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## Explaining the 1096 Massacres in the Context of the First Crusade

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EXPLAINING THE 1096 MASSACRES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FIRST  
CRUSADE

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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## **Abstract**

During the First Crusade's onset, lay enthusiasm went unregulated. Popular preachers spread Urban II's call to crusade across Europe, and after Peter the Hermit left the Rhineland, religious tension flared and culminated in the 1096 A.D. Jewish massacres. This paper examines Christian crusader motivation during the 1096 massacres. Through textual analysis of contemporary Latin and Hebrew chronicles, and medieval eschatological legends, I argue that the conversion of the Jewish communities to Christianity was the primary motivation of the Christian crusaders and neighboring burghers. I suggest that figures such as Count Emicho of Flonheim were likely inspired by the eschatological legend of the Last Roman Emperor and sought to destroy the Jewish communities to bring the second coming of Christ and the End Times. The Jewish communities' destruction was through conversion or the sword, however I argue through primary source examples that conversion was preferable, and crusaders and burghers went to great lengths to see conversion through. This study is part of a growing body of research on conversion during the 1096 massacres, specifically conversion linked to Christian millenarianism. This study aims to add to the greater literature and offer another voice to the ongoing conversation.

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## Introduction

Interpreting motivation of those who existed a millennium ago is a debatable subject, especially when the source literature is so highly tendentious and liturgical. When confronting the ruinous events that were the 1096 A.D. Jewish massacres, we are likely to ask ourselves what spurred those laymen to such atrocities. Historians have drawn several conclusions regarding motivation in the hope of quantifying an answer; the most common motivations being avarice, vengeance, and conversion. Steven Runciman and Christopher Tyerman both drew cynical conclusions. Runciman suggested that Count Emicho of Flonheim manipulated local populations by arousing religious fervor in order to garner greater power and wealth.<sup>1</sup> He argued that the poorer laity, the peasants, burghers, and petty nobility, were predisposed to violence against the Jews due to the parties' past financial dealings.<sup>2</sup> Tyerman reasoned that the need for material resources to offset expenses, as well as garnering resources to act as prestige items, empowered the crusaders.<sup>3</sup> Also of note, Tyerman does not limit avarice to crusaders alone for he cites the clergy as an example by their extortion of the local Jewish populations.

I disagree with Runciman and to an extent, Tyerman. Through my analysis of the source literature, no quantifiable evidence is provided to suggest Emicho manipulated others for his own personal gain. I equate Runciman's conclusion as nothing more than his notorious pro-Byzantine bias. In agreement with Jonathan Riley-Smith and Robert Chazan, I view Emicho, and for the most part, the crusaders, as people enamored by the eschatological currents of the period.

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades. Vol. 1: The First Crusade and the Foundation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, reprinted (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr, 1997), 113.

<sup>2</sup> Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 111-112.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades*, 1. pbk. ed (Cambridge, Mass: The Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2008), 103-104.

Eschatological evidence exists in the source literature, and to disregard the role it played in lay enthusiasm is a tremendous discredit to the subject. I hold issue with Tyerman's conclusion. Crusading was without a doubt an expensive affair with many selling or pledging their patrimonies while crusaders faced further financial insecurity. While I conclude that plunder did occur, it was merely a fundamental practice of medieval European warfare and I would not prioritize it as a grand motivator for the murder and conversion of hundreds, if not thousands, of European Jews. Riley-Smith dismissed conversion as a reason for lay motivation and concluded that vengeance, and in some aspects avarice, were largely motivating factors.<sup>4</sup> Yes, I concede that vengeance and avarice played its role, but I would not go as far as to say that they were the sole prominent motivators. Riley-Smith briefly examined the impact millenarianism and the legend of the Last Roman Emperor had on lay enthusiasm. Riley-Smith was on the right track as far as framing the crusades as an eschatological undertaking, but he never linked millenarianism to conversion.

The approach I took came of age through the efforts of Paul Alphandéry. This approach focuses on the in-depth analysis of the contemporary chronicles, namely the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*. Alphandéry suggested the 1096 massacres were linked to a wish for mass conversion of the Jewish population as a prerequisite to the End Times. He had also suggested that Emicho had a revelation that he would ascend to kingship and would oversee the End Times as Earth's temporal ruler. Others such as Norman Cohn and Joshua Prawer continued the conversation. Under the Sibylline tradition, Cohn took Alphandéry's hypothesis regarding Emicho and restated

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<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095 - 1131*, 1. paperback ed., reprinted (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000), 20.

it as factual.<sup>5</sup> Praver focused on the eschatological expectations of the “popular” crusade participants, and he suggested that Emicho believed that by forcibly converting the Jews, that they would bring about the End Times. Praver acknowledges other motivations such as vengeance, which he states echoes the call of the pope and popular preachers.

However, Chazan is the historian whom I agree largely with. Chazan interpreted the 1096 massacres as an effort to root out and annihilate the European Jewry either by the sword or by conversion. Agreeing with Riley-Smith, Chazan recognized the role millenarianism had, but he took it a step further and linked millenarianism with conversion.<sup>6</sup> I find it difficult to find fault in Chazan’s arguments, and my work is largely based on his research. Others such as Simha Goldin argued that total conversion was the overarching goal of crusaders, while David Malkiel argued that the motive of conversion existed and the option was left only to family or acquaintances, but at no point was conversion prioritized over the sword.<sup>7</sup> Kenneth Stow argued against the role millenarianism held, suggesting the chronicles were merely mocking Emicho to the effect of highlighting the failure that he ultimately was.<sup>8</sup> I do not believe this to be the case. Chroniclers

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<sup>5</sup> Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Messianism in Medieval and Reformation Europe and Its Bearing on Modern Totalitarian Movements*, Second Edition (Harper Torchbooks, 1961).

<sup>6</sup> Robert Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, First paperback printing (Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of California Press, 1996). Robert Chazan, “‘Let Not a Remnant or a Residue Escape’: Millenarian Enthusiasm in the First Crusade,” *Speculum* 84, no. 2 (2009): 289–313.

<sup>7</sup> Simha Goldin and Jonathan Chipman, “Forced Conversion during the First Crusade,” in *Apostasy and Jewish Identity in High Middle Ages Northern Europe, Are You Still My Brother?* (Manchester University Press, 2014), 22–30, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt18mvmct.7>, 257–80; David Malkiel, “Destruction or Conversion: Intention and Reaction, Crusaders and Jews, in 1096,” *Jewish History* 15, no. 3 (2001): 257–80.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth Stow, “Conversion, Apostasy, and Apprehensiveness: Emicho of Floheim and the Fear of Jews in the Twelfth Century,” *Speculum* 76, no. 4 (2001): 911–33, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2903615>.

may have displayed some literary freedom with Emicho, but he was a figure rooted in the period's eschatological sentiment.

My interpretation substantially agrees with recent scholarship, while offering a new insight to the topic; the objective of this thesis is to further investigate the prominence of conversion linked to millenarianism in the context of the 1096 massacres and the other motivating factors mentioned or alluded to in the source literature. Using millenarianism as a framework and with the aid of textual evidence produced by the analysis of the source literature, I suggest the Jews' subjection through conversion and forced baptism was a primary motivation of the crusaders in the 1096 massacres. Though that is not to say that other motivations did not occur; textual evidence indicates several other underlying motivations such as avarice and vengeance for Christ's crucifixion. But as I will show, in most cases, the massacres committed by the crusaders only occurred after the Jewish refusal to convert. As Chazan illustrated, the Jewish refusal to convert only invalidated the Christian faith, and for that reason the Latin crusaders could not allow that slight to be tolerated.<sup>9</sup> A victory spiritually through conversion would have meant so much more because it would have validated the Christian faith as the superior religion. If the Christian could not gain a spiritual victory over the Jew, a temporal victory would have to suffice. Upon refusal of conversion, the Jew's slaughter was generally carried out by the local burghers or crusaders. A large focus of this thesis will be on Emicho of Flonheim, a Rhenish count. He is seen as a messianic figure steeped in the period's eschatological currents. If we take the contemporary literature at face value, namely the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*, Emicho saw himself as a figure who would be crowned in Byzantium and

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<sup>9</sup> Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 73.

then would usher in Christ's return: the legend of the Last Roman Emperor humanized. Apart of the eschatological sentiment of the period was the belief that upon the mass conversion of the Jews, a prerequisite for the End Times and Christ's return would be fulfilled. In the context of the 1096 massacres, an offer of death or conversion was typically given to the Jewish population, and at times, the crusaders would plead and ask the Jews to reconsider their offer of baptism. As said, conversion was preferable to the sword, but if conversion did not occur the Jew's wholesale annihilation would nonetheless bring Emicho and his followers closer to their believed second coming of Christ and the End Times.

## The Primary Literature and Limitations

The following will include a brief summary of the relevant events preceding our topic and a concise account of the 1096 massacres, followed by a research analysis into the crusader motivations. However, I must elaborate on my own limitations. Due to my rudimentary grasp of Latin, and having no prior experience with Hebrew, French, and other languages, I was mainly restricted to English or English-translated copies of contemporary and secondary sources.

Unfortunately, I was not able to use the works of prominent historians related to my research, such as Paul Alphandéry, Joshua Prawer and Jean Flori, due to my own language restrictions. I used *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants*, edited by August C. Krey, for the English translations of the Latin chronicles, and I used the English translations of the Hebrew chronicles provided by Robert Chazan in *European Jewry and the First Crusade*.<sup>10</sup>

Regarding The Last Roman Emperor legend, I used two texts: the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* and the *Prophecy of the Tiburtine Sibyl*. I used an English translation of the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* featured in *The First Crusade: A Brief History with Documents*, compiled by Jay Rubenstein.<sup>11</sup> Due to the lack of scholarly English translations and its great relevance to our topic, I felt obligated to translate portions of the *Prophecy of the Tiburtine Sibyl* from Latin into English. The Latin transcription I used can be found in *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen: Pseudomethodius, Adso und tiburtinische Sibylle* by Ernst Sackur.<sup>12</sup> The *Tiburtine*

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<sup>10</sup> August C. Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, 2016.; Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*.

<sup>11</sup> Jay Rubenstein, *The First Crusade: A Brief History with Documents*, The Bedford Series in History and Culture (Boston, Massachusetts: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015).

<sup>12</sup> Ernst Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte Und Forschungen :Pseudomethodius, Adso Und Die Tiburtinische Sibylle* / ([Torino :, 1963), <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/chi.16188553>, 177-187.

*Sibyl* was translated into English by students of Pomona College in 2012, and I used this endeavor to check my own work. I will go further in-depth regarding the *Pseudo-Methodius* and the *Tiburtine Sibyl* later in the paper.

Contemporary Latin chroniclers were reluctant to detail the massacres for fear of invalidating or discrediting the Crusades due to the divergence of the massacres. As there was no glory or honor to be had in the European Jews' slaughter, contemporaries found little reason to include an account of the butchery. However, two Latin chroniclers wrote brief excerpts pertaining to the massacres: the *Hierosolymita* by Ekkehard of Aura and the *Historia Ierosolimitana* by Albert of Aachen. Compared to the two Hebrew chronicles, we are limited by the short length of the *Hierosolymita* and *Historia Ierosolimitana*. Both Latin chronicles are crucial to our understanding of the massacres as they provide much needed insight otherwise ignored by contemporaries. Ekkehard of Aura ventured on the third wave of the First Crusade in 1101, and he succeeded in reaching the Near East. Ekkehard used oral reports and prior written materials to construct his chronicle. Ekkehard's account of the massacres in the *Hierosolymita* is rather short. Only willing to spare three lines, Ekkehard highlighted the figure of Emicho of Flonheim and his devotion to destroy the Jewish race without delving into specifics. Albert of Aachen never traveled to the Near East, but he nonetheless compiled written reports and oral statements from those who had journeyed on crusade. Albert gives a slightly more robust account of the massacres, however with an emphasis on Mainz. What is notable is his illustration of both Christian violence and the subsequent Jewish martyrdom. Both chronicles were written in the early twelfth century.

Due to their discovery in the nineteenth century, the study of the Hebrew chronicles is a relatively recent phenomenon. The Hebrew chronicles, *The Narrative of the Old Persecutions*, or the *Mainz Anonymous*, and the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*, are central to our understanding of the 1096 massacres.<sup>13</sup> The *Mainz Anonymous* shed light on the initial massacres at Speyer, Worms, and Mainz, while the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* likely used the *Mainz Anonymous* as a source and expounded on it while detailing further events through using additional sources. The *Mainz Anonymous*'s author is unknown and it is thought to have been composed shortly after the massacres with the help of written statements and verbal testimony. The chronicle ends abruptly, suggesting that it is incomplete, detailing only the initial attacks on Speyer, Worms, and Mainz. The *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* is easily the most extensive of the source literature regarding the massacres. The authorship is questioned by some scholars, but for the purposes of this paper, we will assume that Solomon bar Simson, a twelfth-century Hebrew scholar of Mainz, was the author. A rather complete but disjointed account of the massacres, it is suggested that the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* is a collection of different sources, compiled by an editor; the *Mainz Anonymous* is likely one of those sources.

During my analysis of the *Mainz Anonymous* and *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*, I doubted the chronicles' reliability, and I expect others would as well. Through secondary research, those fears were alleviated. Largely agreed upon by scholars of the 1096 massacres, and as I briefly touched upon in my introduction, the Hebrew chronicles were highly tendentious and liturgical, giving us the clear purpose of the texts; they were an attempt to justify the

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<sup>13</sup> For the sake of brevity, I will use *Mainz Anonymous* as opposed to *The Narrative of the Old Persecutions*.

previously unprecedented martyrdoms of the Jewish communities in the Rhineland and surrounding areas. Because of the texts' obvious subjectivity and purpose, it is reasonable to question their facticity. Ivan G. Marcus in his 1982 article, "From Politics to Martyrdom: Shifting Paradigms in the Hebrew Narratives of the 1096 Crusade Riots," questioned the trustworthiness of the Hebrew narratives.<sup>14</sup> Marcus proposed that "facts" in medieval chronicles were merely a "highly edited version of the 'deeds' (gesta)," which fitted the "narrator's preconceived religious literary schema."<sup>15</sup> Marcus went on to say, "medieval chronicles are, in this sense, fiction: imaginative reorderings of experience within a cultural framework and system of symbols."<sup>16</sup> Marcus claimed that the various examples of martyrdom featured in the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* were structured in a series of five parts; a liturgical prologue, a first act that narrated the political negotiations undertaken by the Jews to confront the crusader threat, a liturgical intermission, a second act that included the martyrdom of the Jewish communities, and a liturgical epilogue. If I understand Marcus' argument correctly, the texts' facticity is erroneous as the chronicles served to fit a literary schema to support and justify the martyrdoms.

To alleviate doubt regarding the texts' reliability, Robert Chazan supported their facticity in the second chapter of his book, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, and he directly countered Marcus in the article, "The Facticity of Medieval Narrative: A Case Study of the Hebrew First Crusade Narratives."<sup>17</sup> In *European Jewry*, Chazan's argument largely was centered around the chronicles' commitment to detail and diversity, "rather than portraying a

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<sup>14</sup> Ivan G. Marcus, "From Politics to Martyrdom: Shifting Paradigms in the Hebrew Narratives of the 1096 Crusade Riots," *Prooftexts* 2, no. 1 (1982), 40–52.

<sup>15</sup> Marcus, *From Politics to Martyrdom*, 42.

<sup>16</sup> Marcus, *From Politics to Martyrdom*, 42.

<sup>17</sup> Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*.

stereotyped and repetitive set of behaviors, both Christian and Jewish, they focus on a variety of actions and reactions. The uniqueness of specific circumstances, groups, and individuals is highlighted.”<sup>18</sup> Chazan equated the texts’ facticity with the general medieval growth in the commitment to authenticity in historical writing, as emphasized by Brian Stock and Bernard Guenée.<sup>19</sup> Likewise, the agreement between the Latin and Hebrew sources, and between the two separate Hebrew sources, further strengthens Chazan’s argument. The chronicles were also allegedly recorded through eyewitness accounts, up to five decades after the fact with the help of written records or verbally repeated by living survivors. Marcus’s argument regarding the structure of the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* was also rebuked by Chazan. Out of the eighteen individual assaults on the Jews, only one fit Marcus’s supposed five-part literary schema, the first attack on Mainz. For example, the first act suggested by Marcus was comprised of political negotiations undertaken by the Jews to confront the crusader threat, and as Chazan highlighted, there were only five examples of political negotiations featured in the entirety of the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*. Marcus’s questioning of medieval chronicles’ facticity is problematic; to quote Chazan, “are not all works of ancient, medieval, and modern historical writing ‘imaginative reorderings of experience within a cultural framework and system of symbols?’”<sup>20</sup> If we hold the Hebrew chronicles accountable to this high degree, shouldn’t we also hold their Latin contemporaries subject to the same scrutiny? The Latin First Crusade narratives are equally tendentious and liturgical in nature, yet they are heavily studied and utilized by modern scholars.

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<sup>18</sup> Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 44.

<sup>19</sup> Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 46.

<sup>20</sup> Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 42.

To quote Chazan, “in fact Marcus’s felicitous depiction of the Jewish records... would comfortably apply to all of the major Latin First Crusade accounts as well.”<sup>21</sup>

It is my belief that we should treat the Hebrew chronicles the same as their Latin counterparts. Both contemporary Hebrew and Latin texts were highly tendentious and liturgical in nature, allowing the reader to approximately pinpoint the author’s bias and objective, though it does not diminish the texts’ historical facticity or utility. The agreement between both Latin and Hebrew chronicles is significant. It suggests a mutual understanding of the events by multiple authors who were separated and independent of each other. This agreement is witnessed in the Jewish reaction and subsequent martyrdom. The diversity of the texts’ attributes further to the texts’ reliability. For example, the behavioral patterns of the Jews and Christians are inherently unique and diverse. The diverse nature of the texts suggests a wide array of sources and an unwillingness to fabricate. The consistency between texts and the diversity shows painstaking attention and dedication to detail, suggesting a commitment to historical facticity.

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<sup>21</sup> Robert Chazan, “The Facticity of Medieval Narrative: A Case Study of the Hebrew First Crusade Narratives,” *AJS Review* 16, no. 1/2 (1991): 31–56, 49.

## **A Brief Prelude to the 1096 Massacres**

Pope Urban II launched the First Crusade on November 27, 1095, at the Council of Clermont. Robert the Monk and Fulcher of Chartres were two chroniclers that were thought to be eyewitnesses at Clermont. Robert and Fulcher wrote their accounts years after the fact, but both are strikingly similar in terms of language used against the Seljuq Turks.<sup>22</sup> Urban was vague at times, though one can almost certainly infer that he was referencing the situation in the Near East. Fulcher wrote of a “vile” and “despised and base race,” and for those faithful to wage war against the “infidel.”<sup>23</sup> Robert labeled the Turks as an “accursed and foreign race, enemies of God,” and he noted that the Holy Sepulchre was held by “unclean people” and that Christ’s tomb was “befouled by their uncleanliness.”<sup>24</sup> The chroniclers were clearly referencing the Muslim Turks, but that animosity toward one religion could easily be repurposed and applied to another: in our case, the European Jewry. To liberate the Holy Sepulchre, the place where Christ was buried, was one of the stated goals of the First Crusade. From the Christian perspective, the Jews were responsible for Christ’s death, and the Jews were connected to the Holy Sepulchre so there is an indirect, but unintentional, connection to Urban’s speech and the Jews. The Holy Sepulchre’s proposed liberation stirred a great emotional response in Christendom and brought any residual feelings towards the Jews for their role in Christ’s death to the forefront. Such vulnerabilities could very well have been exploited by popular preachers and the laity. Under this

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<sup>22</sup> Robert the Monk’s *Historia Hierosolymitana* was written approximately 1107 to 1120, and Fulcher of Chartres began writing in 1101 and finished in 1128.

<sup>23</sup> Fulcher in S. J. Allen and Emilie Amt, eds., *The Crusades: A Reader*, Second Edition, Readings in Medieval Civilizations and Cultures, VII (North York: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 35.

<sup>24</sup> Robertus Monachus in Allen & Amt, *The Crusades: A Reader*, 35-36.

context, a line can begin to be drawn connecting Urban II's speech at the Council of Clermont to the messages heard by those who took part in the 1096 massacres.

Furthermore, an additional connection can be found in Urban II's letters to Iberia. In 1096, Urban wrote to the Catalan counts of Besalú, Empurias, Roussillon, and Cerdaña, telling them they could fulfill their already-taken crusader vow by restoring the church of Tarragona instead of fighting in the Levant. Urban feared that losing much-needed manpower from Iberia would destabilize the region further.

We are persistently entreating your lordships on behalf of the city or rather the church of Tarragona, and we order you to persevere with the restoration of that place with all possible means for the remission of sins . . . Of course, if anyone should die on this expedition for God and for the love of his brothers, he should not doubt that he will certainly receive forgiveness of his sins and find a share of eternal life through the most compassionate mercy of our God. Thus if any of you has resolved to go to Asia, it is here instead that he should endeavour to fulfil the desire of his devotion [i.e. his crusade vow].<sup>25</sup>

Urban offered the Iberian crusaders an alternative to pilgrimaging to Jerusalem, and by doing so, offered a precedent upon which others could act. Urban's papal decree was presumably exploited by popular preachers, and his letters to Iberia could illustrate such misuse. The will to earn the crusader indulgence at home is witnessed in the Hebrew chronicles, at the crusade's onset, the German crusaders' desire to "kill and subjugate" the neighboring Jews is acknowledged, and the word was spread amongst German crusaders that anyone who killed a single Jew would have his sins absolved.<sup>26</sup> Likewise in Iberia, an alternative was given; why go to Jerusalem when you can earn the same reward and perform the same function closer to home? Despite Urban's pleas,

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<sup>25</sup> *Papsturkunden in Spanien: I. Katalonien*, ed. P. Kehr (Berlin, 1926), quoted in William J Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia, c.1095-c.1187* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 123.

<sup>26</sup> Mainz Anonymous in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 225, 226.

Iberians still traveled to the Levant to fulfill their crusader vow, as did the German crusaders who took part in the massacres. Spiritual rewards were not simply enough as the allure of pilgrimage was strong. However, if the German alternative is taken literally, it gave burghers as well as crusaders, an opportunity to earn an indulgence. True to Urban's intent in Iberia, the German burgher believed they could earn an indulgence at home and thus took an active role in the 1096 massacres, often orchestrating unorganized, yet devastating, attacks on the local Jewry.

Urban's call to crusade was a historical undertaking that sparked a blaze of religious zeal throughout Christendom. Through the aid of Urban's decree, eschatological sentiment rose to the forefront of the laities' minds. Ekkehard of Aura noted the eschatological occurrences throughout Europe as astronomical portents were seen in the skies. Blood-red clouds, fiery splendors, and torches of fire were seen by Ekkehard.<sup>27</sup> Another priest witnessed knightly specters fighting between themselves through the air, the victor carrying a large cross.<sup>28</sup> Men saw a city in the clouds, Augustine's Heavenly Jerusalem, and began to proclaim that divine signs, such as a cross, were imprinted onto their bodies through divine power or that they saw visions telling them to take the cross.<sup>29</sup> However, whatever eschatological phenomena that were allegedly witnessed or feelings held preexisted in medieval society. For example, the eleventh-century monk Ralph Glaber detailed the eschatological occurrences during the turn of the first millennium. Natural calamities ravaged the landscape, and fatal famines and diseases spread as Europeans believed the "Last Days" were at hand.<sup>30</sup> In 1009, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

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<sup>27</sup> Ekkehard, *Hierosolymita* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 46.

<sup>28</sup> Ekkehard, *Hierosolymita* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 46.

<sup>29</sup> Ekkehard, *Hierosolymita* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 46.

<sup>30</sup> Ralph Glaber, "Ralph Glaber: On the First Millenium." Internet History Sourcebooks Project. Accessed September 25, 2019. <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/glaber-1000.asp>.

was destroyed by the Fatimids, and Glaber cites that the “wickedness” of the Jews were to blame for its destruction.<sup>31</sup> A mass slaughter of the Jews ensued while some were converted or were driven out of Europe. Instances of martyrdom occurred as well. Just as Christian millenarianism rose upon the 1,000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Christ’s birth, likewise, Urban’s decree sparked a resurgence of eschatological superstition in Europe, culminating in a similar fashion in the European Jewish communities’ mass murder and conversion.

Popular preaching was an effective method for spreading Urban II’s call for crusade to the laity. One such preacher was Peter the Hermit, a French priest. Peter collected a mass of recruits and departed for the Rhineland in the Spring of 1096, well before the departure date suggested by Urban II. This contingent would be known as the People’s Crusade. Walter Sansavoir, Peter’s lieutenant, parted ways with him at this juncture, allowing Peter the opportunity to preach further in the Rhineland before he departed Cologne on April 20th. There exists no account of what Peter the Hermit said during his tenure in the Rhineland, or from any popular preacher for that matter, but we can surmise that whatever Peter said either purposefully or unintentionally riled the Rhenish Christians and provoked the massacres. Whatever rhetoric was used, the crusader made no distinction between Muslim or Jew; both were the enemy of God in their eyes. Peter preached, but gathered no recruits, and then continued onwards to Jerusalem, leaving any further preaching to others. The chronicler Albert of Aachen informed us that various crusader bands rose against the Jews shortly after the departure of Peter and Gottschalk.<sup>32</sup> It can be interpreted that Peter and Gottschalk provoked religious zeal in the

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<sup>31</sup> Glaber, “On the First Millenium.” Internet History Sourcebooks Project.

<sup>32</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 54.

Rhenish laymen, which would run unchecked in the absence of a higher authority to correct any deviation from Urban's papal decree.

## **A Brief Summary of the 1096 Massacres**

The 1096 massacres were a series of religiously motivated attacks culminating in the practical annihilation through physical destruction or the conversion of entire Jewish populations by Christian crusaders or by neighboring Christian burghers. When introducing the 1096 Massacres, the three subsequent crisis-points are often considered: Speyer, Worms, and Mainz. In the context of the Jewish massacres, several other cities were attacked, such as Cologne, Neuss, Xantes, Moers, Trier, Metz, Regensburg, and others.<sup>33</sup> It is noteworthy that some of these cities were not in the Rhineland; Trier and Metz are in the Moselle region, and Regensburg is hundreds of miles away in Bavaria. Perhaps it may be helpful to further recognize the 1096 “Rhineland” massacres in a broader context as the massacres spilled over to other regions other than the Rhineland. For this reason, I recognize the events as the 1096 massacres in this thesis. Acknowledging the 1096 massacres as a European phenomenon rather than an isolated occurrence in the Rhineland brings attention to other Jewish communities often neglected.

In summarizing the 1096 massacres, I will be brief; any topic regarding motivation will be saved for a later portion of this paper. As the religious fervor provoked by Urban II spilled across Europe, many became enamored with his crusading message. Against the pope’s wishes, many underprivileged, lower class men and women took it upon themselves to take the cross and joined unsanctioned “popular” crusader armies or bands. Due to the popularity of the crusading message, and its subsequent misinterpretation, many crusaders or burghers became hostile to those outside of the Christian religion, e.g. the European Jews. The French Jews were the first

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<sup>33</sup> Xantes is modern day Xanten.

targets.<sup>34</sup> The French Jews sent letters and emissaries to warn their brethren residing in the Rhineland against the incoming threat and to honor the crusaders in order to survive.<sup>35</sup> Albert of Aachen informed us that a host of Christians, mainly from France, England, Flanders, Lorraine, and separate from Peter the Hermit and Gottschalk, rose in a “spirit of cruelty” against the Jewish people of the “Kingdom of Lorraine.”<sup>36</sup> Of course the violence was not limited to late eleventh-century Lotharingia; the violence was at its most horrendous at Speyer, Worms, and Mainz, hence the “Rhineland” massacres, however it also occurred to the east in Regensburg.

The massacres at Speyer and Worms are synonymous with random acts of violence against the Jewish populations. At Speyer, eleven Jews were killed by crusaders and burghers, and the violence was stopped as the local bishop intervened on the Jews’ behalf, seizing some of the perpetrators and cutting off their hands. Speyer also included the first instance of Jewish martyrdom in the 1096 massacres, “there was a notable and pious woman who slaughtered herself for the sanctification of the [Divine] Name.”<sup>37</sup> I will not delve too deeply into Jewish martyrdom and sanctification, but it is an integral part to the overarching topic of the 1096 massacres. Worms featured two attacks separated by a week. While the first attack was spontaneous, the second was an orchestrated attack on those sheltered in the courtyard of the local bishop. Approximately 800 were killed, and the survivors were forcibly converted and baptized. As with Speyer, the Jews of Worms likewise sanctified themselves to their god. Count

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<sup>34</sup> There exists very little documentation regarding the attacks on the French Jews. Only Guibert of Nogent depicts an attack, as noted by Chazan; Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 54.

<sup>35</sup> “Serve the king of Babylon, and live.”

<sup>36</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 54.

<sup>37</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 244.

Emicho of Flonheim, a “very mighty man of this region,” and his Teuton army arrived outside the gates of Mainz.<sup>38</sup> Despite the attempts of the archbishop to protect the Jewish population, the Mainz Jewry suffered greatly through the efforts of Emicho after the burghers opened the gates to him. Approximately 1,100 Jews were either murdered by Emicho’s crusaders or were martyred. Mainz is largely the focal point of the 1096 massacres in both the Latin and Hebrew chronicles, however an emphasis must be made on the events afterwards. The Jewish communities of Cologne, Neuss, Xantes, Moers, and several unknown towns were struck, and similar instances of mass slaughter were present. Several outlier communities are mentioned in the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*: including Trier, Metz, Regensburg, Prague, and several unknown cities. Bloodshed was minimal; the crusaders were able to prevent any mass martyrdom, and the Jewish communities were acceptable to conversion and baptism, however, the sincerity of those converted can be questioned.

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<sup>38</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 55.

## Millenarianism, the Last Roman Emperor, and Emicho of Flonheim

Count Emicho of Flonheim is a figure central to both Hebrew and Latin chronicles; he is credited as the orchestrator of the Jewish massacres, prompting noble, peasant, and burgher to commit atrocities in the name of God and his own self-proclaimed pseudo-divinity. The culmination of the pre-existing eschatological sentiment in lay society, and Urban's historic call to crusade and subsequent popular preaching by others, both the *Hierosolymita* and the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* agreed that Emicho thought himself to have been called to crusade by divine revelation. The *Hierosolymita* attested that Emicho was "called by divine revelation, like another Saul."<sup>39</sup> Ekkehard most likely was referring to the New Testament Saul, later known as Paul the Apostle, rather than the Old Testament king of the same name. Saul was known in the New Testament as a wicked man who persecuted the early followers of Christ. Upon a divine visitation from Christ, Saul was blinded for three days and then was baptized and renamed Paul. As Emicho was a man considered to be of "ill repute" and a "tyrannical" ruler, and to be later spurred by a religious fervor to lead a crusader army, the comparison to Saul is fitting.<sup>40</sup> The *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* elaborated on Emicho's divine revelation,

...an emissary of the Crucified had come to him and had given him a sign in his flesh indicating that, when he would reach Byzantium, then he [Jesus] would come to him [Emicho] himself and crown him with royal diadem and that he would overcome his enemies.<sup>41</sup>

The author of the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* advertently attributed the Last Roman Emperor legend to Emicho, while the *Hierosolymita* only gave inclination towards the idea. To

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<sup>39</sup> Ekkehard, *Hierosolymita* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 53.

<sup>40</sup> Ekkehard, *Hierosolymita* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 53.

<sup>41</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 250-251.

summarize, the legend asserted that a man would rise to become both “King of the Romans and Greeks,” unifying Christianity, and in the process slaughtering or converting the pagans, including the Jews. Laying low his enemies, the emperor would travel to Jerusalem where he would surrender his temporal kingdom to the God, and the End Times would commence.

The two main sources of the legend exist in the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* and *The Prophecy of the Tiburtine Sibyl*. The *Pseudo-Methodius* is a seventh-century Christian eschatological text, written by an unknown author, that gives a chronological history of events from Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to the End Times. The copy I used for my research was estimated to have been written in approximately the same time period as the First Crusade. In the text, history is divided into six ages, each consisting of approximately 1,000 years apiece.<sup>42</sup> The text emphasized the Arab invasion of the Mediterranean as a moment of crisis. As an act of divine punishment from God for Christendom’s sins, in the sixth and final millennium, the “sons of Ishmael,” the Muslims, would mercilessly conquer the Christian kingdoms, enslaving and slaughtering the native populations. After great suffering, God would bestow mercy on his remaining followers and free them from their captors through the ascension of a Christian king. After seven years of peace, Gog and Magog will be set loose onto the world, the “Emperor of the Greeks” will sit in Jerusalem for seven years, and the Antichrist will rise. The “King of the Romans and Greeks” would turn his spirit over to God, surrendering his earthly kingdom. Christ then would return, strike down the Antichrist, and the final judgement would commence.

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<sup>42</sup> This is the standard division of time in medieval Latin chronicles, starting with St Augustine’s writings in the fifth century A.D.

The *Tiburtine Sibyl* is a prophecy supported by the Tiburtine Oracles, dating to the fourth century, though the surviving adaptation is from the early eleventh century and was likely inspired by the *Pseudo-Methodius*. The content of the *Tiburtine Sibyl* is like that of the *Pseudo-Methodius*; it is a historical, eschatological account of the world spanning nine ages.

The *Tiburtine Sibyl* read,

There will arise a king of the Greeks by the name of Constans, and he will be king of the Romans and of the Greeks... And that same king will have writing before his eyes saying: “King of the Romans, you will conquer for yourself all the kingdom of the Christians.” He will lay waste all the islands and the cities of the pagans and destroy all the temples of the idols and he will gather all the pagans for baptism and the cross of Jesus Christ will be erected throughout all the temples.<sup>43</sup>

Afterwards, a similar timeline of events would occur; the Antichrist and the forces of Gog and Magog will arise, the Last Roman Emperor surrenders his kingdom to God and ascends to Heaven, and the Antichrist is defeated, ushering in the Final Judgement.

In both the *Pseudo-Methodius* and *Tiburtine Sibyl*, emphasis is placed on the total conversion or destruction of the Jews. The *Pseudo-Methodius* reads, “at that time the first will be last, and the Jews will believe.”<sup>44</sup> The point is reverberated two sentences later, “the Jews will believe, and 144,000 of all the tribes shall be killed for Christ in those days.”<sup>45</sup> The *Tiburtine Sibyl* read, “He who will not have adored the cross of Jesus Christ will be punished and when 120 years have been completed, the Jews will be converted to the Lord and his will be glorious to all.”<sup>46</sup> The conversion of the Jews was the prerequisite for the return of Christ. In the period of

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<sup>43</sup> *Pseudo-Methodius* in Rubenstein, *The First Crusade*, 51.

<sup>44</sup> *Pseudo-Methodius* in Rubenstein, *The First Crusade*, 51.

<sup>45</sup> *Pseudo-Methodius* in Rubenstein, *The First Crusade*, 51.

<sup>46</sup> *The Prophecy of the Tiburtine Sibyl* (English Translation).

the First Crusade, the Last Roman Emperor legend was at least known throughout the lay community, despite it being rebuked from the clergy. The years leading to the First Crusade likely further popularized the legend as the Seljuk Turks pushed further into Byzantium. The proclamation of the First Crusade by popular preachers likely further propagated the legend as the call to retake the holy land from their Muslim enemies commenced. Emicho's assertion that he was divinely appointed by God to lead Christendom into the End Times further stoked the eschatological fires that raged within the lay population of the Rhineland. Emicho knew of the Last Roman Emperor legend and either subverted it to meet his own needs or he was caught up into the religious fervor of this historic occasion. Regardless of Emicho's intentions, those who gathered under him, an army estimated to be 12,000 strong, likely believed his claims.

We are not certain when Emicho took command of the crusader army; the first mention of his physical presence is directly prelude to the massacre at Mainz.<sup>47</sup> It has been speculated that Emicho was also responsible for prior attacks, but those lacked the organization, cohesiveness, and manpower of the assault on Mainz. The initial attack on Speyer was foiled when the Jews heard of the anticipated attack on their synagogue; they simply performed their service earlier in the morning and left before the attack was carried out. Eleven Jews were then murdered by crusader hands. Any further violence was quelled by the local bishop who safeguarded the Jewish community. A reference to Emicho is written directly after the attack on Speyer, "They despaired greatly, for every day the crusaders and the gentiles and Emicho - may his bones be ground up - and the common folk gathered against them, to seize them, and to destroy them."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 250.

<sup>48</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 227.

This could be referring to Emicho's presence at Speyer, but again, I believe that this is not likely and the reference is merely an afterthought regarding the massacres as a whole. The initial attack on Worms lacked any martial semblance. The attack was spontaneously sparked,

They took "a trampled corpse" of theirs, that had been buried thirty days previously and carried it through the city, saying: "Behold what the Jews have done to our comrade. They took a gentile and boiled him in water. They then poured water into our wells in order to kill us."<sup>49</sup>

The Christian reaction reflects a total commitment to the elimination of the Jews of Worms, "now let not 'a remnant or a residue' escape, even 'an infant or a suckling' in the cradle."<sup>50</sup>

Those Jews who took shelter in their homes were massacred, save those who halfheartedly converted. A week later, the crusaders took their vengeance on the Jews who took shelter in the courtyard of the bishop, "they gathered from all the villages in the vicinity, along with the crusaders and the burghers; they besieged them [the Jews]; and they did battle against them."<sup>51</sup>

The second attack on Worms was much more organized and motivationally complex. Here we see crusaders actively seeking to convert the Jewish population, slaughtering those individuals who refused. In all, 800 Jews were killed. The stark contrast between Speyer and the initial assault on Worms, and the second attack on Worms can possibly be attributed to Emicho. The motivation precluding Mainz, except for the second attack on Worms, was often spontaneous and without clear motivation. Emicho's arrival outside the gates of Mainz is greatly emphasized in the Hebrew chronicles to highlight this contrast. When Emicho's army arrived outside Mainz on the new moon of Sivan, the town closed its gates to him. Emicho then proceeded to camp outside

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<sup>49</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 228.

<sup>50</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 228.

<sup>51</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 230.

the city for two days. Meanwhile, the Jews offered him seven gold pounds and gave him letters so that other Jewish communities may honor him. Emicho accepted the gift, but he refused to displace his army. On the third day, the burgher population opened the city gates to Emicho's host. "Battalions and companies, sweeping like a river" filled Mainz.<sup>52</sup> Emicho announced to the citizenry to surrender and remove "the enemy" [the Jews] from the city.<sup>53</sup> While the motivation of the crusaders at Speyer and Worms was largely ambiguous, the intent at Mainz was clear: the complete and utter destruction of the Mainz Jewry. The Jewish population of Mainz was either put to the sword or forcibly converted. Approximately 1,100 Jews were killed.

After the massacres at Mainz, it is unclear from the chronicles where Emicho traveled to next. It is estimated that his army split into several smaller bands and continued onwards. Similarities to Mainz can be seen in the proceeding examples featured in the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*. An unknown number of Jews were slaughtered and plundered at Cologne, followed by the town of Neuss where we see an instance of forced conversion. An unknown town was struck next where many were slaughtered, committed suicide, or were forcibly converted. On the third and fourth of Tammuz, two unknown towns were attacked: many rather "sanctified" themselves to God than accept baptism. Three hundred were killed at the latter town. Xantes was attacked a day later on the fifth: sanctification and forced conversion was prevalent. Two days later on the seventh of Tammuz, Moers was besieged. Most of the Jewry was handed over to the crusaders to be forcibly converted. On the fifteenth of Nisan, Trier was attacked, and most of the population was forcibly converted. Metz was next; twenty-two were killed and the

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<sup>52</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 253.

<sup>53</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 253.

majority were forcibly converted. Regensburg was forcibly converted in its entirety, while the next town, unknown, was likewise converted save six who met the sword. Emicho is next mentioned prior to his military rout by King Coloman of Hungary.

It is worthy to note the proximity in terms of time and space between the cities where the crusader bands appeared in the narratives. Such a discussion gives us a better understanding of the movement of Emicho and the crusader bands, and whether Emicho's followers fragmented into several bands post-Mainz. In terms of naming and dating, the information presented in the narratives may be unreliable, but the clear presentation of such information geographical and visually may be helpful to future historians.<sup>54</sup> Any Gregorian calendar dating is pulled from the notes of Chazan in *European Jewry and the First Crusade*.

The first attack occurred on the 8th of Iyyar (May 3rd) in Speyer. As previously mentioned, the attack on Speyer was spontaneous, disorganized, and easily foiled, and the mention of Emicho immediately afterwards in the *Mainz Anonymous* alludes that Emicho was present, but that itself is more likely to be literary flair than suitable evidence of Emicho's presence.<sup>55</sup> Worms was first attacked on the 23rd of Iyyar (May 18th), and the attack was renewed on May 25th.<sup>56</sup> Emicho arrived outside the gates of Mainz on the new moon of Sivan (May 25th). After the slaughter at Mainz, the *Historia Ierosolimitana* claims that "Count Emicho, Clarebold, Thomas, and all that intolerable company of men and women then continued on their way to Jerusalem, directing their course towards the Kingdom of Hungary."<sup>57</sup> The

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<sup>54</sup> For example, several cities were not cited.

<sup>55</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 227.

<sup>56</sup> The *Mainz Anonymous* claimed Worms was attacked on the tenth of Iyyar.

<sup>57</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 55.

*Hierosolymita* greatly summarized the massacres. Ekkehard devoted a single sentence to the massacres themselves, relinquishing no detail on any particular city, town, or village, and then he immediately places Emicho's army on the border of Pannonia.<sup>58</sup> Due to the *Mainz Anonymous*' abrupt conclusion, no detail after the events at Mainz is offered; its significance to our current conversation is mute. Likewise, the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* offers no detail where Emicho travelled post-Mainz. One can conclude with a degree of warranted skepticism that Emicho's main force in-fact travelled to Hungary post-Mainz.<sup>59</sup> If Emicho indeed travelled to Hungary, a multitude of cities that were attacked by crusaders/burghers are left unaccounted for.

As a side note, in the *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Albert of Aachen described a separate band comprised of burghers that is not mentioned in the Hebrew chronicles. According to Albert, the first slaughter was committed by the burghers residing in Cologne; some attempted to escape to Neuss but were caught, robbed, and murdered.<sup>60</sup> The band Albert described then arrived "in a great multitude" at Mainz prior to Emicho's attack.<sup>61</sup> Of course, Cologne is approximately 140km north along the Rhine of Mainz, placing this particular band outside the reach of other cities like Speyer and Worms.

In order to explain who committed the attacks post-Mainz, the acknowledgement of Emicho's main army leaving for Hungary allows us to hypothesize that Emicho's army fragmented after Mainz; leaving Emicho with a devoted crusader core to continue onwards to

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<sup>58</sup> Modern day Hungary.

<sup>59</sup> The *Historia Ierosolimitana* is the only point of reference on Emicho's whereabouts post-Mainz.

<sup>60</sup> Albert explicitly refers to the assailants as the "citizens of Cologne;" Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 54.

<sup>61</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 55.

Hungary, while several zealous bands were left in the Rhineland and surrounding areas to kill or convert any remaining Jews. The next city to be attacked was Cologne, approximately 140 kilometers north along the Rhine, from Shavuot (May 30th-31st) to the eighth of Tammuz (July 1st). Just north of Cologne, Neuss was attacked next on “that Tuesday” (June 24th).<sup>62</sup> There is a discrepancy between the dating of the attacks on Cologne and Neuss; a responsible response is that either the band attacking Cologne fragmented, or an entirely new band attacked Neuss. Whatever the answer may be, three unknown towns were then attacked “on that Tuesday” (June 24th), on the 3rd of Tammuz, “on Wednesday” (June 25th), and on the 4th of Tammuz, “on Thursday” (June 27th).<sup>63</sup> North of Neuss, Xantes was then attacked on “Friday, the fifth of the Month” (June 28th).<sup>64</sup> On “the Seventh of the month of Tammuz” (June 28th), south of Xantes, Moers was attacked. The proximity between Neuss, Xantes, and Moers further suggests that an individual band was responsible for the attacks.<sup>65</sup>

The *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* then lists several outliers as well, including Trier, Metz, Regensburg, Prague, and two unknown towns.<sup>66</sup> It is worth noting that none of these cities are in the Rhineland; rather, they were located sporadically across the Holy Roman Empire. Apart from Trier, no dates were given for the massacres in the chronicles, leaving us with no

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<sup>62</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 275.

<sup>63</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 275, 278; The first of the three towns has been suggested to be Wevelinghofen. The second town is questionable; the cities of Altenahr, Eller, and Ellen have been suggested by historians. The third town is uncertain.

<sup>64</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 280; Chazan highlights that the fifth of Tammuz fell on Saturday. The text states that Xantes was attacked late Friday.

<sup>65</sup> I excluded Cologne due to dating issues.

<sup>66</sup> It has been suggested that the first unknown town was Wesseli, and the second Pappenheim or Bohemia.

frame of reference chronologically. On the 15th of Nisan (April 10th), “an emissary of Jesus,” Peter “the prelate” arrived in Trier, a city in the Moselle region, with his host, and he brought with him letters from the Jews of France to honor him, and if Trier’s Jews honored him as well, he would speak kindly of Israel.<sup>67</sup> As Peter left in good will, Trier’s Jews were forced to further preserve themselves through bribing jealous Christian burghers; curiously enough, the text claimed that the burgher population “had never intended to do any harm” until the arrival of Peter.<sup>68</sup> Violence against Trier’s Jews began on “the Sunday of the Pentecost” (June 8th).<sup>69</sup> Metz, another city in the Moselle region was attacked on an unknown date. Regensburg, a city in Bavaria, was attacked on an unknown date. Two unknown cities were also attacked.<sup>70</sup> All of the outlying cities held a similar theme despite being separated by distance, with the exception of Trier and Metz; the crusaders went to great lengths to preserve the Jewish communities and were successful in converting whole populations with relatively few casualties, compared to Worms and Mainz.<sup>71</sup>

Emicho’s entrance into the narrative was a turning point in the Jewish massacres. Prior, the European Jewry had to contend with disorganized masses of crusaders and burghers whose attacks were often spontaneous and lacked any discernible motivation and were dispelled with relative ease: authority figures such as bishops or friendly neighboring Christians were able to

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<sup>67</sup> Most likely referring to Peter the Hermit; Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 287-288.

<sup>68</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 288.

<sup>69</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 292.

<sup>70</sup> It is worth noting that the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* refers to two unknown cities on page 287, but only describes the attack on one of them, featured on page 294.

<sup>71</sup> Unknown number of deaths at Trier, twenty-two slain at Metz, Regensburg was converted in its entirety, six were killed in an unknown town.

prevent any mass violence from occurring, such as the case in Speyer and the first attack on Worms. A further example is when Duke Godfrey of Bouillon is rebuked by Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV. Godfrey vowed that he would not depart for Jerusalem without first “avenging the blood of the Crucified” through the slaughter of the European Jewry.<sup>72</sup> R. Kalonymous, the parnas of Mainz, wrote to Henry of the situation. Henry sent letters across his empire that no harm should come to the Jews and that they should be provided aid and protection. Godfrey thus obeyed, though he first obtained a five hundred silver zekukim bribe from Cologne, and a similar sum from Mainz, before proceeding to Byzantium. A clear emphasis is placed on the arrival of Emicho at Mainz. It is at Mainz where we witness a radical shift in crusader motivation: the utter annihilation of the European Jewry by the sword or through conversion and baptism. Through the Last Roman Emperor legend, we see further correlation; in order to bring the second coming of Christ, the Jewish people must be no more. Emicho’s assault on Mainz brought this myth into fruition, and a similar tract regarding motivation is clearly seen in Mainz’ aftermath.

To further emphasize and reverberate the crusaders’ motivation and the correlation with Emicho and the Last Roman Emperor legend, we must examine the individual motivations to arrive at a clear conclusion.

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<sup>72</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 247.

## Existing Evidence of Conversion in the Primary Literature

We will recall Chazan's argument concerning the facticity of the Hebrew narratives and their diversity. The Hebrew narratives' diversity does not limit itself to the Jewish reaction; the Christian crusader and burgher actions were likewise diverse. This diversity of action is demonstrated in the numerous depictions of forced conversion and baptism onto the Jews in the *Mainz Anonymous* and the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*. There are depictions of mass conversion, where only minute detail or description is given, but these examples pale in comparison to the rich detail offered in the numerous accounts of the crusaders and neighboring burghers offering mercy and salvation to individual and identified Jews and their families.

On the other hand, the Latin chronicles neglected to offer a diverse account of the massacres. Forced conversion is only mentioned once in the relevant section of the *Hierosolymita*, "as they [the crusaders] were led through the cities of the Rhine and the Main and also the Danube, they either utterly destroyed the execrable race of the Jews wherever they found them or forced them into the bosom of the Church."<sup>73</sup> Likewise in the *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Albert of Aachen was quick to mention forced conversion in the aftermath of Mainz, "and a few, because of fear, rather than because of love of the Christian faith, were baptized."<sup>74</sup> Conversion was alluded to by Albert in the aftermath of Emicho's destruction, "the Lord is a just judge and orders no one unwillingly, or under compulsion, to come under the yoke of the Catholic faith."<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Ekkehard, *Hierosolymita* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 53; For further context, the section featuring Emicho of Flonheim, the 1096 massacres, and the direct aftermath entails three paragraphs.

<sup>74</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 55.

<sup>75</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 56.

While the *Hierosolymita* focuses solely on the Jews' temporal and spiritual subjection, the *Historia Ierosolimitana* describes only the material motivations as opposed to the spiritual. The *Historia Ierosolimitana* sought to distance the overarching crusade from the 1096 massacres. Albert infers "by some error of mind" the crusaders and burghers rose against the Jews, "asserting it to be the beginning of their expedition and their duty against the enemies of the Christian faith."<sup>76</sup> Following the massacres at Cologne and Mainz, Albert highlights the division of spoils, and in the section's conclusion, he cites "greed of money" as the cause of Emicho's destruction.<sup>77</sup> However, the taking of spoils occurred residually following the slaughter, and it appears that Albert purposely sought to depreciate the role conversion played. According to Albert, only after Mainz were a "few" were baptized.<sup>78</sup> As we know from the Hebrew chronicles, certainly greater than a few were forcibly converted. Albert referencing the Catholic Church's prohibition on forced conversion draws further skepticism as well. Unsurprisingly, contemporary Latin chroniclers were extremely reluctant to feature the Jewish massacres in their works at all, so the sparse detail given by the *Hierosolymita* and *Historia Ierosolimitana* is significant to our topic.<sup>79</sup>

Contrary to the Latin chronicles, the Hebrew chronicles emphasized the Jewish dilemma. Once a town received word of the approaching crusaders, the Jews knew their doom had come and they took appropriate action. Rather than submit to the will of the crusader or burgher and to their assailant's religious dogma, a significant number of the Jews either committed individual or

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<sup>76</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 54.

<sup>77</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 56.

<sup>78</sup> Albert, *Historia Ierosolimitana* in Krey, *The First Crusade*, 55.

<sup>79</sup> To my knowledge, the only contemporary Latin chronicles that featured the 1096 massacres were the *Hierosolymita* and *Historia Ierosolimitana*.

mass ritual suicide or familicide, or they rushed to their aggressors to be swiftly executed; all to sanctify their god. The Hebrew chronicles acted to understand and justify the Jewish martyrdom, but also to signify goodwill towards those who were forcibly converted and remained in their communities as half-hearted Christians. During the massacres, the Jews were confronted with an option: death by the sword or forced conversion through baptism. We witness a Christian desire to convert the local Jewry. The desire to convert was of course not the sole motivation, but was, in my belief, a major motivating factor in the 1096 massacres. As previously stated, the desire to convert was interlinked with contemporary millenarian thought as the conversion, or death, of the world's Jewry was the prerequisite to the return of Christ.

The *Mainz Anonymous* and the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* began by offering the Jewish perspective of the crusader mentality at the onset of the First Crusade,

Behold we travel to a distant land to do battle with the kings of that land. 'We take our souls in our hands' in order to kill and to subjugate all those kingdoms that do not believe in the Crucified. How much more so should we kill and subjugate the Jews, who killed and crucified him." They taunted us from every direction. They took counsel, ordering that we either turn to their abominable faith or they would destroy us "from infant to suckling."<sup>80</sup>

The *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* opens similarly,

Behold we journey a long way to seek the idolatrous shrine and to take vengeance upon the Muslims. But here are the Jews dwelling among us, whose ancestors killed him and crucified him groundlessly. Let us take vengeance first upon them. 'Let us wipe them out as a nation; Israel's name will be mentioned no more.' Or else let them be like us and acknowledge the son born of menstruation.<sup>81</sup>

The crusaders believed it was a part of their mission as Christians to not only travel to the Levant to avenge their Lord and subjugate the Muslims, but also to subject the Jewish people to total

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<sup>80</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 225

<sup>81</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 244

destruction by conversion or the sword, “to destroy vine and stock all along the way to Jerusalem.”<sup>82</sup> The annihilation of the Jewish communities coincides with the Last Roman Emperor legend mentioned previously.

The first mention of forced conversion occurred after Speyer, “through him all those forcibly converted who remained ‘here and there’ in the empire of Henry returned [to Judaism].”<sup>83</sup> The passage refers to “Bishop John,” a local bishop who came to the aid of the Jewish community of Speyer. The bishop, along with a large force, brought the Jews into fortified locations until the threat passed. The eleven Jews refused to be baptized, ten of whom were murdered.<sup>84</sup> The remaining Jew was a female who “slaughtered herself for the sanctification of the [Divine] Name,” our first instance of Jewish martyrdom in the Hebrew chronicles.<sup>85</sup>

After the initial massacre at Worms, a number of the Jews who remained saw their brethren naked and dead in the streets, and halfheartedly converted under duress, “let us do their will for the time being, and let us go and bury our brethren and save our children from them.”<sup>86</sup> The crusaders had captured the remaining Jewish children, and the *Mainz Anonymous* implies that the children were baptized into Christianity.<sup>87</sup> In order to prevent their children's indoctrination into Christianity, the Jews succumbed to their Christian aggressors and were forcibly converted. The *Mainz Anonymous* provided several individualized accounts of attempted

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<sup>82</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 226.

<sup>83</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 227.

<sup>84</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 244.

<sup>85</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 244.

<sup>86</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 229.

<sup>87</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 229.

forced conversion as well. The first instance featured a young man named Isaac ben Daniel. He was confronted by crusaders and asked, “do you wish to exchange your God for ‘a wretched idol?’”<sup>88</sup> Once he refused, he was dragged through the streets and once again he was asked, “You may still be saved. Do you wish to convert?”<sup>89</sup> He refused once again, and then was beheaded by a crusader’s sword. A young man named R. Simhah was also asked to convert, “they sought to sully him with their fetid waters,” but he refused until he could see the bishop.<sup>90</sup> Once in the bishop's presence, the man attacked and killed a relative of the cleric and wounded two others before being cut down. The final individual case was that of a respected woman named Minna. “Men of the city,” specifically burghers, not crusaders, gathered and approached the woman. Pleading on their knees they said, “behold you are ‘a capable woman.’ Know and see that God does not wish to save you, for ‘they lie naked at the corner of every street,’ unburied. Sully yourself [with the waters of baptism].”<sup>91</sup> The burghers wished to save the woman because she was well respected in the community and frequented various aristocratic circles. Despite their attempts, the woman refused and was murdered. The passage tells us that the burghers were enforcing the will of God, and the burghers did not wish to see her die. At face value, it appears that the burghers attempted to save her life and offered her baptism based on their respect for the woman. Though the *Mainz Anonymous* specifically mentions that “her reputation was known widely, for all the notable of the city and the princes of the land were in her circle.”<sup>92</sup> Perhaps the burghers were so adamant about saving her life due to their fear of retribution from the secular

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<sup>88</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 230.

<sup>89</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 231.

<sup>90</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 231.

<sup>91</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 232.

<sup>92</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 232.

lords? Only once the massacre at Worms concluded, did the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* mention forced conversion, “there remained only ‘a small number’ whom they converted forcibly and baptized against their will in their baptismal waters.”<sup>93</sup> Neither those who were forcibly converted during the massacre nor those who were murdered after failed conversion attempts were mentioned.

Count Emicho of Flonheim arrived at Mainz, and with the city gates closed to him, his army waited. To reiterate, the authors of the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* and the *Hierosolymita* tied Emicho to the Last Roman Emperor legend, and though he is mentioned in passing prior, Mainz is where we can certainly witness Emicho’s presence and influence. On the third day, the burghers opened the city to Emicho. The crusaders then proclaimed they will now avenge Christ through the blood of the Jews, and the violence began. The crusaders broke through the Jewish defenses and entered the courtyard of the bishop. Shortly following, we witness the first mention of conversion at Mainz. Both Hebrew chronicles attested that rather than be converted, the Jews began mass martyrdom.<sup>94</sup>

The Jewish embrace of martyrdom over conversion is extremely prevalent at Mainz, and perhaps the most harrowing instance is the tale of Rachel in the *Mainz Anonymous*.<sup>95</sup> For emphasis, I will feature the tale in its entirety,

There was a notable lady, Rachel the daughter of R. Isaac ben R. Asher. She said to her companions: “I have four children. On them as well have no mercy, let these uncircumcised come and seize them and they remain in their pseudo-faith. With them as well you must sanctify the holy Name.” One of her companions

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<sup>93</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 245.

<sup>94</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 237; Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 255.

<sup>95</sup> The *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* also includes the tale of Rachel; Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 258-259.

came and took the knife. When she saw the knife, she cried loudly and bitterly. She beat her face, crying and saying: "Where is your steadfast love, O Lord?" She took Isaac her small son - indeed he was very lovely - and slaughtered him. She... said to her companions: "Wait! Do not slaughter Isaac before Aaron." But the lad Aaron, when he saw that his brother had been slaughtered, cried out: "Mother, Mother, do not slaughter me!" He then went and hid himself under a bureau. She took her two daughters, Bella and Matrona, and sacrificed them to the Lord God of Hosts, who commanded us not to abandon pure awe of him and to remain loyal to him. When the saintly one finished sacrificing her three children before our Creator, she lifted her voice and called out to her son: "Aaron, Aaron, where are you? I shall not have pity or mercy on you either." She pulled him by the leg from under the bureau, where he had hidden, and sacrificed him before the sublime and exalted God. She then put them under her two sleeves, two on one side, and two on the other, near her heart. They convulsed near her, until the crusaders seized the chamber. They found her sitting and mourning them. They said to her: "Show us the money which you have under your sleeves." When they saw the slaughtered children, they smote her and killed her. With regard to them and to her it is said: "Mother and babes were dashed to death together." She died with them, as did the [earlier] saintly one with her seven sons. With regard to her it is said: "The mother of the child is happy."<sup>96</sup>

Conversion was never the crusader intention in the tale of Rachel. Greed brought the crusaders to her, and through their disgust of Rachel's filicide, they struck her down, but the Jewish fear of conversion lingered. Rachel, if not the community, feared for their children and what might happen if the Christian crusaders captured them. They were not worried about their children's physical death, but a spiritual one where they leave God for "a crucified one, a trampled and wretched and abominable offshoot..., a bastard and a child of menstruation and lust."<sup>97</sup> After hearing the reports from Speyer and Worms, the Jewish community of Mainz clearly believed the risk of conversion was legitimate, and individuals such as Rachel took extreme measures to act against that possibility. Those who were in the same chamber as Rachel were likewise killed and then were thrown out of the windows into heaps. Miraculously, some survived and signaled

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<sup>96</sup> Mainz Anonymous in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 238-239.

<sup>97</sup> Mainz Anonymous in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 237.

to the crusaders for water to drink. The Jews received the response, “Do you wish to sully yourselves [with the waters of baptism]?”<sup>98</sup> The Jews defied the crusaders and were killed.

The Hebrew chronicles illustrated Jewish defiance. One such example is *gabbai* David ben R. Nathaniel. The priest in whose household Nathaniel and his household were sheltered, came to the *gabbai*, begging him to be baptized as his brethren lest he be killed by the crusaders.<sup>99</sup> Nathaniel agreed to speak to the crusaders. The priest reported to the crusaders Nathaniel’s situation and they were overjoyed. An erroneous number of crusaders gathered around Nathaniel’s house, only to be verbally attacked and rebuked by the *gabbai*.<sup>100</sup> No question, the *gabbai* and his household were then killed. From there, this group went to the home of R. Samuel ben R. Naaman. The crusaders asked and requested that he be baptized. Once Naaman refused their demands, he was killed.<sup>101</sup> Some like Isaac, son of “David the *parnas*,” and Uri ben R. Joseph were baptized against their will, but they temporarily decided to live by their new faith.<sup>102</sup> In regret, Isaac sacrificed his children upon the altar of the synagogue, and burned his home with his mother trapped inside, all in sanctification to God. In league with Uri, Isaac set fire to the synagogue with the intent of burning himself alive. The “enemy” attempted to save him, offering him a staff by which he can be dragged out, but he refused.<sup>103</sup> Uri was

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<sup>98</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 239.

<sup>99</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 241; Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 261.

<sup>100</sup> The Hebrew chronicles claim the crusaders surrounded Nathaniel “by the thousands and [the] ten thousands.” *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 241; Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 262.

<sup>101</sup> The *Mainz Anonymous* abruptly ended shortly after the death of R. Samuel ben R. Naaman. From here on out, all examples will be from the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*.

<sup>102</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 263.

<sup>103</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 265.

murdered on the way to the synagogue. In the closing moments of the Mainz massacre, in terms of motivation, the preference of conversion is prevalent. Only once the crusaders saw that the Jews were not going to accept baptism did the sword strike. The crusaders pleaded and “urged” the Jews to convert and be baptized, but they refused and opted to sanctify God.<sup>104</sup> The crusaders threatened death, and the Jews did not forsake their faith. Those Jews who were on the verge of death were offered clemency as well, but likewise they too refused and accepted death.

At Cologne, a man was dragged into a church to be baptized, where after he spat and cursed the cross, he was executed. At Neuss, a man was tortured and baptized against his will. In an unknown town, torture and forced baptism was again prevalent.<sup>105</sup> At another unknown town, the “enemy” gathered with the intent to once again torture and forcibly convert the population.<sup>106</sup> The crusader plan was foiled when five individuals were chosen by the Jewish community to slaughter the rest. The entire Jewish population, approximately three hundred strong, were killed. At Xantes, a man was urged by the local priests to convert and be baptized, but he refused and martyred himself. At Moers, the city handed the Jews to the crusaders. A few were killed, and the rest were baptized against their will. A man named Shmaryahu and his family escaped Moers, only to sacrifice his wife and children while they slept. Failing to kill himself, the “enemy” found Shmaryahu and urged him to convert. He refused, and they began to bury him alive with the bodies of his wife and children. Again, the Christians asked if he wished to convert, but he refused and was buried alive. At Trier, the Jews were given the option on several

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<sup>104</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 266, 271.

<sup>105</sup> Perhaps Wevelinghofen. Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 275-277.

<sup>106</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 278.

occasions to convert to avoid bloodshed.<sup>107</sup> After several individuals were killed, the women and children were forcibly baptized. At Metz, the entire Jewish population was baptized save for twenty-two slain. The Jewish population at Regensburg was converted in its entirety.

The Hebrew chronicles were keen to recognize that the surviving Jewish communities tolerated and accepted those who were forcibly converted and baptized. At Worms after the first attack, words of consolation were given to those who were forcibly converted,

Fear not and do not take to heart that which you have done. For if the Holy One, blessed be he, saves us from the hands of our enemies, then we shall be with you 'for both death and life.' 'However do not desert the lord.'<sup>108</sup>

The *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* offered praise to those who were forcibly converted. They kept their Jewish sacraments, while they offered the local burghers a facade. The author attested that the burghers knew of the Jews' halfhearted reluctance to the Christian faith, but they failed to act on it because the Jews observed the Sabbath and occasionally attended mass. In closing the massacres, the author curses those who speak ill of the forcibly converted as in doing so also insults God. Acceptance towards those converted expresses that conversion occurred on a large enough scale that it was worth dedicating sizable text, but it does not demonstrate the prevalence of conversion in crusader motivation per se as conversion can occur without direct expressed threat from another, but rather out of fear or distress. In a similar vein, the individuality and diversity shown serves to emphasize the prominence of conversion. In the individualized accounts, a named Jew was typically confronted by their Christian assailant and is either given

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<sup>107</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 290, 291.

<sup>108</sup> Mainz Anonymous in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 229.

the option of conversion or death, or he/she was forcibly baptized. Often, he or she was implored to convert and was given multiple opportunities to do so.

The will to convert the Jewish people cannot be considered the sole motivating factor, despite its prominence in the texts; vengeance for Christ's crucifixion and avarice were motivations as well. As we have discussed, *Historia Ierosolimitana* cited greed as Emicho's downfall, and likewise plunder was abundant in the Hebrew chronicles. However, avarice cannot be regarded as a primary motivation. Plunder appeared as a residual effort as the massacres were underway or over and did not take priority over other motivations. After Cologne, there is no mention of plunder, though there are two instances of bribery.<sup>109</sup> The Hebrew chronicles emphasized the Jews rather than their property as the crusaders' priority. Extortion is a common theme as well. As crusaders arrived in the Rhineland, they "sought funds with which to purchase bread," and in fear, the Jews obliged.<sup>110</sup> Likewise, individuals such as Duke Godfrey of Bouillon and Peter the Hermit extorted gold and silver from the Jewish people through fear. Later cities used bribes to broker goodwill. Emicho was bribed with seven gold pounds by the Mainz Jewry. While he accepted the gold, Emicho massacred, converted, and sacked the Mainz Jewry regardless.

The motive to avenge Christ's crucifixion is prevalent in *Hierosolymita* and in the Hebrew chronicles. Like conversion, vengeance is compatible with medieval Christian millenarianism. The Last Roman Emperor legend illustrated that the Jewish peoples' total conversion or destruction were needed prior to Christ's return. Crusaders believed avenging

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<sup>109</sup> Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 285, 288.

<sup>110</sup> *Mainz Anonymous* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 226.

Christ's millennia-old injury through subjection was consistent with their crusading vows. Rumors were circulated that "anyone who kills a single Jew will have all his sins absolved."<sup>111</sup> A nobleman named "Ditmar" announced he would not depart the Rhineland until he killed a single Jew, and Godfrey of Bouillon stated "he would not depart on his journey without avenging the blood of the Crucified."<sup>112</sup> At Worms, burghers exhumed a corpse and dragged it through the streets proclaiming the Jews boiled the corpse in order to poison the water supply. By doing so, the crusaders and burghers were infuriated and called for immediate vengeance for Christ's crucifixion. The call for vengeance was likewise provoked prior to Worms, Mainz, and in subsequent cities. Vengeance for Christ's crucifixion is compatible with conversion as a willingness to avenge Christ coincided with the will to annihilate the Jewish people, which includes either the temporal or spiritual destruction of the Jew. Once the massacres were underway, conversion took priority.

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<sup>111</sup> Mainz Anonymous in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 226.

<sup>112</sup> Mainz Anonymous in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 226; Solomon, *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle* in Chazan, *European Jewry*, 247.

## Conclusion

Nearly seven decades ago, Paul Alphandéry's definitive *La Chrétienté et L'idée de Croisade* approached the 1096 A.D. Jewish massacres as an eschatological undertaking committed by the popular crusade to convert the Jews and was perceived as a prerequisite for the End Times. This tradition continued through the efforts of Norman Cohn, Joshua Prawer, Jean Flori, and Robert Chazan. However, despite the endeavors by past scholars, the scholarship is ultimately limited and restricted through language barriers. My thesis aids the conversation by offering a fresh, concise perspective in the English language. My research expands current scholarship through my emphasis on Count Emicho of Flonheim. Prior to his entrance into the narrative, whatever attacks were limited and the motivation ambiguous. At Mainz and in the proceeding instances, a clear emphasis on conversion is witnessed, and I believe it is intrinsically linked to Emicho and the eschatological legend of the Last Roman Emperor. Conversion played a pivotal role in the 1096 massacres and is greatly emphasized in the Latin *Hierosolymita*, and in the Hebrew *Mainz Anonymous* and the *Solomon bar Simson Chronicle*. Albert of Aachen's *Historia Ierosolimitana* depreciated conversion in order to distance the massacres from any spiritual motive and the larger crusading movement. Urban II's call to crusade heightened eschatological tensions and gave rise to figures such as Emicho, a man embroiled in millenarianism and likely considered himself the Last Roman Emperor reborn. The Christian eschatological texts, the *Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius* and *The Prophecy of the Tiburtine Sibyl*, provide the framework for Emicho's actions. Through Emicho's command, an organized effort is seen, and the Jews' thorough destruction either physically or spiritually is witnessed. Conversion and forced baptism were often prioritized, and crusaders went to great lengths to see

their spiritual victory realized. Mass slaughter typically came after the Jewish refusal to convert. However, their eschatological mission was being fulfilled. While analyzing the 1096 massacres, several motivating factors can be witnessed, but the prominence of conversion cannot be understated.

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