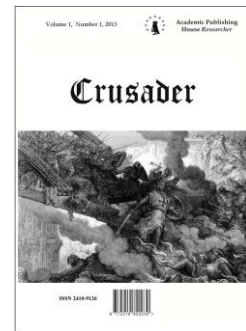


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Crusades and Integration Processes in Europe in XI–XIII centuries

Sergey L. Dudarev ^{a, *}

^a Armavir State Pedagogical University, Russian Federation

Abstract

The article examines the crusades and integration processes in Europe in the period of XI–XIII centuries on the basis of Russian and foreign historiography.

In conclusion, the author notes that the crusades, which initially were the “military-integrative expansion” of the Europeans, increasingly turned into a purely aggressive campaign, gradually losing the spiritual basis under the leadership of the papacy, which began the period of decline. Contemporaries of the crusades were skeptical about these military-religious expeditions. The Reformation of the XVI century put an end to the Christian republic of scientists, which Erasmus of Rotterdam dreamt of. There came a time when, along with the religious integration, purely political unions were also being formed, joined by the opponents who were difficult to be imagined together (for example Francis I and the head of the “true believers”, the Turkish sultan).

Keywords: crusades, integration processes, Europe, XI–XIII centuries, Erasmus of Rotterdam, the Reformation.

1. Introduction

Plenty of works is devoted to the Crusader epic and it would seem to be very thoroughly studied (Dudarev, 2016). Nevertheless, the phenomenon of military campaigns of Europeans to the East continues to attract the attention of specialists and the reading public and it is hardly a coincidence. Today, when West and East once again entered into complex and contradictory relations of the world integration processes, the study of the stages of interaction of these important historical and cultural areas acquires a special significance. What drove the Europeans to the eastern countries, what motives pushed them to travels full of dangers, whether only the bloodshed was a significant result of Christian and Muslim relationship, what were the long-term results of the interaction between the West and the East in the XI-XIII centuries – all these issues today are more important than ever before.

2. Discussion

There is no doubt that the topic of the Crusades has a huge number of interesting nuances that have been the subject of attention to both Russian and foreign historiography. Nevertheless, during the Soviet period some of those nuances were not covered in contemporary literature. Today this situation is undoubtedly changing (works of A.A. Domanin, E. Monusova, A.V. Granovsky, D.A. Batshev and others) (Dudarev, 2016). This partly explains the appearance of translations of Western researches in 1990-2000 which were previously inaccessible in Russia (even for the most

* Corresponding author
E-mail addresses: dudarev51@mail.ru (S.L. Dudarev)

competent scientists) and which were first published in 1950-1970. These are the works of U. Kessler, R. Pernoud, P. Viymar, A. Shamdor, S. Morison, M. Melville, K. Hillenbrand and others, which do not directly relate to our topic of interest, but contain very interesting data that covers the crusades' background (Pernoud, 2001; Viymar, 2003; Morison, 2003; Shamdor, 2004; Melville, 2004; Douglas, 2003; Hillenbrand, 2008).

This article's goal is to review some of the background events and circumstances of the processes that showed the integrative character of the crusades, noting how they pointed out the upcoming unification of Europe. At the same time, we would like to draw attention to the contradictions manifested in the integrative processes, which, like today, created difficulties in the formation of the European community and questioned the reality of its' existence as a whole. This research will be carried out, first of all, through the prism of approaches to the world history chronology, proposed by Professor V. B. Vinogradov and his students back in 1990–2000's (Vinogradov et al., 2010: 33-40).

3. Results

To begin with, we shall cite the statement that has become a textbook in Russian science: "In the last third of the XI century, the "threads" of European politics were increasingly drawn together in the Roman curia. It became a center of power that could unify the dispersed forces of the feudal West by itself" (Zaborov, 1980: 24). It certainly relied on the idea that came from the founders of the Marxist doctrine, that the church "was a real link between different countries", it became "a major international center of the feudal system" (Marx, Engels, T. 21: 495).

Nevertheless, it is well known that the Catholic Church and the papacy acquired this role only after emerging from a prolonged crisis that lasted from the end of IX to the middle of XI century (Lozinskiy, 1986: 80-87). It is also known that the papacy in their far-reaching plans relied on the South Italian Normans (Zaborov, 1980: 23). R. Y. Vipper emphasized the importance of papacy's alliance with the Normans in the context of their end of relationship with the Eastern Church, but especially in the emerging confrontation with the German Emperor (Vipper, 1996. 223). But perhaps only D. Douglas demonstrated the outstanding role of the Norman-papal alliance most clearly both in strengthening the position of the papal throne, and in practicing the idea of *a holy war* (Douglas, 2003: 89-90, 135-164 et al.), although he demonstrated the entire internal contradiction of the said union. At the same time, the author revealed the pan-European character of the Papal-Norman alliance. During the period of 1059 – 1085, the Popes built a kind of axis (which we would conditionally call "Rome-Rouen-London-Palermo"), which served as a powerful lever in the fight against the Empire. In our opinion, the Normans turned out to be a "rapid reaction force" for the papacy, especially during the critical moments of tension with their great and aggressive northern neighbor.

However, no matter how noticeable was the participation of the Normans in the preparation of the crusades at the very beginning, they, despite all their involvement and power, could not become its' core. If we bear in mind that the goal of Gregory VII was the creation of a theocratic Christian empire, where the reign over the lords and peoples was to be entrusted to the Pope (who had a power over the emperor as well), then the relationship with William the Conqueror was, if not ideal, at least acceptable to the newly created system, but it was quite the contrary with the king of France (Lozinskiy, 1986: 104; Douglas, 2003: 204-207). Nevertheless, when Urban II undertook the implementation of the "universalist" ideas of Gregory VII, who aspired, in particular, to the subordination of the Eastern Church, he was well aware that France should be the backbone of these projects (Gergey, 1996: 110). And it was not only due to the fact that the Pope himself was a Frenchman (born Odo of Châtillon).

In her analysis of the preparation of Urban II to the Council of Clermont, R. Pernoud revealed all the important aspects for the success of the first crusade, as well as the significant steps taken by the Pope. Historians noted that before the Council the Pope paid two major visits – to a prominent church figure, Bishop Adhemar de Monteil (who headed the clergy of Auvergne, Aquitaine and Languedoc at the Council), as well as to the powerful lord of Southern France, Raimund IV Count of Toulouse (Zaborov, 1980: 137).

We should take a broad view of the matter and note the integrating role of the Pope at a time when “his endless travels along the roads of the West made him closer to the whole Christian world” (Pernoud, 2001: 24)*. However, we should not forget that this integration was prepared by the well-known activity of the Cluniac movement. The Pope himself and his closest associates were Cluniacs. Just before arriving in Clermont, the pope in a solemn ceremony sanctified the main altar in the huge cathedral in Cluny (surpassing in size even St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome). Secondly, the very location of the cathedral was chosen very carefully. Clermont, with its 54 churches, was undoubtedly a major center of Catholicism in the South of France at the end of the XI century. Thirdly, we should carefully consider the European countries invited to the Council. There were representatives of the Northern France clergy, who were vassals of the French king, as well as the opposition clerics from the territory of the Empire, Anglo-Norman bishops (but not South Italians – Sic!), among which was the brother of William the Conqueror, prelates from Spain, personifying the idea of Reconquista (not even ten years passed since the capture of Toledo by Alfonso VI, which Marx called “the prelude to the first crusade”) (Zaborov, 1980: 22), and of course, numerous representatives of the Southern French clergy (Pernoud, 2001: 28).

This alignment, which best illustrates the basis of the project created by the Pope, underlines (contrary to the opinion of Régine Pernoud) that the excommunication of the King of France from the Church was likely to be carried out for political reasons (Pernoud, 2001: 29). William II of England and Henry IV of Germany were under the excommunication at the same time with the French king and it was not a simple coincidence (Vipper, 1996: 235). The papacy wanted to lead the crusade, thus showing the secular lords, and above all, the emperor, that it takes the leading role in European affairs. All the papal actions preceding the council, such as sanctioning the takeover of England and helping Reconquista, the approval of the struggle against Muslims in southern Italy and the excommunication of Henry IV and even the support of the Patarians (Neusykhin, 1974: 287-288; Gergey, 1996: 95) – all unambiguously pointed to this. Let us emphasize the significant statement of D. Douglas that Pope Gregory VII “believed that it was the right and duty of the Pope to ask the Christian military forces to help to establish Christian rights under the leadership of the Pope” (Douglas, 2003: 153). This makes the statement of R. Pernoud that the participants of the crusading movement were “volunteers from all the corners of Europe ... devoid of any central organization” sound strange (Pernoud, 2001: 5). It seems that the papacy and the Catholic Church were very effective in fulfilling the role of the mentioned organization.

But the integrating role of the papacy in the organization of the crusades and in European affairs in general would be impossible without a number of deep social and economic factors that created the human reserve and made the campaigns possible. They have long been well known to researchers: an increase in commodity-money relations, epidemics, famine, lean years, shortage of land, intensified feudal oppression, escalation of feudal civil strife, aspiration for enrichment, etc. (Zaborov, 1980: 12-16; Morison, 2003: 9). Some add demographic rise (Le Goff, 1992: 60; Morison, 2003: 9) and an increase in the mobility of the population (including the peasantry, feudal lords, merchants, clergy, pilgrims, etc.) to these factors (Darkevich, 2005: 13-34).

At the same time, the spiritual and mental components of the crusading movement are becoming clear: the phenomenon of pilgrimage, the pilgrimage associated with the idea of asceticism, soteriological motives, eschatological expectations, signs and miracles, peculiar signs that appeared on the eve of campaigns, prophecies and so on. The Europeans' lack of knowledge about the East was also important, as it led to complaints about the oppression of Christians by Muslims and contributed to the practical embodiment of the idea of a “just and holy war” against the “infidels”. Jerusalem was perceived (considered to be the Jerusalem of Heaven) as the “center of the world”[†] which was in the hands of the enemy, merging in the minds of the Crusaders with the ideas of feudal-vassal values and Christian ideology (Zaborov, 1980: 17-20, 30-31; Materials, 1980: 75-95, 94-109; Pernoud, 2001: 174, 209; Dudarev, Lesina, 2002: 8-10; Morison, 2003: 10-18, 143-145; et al.).

* The recently passed Roman pontiff John Paul II was similar to the Popes of the XI century, wasn't he? He also visited many countries, thus seeking to establish the unity of Catholics around the world.

† Jerusalem – Genesis (New testament, 1998).

At the same time, a number of scientists associate material and spiritual background. M.A. Zaborov referred to J. Miccoli, who described the “bond of religious and combative knights cooperating with a hope of enrichment ... as the binomial part in the crusaders’ religion” or, according to Zaborov, “crusaders’ ideology” (Zaborov, 1980: 42). Here is the opinion of R. Grousset: “The Latin East was founded through faith in the end of the XI century and it existed due to the profit from spice trade in XIII century” (Pernoud, 2001: 199). And these authors cannot be denied in the validity of this approach, as it is proved by the very taking of Jerusalem. Bursting in Jerusalem, the Crusaders first “scattered throughout the city, grabbing gold and silver, taking horses, robbing homes”. And only after that “rejoicing and weeping with immeasurable joy they came to bow to the sepulchre of Jesus the Savior” (Pernoud, 2001: 67). However, the sacrifice, which was massively demonstrated by the peasant crusaders (but was also common for the representatives of chivalry and the nobility), vividly indicated that “the Christians in their behavior followed Christ, crucified for his love for his neighbor” (Pernoud, 2001: 45).

That is why, the study of mentality, which for a long time was not among the priority assessments of the reasons for the crusades, calls for a deep reference to the spiritual life of the Europeans of the time.

Christianity slowly integrated with the popular beliefs and the adaptation of its ideas and pre-Christian views led to the important changes in the ideological development of the Europeans after 1000 A. D., as it was pointed out by the Western researchers (R. Manselli) (Materials, 1980: 55-56). For example, the mass pilgrimages of that time show that the XI century was a spiritual milestone of European consciousness (Douglas, 2003: 145). We should not forget about the amazing rise of church construction, which began in 1003, noted by R. Glaber (Le Goff, 1992: 58). All these facts allow the contemporary Russian medievalists to talk about the phenomenon of the “*internal Christianization of Europe*”, accompanied by the process of “evangelization” of the masses, when Christianity, having established the rituals, penetrated deeper into the system of moral values through the prism of the newly established feudal relations. *The third stage* of the genesis of Christianity in Europe began, and in our opinion it was a “third acquisition” of this religion (Dudarev, 2004: 24-25). Without going into details about the reasons for the emergence of a new style of religiosity, we shall point out that these spiritual processes were associated with the formation of the feudal socio-economic system and the European-Christian civilization itself (Dudarev, 2002: 21-24)*.

The Crusades were an action of the European Christian passionaries who, like the Muslim Arabs in their time, moved to expand their civilization. R. Pernoud gives an interesting statement by Lord Balian of Sidon who, in response to an attempt to usurp power in the Holy Land by Frederick II of Hohenstaufen said: “This land was conquered not by one lord, but by a whole people” (Pernoud, 2001: 34). This was already understood in the XII century, and the participant in the First Crusade, the chronicler Fulcher of Chartres made an even more vivid statement: “Although we spoke different languages, it seemed, however, that we are brothers and close relatives who are unanimous in the love of God”. “These statements reflected the emerging unified Western European identity that overcomes linguistic, ethnic and other differences” (History of Europe, 1992: 532). We should clarify that the basis of self-consciousness was Christian (so that we have to speak more about the common Christian identity). Thus, due to the “internal Christianization” in Western Europe (from Sicily to Scandinavia), a **Christian super-ethnos** emerged, whose representatives responded to Clermont’s “Deus lo volt!” (It is God’s will), “with a willingness which the Pope himself did not expect” (Pernoud, 2001: 33).

Within this phenomenon, religious attitudes (in the absence of nations) were dominant over local geographic and ethnic communities and connections. Even in the XIII century, when the movement to the East was on the decline, the head of the Order of Dominicans, Humbert of Romans taught that “a real knight must consider the country where the Savior lived, to be his true motherland, and for its’ sake, without hesitation, break up even with his own family, according to the Gospel” (Pernoud, 2001: 187). However, we would not be honest if we did not bring the opinion of Le Goff that the reason for the lack of attachment to the homeland was the conditional land ownership in XI-XIII century. That is why the Norman lords, the German knights, the Île-de-

* R. Manselli is talking about the appearance of the Christian civilization itself after 1000 A. D. (Materials, 1980).

France feudal lords, who opposed the Albigenses, “the Crusaders of all stripes” left their homeland so easily, “because it is unlikely that they have one” (Le Goff, 1992: 127).

This statement is in some way consonant with the observation of V. V. Emelyanov, who noted that: “the Franks have nothing but the desire for money, power and glory. But this is their strength. They venture to the unknown, seek new things and are ready not to go back, because the world behind them does not have a big price for them. Their journey is a great walk to otherness, maybe even to some threshold of the future paradise. This is the civilization of Western Christians. Driven by the adventurous spirit, they do not want to return home” (Emelyanov, 2004: 11)*.

We would like to emphasize particularly one more fact. The Crusades, the situation around them, and the situation in the Holy Land in the XI - XIII centuries, were “**reflecting**” the processes going on in Western Europe at that time. The socio-political situation in Europe at that time was characterized by feudal disunity and the decline of royal power. In the XI century France it was a fait accompli, confirmed by some scientists (J. F. Lemarigne) and accepted by others (J. Duby) (Duby, 2000: 112). Nevertheless, the French king was still a dangerous rival, whom the Pope sought to neutralize (see above), farsightedly trying to compete with William the Conqueror, who laid the foundations of a dual state, which became the prototype of the “Angevin Plantagenet empire”.

Taking over secular power, the Popes openly relied on the nobility, seeking to direct the passionary energy of those “who in the old days fought against brothers and kinsmen” outside Europe (Pernoud, 2001: 32-33). Paradoxically, *it was the factor of feudal fragmentation which contributed to the creation of a general Christian identity and a Christian super-ethnos (through the integrating principle of Catholicism, the church and the papacy)*, and had the highest effect on the Crusades regarding the mass participation of representatives of Western Europe. But, returning to the beginning of our article, let us recall that the French, or the “Franks”, became the support, the basis of the future Latin states in the East. The reason for this was the rapid flourishing of “classical feudalism” in France. The growth of the economic and human potential in France was well understood by the Popes of the XI century, primarily by Urban II. Therefore, it was France, and not South Italy that called to start the war in the East.

But the purely feudal character of the crusading movement and the Latin states in the East became, after all, the cause of their collapse. Hegel famously said “The Kingdom of Jerusalem was founded, and a new feudal system was introduced, which, of course, was the worst state system that could be introduced in the middle of the struggle with the Saracens” (Hegel, 2002: 306). Even when “the ground was burning under the feet of the Crusaders” and their days in the East were already numbered, they continued to fiercely fight each other (the war of St. Sava in 1256-1258 in Acre between the Genoese and the Venetians, with the Hospitallers, the Templars, and others intervening from different sides) (Morison, 2003: 94). The participation of kings in the second and third campaigns led only to an aggravation of the confrontation between the Crusaders (the most vivid example is the keen rivalry between Philip II Augustus and Richard the Lionheart) (Kessler, 1997: 131-239). The attempt of Frederick II to establish control over Beirut and to receive homage from the feudal lords of Antioch and Tripoli, failed, despite his takeover of Jerusalem as a result of a compromise with the Sultan Al-Kamil (Pernoud, 2001: 239-243). The time of the kings who centralized Europe has not come yet, and their offensive actions within their countries forced even the most ardent supporters of the Crusades to forget about the goals of the “holy war” in the East and stay at home[†].

* However, the monolithic nature of the Christian super-ethnos is hardly worth absolutizing. R. Pernoud writes that during the First Campaign in the camp of the peasant Crusaders, where the Lombards, Germans and the French constantly fought among themselves, “national differences quickly led to fights” (Pernoud, 2001: 42). Here is another striking fact, which indicates that the internal contradictions in the camp of the Catholics led, at times, to the actual denial of the Crusades themselves, and therefore cast doubt on the unity of the Christian world even in the culmination of the XI century. In 1096 the French Crusaders, who arrived in Rome, were shocked that almost the entire basilica of St. Peter was in the hands of supporters of the anti-papa, who threw out of the altar offerings of pilgrims and cast them out with stones (Douglas, 2003: 32).

† Jean de Juanville refused to go on a second Crusade with Louis IX, saying: “While I was overseas, the sergeants of the King of France and Navarre plundered and robbed my people. And if I do not stay to protect them, I will insult the Lord who has done everything, in order to save his people” (Pernoud, 2001: 188).

However, it is again important to mention the spiritual factor, which was always intertwined with the material principle. In the works of authoritative researchers of the Crusades, alas, no one paid any attention to the following reasoning of Hegel. We shall cite it briefly. “At this tomb (the Holy Sepulchre – Auth.) the Christian nations once again received the same answer that the apostles heard when they were looking for the body of Christ: “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here: He is risen”. You should look for the principle of your religion not in the spiritual, not in the grave of the dead, but in a living spirit, in yourself ... Christianity found an empty coffin, not a link between our world and the eternal, and therefore lost the Holy Land... Thus, the world comes to the understanding that a man must seek this spiritual principle, which is Divine by nature, in himself ... This was the absolute result of the Crusades, and thus begins the era of confidence in one's own forces and self-activity. At the sepulchre of the Lord, the West forever took leave of the East and understood its principle of subjective infinite freedom. Since then, the Christianity has never acted as a whole” (Hegel, 2002: 307). Largely due to the spiritual evolution that took place over two hundred years of the crusades in the minds of Europeans, they ceased to strive to the East for salvation through pilgrimage, sacrifice, the acquisition of miraculous relics, etc. and found God within themselves. Truly, finally, those who aspire to the holy lands, understood the meaning of the words: “Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst” (Gospel of Luke, 17, 20, 21).

The fact that the crusading movement had been exhausted by the end of the XIII century was, by all means, due to material reasons. The economic and political realities in Western Europe changed greatly two centuries after the first campaigns. Europeans had enough business to deal with at home, both in the field of economics and in politics. The rapid progress of the production forces, the further development and growth of cities, commodity links between town and country, growing agriculture (“internal colonization”, the liquidation of plowing of the land of the landowner) and the demographic rise led to the fact that at the end of the XIII and XV centuries, as some medieval researcher believed, Europe overtook Asia and the countries of Maghreb. In Europe, which embarked the path of the centralized monarchies and broke up the homogeneous in its mosaics feudal political field (Le Goff addressed this situation: “The monarchy has always remained a bit alien to the medieval world”) (Le Goff, 1992: 288), the basis of pre-industrial society began to form.

4. Conclusion

The crusades, which initially were the “military-integrative expansion” of the Europeans (Dudarev, 2001: 12), increasingly turned into a purely aggressive enterprise, gradually losing the spiritual basis under the leadership of the papacy, which began the period of decline. Contemporaries of the crusades were skeptical about these military-religious expeditions. The Reformation of the XVI century put an end to the Christian republic of scientists, which Erasmus of Rotterdam dreamt of. There came a time when, along with the religious integration, purely political unions were also forming, joined by the opponents who previously were difficult to be imagined together (for example Francis I and the head of the “true believers”, the Turkish sultan) (History of Europe, 1993: 401). However, the “sprouts” of such alliances arose in the XI–XII centuries. But this is a topic of another study.

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As we can see, in the mind of a prominent crusader of the XIII century, staying at home and defending his possessions and people is a deed more pleasing to God than an overseas voyage in defense of the faith.

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