

Kilde 5.3

### **Runciman om korstogene**

*Steven Runciman (1903-2000) var historiker og specialist i det østromerske rige (Byzans). Hans værk i tre bind, A History of the Crusades (1951-1954), fik stor indflydelse på opfattelsen af korstogene.*

There was a land-hunger in Normandy, whose thickly populated estates offered no scope for ambitious and restless younger sons and landless knights. This impulse for expansion (...) turned their eyes towards the East and all its riches.

Though the great princes were apt to remain aloof, western knights responded readily to the appeal of holy war. Their motives were in part genuinely religious. They were ashamed to continue fighting among themselves; they wanted to fight for the Cross. But there was also a land-hunger to incite them, especially in northern France, where the practice of primogeniture (: den ældste søn arver alt) was being established. As a lord grew unwilling to divide his property and its offices, now beginning to be concentrated round a stone-guilt, his younger sons had to seek their fortunes elsewhere. There was a general restlessness and taste for adventure in the knightly class in France, most marked among the Normans, who were only a few generations away removed from nomadic free-booters. The opportunity for combining Christian duty with the acquisition of land in a southern climate was very attractive.

(...)

Life for a peasant in North-Western Europa was grim and insecure. Much land had gone out of cultivation during the barbarian invasions and the raids of the Norsemen. (...) It was a moment when emigration seemed very attractive. Already in April 1095 a shower of meteorites had presaged a great movement of peoples.

Apocalyptic teaching added to the economic inducement. (...) Medieval man was convinced that the second coming was at hand. He must repent while there was time and must go out to do good. The Church taught that sin could be expiated by pilgrimage and prophecies declared that the Holy Land must be recovered for the faith before Christ could come again (...) Many of Peter's hearers (Peter Eremitten var leder af Folkekorstoget) believed that he was promising to lead them out of their present miseries to the land flowing with milk and honey of which the scriptures

spoke. The journey would be hard; there were the legions of Antichrist to be overcome. But the goal was Jerusalem, the golden.

Oversættelse (Kristian Steg):

Der var mangel på land i Normandiet, hvis tæt befolkede områder ikke gav muligheder for ambitiøse og rastløse yngre sønner og jordløse riddere. Ønsket om ekspansion (...) vendte disse ridders opmærksomhed mod Østen og alle dens rigdomme.

Selvom de mægtigste fyrster mest holdt sig tilbage, tog riddere fra vesten positivt imod kaldet til hellig krig. Deres motiver var til dels religiøse. De skammede sig over deres indbyrdes stridigheder; i stedet ville de kæmpe for korset. Men manglen på land motiverede dem også, særligt i Nordfrankrig, hvor det var blevet tradition, at kun den ældste søn af en stormand arvede, når faderen døde. Efterhånden som stormændene ophørte med at opdele jord, borge og embeder, måtte deres yngre sønner søge lykken andetsteds. Generelt var der en rastløshed og eventyrlyst blandt ridderne i Frankrig, mest udtalt blandt normannerne som et par generationer før havde været omvandrende lejesoldater. Muligheden for at kombinere kristen pligt med erhvervelsen af land i et sydligt klima var meget fristende. (...)

Livet for en bonde i Nordvesteuropa var barsk og usikkert. Meget land lå uopdyrket hen efter barbarernes invasioner og vikingernes plyndringer. (...) Det var en tid, hvor det var meget fristende at emigrere. Allerede i april 1095 havde en meteorsværm forudsagt en stor folkevandring.

I forlængelse af det økonomiske incitament fandtes der også dommedagsprofetier: Middelaldermennesket var overbevist om, at Messias snart ville vende tilbage [og at Dommedag dermed var nær]. Man måtte angre sine synder, mens der endnu var tid, og man måtte gå ud i verden for at gøre gode gerninger. Kirken prædikede, at synder kunne tilgives gennem pilgrimsfærd, og profeter erklærede, at det hellige land måtte vindes tilbage på kristne hænder, før Kristus kunne vende tilbage (...) Mange af Peter Eremitens (: lederen af folkekorstoget) følgere troede, at han lovede at føre dem ud af deres elendighed – til landet, der flød af mælk og honning, som Biblen talte om. Rejsen ville blive hård; der var Antikrists gigantiske hære, som skulle besejres. Men målet var Jerusalem, den gyldne stad.