

SECTION C

Study Extracts 1 and 2 in the Extracts Booklet before you answer this question.

- 5 Historians have different views about the reasons for the failure of the Fourth Crusade. Analyse and evaluate the extracts and use your own knowledge of the issues to explain your answer to the following question.

How convincing do you find the view that the Fourth Crusade failed because it was in the interests of Venice to attack Constantinople?

(20)

It is quite convincing that the reason for the failure of the Fourth Crusade was due to the fact that Venice wanted to attack Constantinople. Extract 1 disagrees as it states that it is unlikely for this to have occurred, whereas Extract 2 believes that the interests of the Venetians were apparent in the sack of Constantinople.

Extract One by Queller and Madden states that "it makes little sense" that it was in the Venetian interests to attack Constantinople as there is no evidence for it and abundant evidence against it. It takes the view that it is unlikely that Dandolo would know that "there would never be 33,500 crusaders, nor would they ever come up with the agreed payment" that being of 85,000 marks which



(Section C continued) the crusaders could indeed not pay off, only 51,000 marks was collected. It is also true in the case that there were only 12,000 out of the 33,500 men agreed in the Treaty of Venice that actually arrived and it does appear that Dandolo did not want this debt as expressed in Extract One, considering the fact that he tried to get the crusaders to Zara to get the money they needed. Therefore it can be argued that Dandolo was trying to save the crusade, not cause it to become a failure. However Extract One can be disputed as it was in the Venetian interests for the crusaders to attack Zara not only to pay off their debt but also because Zara would be beneficial for the Venetians due to the port enroute to Acre and due to the Dalmatian oak that could be used to build ships. Therefore we can see that Extract One makes a valid point in the sense that Dandolo was



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putting Venice in a dangerous position that he wouldn't want to "expose to the republic" if he was essentially gambling for Constantinople to be attacked, however it has been seen before that Venetians have used the Crusades before to benefit their own interests, and so diverted the crusade

Extract Two differs to Extract One as written by Michael Angelo describes the "commercial opportunities" that Constantinople offered. It is known that Byzantium had been hindering Venetian trade for a long time and the opportunity to attack Constantinople would have given Venice ~~attracted~~ an ~~extra~~ advantage over ~~Crade~~ at the time. Angelo even states that they were at a "disadvantage" due to the empire, so being able to have that advantage would definitely be in the Venetian interests. We can see from the extract that "to secure its interests in Byzantium in such a way that its merchants were free to open up



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~~success~~ ^{success} ~~emission~~ ^{emission} markets ~~it~~ would have been greatly in the venetian interests, and it would have been made possible by Alexius II's offer to the crusaders allowing the venetians to use the crusaders not only to get the approximate 3 L, 000 marks allowed to them (which too would be in their interests) out of Alexius offer of 200,000 marks to them (of which he could only pay 100,000 marks of) but also a deal with Alexius offer trade.

Therefore we can see how the venetian interests could have led to the diversion of the crusade and so its failure, as they supported the diversion and it is clear that it would have been in their interests to attack Constantinople.

However this also begs the question of the fact that it was Alexius who offered to divert the crusade, and couldn't hold up his promises (e.g. only getting 100,000



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therefore it can be argued that it was Alexius who caused the crusade to fail as he created the diversion which led to the end of the Fourth Crusade. This supports Extract One, as it could not only be the Venetian interests that caused the failure of the Crusade, and without Alexius' unexpected offer, Venetian interests would not be as possible to gain, supporting this theory.

Therefore we can see from Extract One that the Venetians would not have risked debt and lack of military support for the sake of their interests at Constantinople whereas Extract 2 believes it is entirely possible that the Venetians used the crusaders to protect their interests. This seems highly likely as their previous diversion to Zara supports this theory and they did support the diversion to Constantinople which inevitably caused the end



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and failure of the crusade
as the crusaders were forced to
leave Constantinople and ended up
remaining there after paying off
their debt to Venice.