

# Primary Source Activity

**networks**

## Medieval Europe

### Lesson 3 *Kingdoms and Crusades*

## The First Crusade

### Introduction to Excerpt 1

Pope Urban II (c.1035–1099) was born in France. After serving the Church there, as well as in Rome and in Germany, he was elected pope in 1088. At a Church council held in the French town of Clermont in 1095, Urban II called for a European crusade, or holy war, against the Muslims. At this time, Muslims held power in the Holy Land. The following excerpt from the pope's speech was recorded by Fulcher of Chartres (c.1059–1127), a French priest who attended the council. Fulcher traveled as a chaplain to Jerusalem in 1099 and spent the rest of his life there. A historian, he compiled a detailed eyewitness account of the First Crusade.

#### ***Excerpt 1***

"All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans [non-Christians], shall have immediate remission [forgiveness] of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested. O what a disgrace if such a despised [hated] and base race, which worships demons, should conquer a people which has the faith of omnipotent [all-powerful] God and is made glorious with the name of Christ! With what reproaches [criticisms] will the Lord overwhelm us if you do not aid those who, with us, profess the Christian religion! Let those who have been accustomed unjustly to wage private warfare against the faithful now go against the infidels [unbelievers] and end with victory this war, which should have been begun long ago.

### Introduction to Excerpt 2

In 1097, the crusaders reached Constantinople, the Byzantine capital. Anna Comnena was the daughter of the Byzantine emperor. An educated woman, she wrote about life at her father's court. Like many Byzantines, she saw the western Europeans as disorderly and rude. In her famous work, *The Alexiad*, Comnena recorded her impressions of the crusaders and their behavior.

# Primary Source Activity *Cont.*

**networks**

## Medieval Europe

### ***Excerpt 2***

"When the Franks [crusaders] had all come together . . . , there was one count who had the boldness to sit down upon the [emperor's] throne. The emperor . . . kept silent, but Baldwin [a crusader] approached the Frankish count and . . . said, 'You ought not to sit there; that is an honor which the emperor permits to no one. Now that you are in this country, why do you not observe its customs?'"

**Directions** Answer the following questions about the excerpts you read above.

### **Analyzing Primary Sources**

- 1. Identifying** In Excerpt 1, who is speaking and what is the occasion?

---

- 2. Describing** According to the speaker in Excerpt 1, how would Europeans who lose their lives in the crusade or holy war be rewarded?

---

---

- 3. Comparing and Contrasting** In Excerpt 1, how does the speaker contrast the crusaders with their enemies?

---

---

- 4. Explaining** In Excerpt 2, why does Baldwin criticize the Frankish count?

---

---

# Primary Source Activity *Cont.*

**networks**

## Medieval Europe

**5. Drawing Conclusions** Why did Anna Comnena think the incident in Excerpt 2 was important enough to write about in her book?

---

---

### Critical Thinking

**6. Analyzing** How did the crusaders see themselves? How did non-Europeans view them?

---

---

---

---