



# Houston Area Model United Nations Crisis Committee

## **Crusades: Islamic Empire**

Crisis Director | Christopher Pham  
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# *The First Crusade*

## *The Islamic Empire*



# Letter from the Crisis Directors

Esteemed Delegates,

Welcome to the First Crusade double-joint Crisis Committee! As the world begins to return to some version of normalcy, and Model UN conferences get back to being in-person, we are excited to present this exciting scenario for you to play out at the 47th HAMUN Conference! The Crusades are a well-remembered but often misunderstood aspect of the Middle Ages, involving the great powers of Europe, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Middle East. In this series of conflicts that spanned centuries and changed the course of history, the roles and influence of European and Islamic cultures and values would be established for centuries to come. The two forces represented in this committee are the Papal Coalition crusader force, and the Islamic Empire. Before we get into the history, allow us to introduce ourselves.

Howdy y'all! My name is Christopher Gearing, although I usually go by Chris. I'm currently a sophomore at the University of Texas at Austin, majoring in Government, with a minor in Business and as a member of the Liberal Arts Honors cohort. This will be my second year taking part in MUN, and despite not getting the chance to participate in high school, I am exhilarated to have discovered it at the collegiate level! While I didn't compete in MUN in high school, I did compete as a member of my team's Policy debate team for 4 years, 3 of which I was a captain, and 4 years on our Mock Trial team, 3 of which as a captain, with multiple state awards in each event. The Crusades have always been a fascinating period of history to me, and I am looking forward to how you choose to present this alternate version of events! I'm pumped to be working with Topher to bring this amazing scenario to life.

Hook 'em!

Christopher (Chris) Gearing  
Crisis Director, Papal Coalition  
cgearing@utexas.edu

Welcome Delegates! I am Christopher Pham, although I usually go by Topher. I am a sophomore at the University of Texas at Austin and am a Biochemistry major. This is my fifth year taking part in MUN in some fashion and I am extraordinarily excited to be able to bring this committee to you all. HAMUN is a conference that I have participated in all throughout highschool and I am so excited to be a part of a conference that has stuck with me for nearly half a decade. I cannot wait to see how your fresh perspectives will change the course of history. Do let me know if there is anything Chris, my fellow crisis director, or I can do to help you prepare for this committee or if you have any questions about the conference in general. I look forward to seeing all of you at the conference. See you soon!

Hook 'em!

Christopher (Topher) Pham  
Crisis Director of the Islamic Empire  
topherpham@yahoo.com

While we have done our best to maintain historical accuracy in this simulation, due to the nature of records keeping at the turn of the 11th Century C.E., many records have been lost to time. To that end, please consider this document the authoritative answer to any anachronisms or inconsistencies in the course of your independent research. Please, take the time to review this background guide, your character sheets (and their wikipedia pages), and any other resources you believe would help you better understand the context of your character and the time period. Good Luck, Deus vult, and الله أكبر!

# History

## The Fall of Rome and Rise of the Byzantines



The Course of Empire: Destruction by Thomas Cole

For a century before the year 476, the decline of Rome as an imperial and military power was evident. As more and more the power of the Western Roman Emperor declined, so too did the frequency of coups and power struggles. Around 376, the Mongols' conquest forced large numbers of Visigoths and non-Roman tribes into the Roman empire, resulting in several bloody civil wars. However, by 100 years later, the final remaining part of the Western Roman Empire, the city of Rome itself, was taken by the Visigoth commander Odovacar, dethroning the 16-year old emperor unopposed and without bloodshed.

Simultaneously, as Rome fell, Constantinople rose as the new Eastern Roman Empire, or Byzantine Empire. Establishing itself (due to partitions of the Emperor's authority) as a weaker, but still powerful empire in its own right, the Byzantine Empire would encompass much of the eastern mediterranean, including Israel and Jerusalem, holy sites for Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Continuing into the 1400's, the Byzantine would represent the often prosperous remains of the Roman Empire, but in a new, Christian fashion.

# The Great Schism: 1054



With the split of West and East Rome, there arose new, long-running tensions over religious authority. Prior to 1054, the Catholic Church was run by a series of Patriarchates, or regions of authority, with each region having one religious leader, the Patriarch. For example, the Patriarch of Rome oversaw much of Italy, and the Patriarch of Constantinople oversaw much of the Eastern Roman Empire. A church council would be called among all of the Patriarchs to decide issues of church doctrine, positions on certain events or emerging issues, and other crises that required the consensus of the entire Church, such as the Council of Nicea.

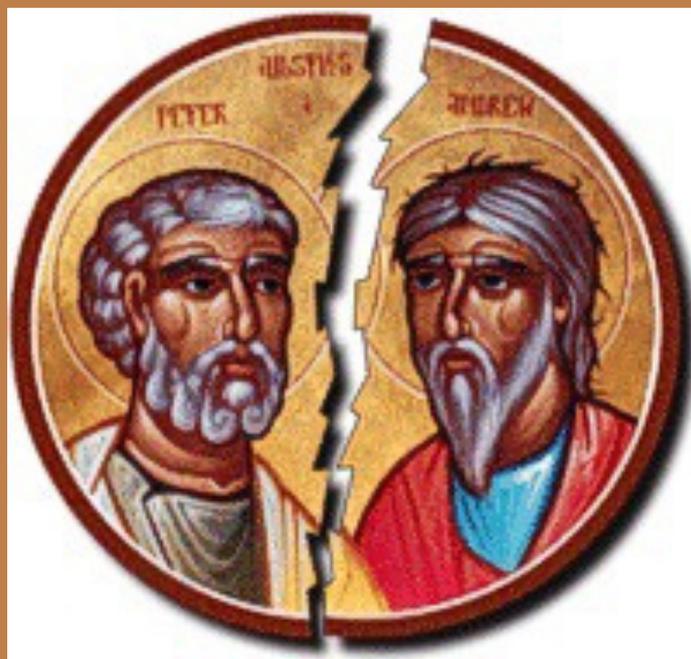
In 1054, the East-West Schism became official, thanks to centuries of gradual cultural and ecclesiastical differences emerging between the Latin West and Greek East. The Catholic Church cemented itself in Rome under Pope Leo IX, and subsequent popes, rather than a system of Patriarchs, while the Eastern Orthodox Church centered itself in Constantinople and retained the system of Patriarchs and Church Councils. This issue of Papal Primacy was a significant ecclesiastical difference that furthered the schism, and continues to be a major sticking point for reunification attempts.

This split would reverberate and sour tensions between the West and East, although attempts at reunification would be made to the present day.

# The Great Schism: 1054



The split created by the schism was effectively divided along the prior split between the Western Roman Empire and the Eastern Roman Empire, now the Byzantine Empire. The Roman Catholic Church retained influence over Europe and the modern-day Baltics, while the Eastern Orthodox Church held sway over Greece, the Kievan Rus, and the Near East of modern Israel and Turkey.



# The Seljuk Empire

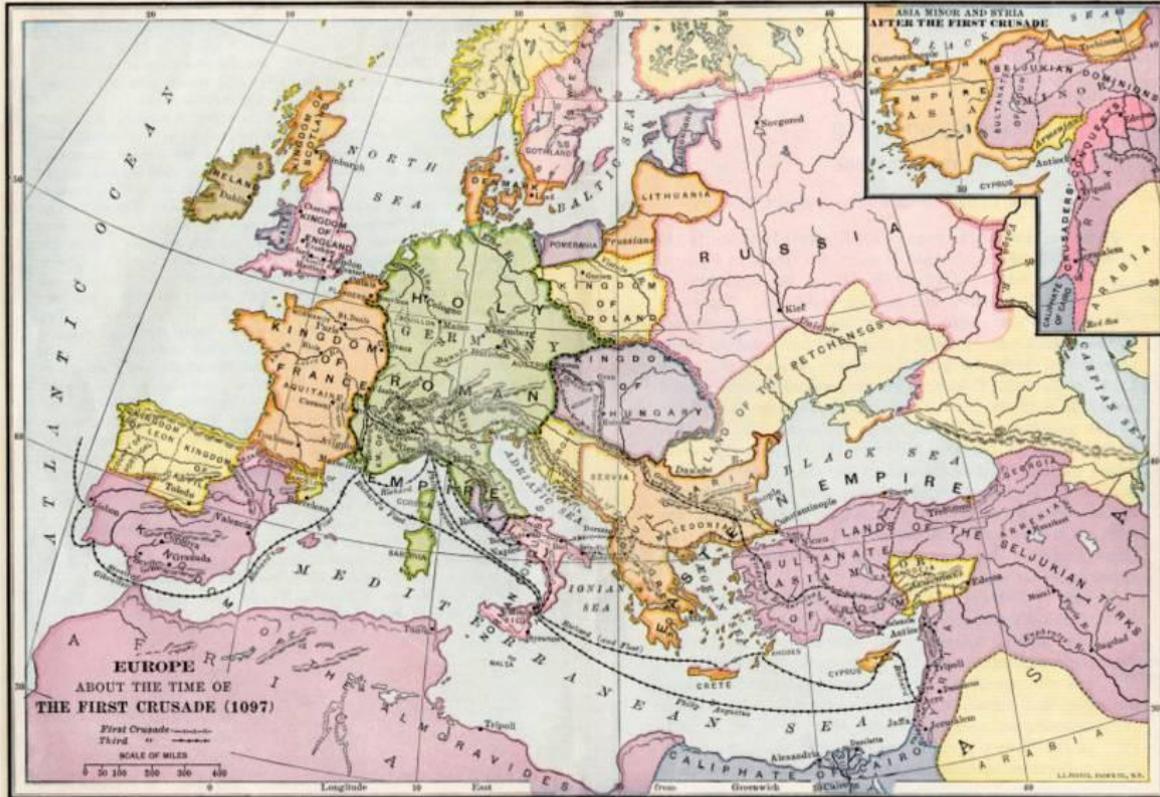


Malik-Shah I, ruler of the Seljuks, seated on his throne

The Seljuk Empire was founded in 1037 by Tughril and his brother Chaghri. From their homelands near the Aral Sea, the Seljuks advanced first into Khorasan and then into mainland Persia, before eventually conquering Baghdad and eastern Anatolia. The Seljuks won the battle of Manzikert in 1071, and then conquered most of the rest of Anatolia, wresting control of it from the Byzantine Empire. Expansion continued under subsequent rulers until Malikshah I rose to power.

When Malikshāh I died in 1092, the empire split as his brother and four sons quarrelled over the apportioning of the empire among themselves. Malikshāh I was succeeded in Anatolia by Kiliġ Arslan I, who founded the Sultanate of Rum, and in Syria by his brother Tutush I. In Persia he was succeeded by his son Mahmud I, whose reign was contested by his other three brothers: Barkiyaruq in Iraq, Muhammad I in Baghdad, and Ahmad Sanjar in Khorasan. When Tutush I died, his sons Radwan and Duqaq inherited Aleppo and Damascus respectively and contested with each other as well, further dividing Syria amongst emirs antagonistic towards each other. This division played a significant role in the First Crusade.

# Kingdoms of Europe



Although still backward when compared with the other civilizations of the Mediterranean basin, western Europe had become a significant power by the end of the 11th century. It was composed of several kingdoms loosely describable as feudal. While endemic private warfare, brigandage, and problems associated with vassalage and inheritance still existed, some monarchies were already developing better-integrated systems of government. At the same time, Europe was feeling the effects of population growth that had begun toward the end of the 10th century and would continue well into the 13th century. An economic revival was also in full swing well before the First Crusade; forestlands were being cleared, frontiers pushed forward, and markets organized. Moreover, Italian shipping was beginning to challenge the Muslim predominance in the Mediterranean. Especially significant for the Crusade was a general overhaul of the ecclesiastical structure in the 11th century, associated with the Gregorian Reform movement, which enabled the popes to assume a more active role in society. In 1095, for example, Urban II was in a position strong enough to convoke two important ecclesiastical councils, despite meeting resistance from Henry IV, the German emperor, who opposed papal reform policies.

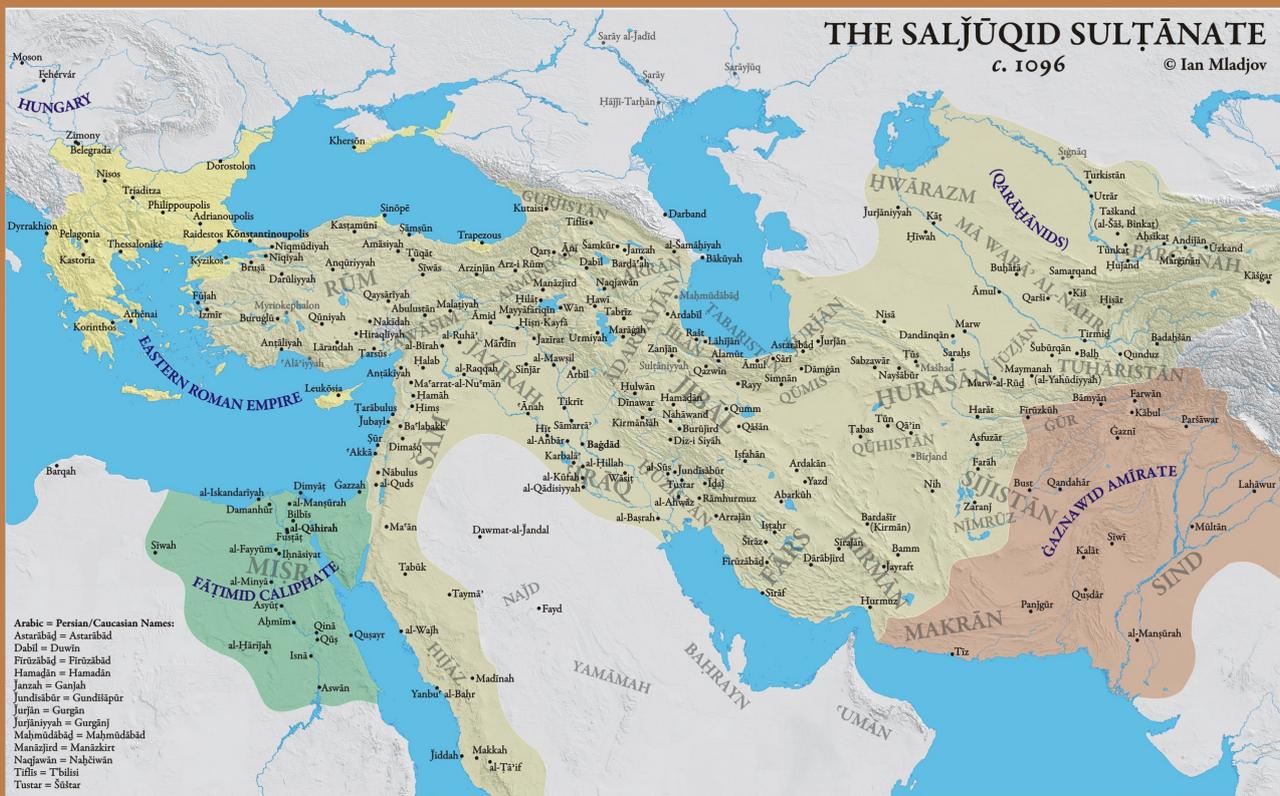
# Kingdoms of Europe

Thus it was that in the closing years of the 11th century western Europe was abounding in energy and confidence. What is more, as is evident in achievements such as the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 that Europeans possessed the capacity to launch a major military undertaking at the very time the Seljuq Turks, one of several tribes on the northeastern frontier of the Muslim world, were beginning to move south and west into Iran.



# The Current Situation (Pre-Committee)

## Fracturing Seljuk Empire



With Malikshāh I's death in 1092, the empire split as his brother and four sons quarrelled over the apportioning of the empire among themselves. Malikshāh I was succeeded in Anatolia by Kiliġ Arslan I, who founded the Sultanate of Rum, and in Syria by his brother Tutush I. In Persia he was succeeded by his son Mahmud I, whose reign was contested by his other three brothers Barkiyarūq in Iraq, Muhammad I in Baghdad, and Ahmad Sanjar in Khorasan. When Tutush I died, his sons Radwan and Duqaq inherited Aleppo and Damascus respectively and contested with each other as well, further dividing Syria amongst emirs antagonistic towards each other. This period was marked by fierce regional rivalries, with each leader attempting to pursue his own vested interests, namely expanding their own territory and political power.

## Byzantine Empire Requests Aid



Shortly after the death of Malikshah I, the Emperor of the Byzantine Empire, Alexios I, called for aid from the West in taking advantage of the fractured state of the Seljuk Empire. Per the letter:

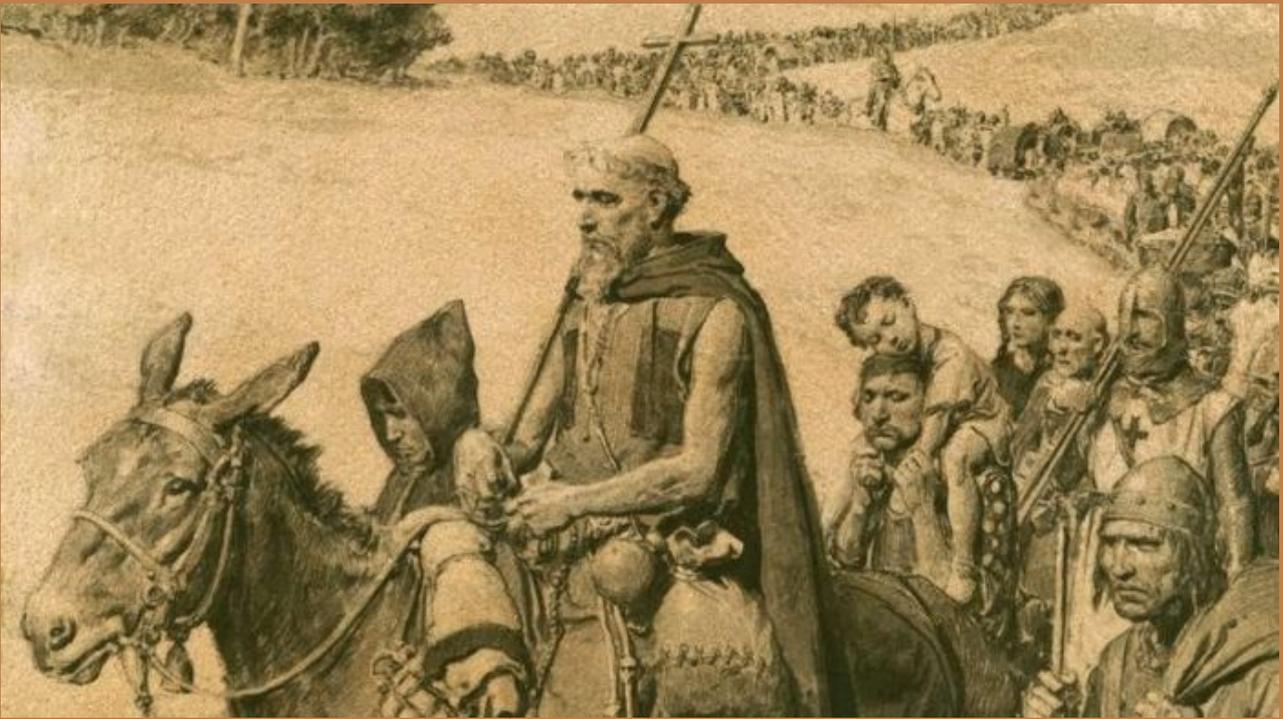
"Come then, with all your people and give battle with all your strength, so that all this treasure shall not fall into the hands of the [Muslim] Turks...Therefore act while there is still time lest the kingdom of the Christians shall vanish from your sight and, what is more important, the tomb where Jesus was buried will vanish. And in your coming you will find your reward in heaven, and if you do not come, God will condemn you."

# The Council of Clermont



Upon receipt of the letter from Emperor Alexios I, Pope Urban II of the Roman Catholic Church called an ecclesiastical council, the Council of Clermont, in 1095. The Council was attended largely by bishops of southern France as well as a few representatives from northern France and elsewhere. As a result of a request by envoys from the Byzantine emperor Alexius I Comnenus to aid the Greeks against the Muslim Turks, Urban II exhorted the French knights at Clermont to rescue the Holy Land from the Turks. Additionally, important ecclesiastical business was transacted, which resulted in a series of canons, among them one that renewed the Peace of God and another that granted a plenary indulgence (the remission of all penance for sin) to those who undertook to aid Christians in the East. Then, in a great outdoor assembly, the pope, a Frenchman, addressed a large crowd, closing his speech with the words "God wills it," (according to one account), which became a battle cry of the Crusaders.

# The People's Crusade



Peter the Hermit leads a column of peasant crusaders

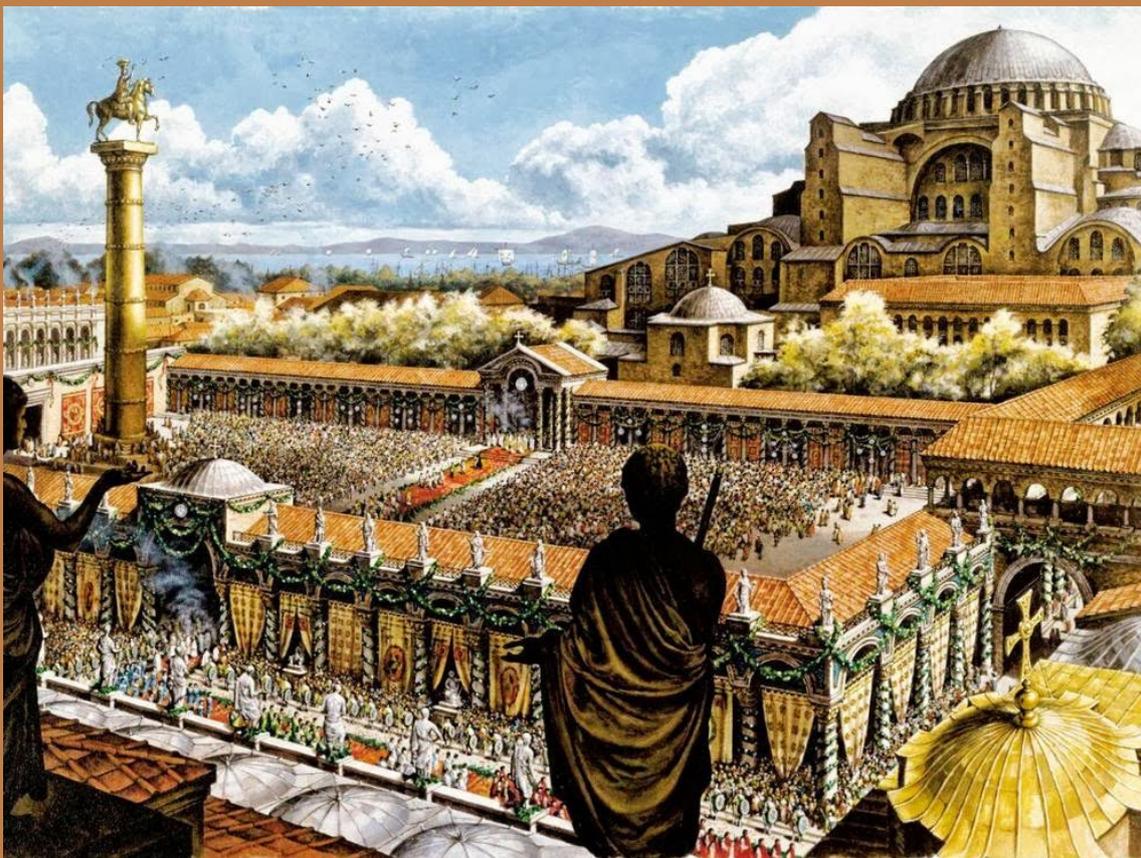
Pope Urban II's calls for Crusade were met with fervor among the population of Western Europe. In 1096, a ragtag force of untrained peasant farmers led by Peter the Hermit departed for the Holy Land. Along the way, this roving band massacred Jews in central Europe, raped and pillaged their way through many towns and cities, including those in the Byzantine Empire they were supposed to be aiding, and subsequently were bloodily defeated by Kılıç Arslan, Sultan of the Seljuk Turks at the Battle of Civetot in northern Anatolia. This People's Crusade was the precursor to the events of this scenario, known as the Princes' Crusade.



# Crusaders Depart for Constantinople



After the departure of the unaffiliated People's Crusade, the Princes' Crusade departed from Europe. In late 1096, at the beginning of this committee, You, the Crusaders, arrived in Constantinople after a months-long overland journey through Europe and the northern Mediterranean nations.



# Committee Objectives: Islamic Empire

Rulers and leaders of the Seljuk Empire, you have been tasked with the following list of objectives:

- Protect the Holy Lands from the invading forces, specifically the city of Jerusalem.
- Hinder the progress of the crusading forces
  - Cut supply lines to force retreat
  - Protect major cities from falling to siege
- Appease your citizens to ensure they remain loyal
- Defend the Holy City of Jerusalem by any means
- Ensure Holy Sites in Jerusalem are protected
- Unify the fractured Seljuk Empire.
- Maintain or capture as much land as possible to expand the borders of the Seljuk Empire



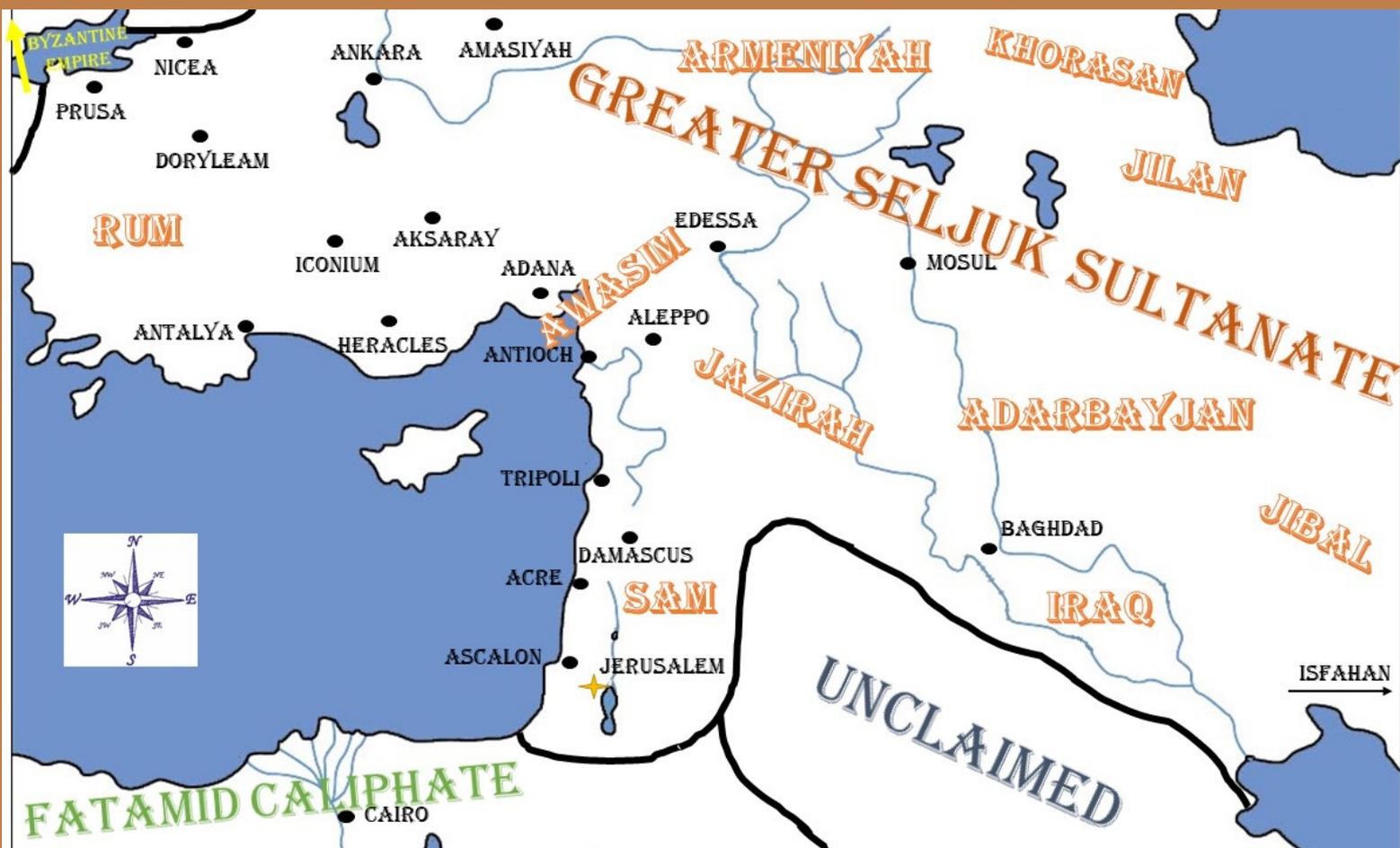
# Research & Committee Tips

## OUTSIDE RESEARCH

It is highly recommended that you research your character and the historical context of this committee outside of what is on this background guide! This being said, for the scope of this committee, this guide should be considered authoritative and the scope of the committee is what is displayed on the map below.

## CRISIS NOTES

You will have the opportunity to communicate with the world outside your committee that is displayed on the map below (and even with the Seljuk delegates should you so choose!) via crisis notes. These notes should be addressed to a specific person or delegate outside of the committee and be detailed as to the information you wish to obtain. In addition, it is beneficial to be clear as to your goals and potential actions, as it makes it easier for us to help you. Providing a clear and persuasive reason as to why we should grant your request will also make it more likely that your request is granted. If you wish to be successful in achieving your goals, remember to include **DETAIL!**



# Character List

## Kilij Arslan

The son of Sultan Suleyman, the sultan before Malik Shah I, Kilij Arslan spent most of his younger years as a hostage after Malik Shah's rise to power. After the death of Malik Shah, Kilij Arslan was able to escape and rose to power in the west portion of the Seljuk Empire and placed himself as the Sultan of the new Seljuk Empire of Rum. Many leaders have flocked to him as he presents a central authority that is not as far removed as the current emperor of the Seljuk Empire. Kilij Arslan was the man who led the Turkish armies to victory over the uncoordinated Peoples' Crusade and his capital is the city of Nicaea. Remembering the ease of destroying the People's Crusade, Kilij Arslan does not yet think that this new crusade will pose too much of a threat and is currently looking to expand his borders and influence.

## Berkyaruq

The son and successor of Malik Shah I. Berkyaruq for his short reign has had advisors make most of the hard decisions for him. He was not prepared for the death of his father and was not ready to assume leadership over such a vast territory. However, without the strong leadership of a single individual the empire has continued to fracture into infighting. Berkyaruq now sees that his inaction has resulted in the divided empire seen today and wishes to rehabilitate the sultanate that was passed down to him. Berkyaruq wishes to reunify the disparate states of the Seljuk Empire under his own leadership once again, recognizing the foreign invaders as a possible opportunity to create a common enemy.

## Muhammad I

The brother of Malik Shah I. He is one of the trusted advisors of Berkyaruq. He advocates for the reunification of the Seljuk Empire by the use of force and sees all the local leaders trying to take power as threats to the central authority of the main Seljuk Empire. In particular he sees Kiliç Arslan's creation of the new Seljuk Empire of Rum as a slight and wishes to see him deposed and the Seljuk Empire of Rum more closely integrated into the organization under Berkyaruq.

## Ahmad Sanjar

The brother of Malik Shah I. He is the advisor of Berkyaruq that has attained the most power. He is slowly taking the power from Berkyaruq by making alliances with those in power around him. He is attempting to place himself into a position where he is indispensable and when Berkyaruq dies he hopes to place himself as the next sultan of the Seljuk Empire. However, his plots and schemes have led to a continued fracturing of the Seljuk Empire as other local leaders also see their opportunities to gain power. Ahmad Sanjar wishes to gain control over as much of the empire as possible and now realizes there are many options for gaining control over the Seljuk Empire. He has made an alliance with Murat, a Turkmen General, as well as Taj al-Mulk, the Vizier to the Sultan, in their mutual goal of gaining overwhelming power and influence.

### Fakhr al-Mulk Ridwan

His father was Tutush I, the brother of Malik Shah I and the Governor of Syria. When both his father and Malik Shah I died, placing the empire into near anarchy, Ridwan killed most of his brothers except Shams al-Muluk Duqaq who was able to escape. He then took up residence in the city of Aleppo and proclaimed himself the ruler of Syria. However, his brother that escaped claimed the southern portion of Syria, taking the city of Damascus as his own. The two brothers are currently in a military stalemate, both armies ready to take action against the other, effectively splitting Syria in two, Ridwan in the north and Duqaq in the south. They believe the current central authority of the Seljuk Empire to be too weak to settle the argument between them and are currently taking matters into their own hands. Ridwan will do anything to ensure that Syria is ruled only by him.

### Shams al-Muluk Duqaq

His father was Tutush I, the brother of Malik Shah I and the Governor of Syria. When both his father and Malik Shah I died, placing the empire into near anarchy, Ridwan killed most of his brothers except Shams al-Muluk Duqaq who was able to escape. He left for the city of Damascus, claiming it as his own. His brother Ridwan was angered by the claim of a city that he believed to be rightfully his. This created friction between the two brothers as Ridwan wants control of all of Syria, placing the north and south of Syria on the border of military action. In order to shore up his defenses Duqaq made an alliance with one of the Turkmen Generals, Azat, and sealed this alliance by marrying his daughter Havva. Duqaq hopes to protect his land and gain allies from around the rest of the Seljuk Empire in order to ensure he is not deposed and killed.

### Azat

Azat is the leader of one of the nomadic Turkmen armies of the Seljuk Empire. He sees the Seljuk Empire devolving into infighting and hopes that someone will bring peace and order back to the empire. He has allied himself currently with Duqaq as he is not personally focused on creating more bloodshed. Duqaq married his daughter Havva to seal the deal and Azat has promised to protect him from attack, primarily from his brother Ridwan. Azat hopes to see a leader unite the Seljuk Empire and bring a sense of unity to the empire in order to be more focused on enemies without rather than within.

### Barquq

The leader of the Mamluk army. The Mamluks are slave soldiers that are treated with quite a bit of prestige. They report to the Sultan of the Seljuk Empire, Berkyaruq, often taking commands from his advisors, Muhammad I and Ahmad Sanjar, in his stead. Barquq sees the fighting that is going on around the Seljuk Empire and hopes that his Mamluks will be allowed to fight in order to gain more honor and prestige.

### Taj al-Mulk

The Vizier of the Seljuk Empire. Taj al-Mulk is a studied man in the area of politics. He advises the king extraordinarily closely and is working to make himself indispensable. He hopes that as long as he is indispensable to whoever is in power they will be unable to get rid of him and he can live the life of luxury he has become accustomed to. He has taken over many of the civil tasks of running the empire and is trying to build a relationship with Ahmad Sanjar who he sees as possibly becoming more powerful in the future.

### al-Musta'li Billah

Caliph of the Fatimid Dynasty. In recent years the Fatimid Dynasty has been slowly collapsing with their territory now only consisting of Egypt. The Turkish part of their population has been railing against their rule and so Billah hopes to either control more of the Seljuk Empire or ingratiate himself with the Seljuk Empire to appease his citizens.

### Shahanshah

Vizier of the Fatimid Dynasty. In recent years the Fatimid Dynasty has been slowly collapsing with their territory now only consisting of Egypt. The Turkish part of their population has been railing against their rule and so Billah hopes to either control more of the Seljuk Empire or ingratiate himself with the Seljuk Empire to appease his citizens. Shahanshah truly hopes to help his Caliph and ensure he stays in power, however fears revolution may be just around the corner. He hopes to quiet the civil unrest in any way possible.

### Aktas

Vizier to Arslan Kiliĵ, Sultan of the Seljuk Empire of Rum. He runs the civil affairs of the state, while Arslan Kiliĵ often leads the military himself. He encourages Kiliĵ Arslan to lead the military as he believes it will cause Kiliĵ Arslan to gain more prestige and honor, leading more local rulers to flock to him for protection and leadership. He wants to help Kiliĵ Arslan expand the new Seljuk Empire of Rum and in doing so has been able to get Okur, a Turkmen general to defect from the main Seljuk Empire and instead join the Seljuk Empire of Rum.

### Okur

A leader of one of the nomadic Turkmen armies of the Seljuk Empire. Okur believes that the devolution of the Seljuk Empire is due to lack of strong leadership. Over the last couple of years Okur's faith in Berkyaruq and his central administration has waned to the point that he was convinced by Aktas to instead support Kiliġ Arslan's new Seljuk Empire of Rum. Okur sees Kiliġ Arslan as a warrior ruler and respects the power that Kiliġ Arslan has displayed in fending off the Peoples' Crusade.

### Yaman

A leader of one of the nomadic Turkmen armies of the Seljuk Empire. Yaman keeps his men in the best position to serve the Sultan of the Seljuk Empire, Berkyaruq. Yaman is incredibly loyal to the Sultan and believes that Berkyaruq will grow into a powerful and respectable leader. Yaman has become incredibly critical of the local leaders of the Seljuk Empire and has begun to distrust many of them as they do not show the same loyalty to the Sultan. Yaman is a man of honor who believes that others should respect their oaths of loyalty to the Sultan.

### Murat

A leader of one of the nomadic Turkmen armies of the Seljuk Empire. Murat has not previously been a very political man. Under Malġk Shah, Murat was rewarded for being a loyal general and conquering lands for the empire. Now, with Malġk Shah dead, Murat has seen the splitting of the Seljuk Empire lowering his ability to benefit the Empire as a whole. Murat feels that Berkyaruq may not be in power for much longer, but is unsure about whether he wants to strengthen his support of Berkyaruq, look for a new leader to support, or use his army to gain power for himself.

## Tulum

Tulum is the commander of Sultan Berkyaruq's personal army. Tulum is an adept politician and strategist and is fiercely loyal to Berkyaruq as he has known him since he was a child. Tulum works closely with Yaman and Taj al-Mulk in order to ensure Berkyaruq is protected and faces no threats. Tulum is willing to go behind the Sultan's back as long as he believes it is in the interest of keeping the Sultan alive and well.

## Hamza

Hamza is the Grand Imam of the Seljuk Empire. Hamza commands the respect of every nation. During these divisive times, most local leaders have been lacking in their religious duties. They have not led their people to greater religious unity. Hamza recognizes this and hopes to gain greater power in order to better unite the Seljuk Empire himself.

## Mehmet

The Emir of Amasya. Along with the rest of Anatolia, Mehmet left the rest of the Seljuk Empire and created the Seljuk Empire of Rum with Kiliç Arslan. Mehmet joined Kiliç Arslan because he fears invasion from outside forces and believes that Kiliç Arslan has more power to defend his city than Berkyaruq's government. Mehmet believes that the crusaders now entering Constantinople are a significant threat and is frustrated that few others believe him.

## Saral

A wealthy merchant, the other merchants in the Seljuk Empire trust him and use Saral as a representative in political matters, particularly the land trading merchants. Saral is not in charge of all merchants and does report back to a collective council full of other powerful merchants, however, he has a lot of influence due to his direct connection to powerful political leaders in the Seljuk Empire. He often works quite closely with Taj-al Mulk in order to help plan policies and provide the merchants' view. He is hoping to gain influence with other local rulers as the Seljuk Empire continues to fragment in order to ensure business goes on as usual.

## Asim

Asim is the head of espionage for the Seljuk Empire. He has been in charge of espionage for a long time and has extensive connections within the Seljuk Empire. He works closely with Taj-al Mulk and Tulum as they tend to be the ones who need his information the most. Asim is an opportunist and is primarily concerned with ensuring his own wellbeing is preserved.

## Levent

Levent is a brand new spymaster for Kiliġ Arslan. He works closely with Kiliġ Arslan and Aktas to ensure they are informed of the ongoing events in Anatolia. However, because of the newness of the Seljuk Empire of Rum, Levent's espionage network is not as developed as others. Levent works hard to grow his system and wishes to become an even better asset to Kiliġ Arslan's new empire.

### Eren

Emir of Ankara. Eren believes that the westerners that are invading could not possibly pose a threat. Eren helped Kiliġ Arslan in fending off the Peoples' Crusade. Instead of focusing on the western threat, Eren hopes to convince the rest of the Seluk Empire of Rum to conquer more land in the east.

### Sezer

Emir of Aksaray in the Seljuk Empire of Rum. Sezer believes that the best way to stop the western invaders is to send troops themselves into the west. He hopes to gain support to lead armies to Constantinople and hopefully end the threat of the crusades by showing the west their might.

### Dolunay

Emir of Antalya in the Seljuk Empire of Rum. Antalya is a port city with great merchanting power. Dolunay hopes to ensure that trade routes with the Seljuk Empire are not disturbed. Dolunay fears a possible attack from the ocean and often wants to create a more powerful naval force to protect the waters around his city.