



37th Annual MVHSMUN Conference

“opus justitiae pax”

The Work of Justice Shall be Peace

Crisis 2

Hi, my name is Daniella Castillo, I am the Head Chair for Byzantine Empire in the NUNO committee. Some interesting things about me are that I've been in MUN for 5 years now, I've played soccer for 11 years, and I'm a sucker for cheesy jokes/pick-up lines. My dream college is UCI and I plan to major in Forensic Psychology but if I get into UCI I would take Social Ecology for its other curriculars. I hope to one day get my PsyD to make it in my family's Hall of Fame. Please email position papers and any questions to mvhsmuncrisis2@gmail.com.

Hello delegates! My name's Ethan Sparks and I get to be your Vice Chair for the Byzantine Empire committee. I've been in MUN programs in Middle School and Mission Viejo for 5 years. I'm a Junior at Mission and have been participating in Cross Country, Track and Field, and the MUN program. I love to travel and have been to every continent except Australia and Antarctica. When I'm not at school I like to go on the weekends to the Colorado River with my family and wakeboard/wakesurf.. When I graduate I hope to go to my college of choice, BYU, and study in either Law or Entrepreneurial Business. I'm excited to be your Vice Chair and can't wait to meet all of you in committee!

Byzantine Empire

I. Background on the First Crusade



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The First Crusade (1096-1099) was a significant point in history because it marked the start of the first attempt to take the Holy Land, Jerusalem, by European Eastern Orthodox and Catholic groups from the Muslim Seljuk Turks. The Holy Land had religious significance to both the Christians and Muslims and the Christian powers wanted to stop the expansion of Muslims states. The Muslim Seljuk Turks, or better known as the Seljuk Empire, succeeded in their battles against the Byzantine armies, especially at the Battle of Manzikert. The Seljuk Empire afterward claimed territory. They claimed major cities such as Edessa and Antioch and then had full control of Jerusalem in 1087 CE. The First Crusade originated as a military campaign to obtain Jerusalem and the Holy Land once again as a goal.

The Byzantine Emperor at the time was Alexios I Komnenos, who was concerned when the Seljuk Empire expanded into the Holy Land. Alexios I gathered help from western armies to aid his forces in the battle for control of Asia Minor. In the process, he asked Pope Urban II for an appeal to send troops in March of 1095. The Pope agreed and sent around 60,000 soldiers and approximately half of another group of non-combatants. Pope Urban II was willing to cooperate with the Byzantine Empire as he wanted the Holy Land out of Muslim hands. The recapture of the Holy Land would be in Christian control to ensure the safety of religious treasures and significant sites. Once the Pope approved of the crusade, the troops began heading towards the Holy Land on November 27, 1095. On July 15, 1099, CE Antioch, Jerusalem, and Nicaea were recaptured and Christian forces gained control of the Holy Land. Many more Crusades were held in the following century as competition for the Holy Land increased.



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I. Byzantine Involvement

Byzantium felt threatened when they noticed that the Seljuk Empire started to gain power and territory in the eleventh century. The Empire tried to fight off the Seljuk Muslims, however, horribly lost due to the disadvantage of having a small army. The Byzantine Empire under Emperor Alexios I was able to go on the offensive with aid from Western crusaders commanded by the Catholic Pope Urban II in an attempt to take back the Holy Land and most of Anatolia taken by the Seljuk Muslims which previously was controlled by the Byzantine Empire. Soon, in 1099 the Byzantine Empire started to retake their previous territories against the Seljuk Muslims.

The Byzantine Empire played a key role in the Crusade to retake the Holy Land due to their organized military forces, their shared goal with the Western Crusaders, and their close proximity to the Seljuk forces. One major contributing factor the Byzantine Empire has is the city of Constantinople, it helps serve as a point of communication, trade, and the point separating the Christian forces to the West and the Muslim forces in the holy land to the East. Generals such as Manuel Boutoumites who was able to use his military knowledge against the Seljuk forces as well as, Takitios who acted as an important diplomatic figure between the Byzantine empire and the Crusaders to better unite the two groups.

Guided Questions:

- In what way did the First Crusade affect the Byzantine Empire and to what extent?



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- What are some alternate outcomes to the First Crusade?
- How do you think the Byzantine Empire's relations were with the Crusaders in the West?
- In the First Crusade, what were the Byzantine Empire's main priorities?
- In what manner should the Byzantine Empire communicate with the other groups?
- To what extent should the Byzantine Empire ally with others?

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