

Pilgrimage for Penance or War of Unjust Invasion? — A Christian Response to the Islamic Perspectives towards the Crusades

(An abstract)

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This article addresses the issue of the Crusades, which is an important topic under discussion in the Post-9/11 era and the age of terror, regarding Christian-Muslim relations. This article also seeks to understand and respond to the Islamic perspectives towards the so called “Crusades.”

First, the article points out the significance of the Crusades as a cultural metaphor in imagining the contemporary international politics, as well as the Christian mission and the popular culture. Second, the article gives a brief survey, going through topics such as the definition of the Crusades: what the Crusades were and how many there were, as well as who the Crusaders were. Third, the article traces the historical development of the Crusades in parallel to the global expansion of Islamic empires. In addition, the article seeks to understand how the Muslims perceive the Franks or the Crusaders, through a development from counter-crusade movements to a genesis of the conception of *Jihad*.

Juxtaposing this Islamic narrative and the recent western scholarly view (pluralist) on the Crusades, the article

points out that there is an urgent need for the Chinese church to study, so as to grasp the history of the Crusades better and thus develop her own historiography.