

Part I

What Were the Crusades?

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Pope Urban II's Preaching of the First Crusade

H. E. J. Cowdrey

Editor's Introduction

Modern investigations into the origins and nature of the crusades begin with Carl Erdmann's seminal work *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens* (1935). Erdmann held that the crusades were a product of the eleventh-century reform movement, which sought to purify not only the church but all of Christian society, including the warriors. The crusades were a means of redirecting excessive violence and an active military culture toward sacred ends. Jerusalem, the professed aim of the crusades, was more an enlistment tool than a serious objective. As with any foundational theory, the Erdmann thesis has received its fair share of criticism and refinement. Yet few scholars are better equipped to critique Erdmann's linkage of reform and crusading than H. E. J. Cowdrey. In several books and copious articles, Cowdrey has focused on the history of Cluniac reform, particularly as it manifested itself during the pontificates of Gregory VII (1073–85), Victor III (1086–7), and Urban II (1088–99). In this chapter Cowdrey addresses the question of Jerusalem's role in the origin of the crusades. Was the rescue of the Holy City the pope's primary motivation for calling the First Crusade? Or, as Erdmann argued, was it the defense of eastern Christians and the improvement of relations between Constantinople and Rome? Although Urban II's words at the Council of Clermont are not known with certainty, Cowdrey concludes that the pope was principally concerned with the plight of Jerusalem when he gave life to the First Crusade. The reconquest of the Holy Land was not a carrot dangled just out of reach of the crusaders, but the true purpose of the entire enterprise.

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H. E. J. Cowdrey

It is doubtful whether the precise terms in which Urban II preached the First Crusade at the conclusion of the Council of Clermont, on 27 November 1095, will ever be known with certainty. Some altogether new evidence would have to be discovered regarding his actual words. In the chronicles of the Crusade, there are, it is true, five quite early versions of his preaching: in Fulcher of Chartres (written in 1101), Robert the Monk (1107), Baldric of Dol (c.1108–10), Guibert of Nogent (c.1109), and William of Malmesbury (who wrote some thirty years after the Crusade). Of these writers, the four earliest wrote as though they had been present at Clermont; Fulcher, and perhaps the other three, may well have been. Where they exhibit a measure of agreement regarding a theme of Urban's preaching, there is some likelihood of a genuine recollection or transmission of it. But Robert, Baldric, and Guibert all said that they gave the gist of Urban's words, not an accurate report of them; and there are considerable differences amongst the five versions. It is more than likely that the chroniclers availed themselves of the customary licence by which medieval writers put into the mouths of their characters such discourses as the writers themselves deemed to be appropriate. If they did so, their departures from Urban's own words may well have been considerable. There can be no doubt that the response to Urban's preaching greatly exceeded his expectations. The chroniclers' versions may have been to some extent influenced by the character of this response, so that they misrepresent what Urban said to elicit it. Historians have found no sure criteria for determining what were the Pope's original themes, in so far as they may have been preserved by the chroniclers; and they have differed in their attempts to reconstruct them or to define what they may have been.¹

All of the chroniclers' accounts, with the exception of Fulcher's, represent the Pope as making much of the call to deliver the Holy City of Jerusalem from pagan domination. But it is an attractive hypothesis that, in November 1095, Urban was not primarily concerned with Jerusalem, if indeed he mentioned it at all. Ever since he had become Pope in 1088, he had been anxious to improve relations with the Byzantine Emperor, Alexius Comnenus, and to promote the union of the Eastern and Western

1 For the most widely influential reconstruction, see D. C. Munro, 'The Speech of Pope Urban II at Clermont, 1095', *American Historical Review*, xi (1906), 231–42.

Churches.² In March 1095, at the Council of Piacenza, Alexius's envoys had moved Urban to call upon western warriors to go to Byzantium and help Alexius to defend the Church against the pagans.³ May it not have been that, in France, Urban intended to publish a further and wider statement of this call? If so, his summons was to help the Eastern Christians in general. If Jerusalem came into the picture, it did so secondarily and not necessarily as a military objective. Perhaps, even, it did not come in at all, but was introduced later by an upsurge of popular enthusiasm and religious zeal.

In one form or another, such questions have been widely asked, especially since they were canvassed by C. Erdmann in a study of the origin of Crusading ideas, which has dominated discussion during the past generation.⁴ Erdmann saw the First Crusade as the culmination of the long process by which there took shape, in Western Europe, the idea of a holy war against the heathen, sponsored by the Church. In Western Francia especially, after the waning of royal power under the later Carolingians, it was upon the knights that the task of defending Christian peoples by force of arms against their internal and external foes increasingly rested; in recognition of this, the Church began to bless their weapons of warfare. With the Spanish 'Crusades' of the eleventh century, the notion of the holy war against the infidel gained currency. In due course, Pope Gregory VII (1073–85) finally broke with the age-long reluctance of Christians fully to recognize the licitness of the procession of arms. He called upon the military classes to take part in a 'militia Christi', or 'militia sancti Petri', in which they placed themselves at the service of the vicar of St Peter. His 'Crusading' plan of 1074 was an abortive attempt to mobilize them to help the Eastern Churches in face of Seldjuk attacks; and he expressed the hope that those who took part might, perhaps, also go on and reach the Holy Sepulchre.⁵ Urban built upon Gregory's work; but he did not repeat the mistake that led to its frustration. He appreciated that a call which was too straitly tied to the hierarchical

2 W. Holtzmann, 'Studien zur Orientpolitik des Papsttums und zur Entstehung des ersten Kreuzzuges', *Beiträge zur Reichs- und Papstgeschichte des hohen Mittelalters* (Bonn, 1957), pp. 51–78, and 'Die Unionsverhandlungen zwischen Kaiser Alexios 1 und Papst Urban II im Jahre 1089', *ibid.* pp. 79–105; S. Runciman, *The Eastern Schism* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 61–2, 71–2, 76–9.

3 Bernold, *Chronicon*, s.a. 1095, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* [= MGH], *Scriptores*, 462. The suggestion has been made that Alexius Comnenus himself used the pagan domination of the Holy Sepulchre as a pretext for seeking Urban's aid: P. Charanis, 'The Origin of the First Crusade', *Byzantion*, xix (1949), 17–36. But it rests upon the unsupported evidence of the thirteenth-century writer Theodore Skutariotes. This is insufficient to establish it as a possible influence upon the Pope.

4 *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens* (Stuttgart, 1935).

5 *Register*, i. 46, 49, ii. 31, 37, ed. E. Caspar, *MGH Epistolae selectae*, ii. 69–71, 75–6, 65–8, 172–3; *Epistolae collectae*, no. 11, ed. P. Jaffé, *Monumenta Gregoriana* (Berlin, 1865), pp. 532–3. It is not certain whether Gregory's plan directly influenced Urban.

claims of the Apostolic See was likely to find but little response. So he took the novel step of associating his own summons to a military enterprise with the idea of a pilgrimage. Hitherto, it had normally been requisite for a pilgrim to travel unarmed; those who responded to Urban's summons at Clermont might make their journey armed, and yet still enjoy the spiritual benefits of a pilgrimage.

Erdmann believed that, when Urban first preached this unprecedented phenomenon, an armed pilgrimage, he referred to Jerusalem; but that he did so without emphasis. In line with what had happened at Piacenza, the overbidding purpose of the Crusade, as Urban envisaged it, was the freeing of the Eastern Churches; there was no special reference to any one locality as being the primary military concern of the Crusaders. Urban mentioned Jerusalem briefly and almost incidentally, as a means of recruiting men for the Crusade. In Erdmann's terminology, the goal of the holy war (*Kriegsziel*) was the freeing from the Turkish yoke of the Eastern Churches in general. Jerusalem was merely the goal of the journey (*Marschziel*); it was a secondary, devotional destination, to be attained in strict subordination to the real business of the expedition. Urban believed that these two goals of the Crusade were compatible; and, in a sense, events proved him right. But as the Crusaders responded to his call, they themselves quickly distorted his intention, by making the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre itself the goal of the holy war. This distortion was the result of the Crusaders' enthusiasm. What Urban had intended to be a means of recruiting became, in the minds of the Crusaders, the military end of their journey.

Such is Erdmann's powerfully argued thesis. It has sometimes impressed itself so strongly upon the minds of his critics that, even when the logic of their own arguments has pointed towards the centrality of Jerusalem in Urban's preaching at Clermont, they have been markedly reluctant to follow it. Two of the most important discussions, since Erdmann's, of the origins of Crusading ideas may serve as examples of this.⁶ M. Villey has convincingly criticized Erdmann for his too ready identification of the Crusade with the already existing phenomenon of the holy war.⁷ In Villey's view, Crusade and holy war should not be used as near-synonyms. The holy war was a much broader conception than the Crusade: although the eleventh century showed various manifestations of the holy war, there was nothing before 1095, even in Spain, which should be called a Crusade. Historians should reserve this term for campaigns that broadly satisfied the juridical categories

6 It must be remembered that medieval Latin had no special noun for a Crusade up to the thirteenth century, when such words as *crux*, *crusata*, and *croseria* came gradually into use. Writers had hitherto used such nouns as *iter*, *expeditio*, and, above all, *peregrinatio*. The modern word *Crusade* is not, therefore, capable of precise definition in terms which were current in the formative period of the Crusades.

7 *La Croisade: essai sur la formation d'une théorie juridique* (Paris, 1942), esp. pp. 9-14, 77-91.

which later canonists were to devise: there should, that is to say, be a preaching of the cross; clear and express spiritual privileges should be attached to participation; and special obligations should be laid upon those who took part by reason of their having taken the cross.

Villey's criticism of Erdmann's view of Crusading would appear to carry further implications. Erdmann insisted upon Urban's having assigned a general goal to the Crusade – the liberation of the Eastern Churches – because he identified the Crusade with a holy war, which itself had the generalized end of defending Christian peoples against the heathen or of recovering the Christians' land that the heathen unjustly detained. But the more the Crusade is seen as (in Villey's phrase) a 'new synthesis', which carried the promise of specific spiritual benefits and which imposed upon the participants a number of special obligations, the more likely it becomes that the Pope should have laid emphasis upon a particular goal, whose attainment represented the discharge of the obligations and won the enjoyment of the benefits. Villey, however, pursued no such line of argument; partly, perhaps, because he gave but little attention to the Crusade in its aspect as a 'peregrinatio' or pilgrimage. He was content to express general agreement with Erdmann's distinction between the *Kriegsziel* and the *Marschziel* of the First Crusade. He also agreed with Erdmann that it was the hearers of Urban's preaching, not the Pope himself, who focused attention upon Jerusalem as the prime object of the journey, and who intended to capture it rather than merely to win spiritual benefits.

A similar hesitation in pursuing a critique of Erdmann is evident in H. E. Mayer's chapter on the origin of the Crusades in his excellent general survey of Crusading.⁸ In certain respects, indeed, he revises Erdmann's conclusions quite drastically. With ample warrant in the sources, he regards the idea of the armed pilgrimage, which for Erdmann was a subordinate factor in the genesis of the Crusade, as in fact a decisive one. The Crusaders were armed pilgrims, whose warfare had the character of a holy war. Since pilgrimages were journeys to a particular place, like Monte Gargano, Compostela, or Jerusalem, it might be anticipated that such an emphasis upon pilgrimage would bring Jerusalem into the centre of the picture. But Mayer argues differently. He adheres to Erdmann's opinion that, at Clermont, Urban had a general aim of bringing help to the Christian Churches of the East. However, he goes further than Erdmann by altogether excluding Jerusalem from Urban's initial preaching. He rightly comments that Erdmann's distinction between the *Kriegsziel* and the *Marschziel* of the Crusade expressed 'perhaps a somewhat subtle interpretation' of events. The eleventh-century religious connotations of Jerusalem were too potent and attractive for it to have served merely as a recruiting device. If Urban

8 *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (Stuttgart, 1965), pp. 15–46.

indeed referred to it, it must have dominated the Crusade from the start. So, while adhering to Erdmann's view that Urban made the freeing of the Eastern Churches in general the goal of the Crusade, Mayer dissents from him by concluding that, because Jerusalem was too potent an idea to have been a subordinate one at Clermont, it must be supposed to have had no place at all. Pointing to the initial amorphousness of the Crusading organization, he suggests that it is most readily explicable if Urban did not mention Jerusalem, and if, in the succeeding months, public opinion threw it up as the goal of the Crusade with such force that Urban had to acknowledge it. But Mayer's emphasis upon Urban's part in determining the character of the Crusade as an armed pilgrimage makes this supposition paradoxical. It points to a more drastic revision of Erdmann and to the alternative supposition about Jerusalem – that, just because it was so powerful an idea, it is unlikely not to have been at the heart of Urban's preaching from the very start.

That it was has been proposed by another historian who has contributed to the debate that Erdmann started – P. Rousset.⁹ In support of his case, Rousset drew attention to evidence which historians have too seldom pondered – the incidental references to the First Crusade which occur in sources strictly contemporary with its summoning and assembly. He makes clear the value of this evidence. But his treatment of it is brief, and he did not sufficiently consider whether it genuinely harks back to the Pope's preaching. It is, therefore, worth while surveying more fully the available material. It falls into five categories: (i) chronicles providing contemporary evidence for 1096, (ii) charters of 1096, (iii) contemporary letters, (iv) the *excitatoria* by which men were urged to rally to the Crusade, and (v) the letters and other rulings of Urban himself. The first four categories come from sources which, in general, probably knew Urban's intentions well. They speak of the military liberation of Jerusalem as the purpose of the Crusade with a clearness that is no less apparent in Urban's own writings.

(i) So far as chronicles are concerned, the earliest source of information is the *Fragmentum historiae Andegavensis*. It was written in Anjou in 1096, and so within a few months of Urban's prolonged stay there to preach the Crusade. The author was almost certainly Count Fulk le Réchin (1060–1109) himself. This gives it particular value, for not only did Urban assiduously cultivate the Count as a possible recruit for the Crusade, as the *Fragmentum* bears witness, but Fulk resisted all his blandishments. Fulk's account is not likely to be coloured by enthusiasm for an enterprise in which he did not allow himself to become actively involved. It describes how, towards the beginning of Lent 1096, 'the Roman Pope came to Anjou and urged its people to go to Jerusalem and subdue the race of the heathen who

9 *Les Origines et les caractères de la première croisade* (Neuchâtel, 1945), esp. pp. 57–73.

had seized that city and all the land of the Christians up to Constantinople'.¹⁰ Fulk provides clear and early testimony that Urban made Jerusalem the goal of the Crusade and that he called for its military deliverance. Other chronicles tend to confirm this. The chronicle of Saint-Maixent, a monastery where Urban is known from his letters to have been on 31 March after he left Anjou, records how 'by the Pope's order, many men, noble and base, rich and poor, from all lands, . . . went on the journey to the Holy Sepulchre'.¹¹ Again, Bernold of St. Blasien's account of Urban's French journey speaks of an *expeditio* of which the Pope was the true architect; Jerusalem was its goal and its purpose was to deliver the Christians from the pagans.¹²

These chronicles indicate that from as early as thirteen weeks after the Council of Clermont, Urban was certainly speaking of an expedition which had Jerusalem as its goal, and which was to liberate the Christians of the East from a pagan subjection which extended from Jerusalem up to Constantinople.

(ii) A similar picture emerges from a small number of charters that survive in which, before the Crusaders left, some of them gave lands to, or made other arrangements with, French monasteries. Such charters are of especial value because they were usually drafted, not by the donors, but by the monks themselves. Thus, they express ideas which had the approval of monks who, if they obeyed Urban's directives, were not themselves involved in the Crusade. If the monks were thus somewhat detached from the Crusaders' enthusiasms, they were in an excellent position to know Urban's mind. His French journey of 1095–6 and his organization of the Crusade were largely undertaken with the assistance of the monasteries.¹³ Thus, the language of the small number of monastic charters which refer to the Crusade, provides significant if indirect evidence of the Pope's intentions.

Some particularly early evidence occurs in the charters of Cluny, of which Urban was a sometime Grand Prior. He stayed there just before he went to Clermont, and Abbot Hugh of Cluny was himself present at the Council. Cluny's understanding of the Crusade was formed in the closest touch with Urban, and it emerges as early as a charter of 12 April 1096.

10 'In fine cuius anni, appropinquante quadragesima, venit Andegavim papa Romanus Urbanus et ammonuit gentem nostram ut irent Jerusalem expugnaturi gentilem populum qui civitatem illam et totam terram christianorum usque Constantinopolim occupaverant': *Fragmentum historiae Andegavensis*, in *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou et des seigneurs d'Amboise*, ed. L. Halphen and R. Poupardin (Paris, 1913), pp. 237–8. Lent began on 27 February.

11 *Chronicon sancti Maxentii Pictavensis*, s.a. 1096, in *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou*, ed. P. Marchegay and É. Mabille (Paris, 1869), p. 412. Although compiled in the twelfth century, the *Chronicon* is made up from earlier material.

12 Bernold, *Chron. s.a. 1096*, MGHs, v. 464.

13 R. Crozet, 'Le Voyage d'Urban II et ses négociations avec le clergé de France', *Revue historique*, clxxix (1937), 271–310.

In it, a prospective Crusader was said to be involved 'in this manifold and great awakening and campaign of Christian people who are contending to go to Jerusalem, to fight on God's behalf against the heathen and the Saracens'; he was further said to be going on the pilgrimage (*peregrinatio*) to Jerusalem. A further, but undated, charter of 1096 refers to the impending departure of two brothers for Jerusalem 'in expeditione'.¹⁴ Cluny's intimate connections with Urban make it likely that its charters were faithful to his own intentions when they referred to Jerusalem in these terms.

Other monastic charters spoke of the Crusade in a similar way. After Urban turned south on leaving the Touraine and Poitou in the spring of 1096, he did not visit the great abbey of Saint-Victor, Marseilles; but he passed within its well-organized sphere of influence. A charter of Saint-Victor, dated 24 August 1096, defined the intention of two Crusader brothers much as the Cluniac charters had done. They were going to Jerusalem, and for two reasons: to undertake a pilgrimage, and to help with the deliverance of innumerable Christian peoples from the fury of their oppressors.¹⁵ A similar combination of motives occurs in a charter of Saint-Père, Chartres, which, although undated, clearly looks forward to the First Crusade. It also illustrates how the Crusade served Urban's purpose as expressed in his speech at Clermont, by leading men to desist from violence at home in order to seek the deliverance of Jerusalem:

Whenever the impulse of warlike fierceness roused me [a Crusader was made to explain] I would gather about myself a band of mounted men and a crowd of followers. I would descend upon the vill and freely give the goods of the men of St. Peter to my knights for food. Now, therefore, I am going as a pilgrim (*peregre*) to Jerusalem, which is still in bondage with her sons, to secure the divine pardon that I seek for my misdeeds.¹⁶

This theme, once again with a naming of Jerusalem, recurs in December 1096, in the cartulary of Saint-Chaffre du Monastier, a monastery situated near Le Puy which had close associations with Bishop Adhemar, Urban's legate on the Crusade.¹⁷

14 *Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Cluny*, ed. A. Bruel, v (Paris, 1894), nos 3703, 3712, pp. 51–3, 59.

15 *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Victor de Marseille*, ed. M. Guérard, i (Paris, 1847), no. 143, pp. 167–8.

16 *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Père de Chartres*, ed. M. Guérard, ii (Paris, 1840), no. xxxvi, pp. 428–9.

17 The Abbot of Saint-Chaffre referred to three knights, 'Jerosolimitanum iter ad expugnandos barbaros arripientes'. They had agreed to desist from unjust demands upon the monks and to seek absolution from the bishop: *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de St-Chaffre du Monastier*, ed. U. Chevalier (Paris, 1884), no. cccxcviii, pp. 139–41.

Very occasionally, there are, indeed, references to the Crusade in contemporary charters without an express mention of Jerusalem. Thus, the record of a gift to the Cluniac priory of Marcigny was dated 'in the year when Urban came to Aquitaine and summoned a Christian army to repress the ferocity of the eastern pagans'.¹⁸ Again, on his journey home from France in 1096, Urban negotiated about the Crusade with Count Humbert II of Savoy. While the matter was being discussed, Humbert gave Cluny the priory of Bourget, and, in his charter, he spoke only of his proposed journey beyond the sea.¹⁹ But these charters do not deny that Jerusalem was the goal; they are best regarded as incomplete statements of why men went to the Crusade.

Taken together, the charters, which come from many localities, serve to confirm the chronicles, although they lay greater emphasis upon the character of the Crusade as a pilgrimage. They testify to the centrality of Jerusalem and its military liberation in the monastic understanding of the Crusade. It is probable that this understanding reflects Urban's own intentions.

(iii) Amongst strictly contemporary letters, especial interest attaches to the single letter of St Anselm's which refers to the Crusade. It is addressed to Bishop Osmund of Salisbury and is probably to be dated in the late summer of 1096.²⁰ Anselm wrote to secure the correction of the Abbot of Cerne. Amongst the charges that he brought against him, the first was that, in spite of the Pope's prohibition, he had exhorted his monks to go on the Crusade (*ire in Hierusalem*), and that he had already sent one young monk off to join it. He was himself making ready to go to Jerusalem and, with some associates, he had already bought a ship in which to travel. Anselm insisted to Osmund that he be forbidden to go, or to send his monks, to Jerusalem. Osmund was also to issue orders to every monastery of his diocese that no monk should dare to venture upon the Crusade (*ut nullus monachus hoc iter Hierosolimitanum praesumat arripere*).

18 *Le Cartulaire de Marcigny-sur-Loire (1045–1144)*, ed. J. Richard (Dijon, 1957), no. 119, pp. 87–8.

19 S. Guichenon, *Histoire généalogique de la royale maison de Savoye*, iv (Lyons, 1660), 27.

20 *Ep. 195, S. Anselmi Cantuariensis archiepiscopi opera omnia*, ed. F. S. Schmitt, iv (Edinburgh, 1949), 85–6. The date is uncertain. Schmitt's suggestion of 1095 is too early, since the Council of Clermont did not meet until late November 1095. Moreover, Anselm asked for his letter to be sent to the Bishops of Exeter, Bath, and Worcester. The see of Worcester was vacant from the death of Wulfstan II on 19–20 January 1095 until the succession of Samson, consecrated 8 June 1096; this date is the *terminus a quo*. The letter is likely to have been written very soon after it. Anselm twice said that he acted in consultation and agreement with King William II, who was however absent and beyond easy communication when he actually wrote. This points to a date immediately after William left for Normandy in the late summer of 1096. For the events of this summer, see Eadmer *Historia novorum in Anglia*, ed. M. Rule (London, Rolls Series, 1884), pp. 74–6.

It is most remarkable that, in the course of a short letter written in England and at so early a date, Anselm should have three times referred to the Crusade in terms of an intention 'ire in Hierusalem' (or 'in Hierosolymam'), and once as an 'iter Hierosolimitanum'. There can be no doubt about the form in which it presented itself to him. This form is likely to have been determined by Urban's own intentions; for there was an intermediary between the Pope and the Archbishop who is likely to have made them authentically known to him. Early in 1096, the high Gregorian, Abbot Jarento of Saint-Bénigne, Dijon, was sent to the Anglo-Norman lands 'ex praecepto papae' in connection with the Crusade. He came to England and negotiated with William II; then, in Normandy, he brought about an agreement between the King and Duke Robert, and saw the latter off to the Crusade.²¹ Jarento may well have influenced those who, according to Eadmer, persuaded Anselm that it was right and proper (*et rationis esse et honestatis*) for him to assist the King in raising the money which he advanced to his brother for the Crusade upon the security of the Duchy. At all events, Anselm seems to have considerably revised his own opinions. For his letter of 1096 and his attitude to the 'expeditio Ierosolimitana' as Eadmer recorded it, demand close comparison with an earlier letter written, probably in 1086, during a visit to England while he was still Abbot of Bec.²² In it, he urged a young Norman layman not to follow his elder brother to the east in the military service of Byzantium. Anselm pleaded with him, instead, to become a monk at Bec:

I warn, advise, beg, beseech, and command you as one most dear, to renounce the Jerusalem which is now not a vision of peace but of tribulation and the treasures of Constantinople and Babylon which must be seized with bloodstained hands. Embark instead upon the way to the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the vision of peace, where you will find real treasures which may only be had by those who despise the others.

Between 1086 and 1096, Anselm's attitude clearly changed. As abbot of Bec, he deprecated the departure of Norman laymen to fight for the Byzantine Emperor against his pagan enemies; but as Archbishop of Canterbury, he was prepared to concede, if perhaps reluctantly, that the Crusade was an enterprise which the English Kingdom might support. In 1096, he is only known to have forbidden the participation of monks, about whom he knew

21 Hugh of Flavigny, *Chronicon*, ii, *MGHS*, viii, 474–5. Urban had summoned Anselm to Clermont, and Anselm had sent Boso, a monk of Bec, to represent him; but Boso's return was long delayed on account of illness: *Vita abbatum Beccensium, Vita Bosonis*, 2, *Beati Lanfranci opera*, ed. J. A. Giles, i (Oxford, 1844), 328–9.

22 *Ep.* 117, *Opera omnia*, iii (Edinburgh, 1946), 252–5.

that Urban himself had legislated.²³ His change of attitude is most readily explicable if it were a response to a clear and specific papal approach about the Crusade, such as Abbot Jarento might have brought; for to such expressions of the papal will, Anselm felt a duty of obedience that overrode his personal opinions. This obedience would have been the more readily forthcoming if Urban had sought it, not merely for such help to Byzantium as Anselm had earlier so unfavourably regarded, but for an 'iter Hierosolimitanum' which was different, and to which the Pope himself had assigned wider and more spiritual ends.

(iv) Amongst the *excitatoria* by which propagandists sought to recruit and encourage participants in the First Crusade, there is one that may come still nearer both in time and in place to Urban's own activity in summoning the Crusade. It is the so-called 'Encyclical of Pope Sergius IV'.²⁴ This document purports to be Sergius's summons to the Christians of North Italy and elsewhere to respond to the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem in 1009 by the mad Fatimid Caliph Hakim: Sergius exhorted them to follow him to the Holy Land, to destroy its oppressors, and to restore Christ's burial-place. The genuineness of the 'Encyclical' was for long a matter of debate.²⁵ But A. Gieysztor has advanced strong arguments that it was fabricated as propaganda for the First Crusade at the Cluniac monastery of Moissac, near Toulouse; it originated in connection with Urban's stay there in May 1096, 'to create a respectable precedent so that all savor of the novel and the dangerous would be eliminated from the project of the expedition'.²⁶ A date just after Urban's departure is, perhaps, preferable to one during his stay: it would be hard to account for the execrable Latin if papal clerks had been at hand; and Urban's visit to Moissac was a brief one. But there is every likelihood that the 'Encyclical' originated at Moissac, or at some other monastery, in the wake of Urban's journey; that it was the work of monks who sought to encourage recruits for the Crusade; and that they acted from recent and intimate acquaintance with Urban and his intentions. The almost exclusive preoccupation of the 'Encyclical' with the liberation of Jerusalem indicates that Urban was well known to have had it prominently amongst his aims.

(v) Urban's own letters and rulings of 1095 and 1096 about the Crusade point to the same conclusion as does the evidence which has so far

23 Anselm always maintained his opposition to the departure of monks for Jerusalem; *Ep.* 410, *Opera omnia*, v (Edinburgh, 1951), 355.

24 A. Gieysztor, 'The Genesis of the Crusades: the Encyclical of Sergius IV (1009–12)', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, v (1948), 3–23; vi (1950), 3–34. The text is printed on pp. 33–4 of the second article.

25 Amongst those who accepted it as genuine was Erdmann: *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens*, pp. 102–6.

26 *Art. cit.*, *Med. et Hum.*, vi (1950), 26, cp. p. 21.

been examined. They do much to bridge the gap that still remains open between the early spring of 1096 and Clermont itself.

It is, indeed, the case that, during the last two years of his pontificate and in the context of Spanish affairs, Urban was twice to refer to the Crusade in terms of a general purpose of defeating the Saracens, with no reference whatsoever to Jerusalem. In 1098, his privilege for the see of Huesca expressed his gratitude that the distresses of Christian peoples were being relieved and that the Christian faith was being exalted in two continents – by Christian victories over the Turks in Asia as over the Moors in Spain.²⁷ Soon afterwards, he wrote to the Counts of Besalù, Empurias, and Roussillon, urging them, if they were minded to campaign in Asia, that they should instead campaign at Tarragona, nearer home. He said that it was for the knights of other provinces to help the Asian Christians: let them rather help their own neighbours.²⁸ But a presentation of the Crusade in these general terms is to be expected in a Spanish context, which provides no parallel to make natural a mention of Jerusalem.²⁹

The remaining, and much earlier, sources for Urban's own view of the Crusade indicate that, in intending to bring help to all the Eastern Churches, he had Jerusalem and its liberation particularly and constantly in mind. As early as 1089, he was beginning to think of Jerusalem in relation to Christian action on the frontiers with Islam. Once again, the context is a Spanish one. Urban wrote to encourage the ecclesiastical and lay magnates of Tarragona and Barcelona to help the material rehabilitation of the Church and city of Tarragona. He promised them the same spiritual benefits as would accrue from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.³⁰ His letter foreshadows such an amalgamation of the ideas of pilgrimage to Jerusalem and of the vindication of Christendom against Islam, as the charter evidence points to in his preaching at Clermont and after.

His own pronouncements of 1095–6 tend to confirm that this was how his mind developed. They strongly suggest that he named Jerusalem as the goal of the Crusade; that he did so in terms of its military liberation; and that

27 *Ep.* ccxxxvii, J.-P. Migne. *Patrologia Latina* [= *PL*], cli. 504–6.

28 P. F. Kehr, *Papsturkunden in Spanien, i, Katalanien*, no. 23, *Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, ph.-hist. Klasse, NF*, xviii, pt. 2 (1926), pp. 287–8. For the date, see Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens*, p. 294.

29 A further incident which has been interpreted as telling against Urban's concern with Jerusalem is his sending back of Archbishop Bernard of Toledo when, perhaps in 1099, he appeared in Rome on his way to join the Crusade in Syria: Roderic of Toledo, *De rebus Hispaniae*, vi. 27, *Hispaniae illustratae . . . scriptores*, ed. A. Schott, ii (Frankfurt, 1603), 107. But Roderic expressly says that Urban sent Bernard back because clerks should not desert their churches. He tends to confirm that Urban named Jerusalem at Clermont: Bernard, who had been at the Council, went towards Syria 'eius [Urban's] indulgentiis provocatus', while Urban preached the Crusade 'eo quod ab Agarenis Hierosolymitana civitas tenebatur'.

30 *Ep.* xx, *PL* cli. 302–3.

he also attached to the expedition the spiritual benefits of a pilgrimage. Thus, on 22 July 1096, when Urban received from Count Raymond of Provence the renewed subjection to the Roman Church of the monastery of Saint-Gilles, Urban's charter referred to the Count as 'in Hierosolimitanam expeditionem iturus'.³¹ Again, the well-known letters which Urban wrote concerning the Crusade to all the faithful in Flanders and to the clergy and people of Bologna, testify, although with some difference of emphasis, to his concern to deliver the city of Jerusalem from the pagan yoke. The undated letter to the Flemings, usually assigned to late December 1095, first refers, in general, to the oppression of the Churches of God in eastern parts. But it was this oppression and that of the Holy City of Christ together that constituted the 'calamitas' which moved him to initiate the Crusade:

We believe that you are already well informed about the barbaric fury which, by its attacks which move us to compassion, has laid waste the Churches of God in eastern parts and, moreover, what is shocking to mention, has delivered the Holy City of Christ, made illustrious by his passion and resurrection, together with its churches, into an intolerable servitude. Grieving as was due in face of such a calamity, we journeyed in France and in large measure stirred up the rulers and subjects of that land to seek the liberation of the Eastern Churches.³²

Urban's letter to the Bolognese, written from Pavia on 19 September 1096, contains no such reference to the liberation of all the Eastern Churches. Jerusalem comes right to the fore, so that Urban was concerned only with it and its liberation:

We have heard that some of you have formed a desire to journey to Jerusalem, and you are aware that this pleases us greatly. Know that we remit the whole penance due for their sins to all who set out, not from greed of this world's goods, but simply for the salvation of their souls and for the liberation of the Church (*ecclesiae liberatione*).³³

His preoccupation with the Holy City is readily explicable, and does not point to a subsequent change in his thought. For he wrote to confirm the

31 *Ep. cciv, PL cli. 477–8.*

32 H. Hagenmayer, *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100* (Innsbruck, 1901), no. ii, pp. 136–7. It is difficult to agree with Mayer's interpretation of the letter, that Urban spoke principally of the liberation of the Eastern Churches and only incidentally of Jerusalem: *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, p. 17. It would be truer to say that he saw the servitude of the Holy City as the most challenging aspect of the 'calamitas' of all the Eastern Churches.

33 Hagenmayer, *op. cit.* no. iii, pp. 137–8. The phrase 'ecclesiae liberatione' should probably be referred to the Church of Jerusalem, rather than to the Church at large, in the light of canon ii of Clermont, quoted below.

spiritual benefits of the Crusade, and to insist upon his rules about who might and who might not go on it; he had no need to refer to any wider objective than Jerusalem.

However, he reverted to the Eastern Christians as a whole as well as to Jerusalem in another, seldom noticed letter which he sent on 7 October 1096 from Cremona to the monks of Vallombrosa. He wrote to repeat his prohibition, of which he also reminded the Bolognese, of the departure to the Crusade of clerks and monks without the leave of their bishops and abbots. He also restated his intention for the Crusade. As he envisaged it, it was essentially the self-dedication (*oblatio*) of the knights who had set out for Jerusalem in order to liberate the enslaved part of Christendom. He had stirred up their hearts to take part in such an 'expeditio' with a view to restoring the former liberty of Christians.³⁴ This letter may well be taken as embodying the most balanced statement that survives of Urban's own view of the Crusade. Not only does it recapitulate the points made in his two earlier letters, but it tends to confirm the other evidence that he preached a Crusade having Jerusalem as its goal, by which he intended to effect the liberation of it as of all the Eastern Churches.

That Jerusalem and its liberation were central to Urban's plan for the Crusade from its very inception is, finally, suggested by a piece of evidence from the Council of Clermont itself. Its canons survive in a version preserved by one of the participants, Bishop Lambert of Arras. Of his thirty-two canons, the second alone directly concerns the Crusade. It refers in the clearest terms to Jerusalem as being its goal, and the spiritual benefits to be gained from reaching Jerusalem are attached to an intention to liberate it, not merely to journey there: 'If any man sets out from pure devotion, not for reputation or monetary gain, to liberate the Church of God at Jerusalem, his journey shall be reckoned in place of all penance.'³⁵

The evidence that has been reviewed all suggests that Urban had Jerusalem in mind from the very beginning of his plans for the Crusade. It may well never be possible to disprove a theory such as Erdmann's. But there is nothing stronger to support it than an interpretation of the letter

34 W. Wiederhold, 'Papsturkunden in Florenz', no. 6, *Nachrichten von der Königl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, ph.-hist. Kl.* (1901), Heft 3, pp. 313–14. The relevant portion of this letter, which Hagenmayer did not print, is as follows: 'Audivimus quosdam vestrum cum militibus qui Ierusalem liberandae christianitatis gratia tendunt, velle proficisci. Recta quidem oblatio, sed non recta divisio; nos enim ad hanc expeditionem militum animos instigavimus, qui armis suis Saracenorum feritatem declinare et christianorum possint libertati pristinae restituere: eos autem qui de relicto seculo spirituali se militiae devoverunt, nos nec arma baiulare nec iter hoc inire volumus, immo etiam prohibemus. Porro religiosos clericos sive monachos in comitatu hoc proficisci sine episcoporum vel abbatum suorum licentia secundum disciplinam sanctorum canonum interdiximus. Videat ergo religionis vestrae prudentia, ne in negotio hoc aut sedis apostolicae contemptum aut animarum vestrarum periculum incurratis.'

35 J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, xx. 816.

to the Flemings which probably understates the place of Jerusalem in it. There is no early evidence that positively and unambiguously suggests that there was a major change in Urban's purpose for the Crusade as the months went by, or that he capitulated to public opinion as regards Jerusalem. The alternative view is not only more likely but also better documented. Urban at all times seems to have preached Jerusalem as the goal of the Crusade, and to have looked upon it as standing at the heart and centre of the Eastern Churches which he desired to free from pagan domination.