

What other groups lived in the Crusader states?

Enquiry: Who lived in the Crusader states?

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Women at war

The role of women in the Crusades is frequently viewed as being limited to **domestic**. To some extent this is true, however, some took part in such activities including armed combat in the battles in the Holy Land.

It was not only noblewomen who participated in the Crusades. Women who were of the **common people** were also present, performing tasks such as removing lice from soldiers' heads and/or washing clothes.

A number of women took the cross and battled the Muslims, some with their husbands, some without; numerous royal women fought as Crusaders.



Women in the Crusader states

Upper class women were ***literate***. They did not have to go veiled in public, although women mostly did due to the summer sun. Most importantly, they were entitled to their opinions. Furthermore, widows had the power, property and right to choose their own husbands.

Compared to their faceless and voiceless sisters in the Muslim world, women in the Crusader states were viewed as intelligent human beings with opinions worth hearing.



Women's status

Due to the almost continuous fighting and the many diseases for which the Westerners had no immunity, mortality rates among knights and barons were exceptionally high. Many men died without a male heir. The desire to retain their lands led to female **inheritance**. By 1131, laws guaranteed the right of daughters to inherit. Coincidentally, in the same year the kingdom itself passed to a woman, *Melisende*. Women in the Crusader kingdoms enjoyed exceptional freedom and power.



Jews in the Crusader states

Certainly, there were still Jewish communities, mainly in Jerusalem, Tyre and Tiberius when the Crusaders arrived. In sharp contrast to Western Europe that saw significant attacks on Jewish communities in association with the Crusades, there was no systematic persecution of the Jews in the Crusader states. Although there are accounts that their synagogues were burnt down when the Crusaders first arrived.



Jews in the Holy City- Jerusalem

The initial contact between Crusaders and Jews had been bitter. The Jews actively supported the Muslim defenders of Jerusalem and other cities of the Holy Land. When these cities were taken by the Crusaders, the Jews were **massacred** along with the Muslims. In Jerusalem, a ban **prohibited** Jews from ever re-settling in the Holy City.



Jewish freedoms

Although Jews were ***prohibited*** from living in the city Jerusalem, other cities, particularly Acre and Tyre, hosted large Jewish communities. There is also evidence that Jews continued to work in respected professions such as medicine. There is no evidence that they were required to wear special clothing or live in ***segregated*** communities, although it is almost certain that like the remaining Muslim population they were subject to additional taxes.



Enslaved People

The custom of keeping captured enemies as slaves provided the Christian kingdoms with a ***bargaining chip*** for the release of their own captives. Famously, Balian d'Ibelin threatened to kill the five thousand Muslim captives held in Jerusalem, if Saladin would not give him terms.



Glossary

Domestic- household work.

Common people- ordinary working people.

Took the cross- fighting in the name of Christ/ for their religion.

Literate- could read and write.

Inheritance- when you are given things from somebody who has died (usually money/ property).

Massacred- killed.

Prohibited- stopped from doing something.

Segregated- separated.

Bargaining chip- able to use this to help get your own way.



Comprehension Questions

1. What was the role of some women during the Crusades?

Sentence starter: *Some women in the Crusader states...*

2. Why did the role of women evolve (develop) in the Crusader states?

3. To what extent were Jews persecuted in the Crusader states?

4. Why did people continue to be enslaved in the Crusader states?

5. Challenge: Look at the next slide



Challenge: What can we learn about the Pope's words here about how he viewed the Jews of the Crusader states?


“We decree that no Christian shall use violence to force [Jews] into baptism while they are unwilling and refuse... Moreover...no Christian shall presume to wound their persons, or kill them, or rob them of their money... Furthermore, while they celebrate their festivals, no one shall disturb them in any way”

Franke, Daniel P.. “The Crusades and Medieval anti-Semitism: Cause or Consequence” in Seven Myths of the Crusades.



Task

Write a short paragraph **explaining** who lived in the Crusader states.

| Sentence starters: | Key words |
|--|---|
| <p><i>There were a number of different religious groups who lived in the Crusader states such as...</i></p> <p><i>Furthermore, there were also many different ethnic groups such as....</i></p> <p><i>Lastly, there were many different social groups such as....</i></p> | <p>-Samaritans</p> <p>-Franks</p> <p>-Saracens</p>  |