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# Reimagined History: Trauma as Provocation for the First Crusade

Spencer Ford Rowan

A Thesis in the Field of History

for the Degree of Master of Liberal Arts in Extension Studies

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## Abstract

The violence of the Crusades was instigated in part by provocative statements made by political and religious leaders who tapped into shared memories of traumatic warfare between Muslims, Jews, and Christians. The different recollections of wrongdoing by these large, religious, ethnic groups were fuel for renewing violence. As each of these faith traditions evolved, they brought with them stories of oppression and violence, often contained in Holy Scripture. Jews heard ancient accounts of enslavement and warfare with other tribes. Christians were oppressed for three centuries by Romans and blamed Jews for the killing of Jesus. Muslims quarreled among themselves in Sunni and Shia warfare—and in armed conflict with Christians. The retelling of ancient stories often resulted in what some psychologists describe as the transmission of trauma across generations.

The hypothesis of this thesis is that psychological insights about trauma can illumine historical accounts of religious violence. A psychological perspective does not refute the findings of historians, but it may help understand how thousands of Christians were persuaded to leave their homes and travel more than a thousand miles to battle with Muslims in the Holy Land. Not only does psychology shed light on past events, it can provide lessons from violent episodes like the Crusades that may help prevent trauma from triggering conflicts in the future.

The First Crusade was launched after exaggerated claims were made that Roman Catholics had been persecuted by Muslims in the Holy Land and mistreated by Eastern

Orthodox Christians. The vastly different large-group identities made it possible for differing religious traditions to view "the other" as an enemy, even after they had lived peacefully together for many years. The perceived trauma of past encounters became fuel for violence—and a phenomenon that has continued long after the Crusades ended. Psychological insights increase our understanding of how those who feel their ancestors (and themselves) have been victims can themselves become victimizers and oppressors. Lessons from past violence can inform contemporary efforts at peacemaking and interfaith cooperation.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the assistance and support of several individuals:

My research advisor, Don Ostrowski, who not only provided invaluable advice but even before, it was his history course that triggered my interest in the Crusades.

My thesis director, Kevin Madigan, who provided beneficial criticism, and like Don, it was Kevin's religion course on the Holocaust that stimulated my interest in how large groups can be manipulated to commit dreadful atrocities.

My copy editor, Cherie Potts, who found and fixed many of my mistakes, suggested improvements, and formatted this thesis under an accelerated deadline.

My colleagues at the International Dialogue Initiative, particularly Vamik Volkan, who helped me comprehend how traumatic memories can trigger violent religious conflict. I was initially skeptical that trauma could be transmitted across generations, a key focus in this thesis.

My grandmother, Sue Moore Rowan, taught me important lessons. She was a Choctaw, and when I was a youngster living in New Orleans during the era of school desegregation, she told me horrific stories about the Trail of Tears, when all her family were forced from their land in Mississippi and required to walk to the Choctaw reservation in Oklahoma. She helped me understand the evil when minorities are oppressed. Moreover, she recalled her painful personal experience on the Trail of Tears. Her final lesson came after she died at age 96, and I realized that she was born five decades after the Trail of Tears. This was my first inkling that trauma could be spread from generation to generation.

Finally, to my wife, True Rowan, who has endured many years while I took more than 20 courses at Harvard on a life-long search for more learning—and especially her patience and support during the time it took to research and write this thesis.

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# Chapter I

## Introduction

This thesis seeks to understand the roots of religious violence in the First Crusade and its impact. I pose several questions, including the following:

- How was religious violence promoted, rationalized, and justified by religious and political leaders?
- All three of the Abrahamic faiths preach *shalom, salam*, peace, yet violence coincided with the birth of each of these traditions. To what extent was violence triggered by the memory of victimization and trauma?
- To what extent was religious warfare a result of (and later the cause of) the infliction of trauma?
- What was the psychological dynamic?
- How were memories of historical violence shaped by leaders who sought to provoke vengeance on other ethnic or religious groups?
- How was history reimagined and misused by leaders?
- What are the lessons for how the memory of traumatic events ought to be reimagined?

Although research and discussion about the First Crusade will not answer all the broad questions listed above, the episode provides insights about the way psychological factors influenced decisions to launch warfare, how traumatic experiences influenced conflict hundreds of years later and still today have continuing relevance.

This thesis illuminates how Catholic leaders persuaded European men (and some women) to take up arms against Muslims in what came to be known as the Holy Crusades. My study does not refute the historical record but adds clarity as to what motivated people to take action, how memories of traumatic events can spur aggression, and how conflicts often simmer for centuries.

Collaborations between historians and psychologists go back at least to William Langer's 1957 address, given at the American Historical Association when he was its president.[1] He encouraged historians to pay attention to psychology, which, he argued, can provide insight into *why* people acted as they did and inform discussions about *what* happened—the purview of historians. Authors James Anderson and Jerome Winer assert:

> All history is made by individuals, whether they are leaders, creative thinkers, or members of a grouping of people . . . . As a body of thought that best illuminates the inner world, psychoanalysis has a natural relevance for the study of history. . . . [Psychology] best illuminates the inner world . . . [and can] offer possible explanations for many of history's mysteries, and it can also make sense of relationships between people.[2]

Accounts of relations between the Abrahamic faiths were reconstructed by leaders in order to emphasize past conflict, point blame, and aggravate tensions between different traditions, thereby instigating the violence of the First Crusade. Historical records indicate that the psychological impact of memories of ethnic trauma fueled violence, particularly as leaders provoked animosity with biased accounts of long festering victimization, exaggerated notions of religious identity, and vilification of those with different religious traditions.

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[1] Vamik Volkan, "Gods Do Not Negotiate: A Psychohistorical Look at Terrorism," address given at Margaret Mahler Symposium, Philadelphia, PA, April 15, 2017.

[2] James William Anderson, and Jerome A. Winer, *Psychoanalysis and History* (Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press, 2003), 1.

## Literature Sources

There is a rich collection of primary source materials, including statements by leaders such as Pope Urban II, advocates such as Robert the Monk, and eyewitnesses including Archbishop William of Tyre. As detailed below, these statements were provocative and stirred passions and bloodshed. Their comments are recounted in source documents on the Fordham University Medieval Source website,[3] in collections by S. J. Allen and Emilie Amt,[4] and by Edward Peters.[5] Additional accounts by Albert of Aachen and Ambrose of Milan, and commentary by Muslims including Usama ibn Munqidh, each speak with clarity about attacks against Muslims who controlled Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Secondary sources include many studies of the Crusades. Works by Tamim Ansary,[6] Thomas Asbridge,[7] Jill Claster,[8] and Jonathan Riley-Smith[9] were particularly helpful for understanding how the violence erupted.

Historical accounts are supplemented by more recent academic research by psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists interested in how group identity is shaped

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[3] See: https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/sbook2.asp. Accessed 3 April 2019.

[4] S. J. Allen, and Emilie Amt, *The Crusades: A Reader*, 2nd edition (North York: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

[5] Edward Peters, (ed.), *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Material*, 2nd edition (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971).

[6] Tamin Ansary, *Destiny Disrupted: A History of the World through Islamic Eyes* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009).

[7] Thomas Asbridge, *The First Crusade: A New History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[8] Jill Claster, *Sacred Violence: The European Crusades to the Middle East, 1095-1396* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009)

[9] Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

by conflict,[10] and importantly, by the memory of victimization in past conflicts. One psychologist, Avner Falk, labels his "psychoanalytical study of the irrational aspects of religious war," a "psychohistory."[11]

Most studies of trauma focus on individual patients suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but studies of collective trauma have increased in recent years. Jeffrey Alexander developed a "social theory" of trauma, in which he says:

> Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, . . . marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways . . . . People have continually employed the language of trauma to explain what happens not only to themselves, but to the collectivities to which they belong as well.[12]

Kai Erikson argues that individual trauma is "a blow to the psyche that breaks through one's defenses so suddenly and with such brutal force that one cannot react to it effectively." On the other hand, collective trauma is "a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality," which can lack the suddenness of individual trauma.[13]

There is growing recognition that "psychology is invariably cultural," according to Karen M. Seeley, an anthropologist and social worker, who adds that cultural

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[10] For example, sociologist Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), and anthropologists James L. Peacock, Patricia M. Thornton, and Patrick B. Inman, eds., *Identity Matters: Ethnic and Sectarian Conflict* (New York: Berghahn, 2007).

[11] Avner Falk, *Franks and Saracens: Reality and Fantasy in the Crusades* (New York: Karnac Books, 2010), ix, xii.

[12] Jeffrey C. Alexander, *Trauma: A Social Theory* (Malden MA: Polity Press, 2012), 6, 7.

[13] Kai Erikson, *Everything in its Path: Destruction of Community in the Buffalo Creek Flood* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976), 153.

differences "deeply and continually shape psychological treatments."[14] Other studies, particularly work by psychiatrist Vamik Volkan and his colleagues,[15] seek to understand how large group identity can be used by political leaders to stir passions and spark violence. Other contemporary works, including those of theologians, deal with the religious roots of conflict.[16] The reimaging of history—especially the way large groups remember wrongdoing—is the focus of theologians, including Miroslav Volf, who was himself traumatized and said, "… afterward, my mind was enslaved by the abuse I had suffered."[17]

It is difficult to perceive the emotions and self-identification of those who lived a thousand years ago, but there is historical evidence. It is impossible to analyze individual emotions except by their actions in response to calls to arms by their leaders, from contemporaneous records, from analyses of letters written by soldiers who fought in the Crusades, and clues in the writings of people who were alive after the conflicts. Sorting out the memorial past (what individuals experienced and remembered) from the historical

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[14] Karen M. Seeley, *Cultural Psychotherapy: Working with Culture in the Clinical Encounter* (Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson, 2006), 205.

[15] Volkan founded the International Dialogue Initiative, which has conducted programs in Jerusalem, Istanbul, Belfast, Berlin, and Vienna. I am also a founding member of this group. I recognize that my bias is to agree with Volkan. However, I do not fully endorse his theories, and I have included in this thesis statements by others who criticized his point of view. Other members include John Alderdice, a psychiatrist and former Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly; Robi Freidman, a psychologist in Israel; psychiatrist Ed Shapiro; psychologist M. Gerard Fromm (both from the Austen Riggs Center); and a dozen other experts from six nations. See www.internationaldialogueinitiative.com.

[16] Theologians who studied how to reconcile fundamental disagreements between Christians and Muslims, e.g., Miroslav Volf, Ghazi bin Muhammad, and Melissa Yarrington (eds.), *A Common Word: Muslims and Christians on Loving God and Neighbor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010).

[17] Miroslav Volf, *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 7.

past (what is beyond individual memory) is a major challenge, as recognized by historian Donald Ostrowski.[18]

My historical research has relevance to contemporary ethnic strife and international conflict. One trend in international negotiation is to analyze intractable conflicts by referring to the issues of ethnic and religious identity, the history of antagonisms, and the impact of remembered victimizations. Yet, these also can pose major blocks to resolving conflicts. Volkan's research is about the impact of trauma from the past on the conflicts of the present.[19] He believes people can be traumatized by stories of ancient wrongdoing, and that accounts of past atrocities are sometimes magnified by leaders as a tool to stir up followers and motivate revenge. Confrontations are influenced by "ambivalences, rage, helplessness, losses, feelings of revenge, guilt, hope, and other internal processes," according to Volkan.[20] We will never be able to fully decipher the emotional mind-set of persons from nearly a thousand years ago. We can, however, look at what was said, what was done, and what resulted. This project may help to enlighten understanding of past conflict and illuminate ways to mitigate current antagonisms.

## Definition of Terms

Some terms require definition to avoid misinterpretation. For the purpose of this thesis, here are some of the most important.

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[18] Donald Ostrowski, "The Historian and the Virtual Past," *Historian* 51 (February 1989): 201.

[19] Vamik Volkan, *Enemies on the Couch: A Psychopolitical Journey through War and Peace* (Durham: Pitchstone Publishing, 2013).

[20] Volkan, *Enemies on the Couch*, 31.

*Identity* as defined by philosopher Peter Unger, is a person's conscious experience as communal and intertwined with one's values, including a "tendency to interpret examples so that our own social group comes out right about the categories of the things we believe ourselves commonly to have encountered."[21] It can also denote a large group's sense of unified tradition. *Self-identity* is ethnic identity at the individual level, "the collective 'we' as opposed to the internal 'I," according to social psychologist Thomas F. Pettigrew.[22] Sociologist Anthony Smith says that *national identity* is a "cultural phenomena"; "a multidimensional concept" that includes ideology; "a specific language, sentiments and symbolism."[23] A study by public health experts at Johns Hopkins University concluded that *personal identity* includes "an ability to express a self-narrative that recognizes the presence of an acting individual," as well as a "constructed narrative that demonstrates intentionality, reasoned choice and coherence."[24]

*Jihad* has dual meanings. The primary meaning is the struggle between good and evil within each individual Muslim believer. "Lesser jihad" is defending the faith against enemies of Islam. Jihad is not optional; believers are expected to defend Islam.

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[21] Peter Unger, *Identity, Consciousness and Value* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 12.

[22] Thomas F. Pettigrew, "Social Identity Matters," in James L. Peacock, Patricia M. Thornton, and Patrick B. Inman, (eds), *Identity Matters: Ethnic and Sectarian Conflict* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 34.

[23] Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), vii.

[24] Debra J. H. Matthews, Hilary Bok, and Peter V. Rabins, *Personal Identity and Fractured Selves: Perspectives from Philosophy, Ethics and Neuroscience* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 193.

*Just War* is the Christian concept that describes efforts to defend the weak, defeat oppression, respond to aggression, and defend the faith.

*Memory* refers not only to recollections of events experienced first-hand; it also refers to second-hand versions of events from the distant past that are widely believed, and—in a negative twist—may cause people to become obsessed by defeat and unable to mourn past losses.

*Religious violence* describes situations where religious leaders promote war against other groups by invoking God's name and promoting what is described as a holy enterprise, in this case either Just War or Jihad.

*Shalom* (Arabic terminology, *salam)* means more than peace. It refers to the absence of armed conflict, toleration of other religious traditions, harmony, and concord.

*Transgenerational transmission of trauma*, a theory advanced by Vamik Volkan, describes the psychological impact of repeating painful stories of atrocities and reenacting suffering in large groups across generations. As discussed later in this thesis, recent neuroscience research suggests that trauma can be transmitted epigenetically.

*Trauma* is used in this thesis not only in the context of psychoanalytical therapy but also to describe a state of woundedness that afflicts individuals through direct contact with violent acts and/or affects a social collective by reinforcement of memories of victimization, particularly by tales of wrongdoing caused by other religious or ethnic groups.

It is important to note that psychological studies illuminate and supplement historical accounts of the sources of violence, enabling us to learn more about what

motivates humans to kill other humans. As we will see, the genesis of the Abrahamic faiths was bloody.

# Chapter II

## The Ancient Roots of Religious Violence

The First Crusade (1095-1099) launched a violent campaign of death and destruction across Europe and the Near East. But this was not the first episode of religious violence. In fact, armed conflict accompanied the origin of all the contending faiths. Various studies have looked at political factors, religious beliefs, and economic motivations to explain why such enormous violence was unleashed, ultimately producing victims in three different faiths.

A less explored rationale, based on psychological motivations, is the focus of this thesis. Psychological concepts of large-group identity, distrust of other ethnic groups, the death instinct as underlying martyrdom, and other emotional aspects, all provide insights into what motivated thousands of people to take up arms, walk more than a thousand miles, fight numerous battles—all in an effort to conquer Jerusalem. These factors help explain how the first victims of the Crusades came to grief. I briefly discuss the roots of violence in the Abrahamic faiths, how victimization of large groups persists over time, and how past traumatic events have influenced behaviors across generations.

The theme of this chapter is that violence is in the DNA of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faiths, and the abbreviated history that follows underscores this contention. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are each faith traditions that preach peace but have practiced war. All three Abrahamic faiths put forward various justifications for engaging

in violence against each other, and these rationales were fine-tuned before, during, and after the First Crusade in the eleventh century.

The Hebrew Scriptures reveal a god who instructs his chosen people to seize land and exterminate those they defeat. According to Richard Gabriel, the destruction of Jericho by an Israelite army and the killing of all its occupants are endorsed in chapter 6 of the Book of Joshua.[25] "Yahweh was a warrior God," according to F. E. Peters.[26] Joshua celebrated the warfare that helped the Israelites believe that God had chosen them and given them the Promised Land. By fighting a holy war and defeating enemies, "Israel enters 'history,'" according Gil Bailie.[27] "The convergence of original event and ritual reenactment enhances rather than diminishes the text's historical reliability, for it shows how culturally galvanizing the ritualized memory of violent events can be."[28] Hebrew Scripture endorses genocide, as in the story of King Saul's battle with the Amalekites in 1 Samuel 15:1–34. The Lord instructs Saul to "attack Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have; do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey." When Saul spares the Amalek's King Agag and gives the animals as spoils to the Israelite troops, God withdraws his blessing on Saul. Even Saul's subsequent dismemberment of Agag does not restore Saul as a leader in the eyes of God. "Kill them all, means *all*" is the moral of this biblical story.

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[25] Richard A. Gabriel, "The Israelite Army that Invaded Canaan Under Joshua was a Veteran Body of Soldiers Led by a Wily and Experienced Commander." https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/daily/military-history/joshua-in-canaan. Accessed January 5, 2019.

[26] F. E. Peters, *Islam: A Guide for Jews and Christians* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 209.

[27] Gil Bailie, *Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads* (New York: Crossroad, 2001), 160.

[28] Bailie, *Violence Unveiled*, 158.

All three Abrahamic religions were born in bloodshed. The Hebrews escaped slavery and had to fight to win the Promised Land. Christians were persecuted after Jesus' execution by the Romans. From the beginning, Mohammad had to fight for the survival and growth of his faith. For some, fighting was a family affair. Given the birth pains of all three religions, a fight over the Holy Land was not an anomaly.

But intra-faith tensions were as much to blame as conflict among the three traditions. The Crusades evolved not simply from a Christian reaction to Muslim expansion generally and occupation of Jerusalem specifically. They also grew from tensions within Christian society and disagreements between Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholics. Jihad, often described as the Muslim response to the Crusades, initially resulted from fractures within Islam itself. Brian Catlos argues that "the greatest tensions and worst violence tended to take place among people of the same faith."[29] Intra-faith violence has occurred throughout history, for example, when the chief priests of the Jews persecuted early followers of an observant Jew named Jesus of Nazareth.

The first Christians argued among themselves but were the victims of violent persecution by the Romans. Many zealots wanted Jesus to be a military savior, but he refused.[30] The early Christians purged other followers of Christ who they denounced as heretics. Latin Christians crusaded against Greek Orthodox Christians. Indeed, the first victims of Crusader violence were Jews, not Muslims. Some Jews sought alliances with various political factions of other faith traditions as a way to save their communities.

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[29] Brian A. Catlos, *Infidel Kings and Unholy Warriors: Faith, Power, and Violence in the Age of Crusade and Jihad* (New York: Farrar, Straus, 2014), 8.

[30] Charles Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), 157.

All three faiths disavowed forced conversions, so until the Crusades most people lived according to their own religious mores and traditions – mostly, but not always. "Christianity and war were incompatible," according to John Ferguson.[31] There was a strong pacifist belief in Christianity, as exemplified by Jesus who urged his followers to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you" (Matthew 5:44).

However, violence was a harsh reality that invited clerical approval and armed response. Saint Augustine developed a formula for when violence was permitted. It was allowed primarily to protect the innocent in what came to be called a "Just War." It was designed to prevent "wanton violence, profanation of temples, looting, massacres, or conflagration," or other atrocities, according to historian Roland Bainton.[32] Among the acceptable conditions when warfare was permitted was the recovery of property that had been wrongfully seized—a rationale that was later applied to Islamic control of the Holy Land.[33] Because Jesus had preached that victims should "turn the other cheek," Augustine said that *individuals* could not use self-defense as an excuse to fight force with force, but a *government* could command individual soldiers to fight aggressors. His example was the Roman Empire, which, by the time he wrote, was a Christian nation. He said:

> I do not approve of killing another person in order to avoid being killed yourself . . . . The only exception would be if you are a soldier or a public

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[31] John Ferguson, *War and Peace in the World's Religions.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978),103.

[32] Roland Bainton, quoted in Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil,* 159

[33] Claster, *Sacred Violence*, xviii.

> official and thus are not acting on your own behalf but for the sake of others or for the sake of the society in which you live. [34]

As a consequence, the Church allowed armed resistance for those serving in an army, but disapproved of or ignored self-defense taken by individual victims who were not serving the government or the church. James O'Donnell believes this showed Augustine's "muddled moderation that led to his acceptance of the notion of 'just war.'"[35] Ferguson notes that the Just War doctrine supports those in power and that violence against the powerful was, by definition, unjust.[36] In effect, there was no clear way to determine if a war was just; it was just if the one in authority declared it to be just.[37]

## The Birth of Islam

The birth of Islam was also bloody. Muhammad's legacy was almost immediately challenged by internal violence. From the start, fighting was essential if Muhammad and his band of believers were to survive. He upset the powerful in Mecca; his admonition to throw away idols was bad for local business; his enemies plotted to kill him; and he escaped with some of his followers to Medina. There his enemies attacked him, his followers armed themselves and captured Mecca—showing remarkable tolerance to those who surrendered.[38] These earliest experiences were all about armed resistance.

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[34] Donald X. Burt, *Friendship and Society: An Introduction to Augustine's Practical Philosophy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 175-183.

[35] James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 154.

[36] Ferguson, *War and Peace*, 111.

[37] Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil,* 160-161.

[38] Michael Hamilton Morgan, *Lost History: The Enduring Legacy of Muslim Scientists, Thinkers and Artists* (Washington: National Geographic, 2007), 11.

It is important to recall how fractured relationships can have an impact for centuries. Islam was born during a time of tribal feuds and dysfunctional family relations. Much of what is known about Muhammad was related by his second wife, A'isha, who reported some 2,210 stories about Muhammad. These traditions, called *hadith*, were about what the Prophet did and said to his companions, and they provide a humane picture of Muhammad that augments the theological tone of the Qur'an.[39] The stories included examples of how the faithful should respond in challenging situations.[40]

Perhaps the most interesting tales are about A'isha and her privileged position as one of the 13 wives of the Prophet. She was the daughter of his trusted friend, Abu Bakr, and Muhammad had wanted to marry her while she was still very young. As his wife, A'isha was particularly jealous of Umm Salamah who was reportedly twice as beautiful and graceful as A'isha. Furthermore, Umm Salamah became an important advisor to the Prophet and her memory rivaled A'isha's. Umm Salamah wrote nearly 400 sayings of the Prophet. Moreover, she was self-confident enough to challenge Muhammad with such questions as why women received only half the amount of inheritance as did men.[41] A'isha became friendly with some of Muhammad's wives but never made peace with Umm Salamah. In fact, Umm Salamah found Muhammad's daughter to be friendlier and their friendship grew. Barnaby Rogerson notes:

> The friendship between Umm Salamah and the daughter, Fatimah, would develop as a rival axis of influence to that of A'isha—one of the shadow

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[39] Ibn Al-Rawandi, *Islamic Mysticism: A Secular Perspective* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2000), 80.

[40] Ruqaiyyah Masgood, *Islam* (Chicago: NTC Publishing, 1994), 109.

[41] Barnaby Rogerson, *The Heirs of the Prophet Muhammad: The Roots of the Sunni-Shia Schism* (London: Little Brown Abacus, 2006), 93-94.

> fault lines which would later grow in the famous historical cleavage between Shia and Sunni.[42]

The major split in the family occurred when A'isha was suspected of having an extramarital affair. Rumors started to fly, and she was accused of betraying the Prophet. A'isha protested her innocence, but Muhammad avoided her for about a month.[43] The Prophet questioned his congregation, and Muhammad's son-in-law Ali had some frank words aimed against A'isha: "God hath not restricted thee, and there are many women besides her." This remark was particularly hurtful to A'isha and she never forgave Ali for undermining her. Muhammad exonerated her and placed her exoneration in the Quran (24:11-26). The relationship between Muhammad and A'isha was repaired, but the relationship between Ali and A'isha were ruined.[44]

Muhammad's death in 632 destabilized the new religion, and the family continued to fracture. There was no formal succession plan for a new leader of the movement. A'isha's father, Abu Bakr, was selected by his colleagues to lead a committee formed to elect the next successors. Three times Ali was passed over for the post of caliph. In 656, the third caliph, Uthman, was assassinated by mutineers from Egypt, setting off factionalism and tribal rebellions. At last Ali could claim the top post, but his caliphate was hit with two wars.[45] A'isha opposed Ali in the first Islamic civil war. At the Battle of

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[42] Rogerson, *Heirs,* 92.

[43] Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 121.

[44] Rogerson, *Heirs,* 100-103.

[45] John Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 35-37.

the Camel, A'isha led forces against Ali, and while she was unsuccessful that day, Ali's fortunes continued to decline.

The struggle for leadership of the new religion after Muhammad's death was intense, pitting Abu Bakr's faction (which became the dominant Sunnis) against Ali and the group that became the Shi'a after Ali's violent death. When Ali was killed, his supporters blamed A'isha as one of those morally responsible for his death, according to Gerhard Endress.[46] Given the importance of this early power struggle it is not surprising that accounts of the virtues of the daughter of Abi Bakr would vary for Sunni compared to Shi'a. The former emphasizes A'isha's positive qualities; the Shi'a regard A'isha's father as a usurper who thwarted Ali's rightful leadership. The denial of her primacy as the Prophet's most beloved spouse is "paralleled by the omission of her father's status as the most beloved of his male companions," in al-Tabari's revised list of A'isha's virtues.[47] Her legacy "provoked Sunni-Shi'a self-definition and polemic in the medieval period."[48] A'isha's reputation was critical in the debates about legitimacy in the leadership of Islam, particularly for Sunnis. For the Shi'a, the Prophet's daughter Fatima, and his first wife Khadijah are objects of reverence.[49]

The Shi'a are literally "Shiite-Ali," that is, partisans of Ali. They believe that A'isha's father and the other two first caliphs were usurpers who threatened the

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[46] Gerhard Endress, *Islam: An Historical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 35.

[47] Al-Tabari, *The History of Al-Tabari: Biographies of the Companions to the Prophet and Their Successors,* Ella Landau-Tasseron, trans (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 49-51.

[48] Al-Tabari, *The History of Al-Tabari*, 51.

[49] Akbar S. Ahmed, *Discovering Islam* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 58.

theological authority of Islam. After Ali's death, the caliphate was run by two dynasties: first the Umayyads, then the Abbasids. Shi'as rejected the authority of both dynasties. The Shi'a perspective "became crystalized at the siege of Karbala in 680 when soldiers of the caliph, Yazid I, massacred Ali's son Husayn along with seventy-two of his companions and family members," according to Vali Nasr.[50] Husayn was said to be the favorite grandson of Muhammad. The story of Husayn's plight and the viciousness of the caliph's forces has become the basis of Shi'a lore and an annual reenactment called Ashoura. The victors decapitated Husayn and took the head back to Yazid, with Husayn's sister, Zaynab, accompanying her brother's head. When Yazid disrespected the dead man, she reminded him that the Prophet Muhammad had kissed his grandson's face. Her defense of her family and its blood ties to Muhammad "galvanized the Shi'a faith."[51]

Sunni Muslims continue to disparage Shi'a Muslims. Islamic philosophers, including al-Ghazali and Ibn Khaldun, urged a peaceful transformation and social cohesion. To this day, however, the Shi'a commemoration of their defeat at Karbala is tumultuous, reenacting the trauma annually with ritual self-flagellation and mourning. Ali Allawi argues that social cohesion provides an ethical foundation linking Muslims to the early theological masters of Islam.[52] But the branches of Islam choose which spiritual masters they will follow and which ones they reject.

The historical evidence is compelling: family violence spawned the idea that struggle is a moral necessity. Jihad is advocated as the struggle for God both inside the

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[50] Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflict Within Islam Will Shape the Future* (New York: Norton, 2006), 40.

[51] Nasr, *The Shia Revival,* 41

[52] Ali Allawi, *The Crisis of Islamic Civilization.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 12-15.

soul of the believer and on behalf of the defense of Islam against aggressors. Greater jihad is a struggle for goodness and against evil inside the believer's heart. It resists satanic forces both inside individuals and outside in the world. The outer manifestations are what make it "a compliant instrument for ideologues claiming absolute authority for their message under the guise of the word of God."[53]

Peace may be the goal of the Abrahamic faiths, but violence preceded it. The bloody stories of the brothers, Cain and Able (Genesis 4:1-16), the enslavement of Joseph by his brothers (Genesis 37:18-28), and the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael by Sarah and Abraham (Genesis 21:8-14), indicate that family struggles are to be expected.[54] What were the triggers of violence involving the offspring of Abraham a thousand years after Jesus' ministry? I will explore this question in the next chapter.

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[53] Endress, *Islam,* 71.

[54] And reconciliation is the eventual goal, as when Joseph forgives his brothers (Genesis 50:15-21) and in the reunion of Isaac and Ishmael at the burial of Abraham (Genesis 29:5).

# Chapter III

## The Contest for the Holy Land

The early Christians were a persecuted minority for hundreds of years before Emperor Constantine accepted Christianity as the Roman religion and conscripted Christians to fight his enemies. Mohammad's first revelation called for passive resistance in the face of persecution, but after a dozen years his second revelation included "permission" for "those against whom war is being wrongfully waged" to defend themselves.[55] Freed to resist armed aggression, Islam swept from the deserts of Arabia, across northern Africa, and into Spain during the first century after Muhammad's revelation of the Qur'an. The religious transitions were not peaceful.

Muhammad initiated a campaign of Islamic expansion from the Arabian Peninsula, endorsing jihad as complying with God's will. The Prophet instituted "a new dynamic order out of the internecine conflicts of the Arabian tribes," an order in obedience to God's command in the Qur'an.[56] It is important to recognize that Muslims accepted some of the beliefs of Jews and Christians and how they interpreted the Bible. Muhammad treated Christians and Jews as one people, related but distinct from the new revelations in the Qur'an. Because they had received revelation from God in the Bible, all three faiths were described as "People of the Book." Muslims said that Christians and Jews deserved respect because they answered God's call. However, Muslims also believe

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[55] Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet,* 98.

[56] Malise Ruthven, *Islam in the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 76.

that Christians and Jews misinterpreted that calling, and that God will assail them: "How they are perverted!" (quoting Surah 9:30).[57]

Christians reinterpreted Judaism by claiming Jesus as the Messiah and savior of the faithful. Muslims reinterpreted Christianity by endorsing Jesus as a prophet and messenger to the children of Israel (Surah 3:48-49); but Jesus was not the son of God, and Christians who assert Jesus' identity as divine are "perverted" because there is only one God (Surah 9:30-31). Muslims affirm the "true Jesus, cleansed of the perversions of his followers," according to Tarif Khalidi.[58] Jesus is "as little an incarnation of god as Muhammad himself, or indeed, of any other prophet," according to Fazlur Rahman.[59] Despite denying his divinity, Muslims honor Jesus, and there are 93 references to him in the Qur'an.[60]

Both Christianity and Islam justified violent resistance to aggression. Each faith exhorted its faithful to take up arms against enemies, but the rationales for justifying offensive military operations varied. Combat to repel an advancing enemy was a practical response, but territorial expansion and conquest required more explanation. Three factors: (1) religious teaching; (2) greed for territory, fame and wealth; and (3) traumatic experience, all combined as reasons for 200 years of conflict between Islam and Christianity during the Crusades. Both faiths sought guidance in holy texts. Both faiths

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[57] Zarchary Karabell, *Peace Be Upon You: The Story of Muslim, Christian and Jewish Coexistence* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 2007), 19.

[58] Tarif Khalidi, *The Muslim Jesus* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 15.

[59] Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 169.

[60] Stephen J. Vicchio, *Biblical Figures in the Islamic Faith* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008), 131.

coveted territory. As will be described below, the Crusades altered the rationales for warfare for both Muslim and Christians.

## What Started the Crusades?

The Crusades had a curious beginning. It is not easy to comprehend why thousands of Europeans would abandon what they owned and embark on a mission to conquer the far-away city of Jerusalem. The Holy Land had been under Islamic rule for almost 400 years without provoking anything like the Crusades. So, what changed?

Historian Edward Peters has compiled an excellent collection of source materials on the Crusades.[61] In his introduction, he says that the incursions of Muslims into Europe, and the growth of Jewish communities in Western Europe, led to a "sharpened awareness of the differences between Christianity and Judaism on one hand and Christianity and Islam on the other," which he called a "recognition of the 'other' as 'enemy' and the legitimacy of the Holy War."[62]

Another explanation focused on a pilgrimage by a monk from the West called Peter the Hermit who was trying to visit the holy sites of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. He claimed he was constantly harassed by Turks who controlled Jerusalem. When this monk returned to Rome, he began telling everybody that Christians should liberate Jerusalem. Peter travelled in towns preaching about the injustices he had suffered at the hands of Muslims. He told this to Pope Urban II who sent out a call for pilgrims to fight to liberate the Holy Land. Author Sharan Newman relates the story about the Pope's

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[61] Peters, *The First Crusade*.

[62] Peters, *The First Crusade*, 13.

decision to use the example of poor treatment of Christians as a way to get out of a political quagmire of his own. At that time, the king of England was not speaking to Pope Urban; the king of France had been excommunicated; and the Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV had been excommunicated and—even worse—now recognized his "own anti-pope"[63] in the person of Clement III. Beyond that, Urban also wanted to bring the dissident Byzantine Orthodox Church back under papal control. Thus, Urban may have seen an expedition to free the Holy Land as a way to unite his feuding monarchs and cure the split in his church—possibly a 'two birds with one stone' motivation.

But this still does not explain why thousands of people responded positively, developed a burning passion for war, and became willing to travel hundreds of miles to fight a foreign foe. The numbers are impressive. About 40,000 marched to the First Crusade and approximately 100,000 people from across Europe joined the battles in subsequent Crusades.[64]

One clue is provided by Robert the Monk who told about the appeal that Pope Urban made in 1095 at the Council of Clermont. In a dramatic address, Urban talked about Muslims this way: They were "an accursed race." Holy sites were "defiled with their uncleanness." They "devastated [Christians] with sword, pillage and fire." Urban said Muslims had enslaved Christians, destroyed churches, turned churches into mosques, desecrated altars . . . the list of alleged atrocities goes on. He had both spiritual and economic messages. Those who joined in liberating the Holy Land would be forgiven

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[63] Sharan Newman, *Defending the City of God: A Medieval Queen, The First Crusades, and the Quest for Peace in Jerusalem* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) 4-5.

[64] Thomas F. Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 11.

their sins and—as an extra incentive—they could "take the land from that wicked people and make it your own." The pope reminded the audience that those who liberated the Holy Land would possess a land "flowing with milk and honey."[65]

According to author Richard Fidler, Pope Urban's speech was "one of the most incendiary speeches in the history of the world, . . . that gathered up the squabbling, discontented masses of western Europe and galvanized them into action." This lurid and entirely imaginary" tale of atrocities against Christian pilgrims tapped into "enormous latent energies" in Western Europe, Fidler said.[66] Other writers noted that the pope had tapped into something that was already at work in the audience—he had connected with and fed "emotions of overwhelming power,"[67] triggering tears and trembling. It reflected "the idea of murder as a form of worship, the idea that religion sanctions murder."[68]

## Early Victims of the First Crusade

Although the eventual targets of the pilgrims on the First Crusade were Muslims, the first actual victims were not. Along the way to the Holy Land, the Crusaders encountered their first victims—Jews living peacefully in Christian lands. An account by Albert of Aachen is related by Peters: "I know not whether by a judgment of the Lord, or

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[65] Robert the Monk, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, reprinted in Dana C. Munro, "Urban and the Crusaders," vol. 1: 2, *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1895). Retrieved July 9, 2018 from https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/urban2-5vers.asp.

[66] Richard Fidler, *Ghost Empire: A Journey to Legendary Constantinople* (New York: Penguin, 2017), 290.

[67] Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 61.

[68] Mortimer Ostrow, *Spirit, Mind, and Brain: A Psychoanalytic Examination of Spirituality and Religion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 169.

by some error of mind [the Crusaders] rose in a spirit of cruelty against the Jewish people scattered throughout these cities and slaughtered them without mercy, especially in the Kingdom of Lorraine." They said it was their "duty against the enemies of the Christian faith." The slaughter was so terrible that Jewish mothers "cut the throats of nursing children . . . preferring them to perish thus by their own hands rather than to be killed by the weapons of the uncircumcised." Albert concludes that the pilgrims slaughtered the Jews "through greed of money" rather than for God.[69]

Another explanation is that many Crusaders had difficulty discerning any differences between Jews and Muslims, instead lumping them all together as enemies of Christ.[70] An eyewitness to the slaughter, Abu Sa'ad al-Hawari, said the Christians killed thousands of Muslims, and bodies "lay in pools of blood on the doorsteps of their homes or alongside the mosques"; also that the fate of the Jews "was no less atrocious," with temples barricaded and then torched with many burned inside.[71]

The other victims of the Crusaders were Eastern Orthodox clerics. The Orthodox and Catholics had grown apart over many years, but the final split occurred earlier in 1054. The Roman Catholic Church claimed supremacy over all of Christendom, and the Crusades gave the Pope an opportunity to assert that claim with military force. The People's Crusade of 1096 conquered and sacked the important Orthodox city of Belgrade. Orthodox members were told they had to recognize the Pope's primacy on

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[69] Peters, *The First Crusade,* 110-111.

[70] Donald Krug, review of *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* by Jonathan Riley-Smith, *Church History* 56 (December 1987): 520-521.

[71] Al Hawari, quoted in Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes,* trans. Jon Rothschild (New York: Schoken Books, 1984), xiv.

"pain of death against those who refuse."[72] In a similar occurrence many years later, the Crusaders would conquer Constantinople and pillage and burn much of the city.[73] Thus, all along the path to Jerusalem, the Crusaders massacred Jews and Orthodox Christians,[74] who became the first victims of the First Crusade—and more victims were to come.

The Crusades were traumatic for Muslims.[75] The period during which Crusaders controlled the Holy Land was exceptionally bloody. Archbishop William of the Crusader kingdom established in Tyre described what happened when those who "should triumph in His name over His enemies" took control in Jerusalem. "Everywhere was frightful carnage, everywhere lay heaps of severed heads." He described "unspeakable slaughter" as the Crusaders "athirst for the blood of the enemy" spread "massacre throughout the city." The streets were filled with the blood of victims and "no mercy was shown to anyone." The victors were "dripping with blood from head to foot" as "everywhere lay fragments of human bodies."[76] For those Muslims who did survive the experience, it must have been traumatic. Another eyewitness account is offered in the Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres: "Oh, what a stench there was at that time around the walls of the city [Jerusalem] . . . from the dead bodies of the Saracens rotting there."[77] Ibn Al-Athir said

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[72] Helen Ellerbe, *The Dark Side of Christian History* (Windermere, FL: Morningstar and Lark, 2004), 67.

[73] Jeffrey Burton Russell, *A History of Medieval Christianity* (New York: Cromwell, 1968), 159-160.

[74] Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil*, 163.

[75] David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

[76] Marvin Perry, "From Ancient Times to the Enlightenment," vol. 1: 238-239, in *Sources of the Western Tradition,* 9th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, 2014).

[77] Peters, *The First Crusade,* 98.

that when the Christians conquered the Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem, more than 70,000 Muslims were killed.[78]

Muslim stories of atrocities committed by Crusaders proliferated. Amin Maalouf describes the conquest of the Syrian city of Ma'arra in 1098. He quotes Ibn al-Athir, who described a scene of carnage. For three days the Crusaders killed more than 100,000 people, al-Athir said. While this was probably an inflated figure, what followed was harrowing. The Crusaders boiled adults in cooking pots and "impaled children on spits and devoured them grilled." He quoted the Frankish chronicler Radulph of Caen, but the cannibal atrocities were recounted by poets and spread throughout the region. Maalouf said, "The Turks would never forget the cannibalism."[79]

Stories like these led to centuries of distrust between Muslims and Christians. The tales of cannibalism seem apocalyptic, both unlikely yet portending doom.[80] However, the story of impoverished Crusaders becoming cannibals is suggested in a crusade chronicled in 1107-1108 by Guibert of Nogent.[81] Fulcher of Chartres described a difficult winter of 1097-1098, with a lack of food and "deficiency of firewood." Thomas Madden concludes that some Christian warriors turned to cannibalism.[82] Even when the horrifying

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[78] Ibn Al-Athir, *The Collection of Histories,* trans. by Francesco Gabrieli, in F. Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades,* trans. E. J. Costello (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984) 11.

[79] Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes,* 39.

[80] Avner Falk says that "some scholars" consider Maaloof's account as "an inaccurate historical novel." Falk, *Franks and Saracens,* 137.

[81] Quoted in Jay Rubenstein, "Guibert of Nogent, Albert of Aachen, and Fulcher of Chartres: Three Crusade Chronicles Intersect," in Marcus Bull and Damien Kempf (eds.), *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory* (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2014), 24-37.

[82] Madden, *Concise History of the Crusades,* 25.

tales contained exaggerations, they were widely spread. For many Muslims who heard such tales, fear and traumatic feelings spread. The Crusades "were the acting out on a mass scale of a psychogeographical fantasy," according to Avner Falk.[83] The ensuing riots and massacres began when European lower-class peasants, "led by disturbed charismatic and violent 'cult leader' types" such as Walter the Penniless and Peter the Hermit, formed a "people's army" that was stirred into a religious frenzy.[84] Long sieges of urban centers resulted in mass starvation, and if the Crusaders were eventually successful they were allowed to kill the occupants and pillage their property. It took the Crusaders 13 years to destroy ancient Tripoli, but at the bloody end, "jihadism which until then had been little more than a colorful slogan, took on new life and meaning" for Muslims, according to Fawaz Gerges.[85]

## The Muslim Duty to Fight

These atrocities eventually galvanized Muslims to repel the Crusaders. Their leaders quoted the Qur'an to embolden warriors. Muslims were told they had a duty to submit to God (Qur'an Surah 3.102), to fear and obey God (64.16), to strive and fight in the service of God (9.41). Surah 2.216 says: "Enjoined on you is fighting and this you abhor. You may dislike a thing, yet it may be good for you." The next verse adds that it is a sin to fail to resist oppression because enemy "oppression is worse than killing." Surah 22.39 states: "Permission is granted those who fight because they were oppressed." The

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[83] Falk, *Franks and Saracens*, 85.

[84] Falk, *Franks and Saracens*, 90.

[85] Fawaz Gerges, *Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy* (New York: Harcourt, 2006), 193.

faithful should "slay the idolaters wheresoever you find them" (Surah 9.5). Those who die in the service of the Lord will be admitted into paradise (Surah 3.169). One who fails to resist the enemy commits a mortal sin that "will bring the wrath of God on himself and have hell as an abode" (Surah 8.16). In the index to his translation of the Qur'an, Muhammad Asad lists 26 passages that describe "fighting in God's cause," plus six additional passages for "fighting in self-defense."[86]

According to Christian theologian Hans Kung, "From the start, Islam has indisputably had a militant character." But I believe that the allegation that Islam was "spread by the sword" is not accurate. Fazlur Rahman states: "What was spread by the sword was not the religion of Islam but the political domain of Islam, so that Islam could work to produce the order on the earth that the Qur'an seeks."[87] John Esposito argues: "The early conquests did not seek to spread the faith through forced conversions but to spread Muslim rule."[88] Islamic conquests by the two great superpowers of the age, the Byzantine and Persian empires, were rapid because the old empires were exhausted from the many long conflicts.[89] To say that Islam was spread by the sword ignores the reality that instead Islam filled a growing vacuum as old-order Christianity—and what remained of the Roman Empire—disintegrated.

The old order did not give way gracefully. Pope Urban II approved of vengeance taken against those who did not bow to the Christian faith. He manipulated his followers

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[86] Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an* (Bristol, UK: Book Foundation, 2003), Introduction.

[87] Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an,* 63.

[88] Esposito, *The Straight Path,* 34-35.

[89] Michael Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 58.

by appealing to their emotions and fomenting hatred. Gary Rashba states, "Europe's masses were riled up with fabricated accounts of persecution of Christians" by Muslims.[90] The Pope told Christians that if they were killed in battle they would be martyrs whose sins would be forgiven and access to eternal life secured.

Also, it is important to look at the way Pope Urban described Muslims as "befouled," and an "accursed and foreign race."[91] He identified them as sub-human, the "other," not like good Christians. "With Christ as our leader," the Pope said, we "drive out the unclean ones" from Jerusalem, which is "the image of the Celestial City."[92] At the same time, it is important to imagine how Muslims perceived Christians who had plundered their homes, committed atrocities on unarmed civilians, and killed indiscriminately. Both sides had good reason to believe the enemy was indeed "the other" in the service of evil.

The evidence is overwhelming. The Crusades poisoned relations between Christians and Muslims and hastened the development of militant jihad in Islam. It also signaled the need for updating the "Just war" theory prevalent in Christendom at that time.

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[90] Gary L. Rashba, *Holy Wars: 3000 Years of Battles in the Holy Land* (Philadelphia: Casemate, 2013), 105.

[91] Robert the Monk, quoted in Perry, *Sources of the Western Tradition,* 237.

[92] Michael Foss, *People of the First Crusade: The Truth About the Christian-Muslim War Revealed* (New York: Arcade, 2011), 40.

# Chapter IV

## Rationalizations for War

Relations between Islam and Christianity sometimes were peaceful and sometimes were not, but the justification for violence varied during the Crusades. Christians perceived the rapid expansion of Islam as aggressive conquest, while proponents of the Crusades claimed they were defensive wars, not a land grab. Muslims had controlled the Holy Land for hundreds of years before Western European Christians launched the Crusades. Many Westerners viewed the Crusades as a struggle between incompatible civilizations—a view that can be found to this day.[93]

There have been, however, many periods of peaceful coexistence, including the hundreds of years before the Crusades when Muslims tolerated Christians and Jews who lived under Islamic rule. The idea of a timeless struggle between Christian nations and Islam is rejected by Brian Catlos who argues that "the peoples of the Mediterranean shared many traditions and habits, including folk and magical beliefs, ideas regarding honor and gender, myths and tales, and the veneration of holy men and women."[94] Sometimes they collaborated; other times they fought. What triggered the latter? What made people think that God wanted them to go to war?

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[93] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

[94] Brian A.Catlos, *Infidel Kings and Unholy Warriors* (New York: Farrar, Straus, 2014), 6.

Muslim defenders of jihad say those questions must be considered in the context of Surah 2:256-7 in the Qur'an, which states: "There is no compulsion in religion." Submission to Islam's political power, not religious conversion, appears to be the goal. Muhammad is said to have proclaimed, "The best jihad is [speaking] a word of justice to a tyrannical ruler," according to Reuven Firestone.[95] Amyn Sajoo notes that Muhammad and the Qur'an "were not licensing but limiting the grounds on which, and the manner in which, defensive warfare could be conducted by Muslims."[96]

There are wide variations in how opposing faith traditions rationalize warfare. During the Crusades, Christians characterized jihad as a mistaken version of holy war. However, Seyyed Hossein Nasr says the concept of jihad does not equate with holy war because jihad's broader meaning is striving to do the will of God and oppose evil.[97] In Islam there is no expression for "holy war," like the excuse Crusaders gave for their aggression, according to Annemarie Schimmel.[98] Christian Crusades may have been rationalized as holy war, but jihad is not, according to Michael Bonner, who stresses that jihad developed as clashes among groups within Islamic societies.[99] "Jihad is a war of self-defense," according to Muhammad Asad.[100] In the Qur'an, Surah 2:190 states that one should "fight in God's cause against those who wage war against you, but do not

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[95] Reuven Firestone, *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 17.

[96] Amyn B. Sajoo, *Muslim Ethics: Emerging Vistas* (New York: Tauris, 2009), 55.

[97] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), 258.

[98] Annemarie Schimmel, *Islam: An Introduction* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992), 69-70.

[99] Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History*, 2-5.

[100] Muhammad Asad, *The Road to Mecca* (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2005), 315.

commit aggression – for verily, God does not love aggressors." The Crusades were unjust to the extent they sought to impose ideologies by force, according to Michael Walzer.[101] Walzer goes further, distinguishing a Just War from a Crusade:

> A crusade is a war fought for religious or ideological purposes. It aims not at defense or law enforcement, but at the creation of new political orders and at mass conversions. It is the international equivalent of religious persecution and political repression, and it is obviously ruled out by the argument for justice.[102]

Jihad not only relates to warfare but also can describe a combative (but not warlike) relationship between Islam and Christian Europe, according to Majid Khadduri.[103]

Many Western historians view the Crusades as a defining moment for jihad and Just War theories. Thomas Asbridge said that in the First Crusade, "The lines of religious discord hardened; Christendom and Islam had been set on the path to enduring conflict."[104] A secondary subtitle of Asbridge's book described the First Crusade as revealing the "roots of conflict between Christianity and Islam." Asbridge was also the moderator of a 2012 BBC broadcast that identified Pope Urban II as the person who "launched a titanic armed pilgrimage," with "rousing words that transfixed the crowd, whose "message reverberated across the West. . . . The Age of the Crusades had begun."[105]

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[101] Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 114.

[102] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 114.

[103] Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

[104] Thomas S. Asbridge, *The First Crusade: A New History* (New York: Oxford University Press 2004), ix, 339.

[105] BBC, "The Crusades: Episode 1," http://www.curiositystream.com. 2012. Accessed March 5, 2019.

In Crusades scholarship in the West, the emphasis is on the uniqueness of the battles for Jerusalem; Islamic scholarship emphasizes a broader contest that also involves North Africa and Spain. Muslim witnesses during the eleventh century "were conscious of the political transformations taking place in the Mediterranean world," according to Paul Chevedden,[106] who also believes it is incorrect to interpret the First Crusade as a new development. Rather, he argues that Islam and Christendom had been for years contesting for souls around the Mediterranean, with conflicts in Spain, Sicily, and Africa occurring prior to the Crusades in the East. There was a "dramatic shift in the power relationship between Islam and Latin Christendom and a dramatic shift in the power relationships within the Islamic world."[107]

According to Chevedden, Muslim scholars called the First Crusade a jihad, indicating that Muslims believed Christians saw the Crusades as equivalent to the Islamic jihad, in this case a struggle sanctioned by God. Chevedden quotes Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami, a legal scholar at the Great Mosque of Damascus, describing the Crusades as a "holy war (jihad) against the Muslims" that began in Sicily, spread to Spain, and then aimed at Syria and Jerusalem.[108] "Islamic sources viewed the different strands of western European expansion in the Mediterranean world as all of a piece," he said.[109] He cites both Ibn al-Athir and al-Nuwayri as considering the Crusades "a general Christian

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[106] Paul E. Chevedden, "The Islamic Interpretation of the Crusade: A New (Old) Paradigm for Understanding the Crusades," *Der Islam: A Journal of the History and Culture of the Middle East.* 83 (2006): 90-136.

[107] Chevedden, "The Islamic Interpretation," 93.

[108] Chevedden translates "holy war" as "jihad" in quoting Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami, *Kitab al-jihad.* 94.

[109] Cheveden, "The Islamic Interpretation," 95.

offensive against Islam that had three main fronts: Sicily, Spain and Syria."[110] Rather than viewing the Crusades as a cosmic showdown between Christianity and Islam spurred by a papal sermon highlighting dreadful mistreatment of pilgrims, Chevedden says Muslim scholars viewed it as part of a continuing struggle involving "a web of pacts, truces and alliances, not only among their own religio-ethnic group but frequently also with the countervailing 'infidel' powers around them."[111] The prevailing idea of jihad did not bar alliances between Christians and Muslims, and "neither jihad nor Crusade functioned autonomously, unrelated to political, social, and military circumstances."[112]

Christians may have seen the First Crusade as pivotal not just because the Crusaders conquered Jerusalem, but also because it presented an opportunity to define aggressive warfare as Just War. Walzer correctly notes the overwhelming evidence that the Crusades were an unjust aggression aimed at changing the political order and encouraging conversions in the Holy Land.[113] The evidence is this: in Pope Urban II's sermon, much is made of the mistreatment of Christian pilgrims by Muslims in Jerusalem. Despite all of its inflammatory language, the text makes the case for remedial action that uses force to right specific wrongdoing. But later versions of church documents that were designed to recruit volunteers for the subsequent Crusades deleted many of Urban's specific arguments rationalizing the use of force while retaining the most exaggerated and pejorative descriptions of Muslims in general.

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[110] Cheveden, "The Islamic Interpretation," 96.

[111] Cheveden, "The Islamic Interpretation," 98.

[112] Cheveden, "The Islamic Interpretation," 99.

[113] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 144.

Penny Cole examined manuscripts in the Vatican Library, and found evidence that later compilations deleted the text of the Urban's sermon at Clermont.[114] The earliest known version by Humbert of Romans was probably written around 1266.[115] It included sermon text with "an extensive treatment of theological, juridical, ethical and social reasons" for launching the Crusade.[116] A later version omitted those reasons, reduced the number of biblical references, instead seeking to equip preachers who would recruit volunteers to fight. This later version became "the staple of popular preaching" in the thirteenth century.[117] It also contained the most derogatory characterizations of Muslims. For example, Saracens are portrayed as the Antichrist prophesized in 1 John 2:18.[118] The documents contain talking points for preachers that reflect "single-minded intractable hostility" and "exceed the limits of rational exegesis." One states that images of Muhammad "should be pelted with excrement."[119]

The final defeat of the Crusaders in the Holy Land occurred in 1291, but "in Europe residues of the Crusades persisted for years to come," according to Tamim Ansary.[120] Persecution of sects considered heretical were "whipped up by the Pope," and

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[114] Penny J. Cole, "Humbert of Romans and the crusade," in Marcus Bull and Norman Housley (eds), *The Experience of Crusading: Western Approaches* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2003), 157-174.

[115] Codex MS Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana lat.3847.

[116] Cole, "Humbert of Romans," 160.

[117] Cole, "Humbert of Romans," 162. Cole extensively discusses the dating of the manuscripts and cautions that this is a "tentative observation." The manuscript with many recensions is Osterreichische Nationalbibliotghek (Palatinus) 4239, dated 1433.

[118] Cole, "Humbert of Romans," 166.

[119] Cole, "Humbert of Romans," 167.

[120] Ansary, *Destiny Disrupted*, 199.

in Iberia, Christians and Muslims continued to fight until 1492 when the Muslims were finally defeated. One main consequence was a "belt of anti-Christian hostility that stretched from Egypt to Azerbaijan."[121]

Long-lasting and intense psychological impact and emotional distress suggest that religious disagreements and disputes were not the only triggers for violence. Psychological manifestations played an important role by preparing fertile ground for theological statements as motivators during the Crusades. Religious justifications—particularly the Pope's desire to reclaim Jerusalem and protect the Eastern Church from Turkish aggression—were not a pretext, but these goals alone seemed unlikely to stir so many to take up arms. Pope Urban II was able to "channel the raw brute energy" that motivated the crowd listening to his call to action at Clermont.[122]

He launched his appeal at a difficult time for the church. The split with the Orthodox to the East was widening; there was an "anti-pope" supported by dissident cardinals; secular monarchs were excommunicated; 200 years of fighting and political unrest, pestilence and famine had caused desolation in Europe. "Hate, revenge, dishonor, pride, greed, cunning, cruelty, vindictiveness" were rampant, according to Michael Foss.[123] Religious arguments about reclaiming the Holy Land from infidels were partly motivated by these chaotic factors in Europe, and by political unrest and challenges to the Pope's leadership.

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[121] Ansary, "Destiny Disrupted," 200.

[122] Foss, *People of the First Crusade*, 29.

[123] Foss, *People of the First Crusade*, 12.

With all these internal problems, an external foe could become the focus that galvanized unified action. Foss notes that "Mohammad was seen as Anti-Christ,"[124] so exhortations by Catholic leaders struck a chord with the strong large-group identity, fueling hatred of Muslims who were stigmatized as "the other." Further, reassurances that "those who wage war under God's leadership do not sin," helped motivate recruits, although promises of forgiveness of sin were not, in themselves, what launched the Crusades.[125]

Historians have shown a new interest in understanding the mindset of the Crusaders. One approach has been to examine the letters of those who participated in or closely watched the Crusades. An excellent summary of this relatively new interest in the emotional expressions was compiled by Jilana Ordman and summarized in her dissertation about the feelings of "holy warriors" in Crusades.[126] Some of the emotions included joy that many of the enemies died, but the warriors "grieved over the deaths of their horses."[127] The death of a comrade produced both "great sorrow," but also that "his most happy soul rejoiced with the angels."[128] Warriors sometimes forgot to defend their positions "while listening to pagan dancing girls, feasting splendidly and proudly."[129]

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[124] Foss, *People of the First Crusade*, 18.

[125] John Gilchrist, review of *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* by Jonathan Riley-Smith, *Speculum*, 63 (July 1988): 714-717.

[126] Jilana Ordman, "Feeling Like a Holy Warrior: Western Authors' Attributions of Emotions as Proof of Motives for Violence among Christian Actors in Military Conflicts: Tenth through Early Twelfth Centuries." PhD diss., Loyola University Chicago, 2013. proquest.com.ezpprod1.hul.harvard.edu/docview/146437751.

[127] Ordman, "Feeling Like a Holy Warrior," quoting Raymond D'Aguilers, 335.

[128] Ordman, "Feeling Like a Holy Warrior," quoting Peter Tudebode, 338.

[129] Ordman, "Feeling Like a Holy Warrior," quoting D'Aguilers, 338.

Warriors experienced joy when they "cut off the heads of the dead and wounded" enemies.[130] Celebrations were held when warriors "killed an innumerable multitude", and carried back "more than 200 of their heads so that the people of Christ might rejoice."[131] This sample does not do justice to Ordman's work, and the author concludes that those clerics who wrote about the warriors were seeking to prove that their motives for fighting were linked with concepts of justice and spiritual purity.[132] But it reflects some of the gruesome victory celebrations while also helping to understand how fighters felt and how they justified the violence they committed. In the twelfth century William of Tyre wrote that the capture of Jerusalem was accomplished with

> unspeakable slaughter . . . and a thirst for the blood of the enemy. . . . Everywhere lay fragments of human bodies, . . . and victors themselves, dripping with blood from head to foot . . . were an ominous sight which brought terror to all.[133]

The decapitations and desecration of the bodies of fallen enemies suggests that such warfare is religious in a perverse context. Historian Natalie Zemon Davis states that religious wars are conducted in religious ways, which she calls "rites of violence." These practices are suggested by scriptural references to ancient conflicts and from a desire "to purify the religious community and humiliate the enemy." Davis says that "even the extreme ways of defiling corpses—dragging bodies through the streets and throwing them to the dogs," had "perverse connections" with religious notions of pollution,

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[130] Ordman, "Feeling Like a Holy Warrior," quoting Albert of Aachen, 339.

[131] Ordman, "Feeling Like a Holy Warrior," quoting Count Stephen of Blois, 341.

[132] Ordman, "Feeling Like a Holy Warrior," 344.

[133] William of Tyre, "The Capture of Jerusalem," Volume 1, quoted in Perry, *Sources of the Western Tradition*, 204.

blasphemy, and heresy.[134] Even Christians who believe in pacifism, Mark Juergensmeyer notes, have traditions where "martial images abound in the rhetoric and symbolism of the faith."[135] Military imagery and metaphors are used in more than 25 places in the New Testament.[136]

Historians have become interested in medieval forms of "lay piety" that characterized the religious furor of the early Crusaders. Bernard McGinn discusses the "enigma of the first crusade" for evidence of motivation. The Pope's call to oust Muslims from controlling Jerusalem evoked an "amazing response" from laypersons that "still remains a puzzle" and "provides evidence for preponderantly religious motivation."[137] McGinn notes that the dynamics of pilgrimage are something that anthropologists focus on more than historians, and that theologians are more interested in martyrdom, although McGinn sees them both as areas that historians should pursue. He sees a parallel between the belief by Crusaders that if they died in battle they would be accepted into heaven and the belief among Jewish victims about their own martyrdom at the hands of Christians seeking vengeance against enemies of Christ. McGinn describes how martyrdom as spiritual motivation also can be understood in psychological terms.[138] The "Crusading

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[134] Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Rites of Violence: Religious Riots in Sixteenth-Century France," *Past and Present* 59 (May 1973): 52-53.

[135] Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 156-157.

[136] J. Daryl Charles, and Timothy J. Demy, *War, Peace, and Christianity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 114 fn 61.

[137] Bernard McGinn, "Violence and Spirituality: The Enigma of the First Crusade," review of the *First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* by Jonathan Riley-Smith, *Journal of Religion,* 69 (July, 1989): 375-379, 376.

[138] McGinn, "Violence and Spirituality," 378.

mentality" was a "dangerous expansion of the theme of vengeance on the 'enemies of God.'"[139] The journey into battle and penitential promises were key elements that transformed a traditional appeal by the Pope for a spiritual pilgrimage into a popular rallying call for armed action.[140] "A number of historians are now engaged in researching the mind-set of recruits," according to Jonathan Riley-Smith.[141] In his study of the Crusades, Riley-Smith includes a 20-page biographical essay detailing the evolution of explanatory themes ranging from legalistic theological discussions about Just War to a description of efforts against "opponents of the church."[142] He points to his own research of crusader motivations,[143] as well as Bull's view of the Crusaders' views of Muslims,[144] and Norman Housley's work on Crusader religiosity.[145] Bull and Housley note that Crusaders joined because they were invited to do so by religious leaders: "It is very unusual for issues of motivation to arise involving such large numbers of people."[146] The actions of large groups may be more complex than the actions of individuals, and scholarly analyses of why people volunteered to fight were mostly limited to "categories that would have been consciously present and largely unproblematic to medieval men and

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[139] McGinn, "Violence and Spirituality," 377.

[140] Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, 22-23.

[141] Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 349.

[142] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 357.

[143] Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1097-1131* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 349.

[144] Bull and Housley, *The Experience of Crusading,*" 17.

[145] Norman Housley, *Fighting for the Cross: Crusading to the Holy Land* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008).

[146] Bull and Housley, *The Experience of Crusading*, 17.

within the reality that they themselves apprehended."[147] In other words, Bull needed to reconstruct how Pope Urban's Clermont speech may have resonated with people who heard it in the context of then-current social narratives. Bull suggests one approach which focuses on "evocative abstract nouns" present in Urban's sermon. These include "defilement, dirtiness and pollution; perfidy, dishonor, evil, infamy, lust and cruelty; tyranny, violence, violation, oppression and destruction; slaughter; enslavement; and abuse; pagan-ness, barbarism, and idolatry; profanity, impiety and disbelief; remoteness, degeneracy, and alien-ness."[148] Bull's list shows the breadth of Urban's denouncement of Islam. He acknowledges that it invites psychoanalysis but that "psychohistory has proved notoriously difficult to do in relation to the Middle Ages."[149] Bull laments that it would be "ultimately impossible to dig deeply into what un- or subconscious triggers were fired by evocations of themes such as dirt and pollution, separation and grief, lust and violation, and bodily dismemberment."[150]

Riley-Smith said the stunning early successes of the First Crusade were euphoric, and James Brundage notes that these successes became the underpinnings for subsequent and unsuccessful campaigns.[151] The liberation of Jerusalem was seen as "miraculous."[152] But the psychological explanations of how warriors were motivated were not highlighted

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[147] Bull and Housley, *Experience of Crusading*, 18.

[148] Bull and Housley, *Experience of Crusading*, 23.

[149] Bull and Housley, *Experience of Crusading*, 24

[150] Bull and Housley, *Experience of Crusading,* 24.

[151] James A. Brundage, " review of *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading,*" by Jonathan Riley-Smith, *American Historical Review* 93 (February 1988): 133.

[152] Gilchrist, review of the *First Crusade*, 715.

in most of these studies. The talking points examined by Cole show how preachers emphasized the evil of Muslims and downplayed claims about the origins of a Just War.[153]

The first wave of Christian pilgrims in the Crusades included a people's army composed mainly of poor and desperate peasants who engaged in mob violence long before they got near any Muslims. Full of "religious frenzy," they attacked Jews along the roads going east.[154] What can explain mob violence? Was the mob acting rationally, in its economic self-interest, or was it acting irrationally? Participation in a crowd, according to Gustave Le Bon, makes an individual act much differently than he or she would in isolation, pulling him or her into the grip of "a sort of collective mind" that lacks a sense of individual responsibility.[155] Mobs tend to take violent, rebellious actions, especially when coupled with religious fanaticism.[156] Le Bon felt such behaviors were psychopathological.[157] However, George Rude criticized this conclusion and said Le Bon was prejudiced when he equated the mob with lower classes of criminals and degenerates "who blindly responded to the siren voices of 'leaders' or demagogues."[158] Rude said it was rational self-interest that caused poor people to seek material goods to improve their

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[153] Cole, "Humbert of Romans," 166-170.

[154] Falk, *Franks and Saracens,* 90.

[155] Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (Atlanta: Cherokee, 1982) 6, 9.

[156] Le Bon, *The Crowd,* 55-61.

[157] Le Bon did not use the word "psychopathological," but Michael Barkun, an expert on religious violence, concluded that this word sums up Le Bon's conclusion. Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 129-131.

[158] George Rude, *The Crowd in History: A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1985), 9.

living standards. While Le Bon and Rude were considering mob violence in the aftermath of the French Revolution, not the Crusades, they both recognized the dangers of crowd manipulation by charismatic leaders.[159] Ted Gurr believes feelings of revenge are aggravated by economic deprivation and, with significant deprivation, the amount of anger needed to trigger violence is often significantly lower.[160]

In a 1907 article titled "On the Psychology of the Crusades," author William Ireland asks: "Was it that a whole people had become mad?" He noted that some pilgrims were "frenzied, hysterical paranoiacs" but concluded that "the bulk of the Crusaders were different from ordinary lunatics."[161] A thoughtful examination by Avner Falk in 2010 investigated the hidden emotions that motivated Christian volunteers to go to war. He examined large-group identity and "unconscious emotions and fantasies" about one's enemies. Ideas about "God and the Devil, and Us and Them" motivated volunteers. Falk said, "Psychologically, each human group needs an enemy against which it can define its own identity and maintain its internal cohesion."[162]

Beginning with Pope Urban II, recruitment for the crusades targeted knights who were trained in military matters. Historian Richard Kaeuper said that dramatic emotional expressions were not surprising in a culture with clear codes of behavior and strong

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[159] Mark Hagopian, *The Phenomenon of Revolution* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1974), 309.

[160] Ted Robert Gurr, "Psychological Factors in Civil Violence," in Ivo K. Feierabend, Rosalind L. Feierabend, and Ted Robert Gurr (eds.), *Anger, Violence, and Politics: Theories and Research* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 51

[161] William Ireland, "On the Psychology of the Crusades II," *British Journal of Psychiatry* 53 (April 1907): 322-341.

[162] Falk, *Franks and Saracens,* 26.

definitions of identity.[163] Kaeuper calls this strong identity the "chivalric soul," continuing: "Animated and valorized by a distinctive but intense species of lay piety, . . . chivalry claimed the Lord of Hosts as its founder and sustainer."[164] Later he adds:

> Religious justification for the order of fighters became significant features of medieval society. . . . That Christ could be transformed into a warrior suggests how powerfully major religious ideals then under construction could be co-opted for the military elite.[165]

The rationale for the chivalrous claim—that the Lord of Hosts was their founder—was lifted from the Book of Revelation, particularly Chapter 19, which was misused to justify the Crusades against infidels, according to Ben Witherington, who contends that Biblical texts "often have been misused to justify all sorts of illegitimate causes."[166] In fact, Revelation describes the final battle between good and evil, the apocalypse. It describes a rider on a white horse: "Its rider is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war." It states that the "armies of heaven" are following him (Rev. 19:11-14). Verse 15 says that he "will rule with a rod of iron" to execute the "fury of the wrath of God the Almighty." With such statements, it is easy to see how the knights who heard this message would envision themselves as warriors for a vengeful God doing battle with infidels who occupy the Holy Land. The problem, according to Witherington, is that only one weapon is mentioned as being carried by the rider: "From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations" (Rev. 19:15). The text "has nothing to say in support of human actions of violence," and

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[163] Richard W. Kaeuper, *Medieval Chivalry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 277-280.

[164] Kaeuper, *Medieval Chivalry*, 33.

[165] Kaeuper, *Medieval Chivalry,* 309.

[166] Ben Witherington III, *Revelation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 259.

the judgment "is carried out by a judicial word, not by physical violence."[167] That weapon is the Word of God. "The only weapon that matters is the Word of God," according to Catherine Gonzalez and Justo Gonzalez.[168] They note that the Word of God as a sword appears frequently in the New Testament, both in Revelation (four times) and in Ephesians 6:17 where "the sword of the Spirit . . . is the Word of God." Armies and weapons are "nothing before the Word of God." This view is echoed by Michael Gorman who said, "God hardly needs to resort to literal violence to effect the cessation of evil," adding, "Revelation should be understood as portraying *symbolically* what God does *actually* with a divine performative utterance, an effective word not unlike the word that spoke creation into existence."[169] In Revelation, humans are not sent into battle. According to Craig Koester, in "the cataclysmic battle of Revelation 19, what do the heavenly armies do? Nothing. . . . All the actions belong to Christ."[170] Rather than a call for followers to take up arms and go to war, "Revelation conveys a spirituality and ethic of nonviolence," according to Gorman.[171]

"Sacred texts in the wrong hands can be dangerous things, especially apocalyptic texts," Witherington says, and he believes they were misused to justify the Crusades.[172] Authors Kevin Madigan and Jon Levinson contend that Hebrew Scripture also can be

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[167] Witherington, *Revelation,* 259.

[168] Catherine C. Gonzalez and Justo L. Gonzalez, *Revelation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 128.

[169] Michael J. Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly: Uncivil Worship and Witness Following the Lamb into the New Creation* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 152.

[170] Craig R. Koester, *Revelation and the End of All Things* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 177.

[171] Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly,* 183.

[172] Witherington, *Revelation,* 259.

misconstrued, citing passages from Psalm 96, Jeremiah 17, and Isaiah 35 that portray a Divine Warrior marching forth against the forces of death and chaos. They can be misunderstood as forms of "violent religious fanaticism."[173] Historian Jay Rubenstein says the First Crusade was "precisely apocalyptic,"[174] adding, "Christian armies marched east, they witnessed miracles, they bathed in rivers of blood." Rubenstein said many believed they were entering the Last Days.[175]

In 1095, there was a meteor shower over Western Europe. In 1096 there was an eclipse of the moon, which then turned red. Many interpreted these as prophetic signs, and soon the recruitment of warriors increased. The same year there was another eclipse and an aurora. In 1097 a comet blazed through the night. In 1098 a great light brightened the night sky and then there was an eclipse of the sun.[176] Riley-Smith states:

> There can be no doubt that there was a hysterical element in it, whipped up by demagogues. . . . The hysteria may have fed on the eschatological expectations, drawing on the popular prophecy of the last emperor in occupation of Jerusalem before the Last Days.[177]

From a psychological perspective, thinking constantly about the apocalypse is self-destructive, according to psychoanalyst Mortimer Ostrow. He believes that individual "apocalyptic thinking derives from suicidal thinking that is initially fended off

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[173] Kevin J. Madigan and Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection: The Power of God for Christians and Jews* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 192-196.

[174] Jay Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven: The First Crusade and the Quest for Apocalypse* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), xii.

[175] Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven,* 319.

[176] Riley-Smith, *First Crusade,* 33-34. But on page 35 Riley-Smith cautions that the evidence is not "copious enough" to prove that eschatological ideas were widespread.

[177] Riley-Smith, *First Crusade,* 34.

and directed at others, but ultimately reverts to its self-destructive nature."[178] The "two opposite poles of apocalypse," according to Ostrow, are cosmos and chaos. Chaos is characterized by "depression, fear, rootlessness, loss and disorientation," as well as darkness, horror, and death. The mood swings dramatically between this dark picture and one of rebirth. The downward mood swing "threatens to become too extreme." Even a high spiritual experience seems threatening because it seems "directed toward reversing the mood" back downward.[179]

There is not much to commend in an apocalyptic scenario, but it is not difficult to see how clever proponents can build on the superstitions, presuppositions, and emotions of their audience to encourage or in fact lead them into battle. The peasants in what was called the People's Crusade were the ones who wreaked the most destruction, murdering Jews and Muslims. In a PBS interview, Norman Cohn said the peasants felt it was a necessary preliminary to the Second Coming of Christ. This was not the official church doctrine on the apocalypse; it only said that all Jews should be converted to Christianity before the Second Coming. Cohn said, "One way of settling this matter was to kill them and there would be no unconverted Jews left."[180] Such was the thinking that resulted in horrific massacres.

As discussed in the next chapter, current psychological research cannot provide a definitive answer to how the Crusaders were motivated to act, but insights into such

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[178] Ostrow, quoted in Werner Bohleber, *Destructiveness, Intersubjectivity, and Trauma: The Identity Crisis of Modern Psychoanalysis* (London: Karnac, 2010), 174.

[179] Ostrow, *Spirit, Mind, and Brain*, 143-145.

[180] Norman Cohn, interview, PBS *Frontline.* https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/show/apocalypse/explanation/crusades.html. Accessed 1 March 2019. On the same program Bernard McGinn stated: "The city of Jerusalem is the apocalyptic city *par excellence*."

things as group identity, trauma, mourning the past, and anticipating the Last Days can inform a discussion about human contests for power, resources, territory, and heroic reputation.

# Chapter V

## A Psychodynamic View of the Launch of the First Crusade

Historians have recently found fertile ground for understanding public motivation in research informed by psychology, cultural anthropology, and neurobiology. Psychiatrist Vamik Volkan studies how Christians have reacted throughout the centuries to the Muslim recapture of the Holy Land and the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453. The story of those defeats is what Volkan calls "the chosen trauma" of Christians in Eastern and Central Europe. He argues, "The loss of Constantinople was a massive trauma that reopened wounds caused by the fall of Jerusalem . . . causing feelings of helplessness, shame and humiliation."[181] Volkan defines "chosen trauma" this way:

> A large group's mental representation of a historic event that resulted in collective feelings of helplessness, victimization, shame and humiliation at the hands of "others" and typically involves drastic losses of people, land, prestige and dignity.[182]

Although the loss happened hundreds of years earlier, Volkan asserts that the Turks became "the unconsciously chosen target of stubborn, systematic, and negative stereotyping by Europeans and historians throughout the West."[183]

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[181] Vamik Volkan, *Psychoanalysis, International Relations, and Diplomacy* (London: Karnac Books, 2014), 173.

[182] Vamik Volkan, *Killing in the Name of Identity: A Study of Bloody Conflicts* (Charlottesville, VA: Pitchstone, 2006), 173.

[183] Volkan, *Psychoanalysis,* 41.

How are these traumatic feelings transmitted across generations? According to Volkan it occurs at the individual level "when an older person unconsciously externalizes his traumatized self onto a developing child's personality." The child then "becomes a reservoir for the unwanted, troublesome parts," causing the child to feel the need to "reverse the humiliation and feelings of helplessness pertaining to the trauma of his forebears."[184] Volkan believes these feelings are conveyed not only through stories told by parents and grandparents, but that members of a large group share feelings of victimization which become incorporated into the group's identity, adding, "The mental representation of shared tragedy is transmitted to subsequent generations in varying levels of intensity." It is more than "children mimicking the behavior of parents" or the older generation. "Rather, it is the end result of mostly unconscious psychological processes by which survivors *deposit* into their progeny's core identities their own injured self-images."[185] What is transmitted is not the traumatized parent's memories, but the "deposited self-images," and as a result of the self-images that multiple parents in a traumatized group transmit to their children, "a shared image of the tragedy develops." The new generation is "unconsciously knit together" and becomes part of a large-group identity, according to Volkan.[186] In effect, the actual history of what took place is less relevant than the new powerful image that links members of a group together.

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[184] Vamik Volkan, *Blood Lines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 43.

[185] Vamik Volkan, *Blind Trust: Large Groups and Their Leaders in Times of Crisis and Terror* (Charlottesville, VA: Pitchstone, 2004), 48.

[186] Volkan, *Blind Trust,* 49.

As an example, Volkan cites the work of historian and psychoanalyst Peter Loewenberg who studied trauma from the Protestant Reformation beginning in late fifteenth-century Europe. "It was trauma of major proportions," according to Loewenberg, triggering "new piety, flagellation, widespread practice of torture, and epidemics of demonic possession." It created a "witch mania that tortured and killed thousands." Although those not trained in psychology might not perceive the relationship, Loewenberg says that trauma "is the theoretical link from individual to group, cohort, population, nation, the world."[187]

A missing link in the transmission process has been suggested by recent neuroscience research showing that the trauma may be more contagious than the methods identified by Volkan and Loewenberg. New research studies indicate that trauma may be heritable through genetics. For example, this "epigenetic explanation"—that trauma can leave a chemical mark on a person's genes which is passed on to the next generation—was discussed in a *New York Times* story by Benedict Carey on December 10, 2018, titled "Can We Really Inherit Trauma?" The article notes that this theory caused a "bitter dispute" among researchers.[188] It is premature to conclude that this is a proven mode of transmission; more research is necessary. But it is cause for concern given what we know about how traumatic memories can be manipulated by demagogic leaders of large groups. "The idea that we carry some biological trace of our ancestors' pain has a strong emotional appeal," Carey states. "It resonates with the feelings that arise when one views images of famine, war or slavery." This theory "also seems to buttress psychodynamic

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[187] Peter Loewenberg, "The Uses of Anxiety," *Partisan Review* 3 (1991): 515.

[188] Benedict Carey, "Can We Really Inherit Trauma?" *New York Times*, December 10, 2018. https://www.nytimes.coom/2018/12/10/health/mind-epigenetics-genes.html.

narratives about trauma, and how its legacy can reverberate" through the ages.[189] In other research, scientists studied how cells with the same genetic code could behave very differently. The following studies suggest how epigenetic transition may work:

- During the prenatal environment, external conditions are associated with changes of the epigenome when adaptive responses are involved in order to cope with adversities.[190]
- Pregnant women who suffer famine may pass on to their offspring problems that affect their long-term health.[191]
- Depression affects 10-15% of pregnant women and may cause changes in DNA methylation in offspring resulting in life-long changes to the immune system of their children.[192]
- Not all changes are harmful. Exercise training in men may reprogram their sperm in ways that affect the health of their offspring.[193]
- "Genomic imprinting is important for normal brain development and aberrant imprinting has been associated with impaired cognition." This study states that "examples of heritability from parent to offspring with possible relevance to

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[189] Carey, "Can We Really Inherit Trauma?"

[190] B. T. Heijmans, E. W. Tobi, L. H. Lumey, and P. E. Slagboom, "The Epigenome: Archive of the Prenatal Environment," *Epigenetics* 4 (2009): 526-531.

[191] E. W. Tobi, et al., "DNA Methylation as a Mediator of the Association Between Prenatal Adversity and Risk Factors for Metabolic Disease in Adulthood," *Science Advances* 4 (2018): eaao4364. Published online 2018 Jan 31. doi: 10.1126/sciadv.aao4364.

[192] Z. Nemoda, et al., "Maternal Depression is Associated with DNA Methylation Changes in Cord Blood T. Lymphocytes and Adult Hippocampal," *Translational Psychiatry* 4 (2015): e545. Published online 2015 Apr 7. doi: 10.1038/tp.2015.32.

[193] J. Denham, B.J. O'Brien, J.T. Harvey, and F.J. Charchar, "Genome-wide sperm DNA methylation changes after 3 months of exercise training in humans," *Epigenomics,"* 2015 Aug; 7:(5): 717-31. Doi: 10.2217/epi.15.29. Epub 2015 Apr 13.

transgenerational transmission of phenotypes have been reported in mouse and human" studies.[194]

These studies do not prove that trauma is transmitted epigenetically, but the research does indicate that cognitive ability can be adversely affected for life. Moreover, Lorgen-Ritchie and her colleagues concluded that while "we have no evidence for a genetic effect" continuing over multiple generations, that possibility cannot be ruled out.[195] At a minimum, the studies suggest that religious ideas plus spiritual and communal affiliations "are communicated from parent to child on the basis of genetic as well as environmental influences," according to psychiatrist Mortimer Ostrow.[196] These studies indicate a physical pathway for what Volkan calls "unconscious psychological processes" that lets parents who have been traumatized "deposit" their damaged self-images into their children.[197] According to psychoanalyst Werner Bohleber, children are vulnerable because the "propensity for unconscious desires to attach themselves with such ease to national and ethnic ideologies" occurs at a time in the life of a person when ideas about identity are being communicated simultaneously with "learnings of love and hate," making collective identity and individual identity intrapsychically associated."[198] Societal rituals enable young people to know their society. "Body, limbs, organism,

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[194] Marlene Lorgen-Ritchie, et al., "Imprinting Methylation in SNRPN and MEST1 in Adult Blood Predicts Cognitive Ability," *PLoS One* 4 (2019): e0211799. Published online 2019 Feb 1. Doi: 10.1371/journal.pone0211799.

[195] Lorgen-Ritchie, et al., "Imprinting Methylation," 14.

[196] Ostrow, *Spirit, Mind, & Brain,* 121.

[197] Volkan, *Blind Trust,* 48.

[198] Bohleber, *Destructiveness, Intersubjectivity, and Trauma,* 162.

fatherland, mother country, and so on, form a symbolic conceptual system used by every society to address political and social identity problems," including "purity, homogeneity and ethnic mix."[199] Patricia Thornton suggests that "[i]dentity, once set in motion, can take on a life of its own," particularly in war when the enemy is demonized as "utterly alien."[200] Another, K. V. Korestolina, contends that negative typecasting of an enemy in a time of conflict can strengthen group identity.[201]

The transmission of trauma in a large group makes the members of a group susceptible to manipulation by those who would exploit their emotions and motivate them to act in ways they otherwise would reject. It is impossible to prove exactly what happened in the run-up to the First Crusade, but one clue may be seen in how Christians reacted when Pope Urban in 1096 called on them to avenge the loss of Jerusalem. The faithful may have felt victimized by a humiliating injury (albeit hundreds of years earlier), which affected their self-image in the eleventh century. The reaction in cases like this, Volkan believes, is "societal regression"—a reversion to childish behaviors including "rallying around the leader, exhibiting flags, attempting to 'purify' the group from those whose names or skin colors suggest that they may be affiliated with the enemy, and dividing the world into clashing civilizations."[202] The situation is ripe for leaders to exploit these feelings, stigmatize others, and demonize opponents and

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[199] Bohleber, *Destructiveness,* 163.

[200] Patricia M. Thornton, "Introduction: Identity Matters," in James L. Peacock, Patricia M. Thornton, and Patrick B. Inman (eds.), *Identity Matters: Ethnic and Sectarian Conflict* (New York: Berghahn, 2007), 7.

[201] Karina V. Korostelina, "Readiness to Fight In Crimea," in James L. Peacock, Patricia M. Thornton, and Patrick B. Inman (eds.), *Identity Matters: Ethnic and Sectarian Conflict* (New York: Berghahn, 2007), 51.

[202] Volkan, *Killing in the Name of Identity,* 48.

warmongers. Volkan says religion is "intertwined with large group identity," mixed with ethnic and nationalistic loyalty, and a force for political manipulation.[203]

According to Volkan, the hypothesis that something in the collective unconscious was at work in 1096, creating animosity by Christians toward Muslims, rests largely on modern research by psychiatrists and psychologists who examine the ongoing impact of trauma, especially the type that can "poison a society's atmosphere."[204] The type of trauma Volkan is talking about is not Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), but there are similarities. A diagnosis of PTSD requires exposure to stressful events involving "actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self and others" that produces "intense fear, helplessness or horror," according to the American Psychological Association.[205] Even though PTSD is associated with direct contact with such an event, sufferers "do not have to be direct recipients of harm to develop PTSD," but can develop symptoms "vicariously by witnessing the traumatic misfortunes of others," according to Harvard psychologist Richard McNally.[206] For example, one study discovered that 65% of soldiers assigned to grave registration duty during the Gulf War developed PTSD. "There is no straightforward relationship between the severity of the trauma and the severity of PTSD," according to McNally, who examined research on the survivors of terrorist bombings, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes. Veterans with the most PTSD symptoms "tend to amplify their memory for

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[203] Volkan, *Enemies on the Couch,* 338.

[204] Volkan, *Killing in the Name of Identity,* 164.

[205] American Psychological Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,* 3rd ed (Washington, DC: 1994), 427-428.

[206] Richard J. McNally, *Remembering Trauma* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2003), 83-84.

traumatic events over time."[207] After the September 11, 2001 attack in New York, a study by Sandro Galea estimated that 67,000 cases of PTSD were triggered near the World Trade Center. Follow-up surveys in 2002 found that 1.7% of New Yorkers suffered lasting disorders.[208] McNally says that "if the trauma is truly catastrophic, then most people will become symptomatic irrespective of personal risk or protective factors."[209]

This does not lead to the conclusion that present-day America or medieval societies in the eleventh century contained millions of PTSD sufferers. Volkan is careful to say that people in large groups experience trauma differently than individuals immediately connected with a stressful event. He states:

> Beyond the presence of PTSD among individuals, massive traumas and disasters can lead to four kinds of reactions among society" including 1) new preoccupations, 2) modifications of cultural customs, 3) building of monuments for shared remembrance, and 4) the transmission of the trauma to the younger generation.[210]

It is the last contention that is at issue regarding violent episodes over many years—that trauma can be transmitted across generations and affect those who did not personally witness the triggering event(s).

There also is growing evidence that experiencing trauma can shatter a person's worldview. If an individual's core beliefs are disrupted, severe symptoms of PTSD can

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[207] McNally, *Remembering Trauma,* 82.

[208] McNally, *Remembering Trauma,* 88.

[209] McNally, *Remembering Trauma*, 97.

[210] Volkan, *Killing in the Name of Identity,* 88.

result, according to a 1997 study by Elanna Newman and her colleagues.[211] They found that PTSD symptoms were less severe if an individual's "construct of the world" was not disrupted; but in the event of disruption, "maladaptive belief structures and negative affective states" were fostered. Traumatic events can trigger profound feelings of vulnerability, undermining survivors' beliefs about the self, the world, and the future. "There is also emerging consensus that healthy adaptation following severe stressors requires both an adaptive integration of the event into one's belief system and the process of negative emotions," Newman stated.[212] They examined "themes" that can shape a worldview, including: helplessness, rage, fear and terror, loss, grief and regret, shame, guilt and self-reproach, diffuse affect (non-specific emotions including pain and misery), benign expectations about the dangerousness of the world, meaningful world expectations about predictability and fairness, people trustworthiness (expectations about betrayal of trust), self-worth (expectation of competence), self-blame (holding oneself responsible), reciprocity (including the ability to respond to love), alienation (feelings of detachment), and legitimacy (including whether one's feelings are valid).[213] Complex PTSD with extreme stress proved to be more disruptive to the core beliefs of sufferers, and reflects changes in basic cognitive-affective organization, according to the Newman study.[214]

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[211] Elanna Newman, David S. Riggs, and Susan Roth, "Thematic Resolution, PTSD, and Complex PTSD: The Relationship Between Meaning and Trauma-Related Diagnoses," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 3 (1997): 197-213.

[212] Newman, Riggs, and Roth, "Thematic Resolution," 197-198.

[213] Newman, Riggs, and Roth, "Thematic Resolution," 200.

[214] Newman, Riggs, and Roth, "Thematic Resolution," 209.

Recent psychological studies of the role of religion in trauma suggest that beliefs are important factors in how people experience stress. Although psychologists utilize secular methods and terminology, there is evidence to support N. D. Sinclair's view that PTSD "is spiritual at its deepest level." Sinclair stated that the "most corrosive impact of horrific emotional trauma is to be found in the spiritual fabric of persons."[215] According to J. LeBron McBride and Gloria Armstrong, trauma disrupts the connectedness that is associated with spirituality, particularly when there is a loss of faith in order and continuity.[216] They cite the experience of Elie Wiesel who was traumatized in a Nazi concentration camp. Wiesel wrote of innocent children burned alive and "the flames consumed my faith," an experience that "murdered my God and my soul."[217] Trauma renders the sufferer a "wounded self, '"[218] according to J. Bradshaw.

A review of empirical research into the relationship between religion and traumatic stress indicated significant linkages. Yung Y. Chen and Harold G. Koenig reviewed 11 studies in 2006 and concluded that all but one of the peer-reviewed studies reported significant associations (positive or negative) between measures of PTSD and spirituality. Three showed inverse associations: higher spirituality correlated with lower measures of symptoms. Four studies showed positive associations: higher scores on PTSD symptoms correlated with higher scores on religion/spirituality. In one of those

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[215] Sinclair quoted in J. LeBron McBride and Gloria Armstrong, "The Spiritual Dynamics of Chronic Post Traumatic Stress Disorder," *Journal of Religion and Health* 34, no. 1 (1995): 5-16.

[216] McBride and Armstrong, "Spiritual Dynamics," 6.

[217] Weisel, quoted in McBride and Armstrong, "Spiritual Dynamics," 6.

[218] J. Bradshaw, *Healing the Shame that Binds You* (Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communication, 1988).

four studies, high scores on spiritual coping were associated with high scores on symptoms. In the second, a negative religious coping factor (seeing the problem as God's punishment) correlated with high symptom scores. In a third study of this foursome, "a strong belief in an afterlife was associated with high avoidance in the high trauma exposure group." Finally, there were three studies with mixed associations. In one, only general spiritual beliefs were inversely associated with symptom severity. In another study those with high symptom severity were more likely to report a change in religious beliefs. In sum, the results were very complicated even though associations were found in almost all cases. Chen and Koenig conclude that all but one of the 11 empirical studies showed significant relationships between spirituality and the severity of trauma symptoms.[219] Another meta-analysis by A. J. Weaver and colleagues indicated that more than 50 published studies demonstrate a positive association "between religious commitment and mental health."[220]

The conflicted relationship between Muslims and Christians led to the First Crusade, and it was Islam's conquest of Christian lands that resulted in stories of atrocities that were passed down from Christian parents to their children. At the same time, Christian atrocities became part of the collective memory of Muslims in the conquered lands. Over the long term, both would become victims and victimizers. When Muslims lost control of Jerusalem to the Crusaders, it was a traumatic loss for Muslims. The later loss of Jerusalem and, centuries later, the loss of Constantinople, to the Muslims

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[219] Yung Y. Chen and Harold G. Koenig, "Traumatic Stress and Religion: Is There a Relationship? A Review of Empirical Findings," *Journal of Religion and Health* 45 (2006): 375-378, 380.

[220] Andrew J. Weaver, Harold G. Koenig, and Frank Ochberg, "Posttraumatic Stress, Mental Health Professionals and the Clergy: A Need for Collaboration, Training and Research," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 9 (1996): 852.

were just as traumatic losses for Christians. This helps us to understand why the 1096 message of Pope Urban resonated with the Christians who heard his appeal for the faithful to avenge the loss of the Holy Land. It fit the definition of a "collective mental representation of an event [with] drastic common losses," where the faithful felt "victimized by another group" which in turn triggered humiliation and damage to their self-image.[221] Shared anxiety can result in psychological defenses and a commitment to seek revenge. How can this pattern of conflict generation be broken?

[221] Volkan, *Killing in the Name of Identity,* 48.

# Chapter VI

## Dispute and Dialogue: Forgive and Forget?

Based on his considerable experience in multiple international controversies involving nearly a dozen different ethnic and nationalistic groups, Vamik Volkan has designed a program that involves psychologists, psychiatrists, social scientists, and lawyers in dialogues aimed at exploring the underlying psychological forces that divide groups.[222] Volkan has assembled a team at the International Dialogue Initiative (IDI) whose members include:

- John Alderdice, former speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, and a psychiatrist who has studied the "psychotic-like regression" of terrorists;[223]
- Deniz Ulke Aribogan, author of ten books and a senior fellow at the Center for Resolution of Intractable Conflict at Oxford University;
- Coline Covington, a psychologist with expertise in the unconscious factors in violence;[224]
- Robi Freidman, Israeli psychologist, who studied how "painful feelings like guilt, fears and hate have to be worked through";[225]

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[222] Volkan, *Killing in the Name of Identity,* 188-227.

[223] John Alderdice, "The Individual, the Group and the Psychology of Terrorism," *International Review of Psychiatry* 19 (2007): 201-220.

[224] Coline Covington, *Terrorism and War: Unconscious Dynamics of Political Violence* (London: Karnac, 2002).

[225] Robi Friedman, "From War to the Matrix of Guilt," Padua Lecture, Haifa, Israel. October 16, 2010.

- Gerard Fromm, psychologist, who described how feelings of grief, horror, and shocked silence at the Dachau concentration camp might be reconciled;[226]
- Hiba Husseini, chair of the Legal Committee for Final Status Negotiations Between Palestinians and Israelis;
- Frank Ochberg, who edited the first text on treating PTSD;[227] and
- Edward Shapiro, psychiatrist, who has collaborated on studies about "irrational behavior" and "collective madness" in religious organizations.[228]

(The IDI website, www.internationaldialogueinitiative.com, profiles other members of IDI.) Volkan hopes that recognition of the psychological forces at work in-group dynamics can lead to progress in avoiding dysfunctional behaviors such as discrimination and violent conflict.[229]

Recognizing collective trauma as a motivating force does not negate religion as a motivating force; it accelerates it. Religious belief is usually socially determined, with people generally identifying with their parents' religious beliefs. Volkan believes religions preach "propaganda," and that religion is a "mixture of illusion and reality" that becomes "crystallized in peoples' minds as 'psychic reality' . . . and becomes intertwined

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[226] Gerard Fromm, *Taking the Transference, Reaching toward Dreams* (London: Karnac, 2012), 148-149.

[227] Frank Ochberg (ed.), *Posttraumatic Therapy and Victims of Violence* (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1988).

[228] Edward R. Shapiro, and A. Wesley Carr, *Lost in Familiar Places: Creating New Connections between Individuals and Society* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 147-156.

[229] The group that Volkan founded, the International Dialogue Initiative, has been active in conflicts involving Turks and Kurds, Israelis and Palestinians, and Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. I have been involved in each of these projects.

with large group identity" often mixed with ethnic and nationalistic loyalty.[230] Volkan is firmly in the Freudian camp, and criticizes religion for aggravating ethnic conflicts.[231] He bases the "animosity" between religion and psychoanalysis on Freud's view that a person's sense of helplessness makes it necessary to seek "an omnipotent father, an image of god," to cope with feelings of vulnerability. He cites Hans Leowald's conclusion that "under the weight of [Freud's] authority, religion in psychoanalysis has been largely considered a sign of man's mental immaturity," an illusion "to be given up as we are able to overcome our childish needs for all-powerful parents."[232] Volkan may be overlooking the potential benefit of what bioethicist Cynda Ruston calls "spiritual, religious and humanistic traditions" in addressing moral suffering and becoming "morally resilient."[233]

Volkan has been criticized for emphasizing childhood experiences. A review of one of Volkan's books by Saul Austerlitz made the following comments:

> For those of us who have not encountered Freudian thought since Intro to Psych, there is something faintly ludicrous in all this talk of infant behavior . . . . Volkan's theories of the oral and anal fixations of refugee communities feel like studying the 21st century with the most up-to-date scientific tools available from Freud's Vienna couch. . . Volkan has

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[230] Volkan, *Enemies on the Couch,* 337-338.

[231] My view is that religion can help in resolving conflicts, as for example, in the Truth and Reconciliation process in South Africa, and in conflicts between gangs in American prisons. My views are summarized in my article, "Forgiveness and Healing in Prison," *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology,* 72 (2018): 293-303.

[232] Hans Leowald, *Psychoanalysis and the History of the Individual* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978), 57.

[233] Cynda Hylton Rushton, *Moral Resilience: Transforming Moral Suffering in Healthcare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 105.

> latched onto something crucial to our understanding of the moment of xenophobic backlash we are living through.[234]

Austerlitz says that an essential element of Volkan's theory is that xenophobia is not an artificial construct but is part of human personality. "We become who we are by identifying and singling out those whom we are not."[235]

I have taught conflict resolution and negotiation for a dozen years, and Volkan's ideas challenge some of the assumptions of those who practice mediation, especially the idea that it is best for contesting participants to discuss interests rather than emotions. I have compiled a list of ideas gleaned from working with Volkan for a decade, which I have also shared with my students.[236]

Table 1. Concepts of Conflict Resolution.

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| 1. People define their identity by ethnic, religious, and nationalistic group affiliation, not by dogma. |
| 2. Holy writ is not the driver, but selected Scriptural passages may be used as the rationalization for politically motivated action. |
| 3. Large groups regress under stress, reverting to primitive behaviors. |
| 4. When people are traumatized by the acts of others, they internalize it, share it with friends and family, and pass the trauma on to the younger generation. |
| 5. Rational explanations rarely defuse passionate conflict among groups that feel victimized and/or threatened by an external other. |

[234] Saul Austerlitz, "Book review of Vamik Volkan's Immigrants and Refugees; A Look at the Rising Fear of Strangers," *National,* January 25, 2017. https://www.thenational.ae/ arts-culture/book-review-vamik-volkan-s-immigrants-and-refugees-a-look-at-the-rising-fear-of-strangers-1.55970. Accessed January 10, 2018.

[235] Austerlitz, "Book Review."

[236] From 2000 to 2013 I was a part-time Professorial Lecturer in Organizational Sciences at George Washington University.

Table 1 (continued)

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| 6. Large groups define themselves by what they are not. The other, the adversary, is crucial for building a self-identity. |
| 7. A common adversary may help the group to unite despite internal differences. |
| 8. The group's feelings of inferiority, aggression and guilt are projected on the other. |
| 9. A hostile image of the adversary provides an excuse. We are not to blame; they are to blame. They become scapegoats. |
| 10. A hostile image polarizes. One is either with us or with them. Friend or foe. Good or bad. There is no neutral ground. |
| 11. A hostile image activates. We do not need to worry about precise facts, theories, nuances, or shades of gray. Hostility motivates action. |
| 12. There is an unconscious link between bully and victim. They are locked in a relationship where neither empathizes with the other. Each will feel victimized by the other. |
| 13. A major way to seek to break the pattern is dialogue. The key to successful dialogue is to insist that every participant listen respectfully to others who discuss their feelings. |
| 14. The exchange of feeling in a respectful setting helps participants seek some sort of resolution. Discussion of apologies and forgiveness can be counterproductive when participants are coping with long-lived antagonisms. |

Source: thesis author

The psychological perspective suggests some conclusions about how trauma can be contagious. People define their identity by their affiliations. Groups identify themselves by what they are not; they are not "the other," an adversary who is crucial to a sense of identity. Holy writings provide rationalization, not direction. There is an unconscious link between bully and victim even though they may hate each other. When people are traumatized by the acts of others, they pass this trauma on to younger persons by retelling stories about the injuries, injustices, and atrocities of the past. How can the cycle be broken? Do religious leaders have a role?

Yale University theologian Miroslav Volf examined how wrongdoing should be addressed and recalled. His basic message is that evil must be confronted. The identification of evil and the evildoer is crucial—a step Volf calls "exclusion." Only after evil is confronted can a second step occur, which Volf calls "embrace"—the attempt at reconciliation between the one who was wronged and the wrongdoer.[237] Bishop N. T. Wright called Volf's *Exclusion and Embrace,* "one of the finest works of Christian theology written in the last decade." Wright suggests that "we ought to stand in awe as we watch Volf's powerful Christian intellect wrestling with such a hugely emotive" issue as his own experience of oppression during the breakup of Yugoslavia and the ethnic violence that followed.[238]

Volf tells a dreadful story about a Muslim woman during the ethnic violence in Bosnia:

> She told me, "I am a Muslim, and I am thirty five years old. To my second son who was just born, I gave the name "Jihad," so he would not forget the testament of his mother—revenge." She wanted him to learn a lesson. "The first time I put my baby at my breast I told him, 'May this milk choke you if you forget.' So be it." The woman said she learned a terrible lesson in the war. "The Serbs taught me to hate. For the last two months there was nothing in me. No pain, no bitterness. Only hatred." She recounted how she had been a teacher before the violence started. "I taught these children to love. I did. I was a teacher of literature . . . My student, Zoran, the only son of my neighbor, urinated into my mouth. As the bearded hooligans stood around laughing, he told me: 'You are good for nothing else, you stinking Muslim woman.'" She added, "I do not know whether I heard the cry or felt the blow."[239]

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[237] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abington, 1996), 29-31.

[238] N.T. Wright, *Evil and the Justice of God* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006), 132-133.

[239] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace,* 111.

The Serbian journalist who reported this story asked, "How many mothers in Bosnia have sworn to teach their children hate and revenge!"[240] Volf believes that for reconciliation to occur, these memories of hatred "must be carefully erased and the threads of violence gently removed.[241] He said this story is distressingly similar across the ethnic combatant factions. It is the sad story of oppressors and the oppressed, of perpetrators and victims. He adds:

> Each party will find good reasons for claiming the higher moral ground of a victim; each will perceive itself as oppressed by the other and all will see themselves as engaged in the struggle for liberation. . . . The categories of oppression and liberation provide combat gear.[242]

In situations like the Crusades, or the breakup of Yugoslavia, or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, each side see the other as oppressor—and more importantly from a psychological point of view—everyone feels like a victim. To suggest reconciliation is an affront to the sense of justice. The lines are drawn between good and evil (each side considers itself the defender of good) and compromise is seen as a deal with the devil.[243] "The only adequate response to suffering is *action,"* Volf says. "As long as we remember the injustice and suffering, we will not be whole."[244] This explains why the cycle of retribution—an eye for an eye—continues on and on, until all are blinded by hate.

Must victims be ensnared by the demon of revenge? In a later book, *The End of Memory*, Volf tells of his own arrest in Yugoslavia before the breakup of that nation. He

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[240] Zeljko Vukiovic, *The Killing of Sarajevo* (Belgrade: Kron, 1993), 134.

[241] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 111.

[242] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace,* 103.

[243] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace,* 104-105.

[244] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace,* 134.

was interrogated and felt "paralyzing fear—fear that makes your body melt, not just your soul tremble."[245] Volf was released in a year but he says that "even afterward, my mind was enslaved by the abuse I had suffered."[246] The memories kept the evil alive in his mind. He contends: "To triumph fully, evil needs two victories, not one. . . . The first victory happens when an evil deed is perpetrated; the second victory when evil is returned." The return is in the memory of the victim when it activates feelings of hatred. "After the first victory, evil would die if the second victory did not infuse it with new life."[247]

Volf believes that the duty of a Christian is to spread God's *agape* love to all one's neighbors, including enemies. Citing the requirement to love one's neighbor in the First Letter of John (1 John 4.7): "Whoever does not love does not know God," Volf concludes that his actions toward others (either by loving or hating) are more important than any theological belief about the nature of God. "God loves, therefore those who know and love God must love their neighbors."[248] As a Christian, Volf wanted to forgive his oppressors but he struggled with how to do that—how to forgive and how to forget the evil perpetrated against him. "To remember a wrongdoing is to struggle against it," he says. He concludes that to "remember wrongly" could be dangerous.[249] He ponders how

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[245] Miroslav Volf, *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 6.

[246] Volf, *End of Memory,* 7.

[247] Volf, *End of Memory,* 9

[248] Miroslav Volf, "God is Love: Biblical and Theological Reflections on a Foundational Christian Claim," in Miroslav Volf, Ghazi bin Muhammad, and Melissa Yarrington (eds.) *A Common Word: Muslims and Christians on Loving God and Neighbor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 138, 139.

[249] Volf, *End of Memory,* 11.

he can do justice and at the same time show grace to his oppressors. It is instructive to follow his evaluation of the dilemma.

Volf begins by considering "What is the right way to condemn? . . . How does one seeking to love the wrongdoer condemn rightly?" One element of reconciliation is condemnation of wrongdoing. Rejection of wrongdoing is not an isolated independent judgment, because the focus is on the unjust behavior. Even when reconciliation cannot be achieved, it is proper to denounce evil. "So, we condemn most properly in the act of forgiving, in the act of separating the doer from the deed."[250] For Volf, forgiving is connected with "remembering rightly." But he asks, "How does one seeking to love the wrongdoer remember the wrongdoing rightly?" Volf thought this was the most difficult part of the decision. His dilemma was not whether he should forgive; it was how he should recall the abuse he suffered. He realized that every time he recalled his oppressors and tried to write loving words about them, it caused distress. Volf says that "a small-scale rebellion erupted in my soul. . . . I don't love abusers—I just don't and never will—screamed the leader of my internal insurrection."[251]

He compared his travail in Yugoslavia to a much worse example: the Holocaust. He quoted Elie Wiesel: "We remember Auschwitz and all that it symbolizes because we believe that, in spite of the past and its horrors, the world is worthy of salvation; and salvation, like redemption, can be found only in memory." Wiesel believes in the "saving power of remembering suffered wrongs."[252] Fifty years after the Holocaust, Wiesel said

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[250] Volf, *End of Memory*, 15.

[251] Volf, *End of Memory*, 17.

[252] Weisel, quoted in Volf, *End of Memory*, 19.

in a prayer that the survivors "do not forgive the killers and their accomplices, nor should they, nor should you, Master of the Universe."[253] Never forget, the Holocaust victim warns.

Volf has a different answer for dealing with shared traumatic memories. He notes that people tend to repress such memories when the suffering they have undergone seems unbearable. Yet, he explains, repressed memories often

> resurface in flashbacks beyond our control, and then we experience anew the horror of past pain . . . to remember suffering endured is to keep one's wounds open. The larger the wound and the better the recollection, the more the past and present merge and past suffering becomes present pain.[254]

It is the remembering that keeps the evil alive in our lives. "If in memory we are re-experiencing evil committed and suffered," Volf concludes, "we are not yet fully freed from its effects."[255]

As a theologian, Volf turns to the teachings of the Church on forgiveness. He quotes St. Augustine on two ways of knowing evil: first, the way of a scholar who looks at it coldly, and second, the felt experience of one who has suffered. The way of forgetting is different, Augustine said. The scholar "forgets by neglecting his studies, the sufferer, by escaping from his misery." Augustine claimed that in the world to come, past evils will be completely erased from the feelings of those granted salvation by God.[256] The problem with this, as Volf concedes, is that inwardly our own self-perception is

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[253] Weisel, quoted in Volf, *End of Memory*, 212.

[254] Volf, *End of Memory,* 22.

[255] Volf, *End of Memory,* 23.

[256] Volf, *End of Memory,* 22-23.

composed of our memories. We are who we remember we are. Volf acknowledges that trauma experts say:

> The healing of wounded psyches involves not only remembering traumatic experiences, it must include integrating the retrieved memories into a broader pattern of one's life story, either by making sense of the traumatic experiences or by tagging them as elements gone awry in one's life.[257]

Volf recognizes that this is the healing process, and it requires remembering—not repressing—horrid memories. He states:

> Personal healing happens not so much by remembering traumatic events and their accompanying emotions as by interpreting memories and inscribing them into a larger pattern of meaning—stitching them into the patchwork quilt of one's identity.[258]

Volf also says that "nothing in the account of psychoanalysis requires that unrepressed memories of wrong suffered be kept alive instead of being allowed to sink into oblivion."[259] One problem is that memories of wrong do not usually sink into oblivion. Traumatic memories live on and have ramifications beyond the lives of those directly harmed. This was captured by William Faulkner, who wrote: "The past is never dead. It is not even past."[260]

Miroslav Volf and Vamik Volkan—a theologian and a psychiatrist, respectively—are not far apart in their evaluation of the impact of wrongdoing on victims. They recognize that people can be traumatized by the actions of others, particularly in episodes of violence between ethnic and religious groups. But the theological and psychological views about how to break the grip of trauma on individuals and groups are quite different.

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[257] Volf, *End of Memory*, 27.

[258] Volf, *End of Memory,* 28.

[259] Volf, *End of Memory*, 153.

[260] William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*, Act 1, Scene 3, 73.

Volf seeks to bring the adversaries together to listen to each other, and—by God's grace—aim for forgiveness, reconciliation, and the erasure of bad memories. Volkan's psychological view also seeks to get adversaries to listen to each other, but it omits God from the conversation and views as counter-productive any attempt to get people to forgive and forget past offenses. If one forgets a major event in his or her life, there is a personal loss. Volkan asks, "If a person's identity is shaped by his or her experiences, what would erasing the memory of experiences do to our self-identity?" He cautions against premature efforts to urge apologies or forgiveness because such decisions can only take place after a complicated mourning process.[261]

Some people are anxious, depressed, and enslaved by the present recollection of past trauma. Others have grown after traumatic experiences. Coping with such stress can lead to personal growth, or it can result in persistent mental illness. Healing is not about forgetting as much as it is about remembering the pain in a new light. The memory is a prerequisite for healing, but the healing happens in the "interpretive work a person does with memory," as Volf acknowledges.[262] In his book, *Exclusion and Embrace*, Volf says that "only nonremembering can end the lament over suffering which no thought can think away and no action undo." No heaven can rectify Auschwitz, he says. "Put starkly the alternative is: either heaven or the memory of horror."[263]

Volf explores how God may handle the history of evildoing. "I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more," it is stated in Jeremiah (31:34). How does God

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[261] Volkan, *Enemies on the Couch,* 154.

[262] Volf, *End of Memory,* 28.

[263] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 135.

forget sin? "The memory of sin must be kept alive for a while, as long as it is needed for repentance and transformation to occur," Volf says, "but then it must be let die, so that the fractured relationship" can heal. "If God is the God of the victims, God cannot forget as long as the victims remember."[264] He ponders whether the victims would view standing next to their oppressors in white robes in heaven as a just outcome. "If I did not hope in the world to come," Volf states, "I would embrace the eternal remembering of wrong suffered." [265] But he leaves for God the working out of justice in the world to come.

Volkan concentrates on ending violence and oppression in this world. Without deep psychological work, an apology and forgiveness "can neither be given nor received by groups that have been traumatized by others." What is needed is "mourning, in its psychological sense," and apologies—when given—must be perceived as part of actions to redress past problems.[266] Volkan examined several examples, including the South African experience after the collapse of apartheid. The concept of apology "became a rather trendy topic among some government circles," Volkan wrote, "after South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was formed to deal with atrocities committed during apartheid."[267] The highly publicized hearings involved victims telling their stories and forgiving wrongdoers who apologized for their actions. Volkan credits the success in South Africa to the transformational leadership of Nelson Mandela, and

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[264] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace,* 137.

[265] Volf, *End of Memory,* 207.

[266] Volkan, *Killing*, 146.

[267] Volkan, *Killing*, 147.

says that subsequent efforts to apply the Truth and Reconciliation model have failed to produce positive results.[268] One reason is that apologizing and accepting an apology requires modification of the identities that sustain the large groups. Changing the perception of a group's identity is a source of anxiety. Urging adversaries to apologize to each other initiates shared anxieties that complicate efforts to resolve differences.[269] Volkan cites his own failed efforts to negotiate agreement between Turks and Armenians as an example of the difficulties encountered in the clash of identities. "Therefore, in international relations, the focus should not be on the single (seemingly magical) act of apology, asking forgiveness," and risking hitting the hot button of an adversary. Instead, Volkan says,

> It should be on developing strategies for helping the victimized group's work of mourning, on modifying such processes for taming feelings of revenge, on increasing the sense of peaceful coexistence, and on creating a political atmosphere in which the victim and the victimizer can find justification for a new type of relatedness.[270]

The "relatedness" that Miroslav Volf envisions is about reconciliation—and in the here and now. If reconciliation requires truthful confrontation with evil, then premature forgetting is inappropriate, Volf concedes. His views about forgetting evil are not consistent with what some other Christian leaders say on the subject. Archbishop Desmond Tutu said,

> Forgiving is not forgetting; it's actually remembering—remembering and not using your right to hit back. It's a second chance for a new beginning.

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[268] Volkan, *Psychoanalysis, International Relations, and Diplomacy,* 79-82.

[269] Volkan, *Killing in the Name of Identity,* 146-149.

[270] Volkan, *Killing in the Name of Identity,* 156.

> And the remembering part is particularly important. Especially if you don't want to repeat what happened.[271]

The oppressors need to hear the painful recollections of the oppressed, like the Muslim woman mentioned by Volf. Her pain cries out for attention. If we try to forget the terror inflicted on her, we risk perpetuating the wrongdoing and allowing other acts of injustice to occur.

Volf recognizes that his ideas about forgetting wrongdoing are controversial. On one hand, Volf says that under some conditions it may be good to "release memories of wrongs"; on the other hand, he concedes that the goal of remembering wrongs suffered is the "formation of the communion of love between all people, including victims and perpetrators."[272] Despite the psychological impediments to forgiveness, Volf says that many people want to forgive wrongdoing so they can "find release from crippling bitterness and resentment, and mend relationships with their coworkers, families, friends and lovers."[273]

Bringing forgiveness and religion into a dialogue or negotiations between opponents can be counter-productive, Volkan believes, because "gods do not negotiate." Religious violence is based on belief that the deity has authorized acts of violence and invoking God is likely to backfire in negotiations.[274] If someone believes that God ordered him to do something—no matter how horrible—how does that believer disavow

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[271] https://www.azquotes.com/quote/380816. Tutu's views on forgiveness are stated in Desmond Tutu, "Freedom Fighters or Terrorists?" in Charles Villa-Vicencio (ed.), *Theology and Violence: The South African Debate* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 71-78.

[272] Volf, *End of Memory,* 232.

[273] Miroslav Volf, *Free of Charge: Giving and Forgiving in a Culture Stripped of Grace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 125.

[274] Volkan, *Gods Do Not Negotiate,* 2017.

his obedience to divine instruction? Volkan and a co-author, historian Journi Suistola, note that there are some serious interfaith dialogues underway, including the Abrahamic Family Reunion project to promote Muslim-Christian-Jewish reconciliation. However, they argue that other efforts are "contaminated by open or hidden propaganda," and that efforts to reintegrate perpetrators of violence into societies in the Near East, Afghanistan, and Africa "have not been very successful."[275]

Volf and his colleagues have worked to identify common ground between Muslims and Christians and "discuss the possibilities of Christians and Muslims living in peace with one another without compromising their own authentic identity or disrespecting the other."[276] The evidence is not yet clear whether such well-meaning efforts can overcome the tendency of humans to define their "own authentic" self-identity in opposition to "the other."

One theme that recurs in the writings of both Volkan and Volf is the need to confront the memories of wrongs, discuss them, listen to the voices of the wronged, make amends where possible, and help exorcise the trauma from the lives of the victims. Moreover, we need to right the wrongs that are not just memories but are present reality. We must use the memory of wrongdoing to prevent oppression in the future. Unfortunately, the transgenerational transmission of trauma complicates using memories to advance peace and harmony.

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[275] Journi Suistola and Vamik Volkan, *Religious Knives: Historical and Psychological Dimensions of International Terrorism* (Durham, NC: Pitchstone, 2017), 153.

[276] Miroslav Volf, Ghazi bin Muhammad, and Melissa Yarrington, eds., *A Common Word: Muslims and Christians on Loving God and Neighbor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), xiv.

# Chapter VII

## Conclusion

A psychological perspective can help to understand the violence of the Crusades. Psychological learnings illuminate but do not refute historical accounts of the sources of violence. The First Crusade was instigated by provocative statements made by religious leaders who exploited shared memories of traumatic warfare between Muslims, Jews, and Christians. The very different recollections of wrongdoing by these different large religious groups became fuel for renewing violence. Each of these faith traditions had evolved stories about oppression and violence. Many were contained in Holy Scripture. Jews heard ancient accounts of enslavement and warfare with other tribes. Christians were oppressed for three centuries by Romans and blamed Jews for killing Jesus. Muslims quarreled among themselves—in Sunni and Shia warfare and in armed conflict with Christians. Violence was nothing new in any of the Abrahamic faiths.

The First Crusade was launched with propaganda about how Roman Catholics had been subjugated by Muslims in the Holy Land and mistreated by Eastern Orthodox Christians. The vastly different large-group identities made it possible for each religious tradition to view “the other” as an enemy, even during those times when they lived peacefully together for many years. There is considerable moral teaching in religion, but

as Michael Sells notes, "In religiously motivated violence, religions are being manipulated to motivate and justify the evil."[277]

The motivations that fueled the Crusades, and the Islamic response, were not only religious and economic but also reflected psychological factors such as demonization of "the other" and traumatic memories of violent attacks in the past. The retelling of ancient stories amplified what some psychologists believe is the transgenerational transmission of trauma. Psychological explanations are always inferences and are susceptible to error when judged from a far distance in time. Nevertheless, the rich collection of source materials about the First Crusade provides ample evidence of a highly motivated populace that volunteered enthusiastically to fight in a distant land.

Emotions are not usually based on rational considerations. While recent psychological studies cannot provide definitive answers about what happened so many years ago before, during, and after the Crusades, they can shed light on the way humans may have reacted to warmongering by religious leaders. Christopher Catherwood stated:

> As a trained historian, I have always been wary of straying into other academic disciplines. But I do think that Vamik Volkan is able to show, as a psychologist specializing in ethno-religious conflict, some of the background as to why such terrible things happen.[278]

Psychological insights can help distill underlying concerns, fears, hopes, joys, and nightmares that drive human behavior. Trauma transmitted across generations may explain why episodic religious violence has flared so frequently in history. Harms to one generation echo in subsequent generations, in effect resurrecting the pain of the past. The

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[277] Sells was speaking of a different, more contemporary conflict, but the message fits the Crusades. Michael A. Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 145.

[278] Christopher Catherwood, *Making War in the Name of God* (New York: Citadel, 2007), 166.

psychological roots of violence shape historical narratives and influence large-group memories. Emotions become fodder for those who preach violence.

The exhortation of pilgrims by Pope Urban II and subsequent preachers tapped into the fears and expectations of those they recruited, including the misinterpretation of scriptural passages about the apocalypse. As theologian Michael Gorman noted, using The Book of Revelation as a prediction of violent "end times" continues into the present day.[279] The perceived trauma of past encounters between the faiths became fuel for violence, a phenomenon that has continued long after the Crusades.

Psychological insights increase our understanding about how those who feel they and their ancestors have been victims can themselves become victimizers and oppressors. Lessons from past violence can inform contemporary efforts at peacemaking and interfaith cooperation. These lessons include:

- Understand the psychological and cultural roots of long-lasting antagonism between groups locked in intractable conflicts.
- Collective trauma in large groups can persist over many generations.
- Humans project their feelings of guilt and inferiority onto their adversaries.
- Ethnic groups that are minorities and/or are surrounded by adversaries often use fear of enemies as a way to unite their own camp and overcome internal differences.
- Stress and anxiety can cause regression (to childish behaviors).
- When a group feels guilty, stress can provoke the group to violence.
- Victimizers often were victims before they became violent.

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[279] Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly*, 65-66.

- Efforts at reconciliation will fail if both sides of a dispute are not willing to engage in honest dialogue and learn to listen to the feelings of others.

The Crusades are often viewed in the West as ancient history, but as Charles Kimball notes, Muslims do not viewed it this way. "In my interaction with these communities of faith . . . I have been struck time and time again by the way many Muslims, Jews and Middle Eastern Christians speak about the Crusades as if they happened recently," he said.[280]

The first victims of the Crusades were Jews in Europe. The next victims were the Orthodox of the decaying Byzantine Empire. The next victims were Muslims in the Holy Land. Finally, the Christians, who suffered defeat in Jerusalem and later in Constantinople, were victims as well. All were victims. Some of their descendants are still hurting today. Some of their descendants are still fighting.

[280] Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil,* 165.

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