

## PIRENNE, MUHAMMAD AND BOHEMOND: BEFORE ORIENTALISM<sup>1</sup>

*Henri Pirenne's Mahomet et Charlemagne (1937; English translation 1939) is one of the seminal works of history written in the twentieth century. His argument that it was the Arab conquests of the seventh century, not the Germanic invasions of the fourth and fifth that broke the unity of the Mediterranean world remains valid. A world where what is now the Near East made up the core territories of an empire whose periphery lay on the Rhine and Danube was replaced by a new superpower, whose centre lay in Iraq, a much reduced Roman empire (medieval Byzantium) centred on Constantinople, and a new Frankish kingdom with its heartland in what had once been Rome's Rhineland periphery. Pirenne's famous dictum, "Without Islam, the Frankish Empire would have probably never existed, and Charlemagne, without Muhammad, would be inconceivable" deserves a place in any dictionary of twentieth-century quotations.*

*The new umma saw the world in terms of the Dar al-Islam and the rest, the Dar al-Harb. Even if the latter was not actually an abode of war, it was a space filled with fantastic and exotic barbarities that reinforced the Muslim sense of superiority. The old Roman empire had the hard task of adjusting to reduced circumstances. The Romans on the Bosphorus reinvented themselves as a New Israel, a Chosen People, whose embattled circumstances were proof of God's favour. They were punished for their sins because God cared about them.*

*Only in the west did past perspectives survive. For a Franco-Latin world whose geography was still shaped by the Bible and the texts of classical antiquity the Mediterranean remained unbroken in the imagination if not in reality. Indeed the lack of contact with reality rendered imagined unity easier to preserve.*

*In 1096 an expedition that would come to be seen as the First Crusade marched to the east. Where they were going was not a strange and new world, but the most familiar landscape imaginable; a Biblical world whose names were better known than anywhere other than their most immediate local surroundings. For the likes of Bohemond it was as if Muhammad had not happened.*

*The creation of the Crusader states did not prefigure nineteenth and twentieth century imperialism; still less did Crusader attitudes exemplify what Edward Said dubbed 'Orientalism'. But the Crusading experience did in due course fundamentally alter the Latin vision of the Near East. By the thirteenth century its inhabitants were no longer seen in uncomplicated terms as 'our brother Christians in the east'; a new sense of a Europe north and west of the Mediterranean had come into being. To paraphrase Pirenne, "Without the Crusades Europe – the Europe of the European Union – would probably never have existed."*

Henri Pirenne's *Muhammad and Charlemagne* counts as one of the seminal works of history published in the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> Having its origins, at least according to legend, as a set of lectures given to fellow inmates in a German POW camp during the First World War, published posthumously in 1937, and never out of print since, Pirenne's thesis stands as a key contribution to our understanding of the post-Roman period in western Eurasia.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of the twenty-first century his position as father of modern thought on this topic remains secure. Two of the most recent and authoritative contributions to the field – Michael

McCormick's *Origins of the European Economy* and Chris Wickham's *Framing the Early Middle Ages* – start with Pirenne.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Mediterranean united**

Pirenne's argument is that it was the Arab conquests of the seventh century, not the Germanic invasions of the fourth and fifth, which broke the unity of the Mediterranean world.<sup>5</sup> And despite nearly a century's research, which particularly in the last twenty years has transformed our understanding of Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, Pirenne's point remains valid. Even after the fall of the western empire, the last emperor of which was deposed in 476, the Mediterranean remained at the centre of a cultural and economic unity that stretched from the Levant to Spain and from North Africa to Gaul. All was not unchanged since the fourth century, let alone since the first. Peripheries, such as northern Gaul and Britain, had become more peripheral; the imperial heartlands had contracted. But the fact remains that the ties of religion, politics, ideology, landowning, material culture, trade and exchange still united the Mediterranean world.

The majority of the recipients of Gregory the Great's letters written between 590 and 604 may have been Italian, but he also wrote to the emperor, the patriarch, and a series of Constantinopolitan courtiers and leading officials. He wrote to the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, and to bishops as far afield as Arabia, Corinth, Justiniana Prima (the emperor Justinian's birthplace in Macedonia), Carthage, Arles, Marseille, and Seville, as well as to the abbot of St. Catherine's on Mount Sinai.<sup>6</sup> Gregory had spent about seven years in Constantinople as the Pope's emissary to the imperial court and he regarded the empire as part of the divinely ordained order of things. Gregory was part of a world that saw it as quite natural that political refugees from Arian Spain should appear at Constantinople, that Greek monks should find a home in Rome, or rather later in the seventh century, that one of those Greek monks, born in Tarsus, should spend his life in Constantinople and then Rome, before eventually becoming archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>7</sup>

Politically this was still a united world, at least in the imagination. The emperor's direct authority might not run in Lombard Italy or Visigothic Spain, but it had done in the recent past and might do again. When exiles fled to Constantinople they expected to find a sympathetic audience, and those they fled from were suspicious that they might return with imperial help. In 582, Gundovald, who claimed to be the son of the Merovingian king, Clothar I, returned to Gaul to make a bid for the throne. He had initially fled Gaul for Italy and had been passed on by Narses, the imperial commander in Italy, to Constantinople, where he spent at least eight years. His return to Gaul was at the invitation of a party of Frankish aristocrats, one of whom, Guntram Boso, according to Gregory of Tours, had made the journey to Constantinople to persuade him. The fact that Gundovald arrived in Gaul with a very large treasure makes it likely that he had imperial support, and makes the accusation that this was a plot to subject a kingdom of the Franks to imperial rule less far fetched.<sup>8</sup> In reverse, the coup that toppled the emperor Phokas was launched from Africa; that same emperor Phokas was honoured by a column in the Roman Forum, at a key cross roads in a central and still public space; and two seventh-century emperors, Heraclius and Constans II, were said to have considered moving the imperial capital to the west.<sup>9</sup> The Roman empire was still a Mediterranean-wide idea, and there was no fundamental reason why the capital should not be moved elsewhere. Just as it had once been moved from Old Rome on the Tiber to New Rome on the Bosphorus, it could now be moved back to the west.

It is easier to find examples of trans-Mediterranean landowning for an earlier period and for a senatorial triangle that included southern Italy, Sicily, and Africa, but this may be no more than the vagaries of our sources.<sup>10</sup> The Anicii came originally from Africa, grew to

great wealth in Rome, and moved to Constantinople in 455. Anicia Juliana was born in Constantinople, and to judge from the huge and magnificent church she built in honour of St. Polyeuktos, she was extremely rich. This reputation reached Gregory of Tours writing in the 580s, about half a century after her death.

When stories of her great wealth reached the emperor Justinian from many sources, he delayed not, but hurried to meet her, saying, "I do not think it escapes you, venerable mother, how the public treasures are drained of gold coin, while we wish you to enjoy peace, and labour to defend our native lands, and reconcile nations to ourselves, and seek to comfort the various peoples by our generosity. Therefore, because the power of divine majesty has conferred much gold upon you, I ask that you stretch forth your hand to us, and that you provide something of your money, on the clear understanding that, when the sum of public tribute has been declared, then instantly you may have some return from your gifts, and it may be publicly proclaimed in the glorious record of your life that the city of Constantinople was supported by the wealth of the lady Juliana." But she, seeing through the Emperor's cleverness, wisely protected what she had vowed to God, saying, "What little income I have, as much from rents as what is hoped for from crops, is spread at the moment through my various residences. If therefore your majesty will grant me time to gather it in, it shall be presented to your inspection. And when you have gazed upon it with your own eyes, leave it or take whatever you please. Whatever your heart desires will be acceptable to me."

When Justinian returns, he discovers that she has had the roof of the church of St. Polyeuktos covered with pure gold. The emperor is shamed into a retreat, slightly sweetened by Juliana's gift of a gold ring with a hugely valuable emerald. Juliana's wealth is confirmed by the surviving ruins of the church, and the obvious explanation would seem to be that she inherited property in the west as well as the east. If you take Gregory's story seriously, that might be why the emperor could not simply get at her gold by confiscating her property in Constantinople.<sup>11</sup>

Another apparent member of the Anicii clan and, if identified correctly, granddaughter of the philosopher Boethius, was Rusticiana, like Juliana a resident of Constantinople, who it seems had moved there from Rome in the late sixth century. In her case ownership of large estates in Italy and Sicily is attested by Gregory the Great's letters.<sup>12</sup> Her daughter, Eudocia, married the great Egyptian landowner, Apion IV. The Apiones were an immensely wealthy family who had risen to hold a series of high offices in the empire from the mid-fifth century. The family is well-known thanks to the *Oxyrhynchus papyri* which have preserved a mass of material shedding light on their estates in the territory of this middle Egyptian city. But they clearly owned land elsewhere in Egypt, and elsewhere in the Mediterranean too. The chronicler Malalas mentions their property in Constantinople (which implies estates around the city), and it is likely that the marriage with Eudocia brought them western estates, even if they had not owned any there before.<sup>13</sup>

A further possibility would be the eunuch general Narses, conqueror of the Goths, and already mentioned for his role in the Gundovald affair. His was an extraordinary career. This Armenian eunuch rose under Justinian to be in effect the regime's troubleshooter, and become extremely rich. Part of that wealth was invested in land. We know that he founded and endowed a monastery in Bithynia, possibly near the hot springs at Pythia, which suggests he had owned estates in this most convenient part of Constantinople's hinterland.<sup>14</sup> But since 551 he had spent most of his time in Italy, including the last five years before his death when

he lived first in Naples and then in Rome. A tenth-century source, the *Chronicon* of Benedict of S. Andrea on Monte Soracte, states that Narses founded the monastery of S. Paolo ad Aquas Salvias, which lies about four kilometres outside Rome, and two beyond S. Paolo fuori le Mura. Most modern commentary is suspicious, and perhaps rightly so. Narses is not an uncommon name in the sixth and seventh centuries. On the other hand the general is very likely to have had estates near Rome, and as in Bithynia, a eunuch might reasonably have left them to a monastery. The detail that this particular monastery was occupied by Armenian monks in the seventh century is another possible link with an Armenian founder.<sup>15</sup> The key point with all these cases is that at the beginning of the seventh century it was still possible to build up such trans-Mediterranean property empires.

Pirenne's thesis is also supported in essence by the archaeological data that has become available in steadily increasing volume over the last thirty years. His statement that "I think we may say that navigation was at least as active as under the Empire" goes too far, but not by much.<sup>16</sup> Pirenne like everyone else before the ceramic revolution of the 1970s and '80s, did not appreciate the extent to which Mediterranean trade was shaped by the demands of the imperial fisc. Grain and oil from Africa went to feed Rome; grain from Egypt went to feed Constantinople. In the western Mediterranean it seems fairly clear that the Vandal capture of Carthage in 439 triggered a lasting decline in inter-regional trade. Judging from the distribution patterns of African red slip fine ware and African amphorae before 439 it seems that once the African shippers had discharged their fiscal obligations in Rome they carried on round the western Mediterranean selling their wares at a series of coastal ports, before finally returning to Carthage for the next shipment. African products must have had their merits, but the degree of penetration reflected the cost advantages enjoyed by African landowners, encouraged to produce on a very large scale by a secure market, and by African shipowners, whose expenses were subsidised by the state. The Vandal capture of Carthage broke this link, and the consequent unravelling of the African trade network shows up in the ceramic record. But as Pirenne would not have been surprised to learn, this was not the end of Mediterranean trade. In the western Mediterranean work on sixth- and seventh-century sites has shown African red slip and African amphorae still being imported, though on a reduced scale and with less inland penetration.<sup>17</sup> What is striking, however, is the emergence of competition, not just from local producers, but from the eastern Mediterranean. The Palestinian wine trade, identifiable via the distribution patterns of the distinctive Palestinian amphorae (conventionally known as LR4 and LR5: Carthage Late Roman 4 and Carthage Late Roman 5), reached Africa, Italy, southern France and Spain throughout the fifth and sixth centuries.<sup>18</sup> Egyptian and Aegean wares, admittedly in small quantities, turn up in Rome and Marseille.<sup>19</sup> And vice versa: African wares turn up in the east. Late African Red Slip types and amphorae (mostly the small *spatheia*) dating from the seventh and even early eighth century have been found on sites in the Aegean, the Black Sea, Cyprus and the Levant, and it is interesting that eastern pottery production appears to emulate African forms.<sup>20</sup> This was still a united world.

If, as pilgrims did, one travelled in the sixth century from Gaul to Palestine, taking ship at Marseille, stopping in Rome and Carthage, landing at Caesarea, pressing on to Jerusalem, and then later heading east across the Jordan, one would have been conscious throughout of how much what was still the Roman world had in common. To put this in concrete terms, a traveller from Arles in the Rhone valley who reached Jerash on the Jordanian plateau would have found a great deal that was familiar. The population at Jerash spoke Greek not Latin, but otherwise they were both walled cities, with the familiar public buildings of the high Roman past being superseded by churches. The traveller would have recognised the porticoed streets and monumental arches, the familiar clutter of ancient statues and public inscriptions, some even in Latin. The traveller from Gaul would have found an

essentially familiar monetary system, eaten off familiar pottery, and recognised a community dominated by a mixture of clergy and local landowners. If the language of the liturgy was strange, what was expected of the Christian visitor was not. The relics of St. Theodore at Jerash were the focus of essentially the same cult as St. Genesius attracted at Arles. The so-called Fountain Court in the atrium of the cathedral at Jerash appears to have been the scene of an annual manifestation of Jesus' first miracle at Cana in Galilee. For a visitor from sixth-century Arles neither the idea of such a miracle nor the particular one evoked could have been more natural or more familiar.<sup>21</sup>

Sixth-century Arles might no longer obey the same ruler as Jerash, but in all other respects the two cities, 3000 kilometres apart, were part of the same world. For the inhabitants of the sixth-century Mediterranean and its hinterland the barbarian invasions of the fourth and fifth centuries – Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Goths, and so on – had no more brought the end of Rome than sundry barbarian conquerors from the Xianbei in 398 to the Manchu in 1644 brought the end of China. The Roman empire that had once extended from the deserts of Arabia to Hadrian's Wall remained a single imagined space. The Fountain Court at Jerash sums up a great deal: its buildings and rituals would not have been out of place in Gaul, Italy or Spain; and its reference to a biblical place, Cana in Galilee, would have been familiar even as far afield as Britain or Ireland.

### **The Mediterranean divided**

Rather than the Germanic invasions of the fourth and fifth centuries, Pirenne asserted that it was the Muslim conquests of the seventh century that broke the unity of the Mediterranean, and created a new world a world where periphery became centre, and centre periphery. An empire whose peripheries had lain on the Rhine, the Danube, and the Tigris was replaced by a new superpower, the Muslim Caliphate, whose centre by 800 was in Iraq, a much reduced Roman empire (that we conventionally call 'Byzantium') with its capital at Constantinople, and a new Frankish kingdom with its heartland in what had once been Rome's Rhineland periphery. Pirenne famously summed up these changes: "Without Islam, the Frankish Empire would have probably never existed, and Charlemagne, without Muhammad, would be inconceivable".<sup>22</sup>

Quite naturally, nearly a century after Pirenne gave his prison camp lectures, and over seventy years since his death, many of his specific points can be corrected or nuanced, but essentially there is little to argue with here. Maurice Lombard's suggestion, for example, that the rise of Islam opened up the Mediterranean has been effectively discredited.<sup>23</sup> As with Pirenne's picture of the fifth and sixth century, archaeology, and above all ceramic studies, have been crucial in proving him right. To take two particularly good examples, again one from the west and one from Jordan, the excavations at the Crypta Balbi in the centre of Rome and at Pella in the Jordan valley have shown that it was not in the sixth or even early seventh that these communities turned away from the Mediterranean, but in the late seventh and eighth: in other words, as Pirenne thought, only after the Muslim conquests.

The Crypta Balbi in Rome lies 500 metres north-west of the capitol. The Crypta itself was a large porticoed courtyard next to the theatre built by Lucius Cornelius Balbus at the end of the first century BC. The derelict site was excavated in the 1980s and '90s with a radically new concern for the post-classical levels, and apart from anything else the Crypta has produced a vast quantity of carefully studied late antique and early medieval pottery. The message of these deposits is clear: amphorae from Africa, and in smaller quantities from the Aegean, Egypt and the Levant continued to reach Rome through to the late seventh century.<sup>24</sup> In the eighth and ninth century deposits this material has vanished. Rome had turned away from the Mediterranean and in to its own region.<sup>25</sup>

Pella in Jordan was being excavated at the same period with what was then a similarly radical concern for the post-classical periods, and again meticulous work on the ceramics paid off handsomely. The evidence makes it quite clear that the city was not in any way brought to an end by the Muslim conquest, instead it is plain that the new political order gradually ushered in a change of outlook. For the sixth and seventh century Pella's links to the Mediterranean coast and the west are attested by amphorae from Gaza and either Cyprus or Antioch, and by red slip fine wares from Cyprus, the Aegean and Africa. (Indeed judging from the African and Aegean fine wares, the sixth and seventh century, rather than the third and fourth, was actually the period of Pella's closest contact with the wider Mediterranean world.) In the late seventh and eighth centuries this changed decisively. The imported Cypriot, Aegean and African wares disappear, and when the local wares are again supplemented by substantial quantities of imported pottery it comes from the east.<sup>26</sup> A city that had once been part of a westward-looking Roman network was now finding ties within the new Dar al-Islam.

The Dar al-Islam is a key concept here. The rulers of the new Muslim world of which formerly Roman Egypt and the Levant were now a part, saw themselves as dwelling in that space, beyond which lay the Dar al-Harb – the abode of war.<sup>27</sup> Early medieval Muslims were not uncurious about the Dar al-Harb and its inhabitants. Indeed one of the striking features about the high culture of the new Islamic world was the geographical literature that flourished from the late eighth century onwards, but wonderful though this literature is, it is curiosity from a very particular perspective. Infidels come in better and worse kinds. Jews and Christians are better than pagans, but in essence the Dar al-Harb is interesting as a place of exotic strangeness, which ultimately illustrates the superiority of Islam.<sup>28</sup> Some of this geographical literature was based on first hand observation. Muslim travellers could be impressively accurate observers. Ibn Fadlan's well-known account of the Viking Rus traders on the Volga in the tenth century is an outstanding example<sup>29</sup>; but there is no doubt that what they describe is no longer a single Mediterranean world. Once familiar places have become alien and strange. And that of course was why one wanted to write about them. The port city of Ephesos in western Asia Minor, for example, once a familiar stopping point on the Mediterranean trunk routes, would have been of no interest to a Muslim audience at all were it not for the Seven Sleepers, whose guardians regularly trim their charges' hair as they slumber the centuries away. Ephesos had left the real world and entered the exotic.<sup>30</sup>

Imagining a new world that left once familiar lands on the outside was not limited to Muslims. The Christian inhabitants of the former Roman Near East were little slower in turning their backs on the world beyond the Dar al-Islam. For those Christians who rejected the Chalcedonian orthodoxy championed in Constantinople and Rome there was perhaps no reason to think about the old Mediterranean. From the mid-seventh century onwards anti-Chalcedonian Christians were effectively confined to the Dar al-Islam; but even for Chalcedonians, or Melkites, as those who followed the same creed as the emperor (*al-Malik*) in Constantinople are usually known, the world beyond the Dar al-Islam became steadily less relevant. This did not happen at once. In the seventh and eighth centuries there were Syrian and Palestinian monks in Rome and Constantinople, a series of Syrian Popes, and there were clearly close cultural ties between Constantinople and Jerusalem in the late eighth century.<sup>31</sup> The major Byzantine chronicle to cover this period, that of Theophanes, gets much of its information from a Greek translation made in Jerusalem of a Syriac chronicle written in Syria; and Cyril Mango has argued persuasively that its chief compiler was not Theophanes, but George the Synkellos, who if he was not actually Palestinian by birth, had certainly spent some time there as a monk.<sup>32</sup> But over the course of the ninth century what had become two

worlds drifted apart. Greek ceased to be the language of the Melkite churches, and they ceased to share the concerns of the church in Constantinople, let alone Rome.<sup>33</sup>

At first sight the participation of the Melkite churches in the Oecumenical Councils of 867, 869, and 879 might appear to prove the existence of closer links. To be oecumenical a council had to include all five patriarchates, namely Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, and each of these ninth-century councils did so.<sup>34</sup> In practice, however, the Melkite presence was limited to a single vicar acting for their respective patriarchs, and those of 867 and 869 were condemned as “false vicars” at the following council.<sup>35</sup> Theodore the Stoudite had already attacked the validity of the Council of 787 (Nicaea II) in 809 on the grounds that the legates were not what they seemed. According to Theodore, those from Rome “had been sent here for another purpose, not for a council... [and] those from the east were persuaded and induced by people here and were not sent by the patriarchs who took no notice of it either then or later because of fear of the pagans.”<sup>36</sup> Effectively the same accusations were made about the legates who represented the eastern patriarchates at the councils of 867 and 869, and could probably have been made too about those at the council of 879. The fact that the Cosmas, described as “a man skilled in various languages”, who represented the patriarch of Alexandria in 879, had been sent the previous year by Photios to all three eastern patriarchs announcing his restoration to the see of Constantinople, suggests that he was a primarily Photios’ man and not the patriarch of Alexandria’s.<sup>37</sup> Whether or not these charges were justified, the difficulty of proving that someone was an authorised representative of one of the eastern sees shows how limited communication with the Melkite churches actually was. Finding someone who knew Greek could also be a problem. Elias, the vicar of the patriarch of Jerusalem in 869, had to speak for the representative of Antioch because the latter did not know enough Greek to talk for himself.<sup>38</sup> The fact that some of the letters from Melkite patriarchs read out to these councils were more concerned to announce their sufferings and plead for financial support, rather than deal with the substantive issues that the council had been called to address, perhaps shows that they were genuine, but is also a sign that what concerned Constantinople was now rather remote to the churches in the Dar al-Islam.<sup>39</sup>

In any case, more revealing than the formal statements of church councils where a pretence of shared identity was required to prove the councils’ status, are the chronicles written by Eutychius, patriarch of Alexandria from 933 to 940, and by Agapius, bishop of Manbij, writing in the 940s. Both these are Arabic texts, with hijra dating, and reveal a striking ignorance of events in Constantinople.<sup>40</sup> The patriarch of Alexandria can go so far as to write, “I have not been able to track down the names of the patriarchs of Constantinople who have filled this see from the death of Theodorus [† 679] up to the point when I finished writing this book.”<sup>41</sup> So much for the claims of the Councils. The truth was that the Melkites had become an Arabic church with its own inward-looking agenda. At best they would validate the decisions of distant councils, but the Greek-speaking world had become a foreign country about which they knew little and cared less. When in the late tenth century Byzantine armies reconquered northern Syria, a few Melkites, such as the historian Yahya ibn Said, began to show more interest in the Greek world, to the extent that he is one of the most important sources for the ill-documented reign of Basil II (976-1025).<sup>42</sup> Even Eutychios becomes slightly better informed about events in Constantinople, possibly as a result of a message sent in 938 by the Patriarch Theophylact, asking that his name be remembered in the liturgy of the church of Alexandria – something that had not occurred, he tells us, since the days of the Umayyads. But what is really striking about the reconquest, is that the Greek-speaking servants of the emperor were foreigners in an Arabic and Syriac world. As late 966 (only three years before the city fell to the Byzantines) the Melkite Patriarch of Antioch,

Christopher, continued to be a loyal supporter of the Hamdanid emir, Sayf al-Dawla, against the emir's enemies in the city who wanted to come to terms with the Emperor.<sup>43</sup> 'Reconquest' is not really the right word. These were now two cultural worlds. There were individuals who bridged them: Greek monks continued to go to Jerusalem and live in the monasteries there through the tenth and eleventh centuries, but they were the exceptions.<sup>44</sup> The Byzantine capture of Antioch was in effect the conquest of a foreign land.

The term 'Byzantine' is effectively a modern label. The Byzantine conquerors of Syria would have described themselves as 'Romans', and their empire as the 'Roman empire'. Unlike its former Persian rival, the Roman empire of the pre-Islamic period did manage to survive the catastrophes of the seventh century, but it was faced by the hard task of adjusting to severely reduced circumstances. The Romans on the Bosphorus responded by reinventing themselves as a New Israel, a Chosen People, whose embattled circumstances were a paradoxical proof of God's favour. Like the Jews they were punished for their sins because God cared about them.<sup>45</sup> In the early seventh century the real Jerusalem in Palestine was still a key part of the imagined world of the Constantinopolitan Romans; its loss to the Persians in 614 a profound shock; its recovery and the restoration of the True Cross in 630 an occasion of maximum symbolic significance.<sup>46</sup> But then it disappeared, or rather Constantinople became the New Jerusalem, Hagia Sophia the New Temple, the emperor the New Solomon.<sup>47</sup> In the imperial palace were to be found all the central relics of Christ's passion, including the True Cross, while the city itself became the focus for a new eschatology that made Constantinople rather than Jerusalem the principal setting for a future cosmic drama that would usher in the end of the world. At the end the city would stand siege by the Anti-Christ, and when the earth was flooded only the tip of Constantine's column in the forum would stand above the waters as the Virgin Mary took the righteous gathered in the city up to heaven.<sup>48</sup>

This was not a world view that left much room for the empire's former territories now under Muslim rule. The *Life of St. Andrew the Fool*, which includes a lengthy exposition of these events to come, is barely interested in Jerusalem; its geographical scope is essentially that of the seventh to tenth century empire, confined to the Balkans and Asia Minor.<sup>49</sup> Even more striking is the lack of interest in Jerusalem and the Holy Land shown by the historian Leo the Deacon. Leo's *History* covers the reigns of Nikephoros II Phokas (963-9) and John I Tzimiskes (969-76). This was a period when Byzantine armies reappeared in the Levant for the first time in over three hundred years, and one might have expected much to be made of the Christian significance of the Holy Land. Yet Leo, who was a well-educated member of the palace clergy, does not mention Jerusalem at all; Palestine only appears in passing, and then in a context which shows that Leo has mistaken its location, and believes it to lie in southern Syria, east of Mount Lebanon. The one text that does appear to make something of this return to the Holy Land, a letter sent by the emperor John Tzimiskes to the Armenian king, Ashot III, and copied (apparently genuinely) by Matthew of Edessa, writing in the early twelfth century, in fact confirms the impression of Byzantine disinterest.<sup>50</sup> After telling Ashot how he has removed the relics of St. James from Nisibis, he goes on to describe at some length his victories in Syria and the submission of Damascus. Only then does the letter mention the Holy Land.

Going forth from there [Damascus], we went to the Sea of Galilee, where our Lord Jesus Christ had performed a miracle with one hundred and fifty-three fish. We were intent on laying siege to the town of Tiberias also, but the townspeople came in submission to our imperial majesty... We left them free of enslavement and did not plunder them because the region was the native land of the holy apostles. We felt the



same way about Nazareth... We also went to Mount Tabor and climbed up to the place where Christ our God was transfigured. While we remained in the place, people came to us from Ramla and Jerusalem to beseech our imperial majesty, looking for compassion from us. They asked that a commander be appointed over them and become tributary to us, swearing to serve us; all of these things we did. We also were intent on delivering the Holy Sepulchre of Christ our God from the bondage of the Muslims.<sup>51</sup>

After this the emperor's letter moves on, and Jerusalem is not mentioned again. Even in the section quoted above, Jerusalem is hardly the focus of attention, and the mention of the Holy Sepulchre reads as an afterthought.

John Tzimiskes' intention to deliver the Holy Sepulchre had no immediate consequence, but the announcement to Ashot III must indicate at least a secondary strand in imperial propaganda, which may have been intended to appeal to the Armenian king. That and the novel presence of imperial armies in the Dar al-Islam would explain why the Christian community in Jerusalem became a focus for anti-Byzantine violence in the late tenth and early eleventh century, culminating in 1009 when the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim ordered the destruction of the Holy Sepulchre. That event, rather than long-standing interest, should in turn explain Byzantine involvement in the rebuilding of the church and the emperor's new role as a protector of the church in Jerusalem. Much of the initial work was actually carried out on local initiative, and had been begun as early as 1012, only three years after its destruction, but negotiations between the emperor Romanos III Argyros and the caliph al-Zahir in 1027/8 involved a Byzantine commitment to restore the Holy Sepulchre, and after the final treaty between Michael IV and the caliph al-Mustansir was concluded in 1037/8, this was put into effect. Under the circumstances no treaty between Byzantium and the Fatimids could have failed to involve Jerusalem. At the least the emperor was bound to contribute to the rebuilding and to play a notional role as protector of Jerusalem's Christian community, but such diplomatic manoeuvres do not demonstrate any fundamental change in attitude to the real Jerusalem.<sup>52</sup>

When one considers how important these regions had been as recently as the early seventh century – ideologically, economically, politically – then this disinterest is a remarkable change. Byzantium had turned in upon itself. It was no more interested in the west. To go beyond Pirenne's specific point, the Muslim conquests had not only split the Mediterranean between the Dar al-Islam and Christendom, but they had also caused what survived of the Roman empire to withdraw into itself too. What we call Byzantium was, of course, the Roman empire, but to call this empire 'Byzantine' rather than 'Roman' serves to clarify an important distinction in outlook. "Without Islam, the Frankish Empire would have probably never existed", but Byzantium too was a product of the same seismic shift.

Only in the west did past perspectives survive. Saying which is not to make a point about there being more contact between the Latin west and either Islam or Byzantium in the early middle ages than is generally appreciated. Michael McCormick argues this in *Origins of the European Economy*, and he is probably right, but in this context it makes little difference.<sup>53</sup> If Pirenne underestimated the volume of trade and travellers between east and west in the eighth and ninth century then he did not err by much, and in any case the important point here is not about economics but rather about outlooks and perceptions.

Past perspectives survived in the Latin west not through knowledge of the eastern Mediterranean, but through ignorance. Because the Latin west had so little direct experience of the eastern Mediterranean, western understanding of the east remained based primarily on the Bible and the Church Fathers, above all Jerome. The east, the Holy Land, Jerusalem, were

not strange but part of a familiar imagined landscape, ingrained by Christian texts, liturgy, and images. Eastern Christians were similarly exposed, but whereas in the Dar al-Islam and Byzantium these spaces had acquired new meanings, in the west they had not.

One of the most striking examples of this outlook is Adomnán's *De locis sanctis*, composed on the island of Iona between 680 and 700.<sup>54</sup> Adomnán pretends that the work represents what he was told by a traveller who had actually been to the Holy Land.

The holy bishop Arculf, a Gaul by race, expert in his knowledge of various distant regions and a truthful and completely reliable witness, stayed for nine months in the city of Jerusalem, making daily visits to the holy places. In response to my careful enquiries, he dictated to me, Adomnán, this faithful and accurate record of all his experiences which is to be set out below. I first wrote it down on wax tablets; it will now be written down in a short text on parchment.<sup>55</sup>

But, as Thomas O'Loughlin has elegantly demonstrated, this is no more than a literary fiction. *De locis sanctis* is a work of scriptural exegesis, inspired by Augustine's injunction in *De doctrina Christiana* that a knowledge of places and things was essential for a proper interpretation of the Bible. It is based on Adomnán's reading of Jerome, Hegesippus, Iuvencus, and Isidore of Seville, and above all on his creative and ingenious reading of scripture. It was only Augustine's stress on the importance of eyewitness testimony that prompted the creation of Arculf.<sup>56</sup>

Adomnán's Palestine is an imagined space of huge importance. It is the centre of the world, a proof of Christ's resurrection, and a key to God's purposes as set out in the Bible. It is, however, a real place. In fact that is essential to its significance. The Holy Land exists, and exists in real time. Adomnán is aware for example that it is now ruled by "the king of the Saracens called Mavias", although he clearly has no idea that Mavias is not a Christian. Adomnán's Palestine exists in a curious limbo between the reality of the Bible and the reality of the present day, but certainly unaffected by the rise of Islam. Pirenne's thesis did not apply to the imagined world of the early middle ages. In that sense the men and women of the west still lived in the undivided world of Late Antiquity.<sup>57</sup>

Adomnán's little book spoke to a whole strand in the culture of the Latin west. He gave a copy to Aldfrith, king of Northumbria (d. 704/5), who, according to Bede, had it copied for lesser people to read. Bede (who felt the need to add some circumstantial detail about how a bishop on his way from Rome to Gaul ended up on Iona) in turn produced his own *De locis sanctis*, which is effectively an edited version of Adomnán's work. In both versions the text spread over Latin Europe. By the ninth century it was a standard school text of the Carolingian renaissance, influencing and chiming with a perception of Jerusalem and the Holy Land that characterised an age. Its churches filled with relics from the east, constantly reminded of these places in the daily liturgy, Latin Europe was far more familiar with Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Galilee, the Red Sea, Nazareth, than places in Spain, Sicily, or the Balkans that are now parts of the 'west'. In the imagination the Mediterranean remained whole; it was as if Muhammad had never happened.

### **East and West in the Age of the Crusades**

At the end of the eleventh century the three worlds of Islam, Byzantium, and the Latin west came into new and closer contact. What has come to be known as the First Crusade was preached by Pope Urban II at Clermont in November 1095 and the Latins captured Jerusalem a little under four years later, in July 1099. In its wake four Latin states were created, three of which survived in the Levant through to the late thirteenth century.<sup>58</sup>

The expedition was in many ways an obvious outcome of what has been described above. The Latin west knew little about the east, but imagined the Levant as a familiar world. Rather curiously while there is a huge literature and an on-going lively debate about what motivated Latin Christians to take part in the First Crusade, historians have tended to treat the contemporary fact of French warriors heading for Spain or southern Italy as simply an unproblematic aspect of the expansion of Europe. Perhaps because these areas are now part of Europe it seems natural that Latin Christians should rule there, whereas the same process in an area that is now part of the Muslim world seems exotic and proto-colonial. In fact the reverse was really the case. Westerners knew and thought little about Spain, Apulia and Sicily. Their conquest was that of strange land, whereas that of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, as the liturgy celebrated each year on the anniversary of the city's conquest emphasised, was a deliverance, a liberation, a restoration, a home-coming.<sup>59</sup>

Raymond of Aguilliers' near-contemporary account of the conquest of Jerusalem celebrates all these themes; so too does Fulcher of Chartres, the whole of whose *Historia Hierosolymitana* may be seen as celebration of this home-coming.<sup>60</sup> Histories of the conquests of Spain, Apulia and Sicily were inevitably dealing with places unfamiliar to anything other than a local readership. Palermo, Cordoba, or Bari meant nothing to Latin Christians. Few would have recognised the names. Fulcher on the other hand could talk of an expedition to Arabia or Tyre, with the knowledge that his readers would experience a thrill of recognition.<sup>61</sup>

We who were occidentals have now become orientals. He who was Roman or Frank has in this land been made into a Galilean or a Palestinian. He who was of Rheims or Chartres has now become a citizen of Tyre or Antioch. We have already forgotten the places of our birth; already these are unknown to us or not mentioned any more.<sup>62</sup>

This famous passage turns upon the fact that Galilee and Palestine, Tyre and Antioch are places that the reader will recognise as biblical placenames, and will feel are rightly part of the Christian's birth right.

For the inhabitants of the Dar al Islam the arrival of the Latins was a complete surprise.<sup>63</sup> Through the tenth and eleventh centuries there had been increasing numbers of pilgrims coming to the east, but there had been nothing to prepare them for Latin conquest and settlement.<sup>64</sup> The Seljuk Turks who overran the region in the 1060s were just as alien, but they did not come with the belief that this was their home. The only Muslim power that seems to not to have been utterly surprised was the Fatimid regime in Egypt, and then only because Cairo misunderstood what was happening. Before the Seljuk conquest of the Levant the region had been divided between the Byzantines in the north and the Fatimids in the centre and south. Antioch had been the Byzantine capital; Damascus the Fatimid. For both powers the unexpected death of the Seljuk sultan Malik Shāh in 1092 and the civil wars that followed appeared to offer an opportunity for a restoration of the old order. There is some evidence that the Fatimids and the Byzantines had been in contact, and that Cairo took the Latins to be a Byzantine army, recruited, as the emperor's armies were, from non-Byzantine mercenaries, and sent to cooperate with the Fatimids. The Egyptian embassy that came to the Crusader camp in front of Antioch early in 1098 seems to have learnt nothing to alter this impression. In July 1098 the Fatimids reoccupied Jerusalem from where they had been expelled in 1071. Still thinking in terms of shared interest and cooperation, they offered the Latins easy access to the Holy City as pilgrims, and assumed that this would be suit the Franks as it had the Byzantines before them. It was not until May 1099, only a few weeks

before the Latins began the siege of Jerusalem, that Cairo realised its mistake. By then it was far too late to send a relief army to the rescue.<sup>65</sup>

The Komnenian regime in Constantinople on the other hand was anything but surprised. Indeed its policy was based upon an appreciation that the Latins would see the east as part of a common Christian homeland. Our only detailed Greek source for these events, the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene, daughter of the emperor Alexios I Komnenos, denies Byzantine involvement in the origins of the Crusade, but over recent years it has become clear that this was not true. We know that Alexios had sent an embassy to the Pope at the council of Piacenza in March 1095 asking for military assistance; there is good evidence that by this date he was consciously using the lure of Jerusalem to attract Latin warriors to his service; and it is possible that Peter the Hermit was part of a Byzantine scheme to raise an army for service in the east.<sup>66</sup> None of this is mentioned by Anna, who treats the Crusade as a bolt from the blue that her father had managed with dexterous political skill. Anna was writing in the 1140s, by when it had become obvious that the consequences of the expedition to Jerusalem and the creation of the Crusader states posed serious problems for the empire. Her political standing turned upon the implication that she rather than her brother and nephew was Alexios' real political heir.<sup>67</sup> She therefore had an obvious motive to hide her father's Latin policy that had created this situation. Rather than deliberate deceit, it is more likely that Anna herself knew no better. How serious a mistake the Crusade had been was obvious enough by 1099, and her information would simply be the story as already presented by imperial propaganda in Alexios' lifetime.<sup>68</sup> Anna's account may perhaps best be read as an innocent repetition of a deception concocted much closer to the events.

Alexios motives for looking to the west are obvious enough. The loss of Anatolia and the eastern capital of Antioch in the 1070s had been genuine disasters, but they had a silver lining for the Komnenian regime in that most of their potential rivals had had estates and clients in the east, and the effect of the Turkish conquests was to render them largely impotent. The Norman and steppe nomad threats to the Balkans had been genuine priorities in the 1080s, but even after the Pečeneg defeat at Lebonion 1091 there was no haste to launch a reconquest of Anatolia. A successful eastern campaign might, paradoxically, do more to threaten than reinforce the regime's domination of Byzantine politics, and could provide an aristocratic rival with exactly the sort of military opportunity that Alexios had exploited in the 1081 coup that had brought him to power. These calculations altered with the Turkish conquest of the west coast and the consequent threat to what had hitherto been secure imperial territory.<sup>69</sup> The picture is complicated by Anna Komnene's confused narrative of the career of Çaka, a Turkish emir who by the early 1090s had carved out a substantial lordship in western Asia Minor. It is usually inferred from Anna that this threat had been ended by John Doukas's campaigns in 1092 and Çaka's murder at the hands of his Seljuk rival, Kilij Arslan, which has been dated to the following year. But this is a selective reading; none of these dates is secure. Anna may have misdated John Doukas' campaign and Çaka's murder. Less likely, the Çaka of 1097 may be a different person of the same name. Less likely still, Anna's account might be read as meaning that Çaka was only wounded in 1093. What is certain is that Anna's narrative leaves no doubt that the Aegean mainland, and possibly Chios and Rhodes too, was still in Turkish hands when the Crusaders arrived. However Çaka's career is reconstructed, the threat he posed had evidently not ended in 1092. During the years leading up to the Crusade Alexios was faced with a Turkish lordship able to deploy powerful naval forces. Crewed and constructed by the emperor's former subjects, these warships posed a new threat to the entire Aegean world. Not even Constantinople would be safe, and Alexios had to respond.<sup>70</sup>

To do so without arming potential rivals, who included even members of his own family, meant an army of foreign mercenaries, and to this end Alexios turned to the west.<sup>71</sup> The empire's traditional sources of foreign warriors were Armenia, the steppes, Russia and Scandinavia, but from the 1030s Latins appear in greater numbers.<sup>72</sup> The Norman conquest of southern Italy and their invasion of the Balkans may have advertised their qualities, and coming from a world where gold exchanged at a very good rate against silver, they may well have seemed good value for what they had to be paid in Byzantine gold coin.<sup>73</sup> The experience of Robert Guiscard's conquest of southern Italy where the Normans had also started off as Byzantine mercenaries, and of Bohemond's invasion of the Balkans in the first half of the 1080s, must have taught caution, but the emperor seems to have been convinced that they could be managed. Well-rewarded they could be loyal, and he may have drawn the conclusion from the Norman invasion of the Balkans that if they were not employed by the emperor then they would be more likely to join his enemies. With the conquest of Sicily effectively complete, ambitious lords such as Bohemond were looking for new fields to conquer, and they needed to be kept busy.

But there was more to the employment of Latins than simply the Normans. Alexios had become aware that Latin warriors would come to the east on their way to visit the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Some of these men seem to have defrayed the costs of their journey by spending a period in the emperor's service. A short text from the abbey of Cormery in the Loire valley describes a Latin force doing exactly this.<sup>74</sup> From Alexios' perspective, however foreign the Latins might actually appear, the fact that they had preserved a Late Antique sense of a Christian world that included Constantinople, Anatolia and the Levant made them a far more likely prospect for mass recruitment than any potential alternative. In the tenth century the emperor Leo VI had observed that one of the strengths of the Muslim world was its ability to tap warriors who would come to the frontiers of Islam to fight for the faith.<sup>75</sup> Alexios's contacts with Latins serving in his armies through the 1080s and early 1090s, and the discovery that these westerners saw Jerusalem in some sense as their rightful homeland, seems to have persuaded him that in the west lay the solution to imperial problems.

Very quickly, however, Alexios' western policy came to appear a dangerous mistake. To begin with all had seemed well. The appeal to the west produced a large response. The first arrivals, insufficiently disciplined and unlucky, were defeated by the Turks in Bithynia, barely across the Bosphorus, but the forces that followed proved more effective. With their help Alexios managed to recover the important fortified city of Nicaea, and when they had defeated the former Turkish ruler of Nicaea and his Danişmendid allies at Dorylaion, western Anatolia was left open to a Byzantine reconquest. Meanwhile, the Latins pressed on to Antioch accompanied by a contingent of imperial troops. The siege of Antioch proved expectedly difficult. In early February, the Byzantine contingent was withdrawn, but the emperor continued to support the Latins with supplies from Cyprus, and he was clearly thinking of going to Antioch himself, presumably with a view to ensuring that, like Nicaea, the city ended up in Byzantine hands. In the event Alexios turned round at Philomelion, about 500 kilometres short of his destination. The news from the city was discouraging. Antioch had fallen to the Latins, but the citadel remained in Muslim hands. Two relief armies had already been beaten off, but a third and much larger force was approaching. The crusaders were desperately short of supplies, incapable of standing siege in the city, and now effectively trapped and faced with destruction. Rather than arriving to oversee the restoration of the pre-Seljuk duchy of Antioch, Alexios would be doing nothing more than rescuing a few survivors from a now expendable army. With that in mind he headed back to Constantinople.<sup>76</sup>

Unfortunately for the emperor, he had turned back within days of the great Latin victory on 28th June 1098 over the Seljuk relief force commanded by Kerbogha. By abandoning the Crusade Alexios had effectively forfeited his ability to control what followed. Bohemond set himself up as an independent prince of Antioch; Baldwin of Boulogne was already ruling the former Byzantine provincial capital of Edessa as an independent county; Jerusalem was made an independent Latin kingdom. The emperor's attempt to harness the Latin sense of the east as part of a common Christian inheritance had achieved the reconquest of Nicaea and the west coast of Asia Minor, but at the price of a series of new Latin lordships whose founding legends were based on tales of Greek treachery and imperial betrayal. Alexios had inherited hostile Latin neighbours in southern Italy; he had now created more in the east. No wonder that the story told at the Byzantine court when Anna was a teenager stressed that this had been a bolt from the blue in which her father had had no part.

Alexios's decision to turn back at Philomelion was apparently made after meeting a trio of senior deserters from Antioch: Stephen of Blois, Peter Aliphas, and William of Grandmesnil. Stephen (the father of the future king of England of the same name) had been elected as leader of the expedition, and even if that meant no more than presiding over a council of other more powerful lords, his desertion carried a significant message.<sup>77</sup> But Alexios may have been more influenced by the opinions of the other two.

Peter Aliphas had been part of Robert Guiscard's invasion of the Balkans in 1081, but since then he had been in the emperor's service, and he had gone to Antioch with the Byzantine contingent.<sup>78</sup> William of Grandmesnil was the son of Hugh of Grandmesnil, whose presence at Hastings and subsequent loyal service to William the Conqueror made him a large fortune. In 1086 Hugh was sheriff of Leicestershire, where he held sixty-seven manors, in addition to extensive property in Nottinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Suffolk. The young William had apparently been high in the king's favour, to the extent that he was offered the hand of the king's niece, but he rejected the proposal and set off for Apulia. Like Peter he had taken part in the 1081 invasion, but he had returned to Italy shortly afterwards where he married Robert Guiscard's daughter Mabel, and was granted lands in Calabria. After Robert's death, William tried to take advantage of the confused conditions to carve out a wider lordship, but in 1093 the attempt ended in defeat, and the confiscation of his lands by the new duke. At this point William and his wife went to Constantinople and entered Alexios' service, where he did very well, returning to Italy at an unknown date with a great deal of money and a court title.<sup>79</sup>

Alexios may also have been encouraged by the fact that Bohemond was still at Antioch. Bohemond was the son of Robert Guiscard, the conqueror of Byzantine southern Italy. In 1081 he had taken a prominent role in the Norman invasion of the Balkans, and continued to wage war there until 1083. On his father's death in 1085, the duchy of Apulia passed to Roger Borsa, Robert's son by his second marriage to the Lombard, Sichelgaita. Bohemond was well compensated with lands in Apulia and Calabria, but his prospects looked to be those of a second-ranking political figure. In 1096 when news of the expedition to the east reached him, Bohemond was helping his brother with the siege of Amalfi. Not surprisingly he abandoned the siege and made plans to go to the east. Jonathan Shepard's careful analysis of Bohemond's actions makes a convincing case that from this point on the emperor's former opponent from the 1080s was acting as Alexios' agent on the expedition, and was intended to play a key role in the restored imperial order in the east.<sup>80</sup> It was not until after Philomelion and after the victory of 28th June that the emperor discovered he had been duped.

These three men, Peter Aliphas, William of Grandmesnil, and Bohemond exemplify a category of crusader that tends to be overlooked or marginalised by the current consensus

about what motivated Latin Christians to head for the east.<sup>81</sup> But from Alexios' point of view these men were typical of the sort of Latins he knew well, and around whom he had constructed his eastern plans. Urban II's offer of the journey to Jerusalem as a full penance for any confessed sins they had committed may have been an added attraction, but it only made sense within a long-standing predisposition to imagine the east as a familiar part of the Christian world, a place where restless men such as this trio might pursue their ambitions as well as in Apulia, Sicily, Spain, or Britain.

Although Alexios' vision broke down because of his inability or unwillingness to offer the crusaders leadership through to Jerusalem, its success up to that point shows the extent to which it was based on a sound knowledge of the Latins and what motivated them. But even had Alexios pressed on, his policy of bringing east and west together contained within it the seeds of its own failure. Fulcher of Chartres, who has already been mentioned, could write in terms of "We who were occidentals have now become orientals"<sup>82</sup>, but the reality, already evident by the time he was writing was that easterners and westerners were not the same. A familiar imagined world was becoming less familiar on closer acquaintance.

The brute fact was that the Latins were a small minority whose power and privileges depended upon maintaining their separate and distinct status, differentiated not only from the Muslim inhabitants of Outremer, but from the local Christians too. As the Israeli historian of the crusades, Joshua Prawer, sums up a chapter on local Christians in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, "The first colonial enterprise started out with different notions, but ended by formulating the classical rule of colonialism: never mix with the natives."<sup>83</sup> Recent work has done something to soften this judgement, emphasising the ways in which Latins coexisted and cooperated with their Christian neighbours during the twelfth century.<sup>84</sup> Mixed Latin-local marriages were clearly commonplace, and not just at the level of high diplomacy where three kings of Jerusalem had Byzantine wives. The *Cour de la Fronde*, the market court, accepted both Latins and Syrians as witnesses, and had a jury made up of four Syrians and two Latins presided over by a Latin.<sup>85</sup> Local Christians were employed as scribes, translators, doctors, masons, and light cavalry, *turcoples*. Local Christian monasteries survived and some, such as the monastery of Mar Sabas, prospered with Latin patronage.<sup>86</sup> The work of Denys Pringle and Ronnie Ellenblum, drawing on a mix of documents, literary sources and archaeology, has shown that Latin settlement was both more substantial and more widespread than it has generally been portrayed, and to some extent more integrated. The Latins were not just town-dwellers, there were Latin villages too, concentrated in areas which had Christian rather than Muslim populations before 1099.<sup>87</sup> There were also mixed villages, such as Cacho or Qāqūn, in the plain of Sharon, which included Latins, local Christians, and Muslims. But Cacho illustrates rather well why this does not alter the fact that the Latins were a separate and exclusive elite. Cacho's relatively profuse documentation reveals the fact of local Christian inhabitants, but only names the Arabic-speaking interpreter whose presence was necessary for the management of the lordship. All the other people named in the documents are Latins.<sup>88</sup> Cacho was typical of a world where, other than the *Cour de la Fronde*, Latins and local Christians had separate courts, separate churches, separate social hierarchies, and in general were divided by a gulf of language and culture. Ellenblum's conclusion is not far from Prawer's: "The mutual interdependence between local Christians ... and Franks... did not change the superior and contemptuous attitude of the Franks towards local Christians".<sup>89</sup>

What emerged in the eastern Mediterranean in the age of the Crusades was not a recreation of the unity that Pirenne identified as having been broken by the rise of Islam, but a new era characterised by Latin colonialism. Occidentals did not become orientals, they remained occidentals, whose status as Roman Catholic Latins legitimised in their own eyes their rule over schismatic Greeks, Syrians, and Armenians. The process was reinforced by

experience. In the wake of the conquest of Constantinople in 1204 Latin colonial societies appeared throughout the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>90</sup> The perception of the east as simply another part of Christendom seemed increasingly outmoded. Christendom's real boundaries were those of Europe. The east was a different world.

Pirenne correctly saw that the events of the seventh century marked a caesura in the history of western Eurasia, but he passed over the fact that in the imagination of the Latin west the unity of the Christian Roman Mediterranean continued for another five hundred years. That imagined unity was only broken when the Latins came to rule the east and discovered that they were foreigners in what they had thought to be their homeland. They were westerners in the east. To paraphrase Pirenne, "Without the Crusades Europe – the Europe of the European Union – would probably never have existed."

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1. I am very grateful to the CBRL and its director, Professor Bill Finlayson, for the invitation to speak at the 'Shifting Boundaries' workshop, to the participants at that workshop for their comments and lively response, and to Stephen Humphreys for reading and commenting on a draft of this paper.

2. Henri Pirenne, *Mahomet et Charlemagne* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1937). I shall cite the book in its first English edition translated from the 10th French edition: Henri Pirenne, *Mohammed and Charlemagne*, trans. Bernard Miall (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1939).

3. Pirenne's were the product of a lengthy period of gestation which stretched back into the 1890s: see Jacques Pirenne's comments in the preface to Pirenne, *Mohammed and Charlemagne*, 9; Bryce Lyon, *Henri Pirenne – a biographical and intellectual study* (Ghent: E. Story - Scientia, 1974), 260-61, 265-8, 375, 441; Paolo Delogu, "Reading Pirenne again", in Richard Hodges, William Bowden, eds., *The Sixth Century: Production, Distribution and Demand* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 15-40.

4. Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce AD300-900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2; Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400-800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1.

5. Pirenne, *Mohammed and Charlemagne*, 79-96, 147-64.

6. Gregory the Great, *Registrum epistolarum*, III.61, V.30, VI.16, 64, VII.6, 30, XII.7, XIII.32, 39 (emperor); I.4, 24, III.52, V.44, VI.15, VII.4 5, 28, XIII.41 (patriarch of Constantinople), I.5, 6, 28, 29, 30, 31, III.51, 62, 63, 64, IV.30, V.6, 38, 39, 43, 45, 46, VI.14, 17, VII.15, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, IX.4, 188, 190, 237, XI.4, 27, 29, XIII.33, 40, XIV.8 (Constantinopolitan courtiers and leading officials); I.24, V.41, VI.61, VII.31, 37, VIII.28, 29, X.14, 21, XII.16, XIII.42, 43 (Alexandria); I.7, 24, 25, V.41, 42, VII.24, 31, VIII.2, IX.136, 176 (Antioch); VIII.6, XI.28 (Jerusalem); XI.20 (Arabia); I.26, III.38, V.57, 62, IX.157 (Corinth); III.6, V.16, VIII.10, XII.10 (Justiniana Prima); II.40, V.3, VI.63, VII.32, VIII.31, X.20, XII.1 (Carthage), I.45, IX.217, 225, XI.38, 45 (Arles), I.45, IX.209, XI.10 (Marseille), I.41, V.53, 53a (Seville); XI.1-2 (Mount Sinai); ed. Dag Norberg, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 140-140A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982), 209, 296, 385, 439, 452, 490, 977, 1033, 1042 (emperor); 4, 22, 197, 329, 384, 446-7, 486, 1045 (patriarch of Constantinople); 5, 7, 36-8, 196, 211, 213-14, 248, 271, 312, 314, 328, 337-8, 382, 387, 465,



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472, 474, 480-81, 483, 565, 744-5, 820, 862, 902, 917, 1034, 1043, 1076 (Constantinopolitan courtiers and leading officials); 22, 320, 434, 492, 500, 549, 550, 840, 852, 990, 1046-7 (Alexandria); 9, 22, 33, 320, 325, 478, 492, 514, 685, 733 (Antioch); 523, 914 (Jerusalem); 889 (Arabia); 34, 183, 351, 364, 714 (Corinth); 151, 282, 527, 982 (Justiniana Prima); 127, 268, 437, 495, 554, 850, 967 (Carthage); 59, 780, 798, 932, 942 (Arles); 59, 768, 873 (Marseille); 47, 348-9 (Seville); 857-60 (Mount Sinai). See also *The Letters of Gregory the Great*, trans. John R. C. Martyn, 3 vols. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2004) for additional notes and identifications.

7. Robert Markus, *Gregory the Great and his world* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 10-12, 134-5, 140-42; Robert Markus, "Gregory the Great's Europe", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 31 (1981), 21-36, esp. 34-6; Michael Lapidge, "Theodore of Tarsus [St Theodore of Tarsus] (602—690)", in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27170> (accessed May 12, 2007). More generally on religious and cultural ties uniting east and west in the age of Gregory the Great, Peter Brown, "Eastern and Western Christendom in Late Antiquity: A parting of the Ways", in *The Orthodox Church and the West*, ed. David Baker, Studies in Church History 13 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976) 1-24 remains fundamental.

8. Gregory of Tours, vi.23, 26; Ian Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450-751* (Harlow: Longman, 1994), 93-8.

9. *CIL* vi/1, nr. 1200; Cairolì Fulvio Giuliani, Patrizia Verduchi, *L'area centrale del Foro romano*, 2 vols. (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1987), i, 174-7; Mark Whittow, *The Making of Orthodox Byzantium, 600-1025* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 163.

10. Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 163-5.

11. *PLRE* II, 635-6: "Iuliana 3"

12. Rusticiana: *PLRE* III, 1101-2: "Rusticiana 2"; Averil Cameron, "A Nativity Poem of the Sixth Century A.D.", *Classical Philology* 74 (1979), 222-32.

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