

# **What was life like for a Muslim living under Frankish rule?**

Enquiry: Who lived in the Crusader states?

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## Who are the Franks?

From 1100 to 1291, the Holy land was dominated by the rule of the Franks.

The Franks were considered as those who had settled in the Crusader states after the First Crusade. They were the Western Europeans who took over the Holy land in 1099 (think to last lesson). This term is used differently to those who simply passed through the land when the Crusades were taking place. These people were known as Crusaders.



## Were the Franks the majority or minority?

One popular misbelief about the society of the Crusader kingdoms is that the Crusaders were a tiny Christian **elite** ruling over mainly Muslim population. That is not correct.

In short, the Crusaders **conquered territories** in which roughly half the population was still Christian (Remember- Jesus had died here and **converted** many to Christianity). Historian, Hamilton, estimates roughly 60% of the population of the Crusader states were Christians.



## Living together

At times, the Franks went to war to try and increase their power. Although there are many sources which talk of the Franks being barbaric to the Muslims.

This has now been investigated by more historians. Recent research now shows that both communities lived relatively peacefully and well together. On occasion, the Franks and the Muslims would work together against their enemies. Some Muslims even **voluntarily** converted to Christianity! Despite this, there were **undertones** of dislike towards one another, even if they were civil to each other.



## Muslim places of worship

When the Christian settlers came to Jerusalem, the Church of the **Holy Sepulchre** was rebuilt as a large Romanesque church. Muslim shrines were converted for Christian purposes.

King Baldwin II of Jerusalem (a Frankish leader) allowed for Muslim buildings to be used as headquarters. But not all Muslim religious space was touched; lots of it was respected and Muslims could pray as normal.



## Muslim resistance

There were some groups of Muslims who **resisted** Frankish rule, but not always on religious grounds. Some tried to defend the cities which had been taken whilst others wrote to Muslim leaders asking them for help.

Some Muslim communities cut off trading routes which would act as an obstacle for the Crusaders. Some historians argue that some Muslims even waged **jihad**, a holy war, against the Crusaders which led to the second Crusade within the area.



## What was life like for Muslims?

- They could still **worship** in the mosque.
- Social matters were sorted by the Muslim **Imam**.
- Muslims could still make their **holy pilgrimage** to Mecca (Hajj).
- Muslims could still work in **top jobs** such as being doctors.
- Muslims could **live** in the same towns as Franks
- Muslims and Franks began to **converse** together.



# Glossary

**Voluntarily:** doing something of one's own free choice

**Undertones:** subtle and slight

**Holy Sepulchre:** religious building in Jerusalem

**Convert** - to change somebody's beliefs

**Conquered territories** - lands taken over

**Elite** - a small group of upper class people

**Jihad**- a holy war waged by Muslims





# Comprehension Questions

1. Is it true to assume that all of the Crusader states were mainly Muslim?

**Sentence starter:** From the evidence, the Crusader states were...

2. Were the Franks and Muslims always at war with one another?
3. What things show that Muslims lived relatively peacefully under the Franks rule?

**Challenge:** Why might some Muslims have not accepted Frankish rule?



***Positive*** experiences for  
Muslims living under  
Frankish rule

***Negative*** experiences  
for Muslims living under  
Frankish rule

