Were The Crusades An Unprovoked Attack On Islamic Societies In Western Asia And Did It Set Up A Cycle Of Violence Between Muslims And Christians That Was Focused on Revenge?

Student Name

Course

Date

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The question of whether the Crusades had established a cycle of violence between Muslims and Christians that focused on revenge is one that must look at the events as a series of battles that each had different results. For example, the Fourth Crusade was one that involved the Christians not fighting the Muslims at all (Outside & Inside, Madden, p. 661). The personal revenge is stated to be between the Christian knights against their Eastern brothers (Outside & Inside, Madden, p. 661). The violence of the Crusades is specific to the factions involved. Artifacts recovered from Syria and Egypt depict the Christians and Muslims as involved in the same visual culture (Christian-Islamic Encounters, Hoffman, p. 129). The impact from the Crusades is thought to be tremendous on all sides involved. On Muslim society, the Crusades left an impact on the societal consciousness felt till modern day yet the scholarly research available on the Muslims in the Middle East is far less (The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives, Hillenbrand, p. 1). This would indicate the Crusades to have had a long lasting impact on the Muslims in the Middle East.

There are other views that would point to the potential that the Crusades were an attempt at ethnic cleansing by the Christians. For example, it is thought that western immigration was not going to be large enough to facilitate an entirely Christian state (The Crusades: A History, Simon & Riley-Smith, p. 62). The situation regarding the unprovoked attacks appears to have the Turks invading modern-day Istanbul within the former Byzantine empire. The Turks seemingly were advancing towards Istanbul for an invasion (The Crusades: A History, Simon & Riley-Smith, p. 62). Therefore, it is very likely the unprovoked attacks were Muslim and potentially led by the Turks against the Byzantines. For example, the advance of the Turks against the Byzantines is thought to have been the event to set of the series of events that became known as the First Crusade (The Crusades: A History, Simon & Riley-Smith, p. 62).

The Muslims were therefore most likely to have led unprovoked attacks against the Christians while the Christians were most likely to have had the tendencies to establish a cycle of violence against all. The cycle of revenge had seemingly been from both the Muslims and Christians to reclaim territories lost during conflicts resulting from the Crusades. An example of this is the statement that in the early eighth century, the area of North Africa, Palestine and Syria as well as most of Spain had been lost to the Muslims. The Christians had lost much land to the Muslims and under Pope Gregory VII led to the dictum to liberate Christians from the East (The Crusades: A History, Simon & Riley-Smith, p. 2). Therefore, loss of land to the Muslims had led the Christians to seek attacks against Muslim empires as a means to reclaim lost territories. These attacks can be interpreted as revenge against the Muslims who taken land from the Christians.

The research had identified the focus of the Christians as one of ethnic cleansing and a means to ensure Christian kingdoms had land for themselves. The Christian knights were the force in the Crusades that attempted to expand the Christian empire and to reclaim territories lost to the Muslims. These revenge attacks can be understood as part of the ethnic cleansing practice the Christians had brought to the conflict. The Muslims were depicted as invaders that had expanded Muslim territories into Christian lands. In this case, the Crusades were an unprovoked attack by the Muslims on the Christians that potentially led to the ethnic cleansing beliefs of the Christians against all non-Christians. The cycle of violence between Muslims and Christians was seemingly created by the Muslims by invading Christian territories thereby facilitating the Christians to seek cyclical revenge against the Muslims to reclaim lands and vice versa.

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