

The Medieval Magazine

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Revealed



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Venetian Prisons in the Middle Ages

The Medievalverse

March 9, 2015



Venetian Prisons in the Middle Ages

Taking a look at how a Venetian prison on the island of Crete operated.



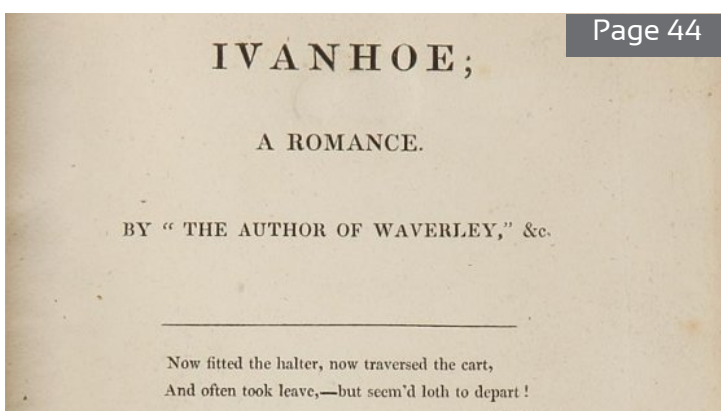
Lady in the Lead Coffin Revealed

A mysterious lead coffin found close to the site of Richard III's hastily dug grave at the Grey Friars friary has been opened and studied by experts from the University of Leicester.



The Crusades

Andrew Latham traces the contours of the specific types of violent religious conflict always immanent within the historical structure of medieval war.



Medieval Historical Fiction: Ten Novels from the 19th century

Historical fiction was just beginning as literary genre in the 19th century, but soon authors found success in writing about stories set in the Middle Ages.

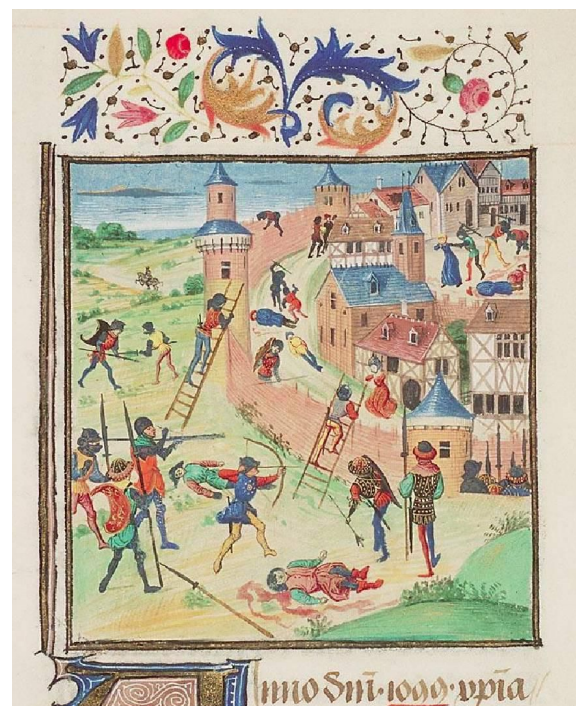
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The Medievalverse

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Edited by Peter Konieczny and Sandra Alvarez



**Cover: Crusaders storm
Jerusalem, from The Hague,
MMW, 10 A 21**

How Well Do You Know the Seventh Century?



1. This Anglo-Saxon helmet, which dates from the early 7th century, was found at which archaeological site?
2. Pope Agatho (678-681) spent much of his reign dealing with which heresy (he was able to convince a council chaired by the Byzantine emperor to be condemned)?
3. Who were the first four Caliphs of Islam, also known as the 'Rightly Guide Caliphs'?
4. This Anglo-Saxon saint died in 687. He was a monk, bishop and hermit, has his tomb at Durham Cathedral, and is regarded as the patron saint of northern England. Who is he?

5. Which event, that took place in the year 664, helped to decide the proper date for Easter and how monks should be tonsured, in Anglo-Saxon England?
6. Which group besieged Constantinople in 626?
7. What is the The Ladder of Divine Ascent?
8. Etymologiae is a 7th-century version of an encyclopaedia - it touches on hundreds of topics ranging from the names of God, the terminology of the law, the technologies of fabrics, ships, and agriculture, to the names of cities and rivers, the theatrical arts, and cooking utensils - and it was widely used throughout the Middle Ages. Who compiled it?
9. After capturing and beheading Phocas, this Byzantine emperor would rule for nearly 31 years. Who was he?
10. Which dynasty began its rule over China in the 618 AD, and would last for nearly 300 years?



Answers on Page 10



Medieval Mass Grave Discovered in Paris

Archaeologists in the French capital have discovered more than 200 skeletons on what was once the site of a medieval hospital. It is believed that the remains date between the 14th and 16th centuries.

The discovery was made in the basement of a Monoprix supermarket located on Rue Sebastopol. The archaeologists have found eight separate mass grave so far. Seven of them have between five and twenty individuals, buried two to five deep. The eighth grave has at least 150 dead. They were deposited carefully and show a deposit method very organized: at least two rows of individuals are filed "head to tail", a third row seeming to grow beyond the limits of the excavation. The bodies are buried five to six deep.

"We expected it to have a few bones to the extent that it had been a cemetery but not find mass graves," store manager Pascal Roy told Agence France Presse.

This very large mass grave appears to correspond to a mortality crisis whose cause is currently unknown. Adults (women and men of all ages) and children are represented. The skeletal remains do not show damage to immediately identify the cause of the mass death. Paris was struck by the Black Death in the 14th century, and suffered other plagues in following centuries.

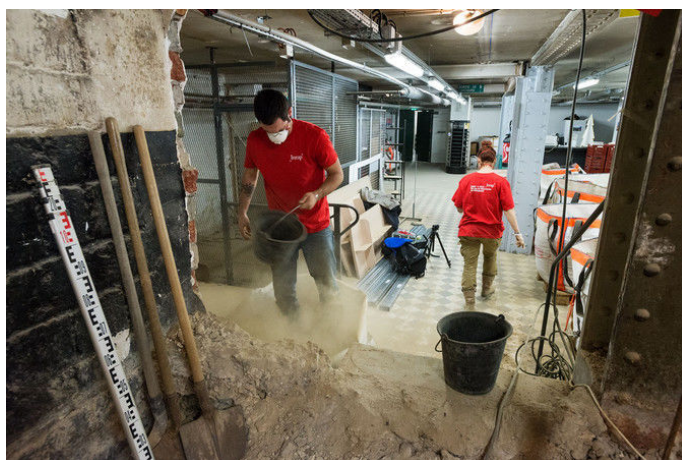
"What is surprising is that the bodies were not thrown into the graves but placed there with care. The individuals—men, women and children—were placed head to toe no doubt to save space," said archaeologist Isabelle Abadie, who is leading the dig.

The site was once home to l'hôpital de la Trinité, which was built in 1202. Located just outside the medieval walls of Paris, the hospital provided care for pilgrims and the poor. By the 16th century the site had become an orphanage and its buildings were torn down in 1817.

France's National Institute for Preventive Archaeological Research (INRAP) plan to carry out extensive research on the site. They note that many aspects of funeral practices associated with medieval and early modern hospitals remain unknown in France, with less than a dozen sites in the country have been the subject of archaeological studies. They will soon carry out DNA testing in order to learn more about the people who were buried here.



Images from the archaeological site underneath a Paris supermarket - photos by © Denis Gliksman / INRAP



Venetian Prisons in the Middle Ages

By Sandra Alvarez

Prisons. A grim topic now and even more grim when we look at incarceration in the past. Much has been written about the medieval prison but little has been said about prison life on the fringes of Latin Christendom. What were medieval prisons like in Crete? In his article entitled, *Prisons and Incarceration in Fourteenth-Century Venetian Crete*, Nickiphoros I. Tsougarakis examines the history behind the Venetian prison system.



A 16th-century map of Crete

Prisons today function to punish individuals for criminal activity. Simply put: you do the crime, you do the time, justice served. When we look back at medieval prisons, however, they didn't operate in the same way. People weren't kept in jail to serve time, they were in jail for some of the following reasons:

- 1.) Prisons were a sort of holding tank until the powers that be could decide what they wanted to do with the criminal, i.e., they were awaiting trial.
- 2.) Preparing to meet their maker (execution).
- 3.) Force an individual to pay a fine or face severe consequences.

Towards the late Middle Ages, especially in Italy, prisons began to change towards punishment model due to several developments:

- 1.) The advent of the Inquisition (who frequently employed punitive measures),
- 2.) The development of Communes - the future City States - which were powerful political entities independent of feudal lords and the monarchy,
- 3.) Lastly, the renewed interest in Roman Law.

As Venice expanded as a City State and powerful maritime empire, it colonised Crete and Cyprus. Crete was under Latin Control but not a technically part of Western Europe. There were

hostilities when the Latin Church was imposed upon a largely Orthodox population.

Venetian civil law appears to have been used to coerce rather than punish criminals. For example, a debtor would be held by the court while his creditors took his possessions. Venetian law did not incarcerate for violent crime. If you committed a violent crime, you were either fined, punished promptly by mutilation or death or exiled. There is a curious exception to this rule: Rapists. A rapist was held for 8 days until he could pay the victim a sum equal to her dowry. If the rapist couldn't come up with the money, he was blinded. The rapist wasn't jailed for the rape, he was jailed to be coerced to pay the victim or jailed until his alternative punishment was meted out. Incarceration with pending punishment was never long in Venetian Crete.

So when did the Venetians use incarcerations as actual punishment in Crete? This occurred mainly when the punishment fell to the discretion of judges. When a criminal was found not guilty, but the judge still suspected guilt, he could over ride and sentence the criminal, "according to their own conscience". Crete had only so many set punishments in the law codes, anything that fell outside of them was either decided by past custom or left for the judge to decide. In many cases, this 'outside the codes' punishment included incarceration. It still wasn't the "go-to" answer for all crimes. Jail time was still mainly used to force payment, as a holding tank for trials and pending corporal punishment. That slowly changed in the 14th century.

Show Me the Money!: Prison Conditions

Venetian prisons in Crete weren't great but, the Venetians did occasionally pay for the incarcerated unlike most other prisons of this time period. In Crete, the prisoner was expected to cover some of the cost of their prison stay. Unlike today's modern jailhouses, where the food, shelter and wellbeing of the criminal are paid for by the government via taxation, in the Middle Ages, prison stays varied depending on the wealth of the offender, i.e., you paid your own way. The more money you had, and the higher your social status in the world, the better your prison time - you got better food, potential freedom to move about and better

accommodations. Generally speaking, you were given two meals per day, allowed visitation from family and friends (provided you bribed the guards - more on that later), and for the most part, you were able to walk about the halls during the day. Fourteenth century Crete had 4 prisons, one being a women's prison founded in 1314.

The Usual Suspects: Who Was Imprisoned?

Those awaiting trial: These prisoners were never held very long; the longest time span being two years.

Debtors: There was no set minimum as to the threshold before you wound up in jail for your debt. Meaning, you could owe very little and end up in jail, so many debtors in Crete ended up incarcerated for tiny amounts. This became a burden on the jails and threatened Crete's credit reliant economy. Many debtors fled Crete to avoid jail. Venetian legislators stepped in and tried to resolve the issue on several occasions by offering better repayment programmes for those who wanted to pay but had fallen on difficult times. Falling on hard times was relatively easy to do for an investor considering Crete's serious problems with the Plague in 1348, frequent wars, and constant colonial rebellion. Incarceration during the 14th century increased but it wasn't always the best solution.

Fine Evaders: Some laws came into effect that stipulated jail time for failure to pay such as one law in 1320 where if a nobleman was involved with a dispute with a member of the clergy, he could be fined 100 hyperpera (the Byzantine coinage reissued during the rule of Alexios I Komnenos, 1081-1118) or, a year of jail time. The punishments were generally (but not always) the following: 50 hyperpera or more resulted in a 6 month detention for failure to pay, 100 hyperpera equalled one year, and 200 hyperpera, two years. Low-level violent offenders also fell into this category - they either had to pay the victim restitution or do time. Judges favoured this last option for assaults where the jail time was in addition to the fine.

Exiles: An Alternative/or in Addition to Exile: Exile was a popular means of dealing with particularly violent criminals. They could spend a year in jail and then be exiled, or be exiled and the threat of

particularly violent criminals. They could spend a year in jail and then be exiled, or be exiled and the threat of imprisonment used if they dared return.

Corrupt Officials and Trouble Makers (Threats to the State/Subversive Behaviour): Corruption was taken very seriously by the Venetians. In the mid 15th century, several prominent government officials were thrown into jail and forced to dole out extremely high fines. In terms of threats to Venetian interests, we have situations like the Greek clergy who were incarcerated for subverting venetian authority by taking in escaped slaves as monks.

Did You Know?: Fun Facts

There was no segregation of different religious groups or ethnic minorities in Venetian prisons. Greeks, Latins and Jews shared the same living quarters. In fact, Tsougarakis mentions there were several instances where prisoners from all 3 backgrounds helped each other escape!

Another interesting fact was that because it was so easy to end up in prison for minor offences such as unpaid debt, being jailed did not carry the same stigma it does today. While it wasn't a badge of honour, it was certainly considered 'a fact of life' and didn't affect one's social standing. The 14th century saw many people bequeathing money to debtors as a form of charity. This shows that people knew their legal system wasn't always fair and anyone could end up in jail for a minor infraction.

Prison breaks were common. The guards were notoriously bad at keeping people inside prison

walls. Between 1317 - 1352 there were 17 breakouts. At some point, it got so bad that prison breaks occurred almost daily! Of all the break outs - this one takes the cake: In June 1338, 4 men broke out of jail along with their guard! He was eventually put on the fugitive list when they realised he was bribed and went along with his former charges. You know things are getting bad when even the guards won't stay!

There were different levels in prison - the lower level was not a place you wanted to be. These cells, known as le camerete, were shared with other prisoners and time spent here was reserved for the only the most heinous offences.

The worst part of prison? Not the food, not lice, not the smell...nope. It appears to have been the guards! Cretan poet, Stephanos Sachlikes wrote an account of his time in a Venetian jail in 1370. He complained that the guards mistreated prisoners to get them to offer bribes. They would go so far as to refuse access by visiting family members to the jailed person until the guards were adequately paid off. The poet also complained that the guard ate most of his food!

By the 14th century, Crete was transitioning towards a more humane treatment of prisoners by replacing stiff corporal punishments with jail time. Byzantine influence remained on the island but in terms of doling out punishment, Venetian law was firmly entrenched and practiced on a day to day basis.

The article 'Prisons and Incarceration in Fourteenth-Century Venetian Crete' by Nickiphoros I. Tsougarakis, appears in *Mediterranean Historical Review*, Vol.29:1 (2014)

Answers to our Seventh-Century Quiz

- 1. Sutton Hoo**
- 2. Monothelitism**
- 3. Abu Bakr, Umar, Utham ibn Affan and Ali**
- 4. Cuthbert**
- 5. Synod of Whitby**
- 6. Avars**
- 7. A book about monasticism**
- 8. Isidore of Seville**
- 9. Heraclius**
- 10. Tang Dynasty**

Knight buried at Hereford Cathedral may have had jousting injuries, archaeologists find

The remains of over 700 individuals were discovered at the graveyard of England's Hereford Cathedral between 2009 and 2011. Archaeologists are now revealing more details about some of the people that were buried here during the Middle Ages.

Built in the early 12th century it is believed that Hereford Cathedral replaced an earlier building on the site and archaeologists investigating the site have also uncovered information about the development of Saxon Hereford as well as excavating and recording c. 2500 burials as part of the landscaping project.

Headland Archaeology conducted a detailed study of over 700 individuals from these excavations (undertaken between 2009 – 2011) for Hereford Cathedral, produced exciting glimpses into life, disease, accident and injury from the Norman Conquest through to the 19th century.

However, some individuals stood out more than others – one such being the burial of a leper, and the other a lady with a severed hand. One of the most remarkable stories is of an individual believed to be a Knight. The interpretation is based on a number of disparate bits of scientific observation.

Firstly, he has very numerous fractures, all to ribs and the shoulder on the right side. Some of these had healed others hadn't, showing they were suffered at different times and also indicating that at death he hadn't recovered from his latest wounds. He also had an unusual twisting break to his left lower leg and these wounds are all consistent with injuries that can be sustained through tourney or jousting.

Analysis of his teeth that the man was likely to have been brought up in Normandy and moved to Hereford later in life.

Andy Boucher, who managed the post excavation work, remarked, "Obviously we can never be sure how people came about their wounds, but in this case there is a considerable amount of evidence suggesting this man was involved in some form of violent activity and the locations of his injuries do match quite closely what might be expected from taking part in mock battles.



Remains of a medieval individual discovered at Hereford Cathedral, believed to be a knight - photo by Headland Archaeology / Twitter

"The fact that he was still doing this after he was 45 suggests he must have been very tough."

A book about the discoveries, *Death in the Close – A Medieval Mystery*, is due to be published in 2015

Lady in the Lead Coffin revealed

A mysterious lead coffin found close to the site of Richard III's hastily dug grave at the Grey Friars friary has been opened and studied by experts from the University of Leicester.



The Inner Lead Casket of the Greyfriars Medieval Stone Coffin Revealed For The First Time in 600 Years – University of Leicester

The coffin was discovered inside a much larger limestone sarcophagus during a second excavation of the site, in August 2013 – one year after the remains of the former King of England were unearthed. Richard III will be reinterred at Leicester Cathedral this month after his mortal remains are taken from the University of Leicester on Sunday 22 March.

Inside the lead coffin, archaeologists found the skeleton of an elderly woman, who academics believe could have been an early benefactor of the friary – as radiocarbon dating shows she might have been buried not long after the church was completed in 1250 (although analysis shows her death could have taken place as late as 1400).

The high status female was in one of 10 graves

discovered in the grounds of the medieval complex, including that of Richard III, six of which were left undisturbed. Those that were examined were all found to have female remains.

Grey Friars site director Mathew Morris, who led the dig said: "Although it might seem unusual that Richard III is the only male skeleton found inside the Grey Friars church, the other four skeletons all being female, it must be remembered that we have only excavated five of ten identified graves in the church's chancel with the potential for hundreds more burials elsewhere inside the church, the other friary buildings and outside in the cemetery. Excavations of other monastic cemeteries have found ratios ranging from 1:3 to 1:20 woman to men buried, with urban monastic cemeteries

men buried, with urban monastic cemeteries typically having greater numbers of women buried in them than rural sites.

"In Leicester, ULAS's excavation of the medieval parish church of St Peter (today situated beneath the John Lewis store in Leicester's Highcross retail quarter) found that the burial of men and women inside the church was broadly equal. Statistically, the sample is too small to draw any conclusions to the significance of so many women at Grey Friars. After all, if we carried out more excavations it is possible that we could find that these are the only four women buried in the church. Richard III would certainly not have been the only male buried here during the friary's 300 year history and historic records list at least three other men buried in the church. What stands out more is the contrast between the care and attention taken with these burials – large, neatly dug graves with coffins – and the crudeness of Richard III's grave. The more we examine it, the clearer it becomes how atypical Richard III's burial really was."

The lead coffin, with an inlaid crucifix, the location of her burial in presbytery of the friary's church (possibly close to the high altar) meant that she had a special significance to the holy Catholic order.

The discovery is the first example of an intact

medieval stone coffin to be unearthed in Leicester during modern excavations.

Mathew Morris comments: "The stone sarcophagus was a tapered box carved from a single block of limestone. Inside, the wider end was curved, creating a broad head niche. Unfortunately, the stone lid did not properly fit the coffin allowing water to get inside, and its immense weight had badly cracked the sarcophagus, meaning it could not be lifted intact. However, inside the inner lead coffin was undamaged except for a hole at the foot end of the casket where the lead had decayed and collapsed inward exposing the skeleton's feet. This is the first stone coffin in Leicester to be excavated using modern archaeological practices. This makes it a unique discovery which will provide important new insights into the lives of the people of medieval Leicester."

Of the other nine sets of remains found at the Grey Friars, during the second excavation, three more were exhumed by University archaeologists, and six left undisturbed.

Two graves inside the choir – where Richard III was found – contained wooden coffins and inside were two females aged between 40 and 50-years-old. Radiocarbon dating shows there is a 95 per cent probability that they died between 1270 and 1400.





Archaeologists Open the Stone Coffin at the Greyfriars Archaeological Dig July 2013 – photo courtesy University of Leicester

Osteological examinations found that one of the women had a possible congenital hip dislocation which forced her to walk with a crutch. The other was found to have lived a life of hard physical labour – regularly using her arms and legs to lift heavy weights. And she was not alone. A fourth female skeleton, which had been disturbed, was also thought to have believed to have led a life of hard physical work.

She is believed to have died in her early to mid-20s. Analysis of the three intact sets of female remains – including the lady in the lead coffin – show that all of the women had a highly-varied, protein-rich diet including large amounts of sea fish.

A diverse diet like this would indicate that they would have been wealthy, and were able to consume expensive foods like game, meat and fish.

"Analysis of Skeleton 4 shows that she had a life of hard physical work, frequently using her arms and legs to lift and support weight. It is interesting then that she is buried in an area of the church which would have typically been reserved for wealthy benefactors and people of elevated social status. Her presence in this area might suggest that the friary's main source of donations came from the town's middle-classes, merchants and tradespeople who were probably

of more modest means, and worked for a living."

There is a small clue as to who is buried at the site, which is in Leicester city centre, just a few yards from Leicester Cathedral where Richard III will be reinterred in March. But not enough information remains to say with any accuracy whether the records relate to any of the female skeletons found by Mathew and the team.

Documents dating back to the time of the burials – about 700-years – name a lady called Emma, who was married to John of Holt. In September of that year, 1290, the Bishop of Lincoln issued an indulgence granting 20-days off Purgatory for anyone who would say 'a Pater and a Ave for the soul of Emma, wife of John of Holt, whose body is buried in the Franciscan church in Leicester'. However, little is known about her, including what she looked like, her age at death or where in the friary church she was buried.

Mathew added, "We know little about her and a lack of fundamental information, such as her age at death, what she did for a living, what she looked like or where in the church she was buried, coupled with no known descendants who can provide a DNA sample, make it impossible to say for certain whether one of these skeletons is that of Emma, or indeed anyone else. Sadly, they will forever remain anonymous."

Medieval Articles

The Papacy and Christian Mercenaries of Thirteenth-Century North Africa

By Michael Lower

Speculum, Vol. 89:3 (2014)

In the medieval period, Muslim rulers frequently hired Christian mercenary soldiers to defend their persons and bolster their armies. Nowhere was this practice more common than in North Africa, a region, then as now, linked to Europe through migration, diplomacy, and trade. From the twelfth century to the sixteenth, North African regimes of all types found it useful to recruit European fighters to their sides. Some of these mercenaries were former prisoners of war, while others were prominent political exiles. Most, though, were of humbler origin, fighting men who found a lively market for their services in the decentralized, fiercely competitive political environment of the late medieval Maghrib.

[Click here to read this article from Academia.edu](#)

Women's role in politics in the medieval Muslim world

By Yasmin Hilloowala

Masters Thesis, University of Arizona, 1993

The objective of this paper will be to demonstrate in what ways medieval women (the upper-class women) of the Middle East made themselves visible and wielded influence or power over affairs of the state. Because of the limiting aspect of the thesis, the area that I will discuss will be limited both in geography and time. This paper will concentrate on the eastern area of the Islamic world from approximately the eighth century to the thirteenth century. The main body of the paper will deal with this time period. However, first, I will need to discuss the situation of women before Islam, Islam's rise and the changes it brought to women in the early years of its existence. And then I will cover Islam's spread into other areas, how it changed there, and thus how women were able to exert their influence within the framework of these changes.

[Click here to read this thesis from the University of Arizona](#)

What Women Want: Female readers of Virgil's Aeneid in the Middle Ages

By Claire Harrill

eSharp, Vol.21 (2011)

In this article I will consider the influence of female readers of Virgil's *Aeneid* on two medieval adaptations of Virgil's text, namely, the C11th Latin *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, and the C12th Old French *Roman d'Enéas*. In these two texts female readership of Virgil is manifested in two ways; the Roman is tailored to a female audience and the Encomium is tailored for a female patron.

[Click here to read this article from eSharp](#)

Tower of London: Ceremony of the Keys

By Sandra Alvarez

Here's a riddle for you: What's the longest running, yet shortest, military tradition in the world? Give up? It's the Tower of London's Ceremony of the Keys.

Normally, when people visit the Tower of London, they visit during the day. Hordes of tourists from all over the globe cram into the Tower grounds every day to get a glimpse of London's medieval past. Then, there are a few of us diehards who have done the Tower of London Twilight Tour. It's brilliant and I highly recommend going to see the Tower when everyone has gone, and only the Yeoman Warders and spooky spirits are out. But that isn't all there is to the Tower, there is the 700 year old Ceremony of the Keys. It's the longest running (and shortest) military ceremony in the world. Every night, at 9:53pm on the dot, the Warders begin their 7 minute lock up ceremony, rain, wind, snow or shine. They lock the Tower in the same manner since the 12th century. The first recorded mention of the ceremony is in 1380, but the locking of the Tower can be traced further back to the reign of Henry II (March 5, 1133- June 6, 1189). He disliked having the gates open so he insisted they be locked from sundown to sunrise every night. Now you're saying hang on, this ceremony is at 10 o'clock at night, well past sunset. Yes, thanks to the Duke of Wellington (May 1, 1769 – September 14, 1852) who in 1826, had 1,000 antsy soldiers stationed at the Tower and felt it would be best to give them a more lenient curfew to carouse and enjoy all that London has to offer lest he have a mutiny on his hands. He reset the curfew to 10pm and it's been that way ever since. To its credit, the ceremony has only been late once in its 700 year history; on September 7, 1940, Germany bombed London and the ceremony was delayed by 7 minutes. But the show went on! Amidst bombs, and extreme danger, the Warder heading the ceremony insisted, (in spite of being gravely injured) that they finished what they had started. Sadly, that Warder died as a result of those injuries 3 years later, making him the oldest

running Warder in history (1908 – 1943). English tenacity at its best.

While the time may have changed, the actual ceremony hasn't. When I watched the ceremony, it gave me the goosebumps. It was like stepping back in time, but really stepping back. The events unfolding before you have been repeated daily, in the same fashion for over 700 years. Any Warder at the Tower can conduct the ceremony. The soldiers involved in the Tower's Ceremony of the Keys are young servicemen. The Warders, as always, are fountains of knowledge as well as stellar ambassadors to the Tower. They are absolute gems; they are witty, funny, and extremely professional. They take this ceremony and their duties at the Tower very seriously; they are not mere tour guides. All Warders come from the military, having seen 22 years of service before being able to join the esteemed ranks of the Yeoman Warders.

The best part of this: it's **FREE!** (There is a £1 booking fee to cover admin costs but the ticket is free). A visit to the Tower during the day costs about £22 so it's nice to get in and see a piece of history without paying an arm and a leg. This is also why it's booked up so far in advance.

A few words of warning:

1.) **Don't be late.** This event is very popular, and at the time of this writing, it is booked solid until August 2015. Your name is on a list, and if you miss it, you can't come in and you will have to wait months for another shot. Come early with your ID and ticket ready.

2.) **No cameras, no recording devices, no mobile phones.** All of it off. You're permitted to take pictures after the event of the Tower, and Tower Bridge is lovely at night from the Tower, but during the ceremony, absolutely no photos or videos are permitted. It's an incredible tradition and over in 7 minutes so it's best if you listen and



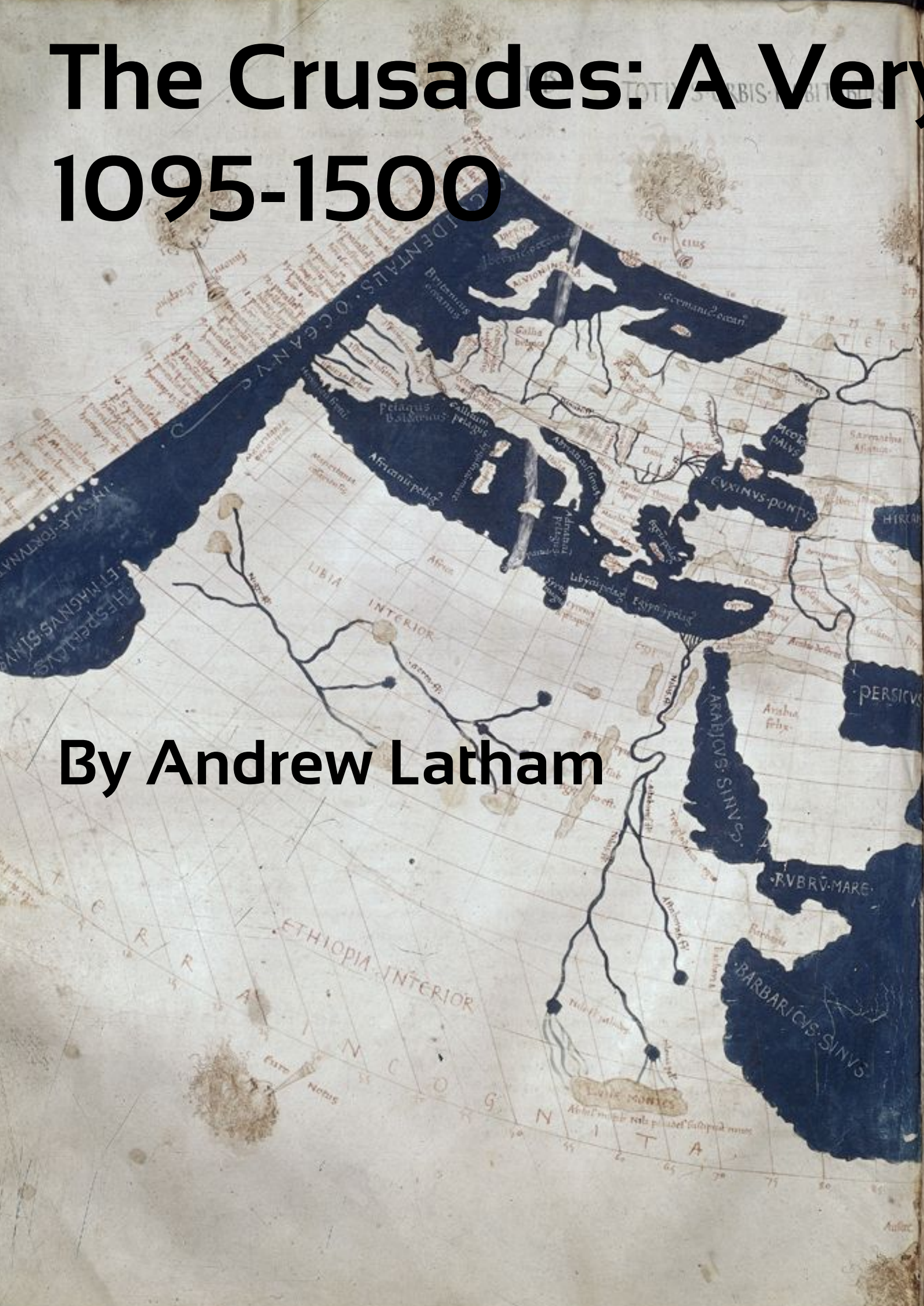
during the ceremony, absolutely no photos or videos are permitted. It's an incredible tradition and over in 7 minutes so it's best if you listen and immerse yourself in the moment rather than texting your mates or the fiddling with your camera.

3.) **Dress warmly.** I did this in early March. I'm Canadian, I can take standing outside in near zero temps for a while and not bat an eyelash,

however, some of you may not be so inclined. You have to get to the Tower well before the event, stand in a queue and wait outside. So unless you're doing this in the summer, I suggest you bring a jacket to keep warm. You're not walking far or moving about very much once you're inside the walls, and the entire ceremony takes place outside so dress accordingly. Also, this is England – bring an umbrella just in case.

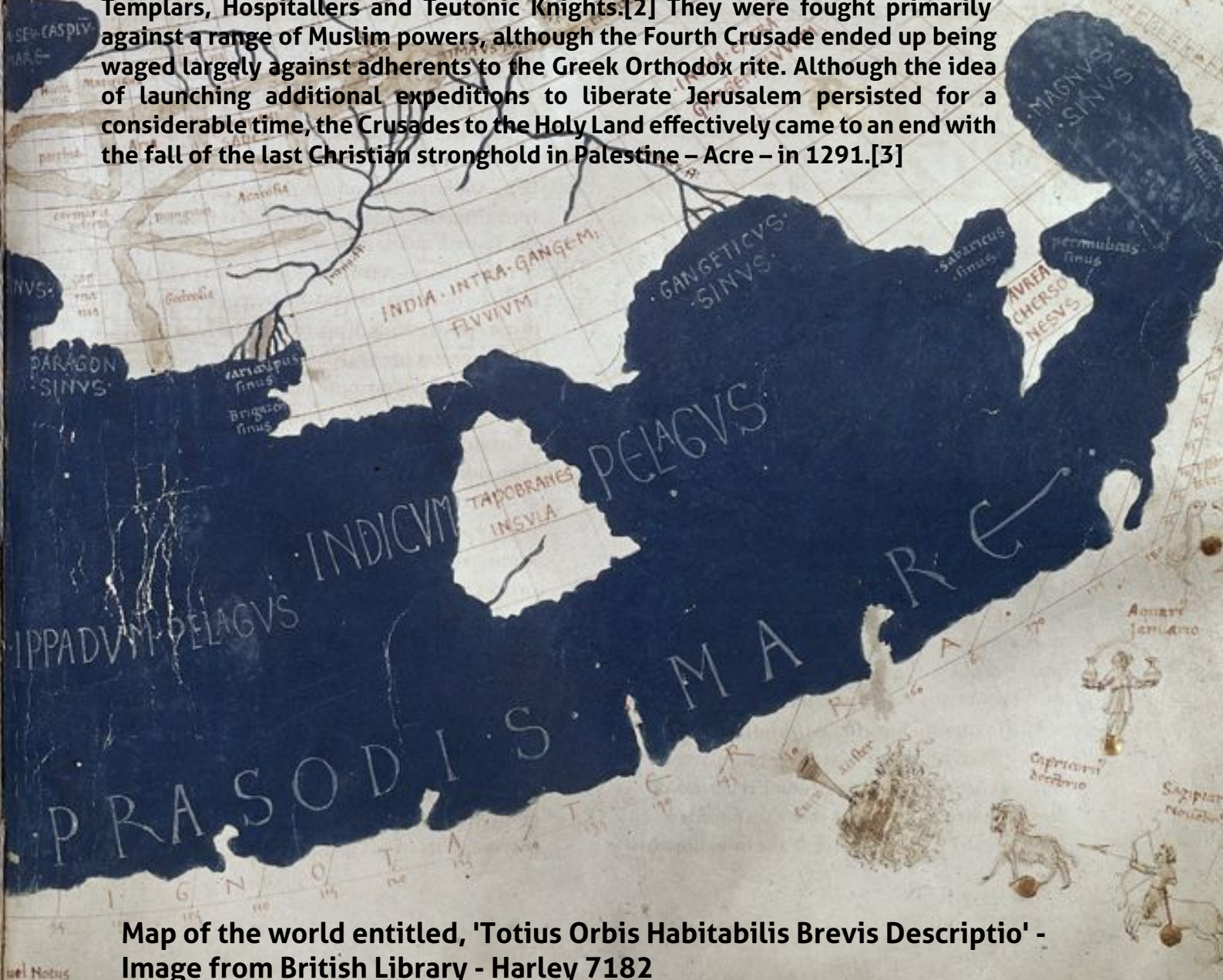
The Crusades: A Very 1095-1500

By Andrew Latham



y Brief History,

Between the mid-11th and late-15th centuries, an historically specific configuration of material and ideational factors gave rise to a constellation of religious wars that have come to be known as "the crusades". This constellation included Church-organized wars in the Holy Land, Iberia and along the Baltic frontier as well as within Latin Christendom itself.[1] The Crusades to the Holy Land were "wars of liberation" initially launched by the Church to restore Jerusalem to Christian rule. Following the First Crusade and the establishment of the crusader principalities (the County of Edessa, the Principality of Antioch, the County of Tripoli, and the Kingdom of Jerusalem – collectively known as Outremer), these expeditions were conducted primarily to defend the Holy Places against Muslim attempts at reconquest or, following its loss in 1187 and again in 1244, to recover Jerusalem for Latin Christendom. While authorized by, and fought on behalf of, the Church these wars were prosecuted by princes, nobles and knights from every corner of Latin Christendom as well as by so-called "paracrusaders" (*milites ad terminum*), and members of military orders such as the Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights.[2] They were fought primarily against a range of Muslim powers, although the Fourth Crusade ended up being waged largely against adherents to the Greek Orthodox rite. Although the idea of launching additional expeditions to liberate Jerusalem persisted for a considerable time, the Crusades to the Holy Land effectively came to an end with the fall of the last Christian stronghold in Palestine – Acre – in 1291.[3]



Map of the world entitled, 'Totius Orbis Habitabilis Brevis Descriptio' - Image from British Library - Harley 7182

The Iberian crusades were a series of military campaigns launched by the Church to liberate Christians from Muslim rule in what are now Spain and Portugal.[4] While undertaken against the backdrop of the Reconquista, they are neither reducible to, nor synonymous with, this much broader and more complex geopolitical phenomenon. Although it came to be seen as a sanctified enterprise, the Reconquista was in large measure a "political" process of conquest, conversion and colonization that unfolded over several centuries. The Iberian crusades, on the other hand, were a series of discrete papally authorized, religiously motivated military campaigns that punctuated that centuries-long process.[5] The Reconquista was not, in other words, an "eternal" or "perpetual" crusade such as would emerge in the Baltic region.[6] To be sure, these two phenomena clearly exercised a reciprocal influence on one another; just as clearly, however, they remained distinct expressions of the historical structure of medieval war.

Unlike the crusades in the Holy Land and Iberia, which were understood to be elements of the Church's eschatological struggle against Islam, the Northern Crusades were "indirect missionary wars" launched by the Church to create the conditions necessary for the subsequent evangelization of the pagan Baltic region.[7] As with their Iberian counterparts, these crusades were part of a broader phenomenon of territorial conquest and colonization – in this case, the medieval German *Ostsiedlung* or "settlement of the East" – but were not reducible to it. Although in this case there was a dimension of "perpetual crusade" that was not found in Spain, the Northern Crusades were nevertheless discrete campaigns punctuating the three-centuries long process of conquest and colonization that Germanized and Christianized the Baltic region. As Peter Lock has characterized argued, this process unfolded in five partly overlapping phases: the Wendish Crusades (1147-85), the Livonian and Estonian Crusades (1198-1290), the Prussian Crusades (1230-83), the Lithuanian Crusades (1280-1435), and the Novgorod Crusades (1243-15th century).[8] While authorized by, and fought on behalf of, the Church these wars were prosecuted by Danish, Saxon, and Swedish princes as well as by military orders such as the Sword Brothers and the Teutonic Knights. They were fought primarily

against a range of pagan adversaries – Wends, Livonians, Estonians, Lithuanians, Suomi, and Prussians – although some were also waged against Russian Christian schismatics (i.e. adherents to the Greek Orthodox rite). By the early 16th century, these ecclesiastical wars – always only one element of broader process of the expansion of medieval Europe – had contributed significantly to extension of the northeastern frontier of Latin Christendom and the transformation of the Baltic from a pagan mare incognita into a Latin Christian lake.

The final expression or form of religious war, however, was not directed outward against Muslims or pagans, but inward against Christians within Latin Christendom.[9] These "internal crusades" were of two types. The first involved Church-organized wars against schismatics and heretics such as the Cathars, Hussites and Waldensians. These heterodox religious movements were seen as "a threat to Christendom, a threat, as Hostiensis put it, to Catholic unity which was in fact more dangerous than to the Holy Land." [10] This type of crusade was thus seen as a defensive war fought against those who threatened the Church's spiritual authority. The second type of internal crusade involved wars launched by the papacy against temporal powers it believed threatened the Church's political authority. Examples include Pope Innocent II's 1135 crusade against the South Italian Normans "for the liberation of the Church" and Pope Innocent III's 1199 crusade against Markward of Anweiler who, the pope charged, was impeding the Fourth Crusade. As Riley-Smith notes, these internal crusades were always framed as being necessary for the defense of the Catholic faith and/or the liberty of the Church.[11]

Reflecting the very different "political" conditions encountered in these distinct contexts, each of these types of religious war developed its own distinctive character. But each was also powerfully conditioned – indeed, made possible – by a common institutional and legal framework (the idea of the "crusade" as codified in canon law and theology), a common politico-military infrastructure (the crusader army, the military religious orders), and a common moral purpose (the defence of the Church and Christendom, the redress of injustice). Put slightly differently, each was a manifestation of



Crusaders capture Antioch – The Hague, KB, KA 20 fol. 255r

Christendom, the redress of injustice). Put slightly differently, each was a manifestation of a common historical structure of war. In this chapter, I trace the contours of the specific types of violent religious conflict always immanent within the historical structure of medieval war.

The crusades, on this account, were artifacts of neither the timeless logic of anarchy nor the feudal mode of production/exploitation. Nor were they simply the geopolitical derivatives of socially constructed religious mentalités collectives. Nor, significantly, were they a function of the logic of the late medieval state-system. Rather, they were organic expressions of the historical structure of medieval religious war. This structure comprised three elements. The first of these was the development of a distinctive war-making capability on the part of the post-Gregorian Church. The second was the crystallization of a socially constructed identity-interest complex that placed this Church in a structurally antagonistic relationship with a range of other social forces both within and beyond Latin Christendom. And the third was the evolution of the social institution of "crusade" – an institution that both legitimized war as an

instrument of ecclesiastical statecraft and reconstructed the armed nobility that provided the core of Latin Christendom's war-fighting capacity as "soldiers of Christ" willing and able to fight on behalf of the Church and its interests. This historical structure did not "cause" the crusades – at least not directly. Rather, it established the essential conditions-of-possibility for each of the specific crusades that took place during the later medieval era. Once it had crystallized, ecclesiastical war became an always-immanent feature of the geopolitical relations of Latin Christendom; once it had passed from the historical scene, crusading – while formally persisting for centuries – became little more than a vestigial remnant of a bygone era, increasingly out of place in the post-medieval world order of Early Modern Europe.[12]

The Crusades to the Holy Land

As Riley-Smith has argued, following the "birth" of the crusading movement and the First Crusade, the history of the crusades to the Holy Land can be organized into several discrete phases.

phases. The first of these, c. 1102-87, he describes as that of "crusading in adolescence".[13] During this phase, the Church and crusader principalities were forced decisively on to the defensive by an increasingly unified Islamic polity committed to the reconquest of Jerusalem and the extirpation of the Christian presence in Syria and Palestine. The success of the First Crusade was largely a function of disunity and internecine conflict in the Islamic world. This was also true of the period in which the Crusader States were established – disunity among the contiguous Muslim polities (Rum, Aleppo and Mosul, Damascus, Egypt, Seijar, Hama, Homs) meant that the Christian princes could play them off against one another to great strategic effect. Almost immediately after the liberation of Jerusalem, however, Muslim opposition began to coalesce: Egyptian forces, for example, attempted to retake Jerusalem as early as 1099, as did those of the

sultanate of Iraq beginning in 1110.[14] Ominously from the Church's perspective, an increasingly unified Muslim state centered on Mosul and Aleppo began to coalesce in the 1120s. When a new governor, 'Imad as-Din Zengi, was appointed in 1128, he led this newly unified emirate on a series of campaigns intended to further extend what had become his personal domain at the expense of both his Christian and Muslim neighbours. When in 1144 the count of Edessa entered into a defensive alliance with one of Zengi's Muslim adversaries, Zengi sensed an opportunity and attacked the county. Edessa, the capital of the first crusader principality and a cornerstone of the strategic defenses of Jerusalem, fell to Zengi's forces on Christmas 1144.

Almost as soon as they had taken Jerusalem in 1099, the crusader leadership realized that if the Holy Land were to be made secure it would be



Louis IX sailing off on the Second Crusade. - Image from British Library Royal 16 G VI

be necessary to create a kind of defensive buffer around Jerusalem. In addition to an "inner ring" formed by the principalities founded during the First Crusade, this would also require an "outer ring" comprising the key strategic towns of Ascalon, Aleppo, Damascus and the Mediterranean ports, all of which could provide staging areas for any future Muslim counteroffensive against the Kingdom of Jerusalem. With the fall of Edessa, this strategy was seriously compromised. On 1 December 1145 Pope Eugenius III reacted to this unwelcome development by issuing a general letter entitled *Quantum praedecessores*, which called for a second crusade to fight in defence of the Holy Land. Following a poor initial response, the encyclical was reissued on 1 March 1146 and Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux was charged with preaching the crusade in France and Germany. *Quantum praedecessores* was augmented by a second encyclical issued in October of that year – *Divini dispensatione* – addressed specifically to the Italian clergy. In addition to calling on the armed laity to take the cross and come to the aid of their besieged brethren in Outremer, both of these letters offered those who took the cross remission of sins, protection of property and other privileges. The former also outlined the motives behind this call to crusade: on the one hand, the need to right the injustices perpetrated by the Muslims (the unlawful seizure of one of the oldest of all Christian cities; the spoliation of the local Church and its relics; and the murder of the local archbishop and his clergy); and, on the other, the need to deal with the threat to the Church and all Christendom posed by the loss of the city. The latter extended the crusade to Iberia and the Baltic frontier, in effect authorizing a three-front campaign to defend and expand Latin Christendom.[15]

The response to the call was an extraordinary mobilization of the armed laity of the Latin world. In 1147, two massive armies – one under the leadership of King Louis VII of France; the other under Conrad III of Germany – embarked in quick succession on the overland route through Byzantine Greece and Anatolia to Syria. Despite the tremendous enthusiasm generated by the venture, however, the sad reality (from the Church's perspective) was that these crusader armies were simply not up to the task of taking on the Muslims threatening Outremer. Against

the backdrop of political maneuvering amongst the French, German and Byzantine leaders, the Seljuk Turks inflicted crushing defeats on Conrad's army at Dorylaeum and Louis' army at Laodicea, both in Asia Minor. Despite the clear danger posed by the unification of Egypt and Syria under Saladin in 1174, the resulting demoralization and disillusionment mooted the possibility of a major crusade to the East for the better part of a generation. [16]

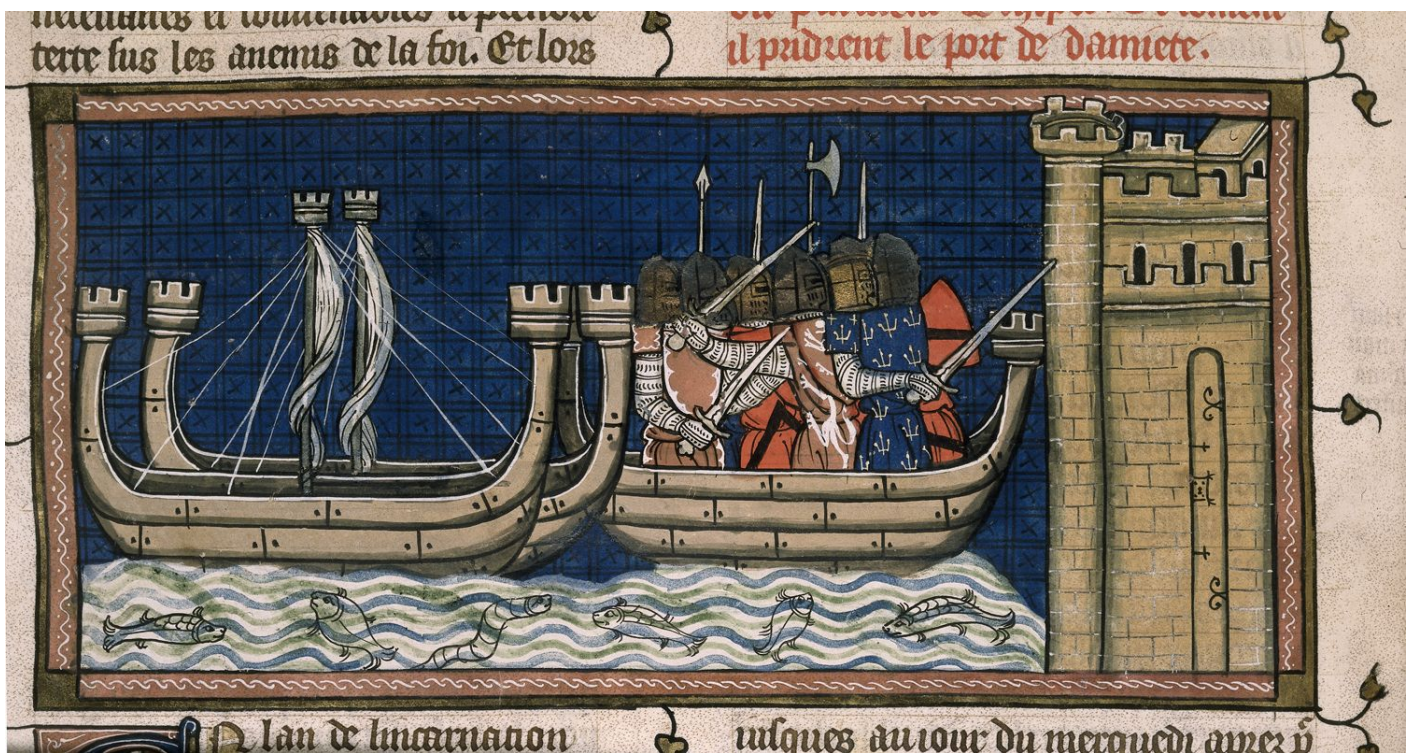
The second phase in the history of the crusades to the Holy Land, that of their "coming of age", began with the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin in 1187 and ended with its restoration to Latin Christendom in 1229.[17] Above all else, this phase was characterized by a profound change in geopolitical purpose: during this period, the crusades were no longer prosecuted in defence of Jerusalem, but for its recovery. After the failure of the Second Crusade, the jihad against the Christian principalities provided both a common goal and a unifying religious focal point for the Muslim polities in the region. Building on this, Zengi's son and successor, Nur al-Din, first created a unified Syrian emirate and then entered into an alliance with Egypt for the purpose of putting pressure on the Christians. On his death, the vizier of Egypt, Saladin, invaded Syria, creating for the first time a truly unified Muslim polity surrounding Outremer. Once he had consolidated his hold over this "empire", Saladin resumed the jihad against the crusader principalities. After a somewhat chequered period marked by a few notable victories and several serious defeats, and at a point when "the Christians were exceptionally weak and divided", Saladin's army attacked Tiberias.[18] When the Christian army marched to relieve the besieged citadel, Saladin caught them in a highly unfavourable position and inflicted a devastating defeat upon them at the Battle of Hattin. The majority of the massive Christian host was killed or captured, including the King of Jerusalem, the Master of the Temple and many other important leaders. The True Cross, recovered during the First Crusade and typically carried into battle by the King of Jerusalem, was captured and paraded upside down through the streets of Damascus by the victorious Muslims. With the principalities denuded of their best fighting men, Jerusalem fell to Saladin's forces on October 2, 1187. By the time Saladin was finished his campaign, Outremer had been reduced to little more than

On October 29, 1187 Pope Gregory VIII responded to these catastrophic developments by issuing an encyclical – *Audita tremendi* – that called upon the princes, nobles and knights of Latin Christendom to launch an expedition to liberate Jerusalem once again from the Muslims.[19] The encyclical began by characterizing the disastrous fall of Jerusalem as punishment for the collective sinfulness of all Christendom; the city had been lost, so the pope argued, because of the sins of Christians everywhere. This being the case, the encyclical continued, the redemption and liberation of the Holy Sites necessarily required penitential sacrifice by Christians everywhere.[20] In effect, the pope called on Latin Christendom to redeem itself through acts of contrition, piety and purification, including participation in an expedition to liberate Jerusalem. In practical terms, the encyclical also sought to facilitate such an expedition by imposing a seven-year truce throughout Latin Christendom and by mobilizing the princes and nobles of Latin Christendom by offering them the now-usual indulgences, privileges and protections in exchange for their penitent participation in an armed pilgrimage to Jerusalem.[21]

The response to Gregory's call was "the largest military enterprise in the middle ages".[22] Richard I (Lionheart) of England, Phillip II (Augustus) of France and Frederick I (Barbarossa) of the Holy Roman Empire all led vast armies to the Holy Land. Once again, however, the campaign was to prove ill-fated. Frederick drowned en route, leaving only a rump force under the command of Duke Leopold IV of Austria to press on to Palestine. Divisions among the three temporal crusade leaders subsequently led to the departure of Leopold and Phillip from the Holy Land in 1191. This left only Richard to continue the campaign, which he did ably and with some notable military successes against Saladin. When he began his campaign, the Latin kingdom comprised little more than a handful of coastal cities and a few isolated inland fortresses; when he was finished, it consisted of the whole coast from Tyre to Jaffa. However, while Richard had effectively reversed most of Saladin's gains since the Battle of Hattin, he was able neither to break the sultan's army nor force him to abandon Jerusalem. The best he could manage was a negotiated settlement that guaranteed unarmed Christian pilgrims access

to the holy sites, but that left the Holy City in Muslim hands. Having achieved this – and created the geopolitical conditions necessary for the Kingdom of Jerusalem to survive for another century – Richard quit the Holy Land for good in 1192.

While Richard's campaign against Saladin was in some ways remarkably successful, from the Church's perspective it manifestly failed to achieve the goals articulated in *Audita tremendi*. To be certain, the crusader principalities had been restored and their strategic position greatly enhanced. But, as Madden puts it, "the purpose of these states was the protection of the holy sites; they were not an end in themselves". To the papacy and many of Latin Christendom's temporal leaders, Richard's inability to liberate Jerusalem from Saladin's grip was a crushing setback – one that needed to be reversed at the earliest possible opportunity. The failure to realize this crucial objective thus set the stage for three more major crusades, all intended to restore the holy sites to Latin Christendom. In 1198, Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) issued the encyclical *Post miserabile*, launching the Fourth Crusade (1202-1204). The avowed objective of this campaign was "the liberation of Jerusalem by an attack on Egypt".[23] It was, however, soon diverted into an attack on the Byzantine capital, largely as a result of the strategic calculation that "a Constantinople in reliable western hands might be deemed as much of an asset for the liberation of Jerusalem as the conquest of Alexandria".[24] While it succeeded in establishing the Latin Kingdom of Constantinople, this crusade too manifestly failed to realize its declared goal of liberating Jerusalem. The Fifth Crusade (1217-1221), also launched by Innocent, was similarly intended to harness the "full economic, military and spiritual might" of Latin Christendom to the task of liberating Jerusalem, this time under even tighter Church leadership. The proximate objective of the crusade was again Egypt – the Nile port of Damietta was to be captured and used as a base for an attack on Cairo which was in turn to be used as a base for the liberation of Jerusalem. Following extensive preparations, Damietta was attacked and captured in 1219. In August 1221, however, the crusader army found itself surrounded by Muslim forces near El Mansura and was forced to withdraw from Egypt. For all its efforts, this crusade achieved little more than



Attack on Damietta - image from British Library Royal 16 G VI

Mansura and was forced to withdraw from Egypt. For all its efforts, this crusade achieved little more than an eight-year truce and a (never fulfilled) promise that the relic of the True Cross – lost to Christendom at the Battle of Hattin in 1187 – would be returned. The Sixth Crusade (1228-1229) was to prove considerably more successful, though more due to skilful diplomacy than martial prowess.[25] Under pressure first from Pope Honorius III and later from Gregory IX, the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Jerusalem, Frederick II, finally embarked on his long-promised crusade in 1228. He launched his expedition, however, without papal approval because, having failed for so long to fulfill his crusader vow, he was under sanction of excommunication. While his status as an excommunicate caused him considerable political difficulty – he was not afforded crusader protections and privileges; he was opposed by the military orders – Frederick was nevertheless able to force the sultan of Egypt, al-Kamil, to the bargaining table. Against the backdrop of al-Kamil's efforts to consolidate control over his own newly acquired Syrian territories, Frederick was then able to pressure him into signing a treaty that effectively surrendered Jerusalem to the Christians. While the treaty itself no longer survives, its terms were widely reported in contemporary accounts. On the one hand, in return for a much-needed ten-year truce, al-

Kamil agreed that the Kingdom of Jerusalem would extend from Beirut to Jaffa and would include Bethlehem, Nazareth, Belfort and Montfort and the city of Jerusalem (which would be demilitarized). On the other, Frederick agreed that the Muslim inhabitants would retain control over their holy sites (the Dome of the Rock and the Temple of Solomon), remain in possession of their property, and administer their own system of justice. He also agreed that the Kingdom of Jerusalem would stay neutral in any future conflict between the sultanate and the Christian principalities of Tripoli and Antioch. While condemned by many at the time for the "humiliating" nature of its outcome, in geopolitical terms the crusade was clearly a success: the city of Jerusalem was restored to Latin Christendom and the Kingdom of Jerusalem rebuilt as its defensive glacis.

The third phase of crusading in the Holy Land – that of its "maturity" – began with the expiration of Frederick's truce in 1239 and ended with the fall of the last remnant of Outremer, the city of Acre, in 1291.[26] Its opening act involved the occupation of the defenceless city of Jerusalem by the forces of the Muslim emir of Kerak in 1239. Against the backdrop of internecine conflict in the Muslim world, over the next two years minor crusader armies were able to play Muslim factions off against each other, thereby securing

securing the return of the city of Jerusalem and greatly extending the frontiers of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. But the regional balance of forces soon shifted again and the Muslims retook the defenceless city in 1244, subsequently massacring its Christian inhabitants and torching the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This set the stage for the final three acts of this phase of the crusades to the East. The Seventh Crusade (1248-54), led by King Louis IX of France, was a direct response to the loss of the Holy City. Louis led a massive army to Egypt, occupying Damietta almost without resistance and then advancing on Cairo. Stiffening Muslim resistance and an outbreak of dysentery within the crusader army, however, turned the tide and Louis was forced to withdraw toward his operational base at Damietta. Additional Muslim successes soon rendered the crusader army's position untenable and Louis' first bid to liberate Jerusalem ended with him surrendering to the sultan of Egypt on April 6, 1250. The Eighth Crusade (1270) was King Louis' second attempt to liberate the holy sites. This time he adopted a three-step strategy: first, attack Tunis; second, advance along the north African coast and take Egypt; and, third, liberate Jerusalem. At first, the expedition went well: Carthage fell to Louis in July 1270 and a Sicilian fleet led by Charles of Anjou was nearing the port with reinforcements that would allow the king to exploit this initial victory. On August 25, however, Louis died of dysentery; the crusade was abandoned shortly thereafter. Finally, in the immediate aftermath of the failed Eighth Crusade, Prince Edward of England led an expedition to the Holy Land to help defend Tripoli and the rump Kingdom of Jerusalem. This was the Ninth Crusade (1271-2), conventionally considered to be the last major crusade to the Holy Land. It ended when a treaty was signed between Egypt and the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Upon the death of his father, King Henry III, Edward returned home to assume the English throne.

As this necessarily schematic sketch clearly indicates, the crusades to the Holy Land were a powerful expression of the historical structure of war of later medieval Latin Christendom: they reflected the distinctive war-making capacity of the Church (the crusader army and the military religious orders); they expressed the socially constructed interests of the reform papacy (the liberation and defence of Jerusalem); and they

were made possible by the institution of the crusade (constituting the Church as a legitimate war-making unit and the "crusader" as a recognizable form of actor with a defined portfolio of religious interests). Of course, crusading was not the only form of war conducted by Christian powers in the Holy Land. The dynamics of public war were clearly at work throughout the two-centuries long Latin political presence in Syria and Palestine. Nevertheless, any serious account of medieval geopolitics must recognize and take into account the distinctiveness of these ecclesiastical wars. While often intertwined with other forms of violent conflict, the crusades were not reducible to them; nor were they motivated by the same underlying constellation of war-making units, structural antagonisms and institutions that gave rise to these other forms of war. Rather, they were a distinctive form of organized violence – one that would quickly find expression in other parts of Latin Christendom.

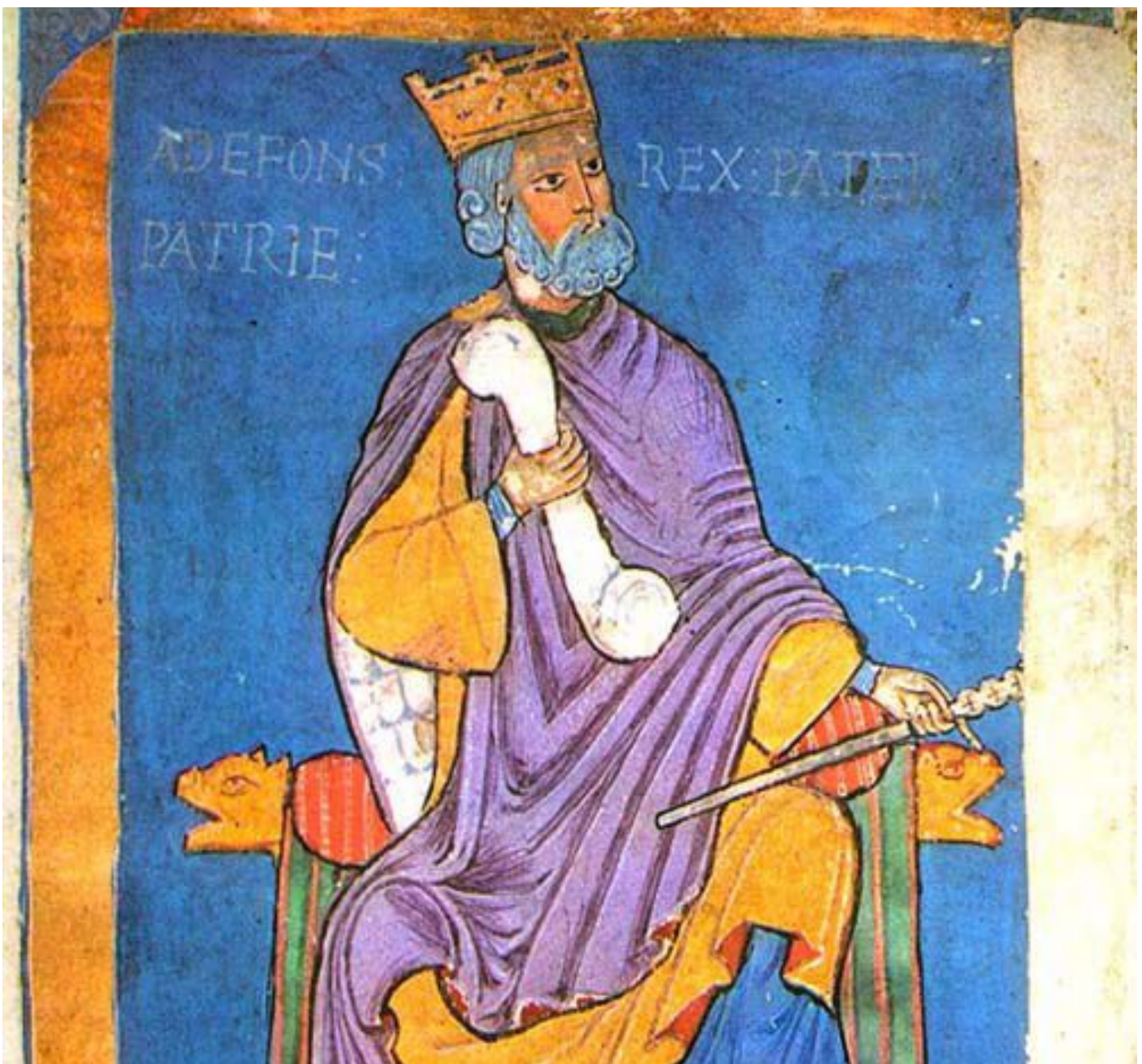
The Iberian Crusades

The pre-history of the Iberian Crusades can be traced to the disintegration of Umayyad Caliphate of Córdoba in 1031 and the subsequent emergence of a constellation of weak successor kingdoms – Badajoz, Seville, Grenada, Málaga, Toledo, Valencia, Denia, the Balearic Islands, Zaragoza and Lérida – known as taifas. Locked in intense internecine competition, these emirates soon began to seek the "protection" of the militarily stronger Christian kingdoms of León, Castille, Navarre, Aragón and Catalonia. In turn, these Christian kingdoms began to vie with one another for the tributary payments (parias) paid by the taifas for protection. In this complex regional system, the geopolitical fault-lines were not always drawn along religious or civilizational lines: as O'Callaghan puts it, "[j]ust as Muslim kings concluded that it was prudent to become vassals of their Christian neighbors, paying tribute and joining in attacks on their fellow Muslims, so too, when it suited their purpose, Christian princes did not hesitate to make alliances with Muslims".[27] Nor were they stable: alliances and tributary arrangements changed as perceptions of advantage or insecurity shifted.[28] And while territorial expansion at the expense of the taifas was certainly part of the dynamic of this system

was certainly part of the dynamic of this system (witness Fernando I's conquest of the town of Coimbra from the taifa of Badajoz in 1064), it was not its defining characteristic. Rather, the dominant logic of Iberian geopolitics during this period was maneuvering for advantage among the taifa statelets coupled with competition over the parias (which had both proprietorial and state-building dimensions) among the now-dominant Christian principalities.[29]

It was against this backdrop that in 1063 Pope Alexander II encouraged Christian knights from within and beyond Iberia to wage war on the taifas. Reflecting his worldview as one of the early reform popes, Alexander was greatly

concerned by the general military threat posed to Christendom by Islam. Indeed, in common with Gregory VII and Urban II, Alexander "considered the military threat posed to Christianity by Islam, and its eschatological context, at least as much in terms of the struggle in Iberia as in that of wars occurring in the Middle East".[30] Sensing an opportunity to liberate at least some of the once-Christian lands of the peninsula from Muslim rule, Alexander responded to an appeal for assistance from the Christian king of Aragón by issuing a bull – *Clerio Vultutnensi* – that offered relief from penance and remission of sin to any and all Christian warriors participating in his planned expedition against the taifa of Zaragoza.[31] In response, a large Iberian journeyed to Aragón to



A 12th-century painting of Alfonso VI at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.



Battle with Saracens - Image from the British Library Royal 15 E VI

large number of knights from Burgundy, Normandy, Aquitaine, Italy, and all over Christian Iberia journeyed to Aragón to take part in the campaign. The fort at Barbastro – a strategically important site about sixty miles north of the town of Zaragoza – was subsequently taken this army and held until recaptured by Muslim forces in late 1065.

Following several lesser actions in which Pope Gregory VII may have offered similar religious inducements to fight,[32] in 1089 another major proto-crusade was launched by Pope Urban II. The geopolitical context within which this campaign was undertaken was quite different from that prevailing in the 1060s. In 1085, King

Alfonso VI of Castile captured Toledo, convincing the emirs of the taifa statelets that they faced an increasingly lethal threat to their existence. They subsequently appealed to the Almoravids – a puritanical Sunni sect that had recently subjugated Morocco – to help them resist the Christian campaign of reconquest. Responding to this appeal, but also acting on their belief that the taifas were decadent and in need of their particular brand of religious reinvigoration, the Almoravids crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and entered Iberia in force. In 1087, they routed King Alfonso's army at the battle of Sagrajas near Badajoz, thereby stemming the Christian advance, ending the parias system and so simultaneously dealing a severe geopolitical and

economic blow to the Christian principalities. Over the next two decades or so, the Almoravids then proceeded to incorporate the remaining taifas into their empire. These developments gravely concerned Church officials, who saw in them not only a reversal of the re-conquest, but a growing threat to Christian Spain, southern France and, ultimately, all of Christendom.[33] In a bid to "create a wall and bastion against the Saracens", [34] the pope offered remission of sins to those Catalan nobles who undertook to liberate and restore a number of important metropolitan sees under Muslim control (Braga, Mérida, Seville and Tarragona). While not yielding immediate successes, the call nevertheless resulted in the mobilization of considerable number of knights committed to the goal of liberating Tarragona. In some ways anticipating the future evolution of the Military Orders (Templars, Hospitallers, Teutonic Knights, etc.), it even led to the creation of novel form of "military confraternity" – comprising knights living communally in frontier fortresses – dedicated to liberating and restoring the See in return for the remission of their sins.[35]

These early campaigns, clear expressions of the historical structure of medieval war as it had begun to crystallize in the 11th century, are significant for two reasons. First, they contributed to the evolution of the crusade proper as a defining element of the geopolitical system of medieval Latin Christendom. During these campaigns, many of the elements that were later to coalesce into the institution of the crusade were first developed: the use of papal bulls to mobilize the armed laity, the remission of sins in return for service, the invocation of the Peace of God in order to secure the internal tranquility necessary for campaigning against the Muslims,[36] and the trans-local nature of the forces responding to the call all anticipated the character of crusading proper. While there is no denying that some of the institution's defining elements – such as the vow and the sense of pilgrimage – were not present in these pre-1095 campaigns, there is also no denying that these experiments laid the institutional groundwork for the First Crusade to the Holy Land. Second, these campaigns initiated a process of transformation that radically altered the overall character of the Reconquista. Space limitations preclude a detailed account of this broader process. Suffice it to say, however, that

whereas prior to the 1060s the re-conquest was driven by the inter-twined logics of lordly political accumulation and princely state-building, after the Barbastro campaign it was increasingly driven by the logic of religious defense and expansion (*defensio* and *dilatio*) as well. To be sure, the more mundane dynamics of the Reconquista never disappeared: it was always in some substantial measure about the configuration, wealth and power of the peninsula's Christian kingdoms and lesser principalities. After 1063, however, a significant new religious dimension was introduced that profoundly transformed the causes, character and correlates of war in the region. If not completely reconfiguring the Reconquista into a sort of perpetual crusade – as O'Callaghan seems to argue – this development clearly reshaped the basic patterns of violent political conflict in the peninsula for centuries to come.

The next phase of Iberian crusading – running from 1095-1123 – was a period of bricolage and experimentation during which the constitutive ideal of the crusade – forged decisively during the successful expedition to Jerusalem in 1099 – was purposefully introduced to Iberia. As with the experiments before 1095, the impulse to introduce crusading proper to the peninsula was provided primarily by developments in the Islamic world – specifically, by the continuing successes of the Almoravids in both weakening the Christian kingdoms and consolidating their own. By 1110, this process was completed with the incorporation of the last remaining taifa – Zaragoza – into their empire. With internal consolidation complete, the Almoravids were free to intensify their pressure on the Christian kingdoms of León-Castile and Aragón, prompting the rulers of these kingdoms in turn to appeal to the papacy for assistance.

The reform popes of the period – Urban II, Paschal II, Gelasius II, Calixtus II – viewing the threat in Iberia in its broader eschatological context, responded to this appeal by mobilizing the only military instrument then available to them: the crusader army. Drawing on the constitutive ideal of the successful 1095 expedition to Jerusalem, the papacy almost immediately began to introduce the formal apparatus of crusading – bull, preaching, vow, indulgence, privilege, signing with the cross – to the Iberian region in order to mobilize the martial resources of

indulgence, privilege, signing with the cross – to the Iberian region in order to mobilize the martial resources of Christendom against the Almoravids. This resulted in two crusades between 1113-8. The first of these, authorized by Pope Paschal in 1113, was a joint Pisan-French-Catalan expedition to liberate Christian captives being held in the Balearic Islands;[37] the second, proclaimed in 1118 and led by King Alfonso I of Aragón-Navarre, was a campaign to capture Zaragoza.[38] While there is some debate as to whether they were full-fledged crusades or merely a type of Iberian proto-crusade,[39] these two campaigns clearly reflected the Church's new-found desire not merely to sanctify and encourage the Reconquista, but to use its recently acquired and distinctive war-making capacity to advance its own socially constructed interests in the region.

The final stage, from 1123 onwards, was that of Iberian crusading in maturity. As argued above, crusading in Iberia prior to 1123 involved either innovations that anticipated the First Crusade of 1095 or, after 1099, piecemeal applications of crusading practices that had crystallized as a result of that campaign. In 1123, however, the First Lateran Council decisively ruled that the Iberian crusades were of a piece with those to the Holy Land.[40] From this point on, the crusades in Iberia were seen as part of a wider conflict against Islam – usually as a kind of “second front”, though sometimes as an alternate route to the East and steps were often taken to coordinate (or at least “de-conflict”) crusades in the two theaters. As importantly, with the full application of the increasingly well-defined crusade institution in Iberia, crusader armies could be more readily mobilized by the Church to advance its interests in the peninsula. Taking advantage of this new capacity, the papacy authorized a number of Iberian campaigns – one conducted by Alfonso VII of Castile against Almería on the southern coast of Granada 1147;[41] another, conducted by a joint Catalan-Genoese force, against Tortosa at the mouth of the Ebro in 1148 – in support of the Second Crusade (1145-9).[42] Popes Eugenius III and Anastasius IV also authorized a crusade by Count Ramon Berenguer IV to consolidate control of the Ebro valley between 1152 and 1154, and one by King Alfonso VII to capture Andújar in 1155.[43]

From the mid-1100s onward, however, the

Church was increasingly concerned with the threat to Christendom posed by the Almohads, a fundamentalist Islamic sect originating in Morocco that had begun displacing the Almoravids as rulers of Muslim Iberia. Against the backdrop of continuing rivalry among the Christian principalities, for several decades this new empire reversed the geopolitical dynamic in the peninsula, winning several important battles, and retaking territory that had been lost in the later years of the Almoravid regime. In 1172, the Almohads seized the last Almoravid emirate in Iberia. The period of Almohad expansion was not to last for long, however. Faced with the grave threat to Christian Iberia posed by the resurgent Muslim forces, the Christian princes (with papal encouragement) began to employ a number of religious military orders as a bulwark against further Almohad advances. As Houlsey observes, this phenomenon had both a local and translocal dimension.[44] On the one hand, each of the Christian kingdoms (except Navarre) created its own orders. These included the larger and more long-lived orders such as Alcántara, Calatrava, and Santiago, as well as more ephemeral ones such as Le Merced, Monte Gaudio, San Jorge de Alfama, and Trujillo. On the other hand, the Templars and the Hospitallers, both iconic translocal orders, had a significant presence in the peninsula, especially in Aragón and Catalonia.[45] Taken together, these orders provided a permanent defensive carapace along the frontier – a carapace that contributed substantially to the frustration of the Almohad advance in the latter part of the 12th century.

Not content with merely stabilizing the frontier in Iberia, during this period successive popes offered remission of sins and other spiritual inducements to those fighting to drive the Muslims out of Iberia. In 1175, Pope Alexander III used the promise of the same indulgence given to crusaders to the Holy Land to encourage Christian rulers of León, Castile and Aragón to go on the offensive against the Almohads. In an effort to prevent any large-scale departure of penitential warriors from Spain to the Holy Land following the proclamation of the Third Crusade (to liberate Jerusalem, which fallen in 1187), Pope Clement III extended the scope of that crusade to include Iberia. In response, Alfonso VIII went on the offensive south of the Guadiana River and, more importantly, non-Iberian

VIII went on the offensive south of the Guadiana River and, more importantly, non-Iberian crusaders on their way to the Holy Land engaged in a joint venture with Sancho I of Portugal to capture the town of Silves (the Crusade of Silves, 1189). Also encouraged by the extension of the Crusade bull to Iberia, Alfonso VIII embarked upon the ill-fated Crusade of Alarcos (1193). Against the backdrop of successful and crucial papal efforts to end the internecine struggles among the peninsula's Christian princes, the Crusade of Las Navas de Tolosa was launched in 1212. Culminating in a decisive Christian victory, the campaign effectively broke the back of the Almohad empire and constituted a tipping point of sorts in the long conflict in Iberia. The preceding century or so had been one of geopolitical stalemate, with the frontier whip-sawing back and forth according the always-shifting balance of forces between the Muslim and Christian powers. After Las Navas, however, the Almohads never again managed to recover their footing, and their empire entered into a period of terminal decline. Four decades (and several crusades) later, al-Andalus had been all but extinguished and almost all of Iberia had been permanently reincorporated into the Latin Christian world order.

Perhaps not surprisingly, over the course of several centuries the Iberian Crusades developed their own distinctive character: "pilgrimage" was far less important than in the crusades to the Holy Land; they were closely controlled by Iberian monarchies (especially Léon-Castile); they were more successful than those in the East (especially after the Battle of Las Navas in 1212); they were more reliant on both regional and trans-regional military orders; and the Iberian "crusader states" – unlike those in the Holy Land – developed strong fiscal and administrative bases from which to launch both political wars and crusades.[46] But they were nevertheless also clear expressions of an historical structure of war that transcended the Iberian sub-system: they reflected the distinctive war-making capacity of the Church (the crusader army and the military religious orders); they expressed the socially constructed interests of the reform papacy (the restoration of once-Christian lands in Spain to the Latin Christian fold); and they were made possible by the institution of the crusade (constituting the Church as a legitimate war-making unit and the

"crusader" as a recognizable form of agent with a defined portfolio of religious interests). Of course, this does not explain the totality of the historical process known as the Reconquista. It does, however, highlight the distinctively ecclesiastical or religious dimension of the process – a dimension that was organic to the historical structure of war in later medieval Latin Christendom.

The Northern Crusades

As Peter Lock has characterized them, the Northern Crusades were conducted in five partly overlapping phases: the Wendish Crusades (1147-85), the Livonian and Estonian Crusades (1198-1290), the Prussian Crusades (1230-83), the Lithuanian Crusades (1280-1435), and the Novgorod Crusades (1243-15th century).[47] While authorized by, and fought on behalf of, the Church these wars were prosecuted by Danish, Saxon, and Swedish princes as well as by military orders such as the Sword Brothers and the Teutonic Knights. They were fought primarily against a range of pagan adversaries – Wends, Livonians, Estonians, Lithuanians, Suomi, and Prussians – although some were also waged against Russian Christian schismatics (i.e. adherents to the Greek Orthodox rite). By the early 16th century, these ecclesiastical wars – always only one element of broader process of the expansion of medieval Europe – had contributed significantly to extension of the northeastern frontier of Latin Christendom and the transformation of the Baltic from a pagan mare incognita into a Latin Christian lake.

The pre-history of the Northern Crusades can be traced to the so-called Magdeburg Charter of 1107/8 – a document that explicitly called for an expedition to be undertaken against the Baltic pagans. Although there are a number of debates about the provenance and purpose of this document,[48] it is important for the purposes of this study in that it constitutes the earliest known text in which the crusading idea is grafted on to pre-existing ideas about the dangers and opportunities confronting the Church on the northeastern frontier of Latin Christendom – i.e. the earliest translation of the idea of the crusade to the Baltic region. Several themes running through the document are particularly significant. To begin with, it depicts the pagan



Baltic countries on the 16th century Carta Marina

significant. To begin with, it depicts the pagan Slavs in terms redolent of depictions of Muslims in accounts of the First Crusade – i.e. as “oppressors” guilty of committing grievous “injuries” against the Church and its members. Second, it portrays the pagan lands as “our Jerusalem”, a land of milk and honey lost to the heathen because of sinfulness of the Christians in the region. Third, it calls on the “soldiers of Christ” to liberate this Jerusalem, implying that doing so will create conditions favourable not only for settlement but for evangelization as well.[49] While the charter’s call to arms came to nothing at the time, it expressed ideas that were

circulating widely among the clerics in the region and that over time would come to exercise an increasingly powerful grip on the collective imagination of the highest levels of ecclesiastical leadership.

The formal introduction of the crusade to northern Europe can be attributed to Pope Eugenius III’s 1147 encyclical *Divini dispensatione*, which extended the scope of the Second Crusade to include not just the Holy Land, but Iberia and the Wendish (West Slavic) lands adjoining Saxony as well. The explicit objectives of the expedition were to subject the pagans to

adjoining Saxony as well. The explicit objectives of the expedition were to subject the pagans to the Christian faith – a goal that came close to contradicting canon law prohibiting forced conversions. Reflecting many of the themes of the Magdeburg Charter, however, senior Church officials – including, significantly, Pope Eugenius and Bernard of Clairvaux, the chief ideologist of the Second Crusade – almost certainly regarded this expedition as a just war fought primarily to defend Christian missionaries and converts from harassment at the hands of the pagan Wends and to create a political context conducive to the peaceful expansion of Christendom through missionary work. As Hans-Deitrich Kahl has argued, these core eschatological motives were also at least inflected by a powerful belief that the second coming of Christ was imminent (with all that this implied for the prospect of mass conversion).[50] Proceeding hand-in-hand with territorial expansion on the part of the Saxons, the region had seen extensive missionary activity in the preceding decades. Not surprisingly, the Wends had resisted both of these activities, on the one hand mounting military campaigns against the Saxons, on the other destroying missions, martyring missionaries and menacing local converts into apostasy. When the crusade encyclical *Quantum praedecessores* was proclaimed following the fall of Edessa in 1144, the state of affairs on the Wendish frontier was such that the Saxon nobility responded only half-heartedly to the Church's call, asking instead to be allowed to campaign against the pagan Wends with whom they were already embroiled in conflict. This was supported by local clergy, who argued that Christians converts – and thus the future of evangelization in the region – could only be made secure if the Wends were brought under Christian rule. Given the centrality of evangelization to the core ontological narrative of the Church – as well, perhaps, as the general enthusiasm generated by the proclamation of the Second Crusade – Eugenius not surprisingly responded positively to this request. He subsequently appointed Bishop Anselm of Havelburg as papal legate, authorized an expedition to subject the Wends to Saxon lordship (thereby creating the conditions within which the permanent evangelization of their territory could take place), and promised those crusading in the North the same indulgence (and many of the same privileges) as had been granted

by Urban II to those fighting in the First Crusade.

Responding to the papal proclamation, in 1147 a crusader army comprising Saxon, Polish and Danish contingents invaded the Wendish lands. While this army enjoyed some successes on the battlefield, however, it ultimately failed in to achieve its primary goal: the destruction of paganism in the Wends' territories and their decisive incorporation into Latin Christendom. As Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt has shown, this prompted the Church to reconsider the whole enterprise of crusading in the Baltic.[51] For several decades after 1147, the papacy demonstrated a considerable lack of enthusiasm for any further crusading in the North and neither local ecclesiastical nor lay authorities petitioned for one. Wars continued to be fought in the region in the aftermath of the Wendish crusade, of course, but "they were fought without benefit of papal authorization, or any of the apparatus of the crusade; there was no vow, no *ad hoc* legatine commission, no special preaching or promises of crusade privileges".[52] Indeed, it was not until 1171 that Pope Alexander III (1159-81) issued a new crusading bull for the region (*Non parum animus noster*), and even then he recast these expeditions as "penitential wars" – similar to crusades to the Holy Land, but offering fewer spiritual rewards, privileges and protections and enjoying a somewhat lower status.[53] The wars against the Wends continued, however, led by men such as Duke Henry the Lion of Saxony (1142-95) and King Valdemar the Great of Denmark (1157-82). As Christiansen puts it, these campaigns were "wars carried on successfully in the shadow of the unsuccessful 1147 crusade".[54] After decades of brutal conflict, by 1185 the Wends had been effectively pacified, their pagan regime destroyed, and political and ecclesiastical structures more conducive to Christianization erected in their place.

When Alexander issued his bull of 1171 he not only re-introduced the institution of the crusade – or at least a diluted version of it in the form of "penitential war" – to Northern Christendom; in a marked departure from past practice,[55] he also outlined a papal vision for the evangelization of the entire East Baltic region. This vision had two key elements. First, it entailed a commitment to the armed defence of the Christian Church and its missions in the region. Alexander had received troubling reports that the mission in Estonia was



Laurits Tuxen (1853-1927): Danish Bishop Absalon topples the god Svantevit at Arkona in 1169 during the Wendish Crusades

This vision had two key elements. First, it entailed a commitment to the armed defence of the Christian Church and its missions in the region. Alexander had received troubling reports that the mission in Estonia was subject to repeated pagan attacks – attacks that he viewed as both unjust (contrary to the *ius gentium*) and a serious threat to the Church's core mission of evangelization. Accordingly, he authorized the use of armed force in the defence of the Estonian mission and granted limited indulgences to those fighting in this just cause.[56] Second, Alexander envisioned a significant expansion of the northern frontiers of Latin Christendom to include, at a minimum, Estonia and Livonia. This latter part of the vision, Alexander argued, was

to be accomplished through peaceful missionary work if at all possible, but through the use of armed force if necessary. By combining the goals of both *defensio* and *dilatatio*, Alexander's 1171 bull established the basic approach to crusading in the North: in Erdmann's terms, "indirect missionary war". In the future, peaceful missions would be established in pagan territory; when these incurred local hostility, they and their activities would be defended by penitential warriors; and finally, when circumstances seemed propitious, the pagan "problem" in that particular region would be resolved by forcibly incorporating the catchment area of the endangered mission into Latin Christendom through crusade.

The mission of Bishop Meinhard to the pagan Livonians powerfully illustrates this expansionary dynamic. With the support of both the Archbishop of the missionary see of Hamburg-Bremen and the papacy, Meinhard established a mission in the Dvina River basin around 1180. Sensing an opportunity for large-scale conversion, Meinhard offered the Livonians a bargain: in return for their agreement to undergo baptism he would build two fortifications on islands in Dvina River (Üxküll and Holm) to protect them from their enemies among the other pagan peoples of the region. According to the chronicler Henry of Livonia, the Livonians freely accepted this offer.[57] When they realized that all those who converted were also going to be held financially responsible for the upkeep of these fortifications, however, the Livonians balked: few among them actually accepted baptism or placed themselves under the authority of the bishop. Viewed from Meinhard's perspective, this constituted a grave breach of the Livonians' promise to convert. It also presented him with a serious problem. Not only was he not attracting many converts, but those few Livonians whom he did baptise (the only people Meinhard actually had any authority over) simply did not constitute a tax-base capable of supporting the mission's castles and their garrisons. Meinhard realized that if he could not maintain these forces he would not be able to provide the protection he had promised, fatally undermining his entire strategy for evangelizing the region. The Bishop's problem was compounded by the fact that the relatively high taxes he was forced to levy on his small flock of converts actually provided a strong financial incentive to apostasy – he was losing souls faster than he was gaining them. Meinhard's solution: expand the tax base by compelling the Livonian people to keep what he believed to be their promise to convert.[58] When persuasion and threats failed to compel the Livonians to come in, the bishop appealed to Rome for the military forces needed to implement this strategy.

Gravely concerned by the Livonians' apostasy and their collective failure to honour the terms of their agreement with Meinhard, in 1195 Pope Celestine III responded positively to the Bishop's appeal, granting limited remission of sins to those agreeing to take the cross to fight in Livonia. An expedition was subsequently launched under

the leadership of the Duke of Sweden, but failed to achieve much before Duke returned home with the majority of the crusader army. Following Meinhard's death in 1196, his successor – the Cistercian Bishop Berthold – led another expedition against the Livonians, explicitly justifying the campaign in terms of restoring the apostates to the faith.[59] When Berthold was killed in 1198, Pope Innocent III authorized yet another Livonian crusade, this one led by the newly elected Bishop Albert of Buxhövdén. This and subsequent crusades – all explicitly justified in terms of defending the Church from pagan harassment, restoring apostates to the faith, and/or creating conditions propitious for evangelization – were far more successful, ultimately resulting in the destruction of the Livonians' war-making capacity and with it their ability to resist incorporation into Latin Christendom. By the time of Albert's death in 1229, Livonia been made an imperial fief and most Livonians had been converted to Latin Christianity.[60]

Thus ended the early phase of Northern crusading. The crusades that took place during the subsequent high phase – specifically, the Prussian Crusades (1230-83), the Lithuanian Crusades (1280-1435), and the Novgorod Crusades (1243-16th century) – all shared the same basic structural character as the indirect missionary wars against the Livonians, but were differentiated from them in significant ways. First, from the earliest decades of the 13th century on, the Baltic wars were distinguished from earlier expeditions by their elevation from "penitential wars" to full-blown "crusades". As Fonnesberg-Schmidt has convincingly demonstrated, crusading in the Baltic prior to 1230 involved piecemeal applications of crusading ideas and practices developed primarily in the context of the Church's crusade experience in the Holy Land. As a result, it acquired the character of what she calls "penitential war" – a form of ecclesiastical war conferring fewer spiritual rewards and less prestige than the crusades to the East. Under Pope Honorius III (1216-27), however, papal policy changed in this respect: largely due to growing papal involvement in the missionary project, during his pontificate the ecclesiastical wars in the Baltic region were decisively elevated to full crusade status with all the same indulgences,



Pope excommunicating the Albigensians, while on the right, the Albigensian Crusade is launched- image from British Library Royal 16 G VI .

indulgences, privileges and protections as those to the Holy Land. Prior to the pontificate of Innocent III (Honorius' predecessor), missions had effectively fallen within the purview of the frontier bishops, kings and princes. During the pontificates of Innocent and Honorius, however, the papacy arrogated to itself greater responsibility for initiating and directing large-scale missions among both heretics and pagans – largely as a result of the post-Gregorian papacy's socially constructed identity and its entailed core interest in active preaching and evangelization (i.e. living the "apostolic life").[61] Not surprisingly, as the missions became an increasingly important papal priority so too did their defence against those social forces that would violently oppose their evangelizing work.

In practical terms, this had the effect creating two new models for Baltic crusading. During the early phase, expeditions were initiated by local bishops or princes who sought and received papal authorization, but essentially retained control over planning, preaching, financing and other practical matters. As Fonnesberg-Schmidt demonstrates, while this pattern continued throughout the later Middle Ages, it was supplemented from the early 13th century onward by two new forms of crusade. The first of these involved a partnership between the Dominicans and the Teutonic Order in which the former preached and recruited for the crusade

and the latter financed and conducted it. The Teutonic Order had been introduced to the region in the 1220s and had subsequently secured from Pope Innocent IV the right to launch expeditions and issue indulgences to those fighting in its ranks without additional papal authorization.[62] In effect, this created a permanent crusade under the leadership of the knights who proceeded to conquer Prussia and Lithuania and establish the Order State of the Teutonic Knights. The second new model involved a more active leadership role for the papal curia. In this type, the initiative for the crusade came from the pope, while its preaching and direction was made the responsibility of a papal legate. The crusade in Livonia proclaimed by Pope Gregory in his 1236 encyclical *Ne Terra Vastae* is a prime example of this sort of expedition. In both cases, the rationale remained the defence of the missions and their newly converted flocks; the "liberation" of Christians from pagan oppression and pagans from ignorance; and the vindication of injuries done to Christ and His Church.[63] From the early 13th century onward, however, the way in which the Church mobilized its martial resources became more differentiated.

It used to be believed that the Northern Crusades were simply an unremarkable element of the broader historical process of conquest and colonization that has come to be known as the

Ostseidlung. On this view, the ecclesiastical wars in the Baltic region were little more than a series of essentially mundane campaigns to acquire fish, fur, and land – campaigns cloaked in a thin religious veil to be sure, but ultimately reducible to the all-too-worldly pursuit of wealth and power. As Housley points out, however, recent research has begun to move in a somewhat different direction. Rather than focusing narrowly on the socio-political determinants of these crusades, researchers have now begun to explore more fully the religious causes and character of these wars.[64] The emerging consensus seems to be that the causes and character of the crusades around the Baltic were informed by the convergence of socio-political and socio-religious factors. On the one hand, there is little doubt that many Christian marcher lords were powerfully motivated to wage war on their pagan neighbours for reasons that had little to do with religion – specifically, the desire to acquire productive land and peasants through a process of violent political accumulation. Similarly, there can be little doubt that the dynamics of state-building were also at play in many of these expeditions. On the other, it is increasingly clear that the key Church officials behind the Northern crusades were motivated primarily by religious concerns and interests, including most importantly the perceived need to create a political context conducive to the peaceful expansion of Christendom through missionary work. It is also clear that many Christian warriors were motivated to wage war not on the basis of worldly concerns, but as a result of their deeply held religious convictions.

Crusades against Christians

Thus far, we have looked at three expressions of religious war along Latin Christendom's long frontier with the non-Christian world: the crusades to the Holy Land, those in Iberia and those taking place along the Baltic coastline. The final expression or form of religious war, however, was not directed outward against Muslims or pagans, but inward against Christians within Catholic Christendom.[65]

The most notable example of an ecclesiastical war waged against a heretical social movement was that waged against the Cathars or Albigensians in the Languedoc region in what is

now southwestern France.[66] The Cathars were a dualist or Manichean sect which rejected almost every element of Latin dogma, liturgical practice and ecclesiastical structure.[67] By the early thirteenth century, the movement had taken hold in areas such as the Rhineland and northern Italy, but was especially pervasive in the Languedoc where it had found favour not only amongst peasants and burghers, but amongst a number of the region's more influential nobles as well. The reasons for its popularity in this region are complex, but a crucially important factor was the lack of effective political authority in the region. For centuries, the Church had relied on the secular authorities to create the political context within which the Church could carry out its core mission. This included suppressing unorthodox religious movements when they posed a threat to this mission. For most of the preceding nine hundred years, this had not been a particularly pressing problem as most such movements had comprised little more than individual preachers and a handful of followers. In Languedoc, however, Catharism was an increasingly pervasive and institutionalized mass movement – one that threatened to displace Christianity in throughout the region and so inflict grievous injury on both the Church and the *res publica Christiana*. It was also viewed as an expression of the kind of collective sinfulness that had contributed to the disasters in the Holy Land in 1187 – that is, as a manifestation of the spiritual disorder plaguing Christendom that God had punished by laying low the crusader principalities. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that the Church turned to the temporal authorities – including both Count Raymond VI of Toulouse, the nominal prince of the region, and King Philip of France – to suppress this movement. It was only when it found these powers unable or unwilling to deal with the Cathar threat that it sought alternative remedies.

Catharism had been an issue in the region at least since 1178 when Count Raymond V appealed to the temporal and spiritual authorities for assistance in dealing with the emerging heresy in his domain. The initial response, a Cistercian preaching mission to the region, failed to stem the rising Cathar tide, as did a subsequent military expedition against Roger Trencavel II who was believed to be abetting the heretics.

When Innocent III became pope in 1198, he was determined to enforce orthodoxy in the region. Reflecting his own identity as a reform pope, he began his campaign by sending preachers to the region and by taking steps to reform the local Church. When these efforts again failed to yield the hoped-for results, however, Innocent came to the conclusion that he had no option but to suppress Catharism by force. In 1204 he called on Philip of France to come to the aid the Church, promising indulgences to all of the king's subjects who did their duty to suppress heretical movements. At first, Philip declined to provide the requested aid, largely because he was concerned that King John of England would exploit the opportunity and attempt to recover territories recently lost to France. Innocent repeated his appeal for aid in 1205 and 1207, sweetening the offer by promising all who took the cross the privileges and protections typically

associated with a crusade (although none had yet been proclaimed). Philip, however, again declined to act. Frustrated by the failure of the temporal powers to discharge what he perceived to be their duty to aid the Church, Innocent eventually came round to the view that he would have to mobilize his own war-making capabilities to deal with the Cathars. He was able to do nothing militarily, however, until one of his legates, Peter of Castelnau, was murdered in 1208 after excommunicating Raymond VI for failing to take steps to suppress the heresy. Upon hearing of Peter's death (which he suspected was at Raymond's hand), Innocent seized the opportunity to mobilize the armed laity of Latin Christendom against the Cathars and those, like Raymond, whom he believed abetted them, by proclaiming a crusade. The response to the call among the nobles of France was "enthusiastic, even fervent" and a large crusader army was



Expulsion of the inhabitants from Carcassonne in 1209. Image from British Library Cotton Nero E II Pt2

failing to take steps to suppress the heresy. Upon hearing of Peter's death (which he suspected was at Raymond's hand), Innocent seized the opportunity to mobilize the armed laity of Latin Christendom against the Cathars and those, like Raymond, whom he believed abetted them, by proclaiming a crusade. The response to the call among the nobles of France was "enthusiastic, even fervent" and a large crusader army was quickly dispatched to attack the lands of

Raymond Roger Trencavel, Viscount of Béziers and Carcassonne, a suspected Cathar sympathizer.[68] Thus began a brutal two-decades long war in the region – a war that ultimately destroyed the power of the temporal lords who had protected the heretics, leaving the newly created Inquisition a free hand to extinguish Catharism as a threat to Latin Christendom once and for all.

Andrew A. Latham is a Professor and Chair, Political Science Department, Macalester College. He is the author of *Theorizing Medieval Geopolitics: War and World Order in the Age of the Crusades* and the fictional novel *The Holy Lance*. You can visit his website at www.aalatham.com

End Notes

[1] Given the focus of the existing constructivist literature on the crusades, Appendix 1 of *Theorizing Medieval Geopolitics: War and World Order in the Age of the Crusades* provides an account of these religious wars organized around the framework developed here.

[2] Para-crusaders, or milites ad terminum, served for a fixed amount of time as an act of devotion. See Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 103.

[3] Key contemporary secondary sources related to the Crusades to the Holy Land include Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*; Helen Nicholson, *The Crusades*, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2004; Thomas F. Madden, *A Concise History of the Crusades*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999; France, *The Crusades and the Expansion of Catholic Christendom*; Lock, *Companion to the Crusades*; Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.

[4] Christopher Tyerman, *God's War*, 660. The authoritative study of the Iberian Crusades in English is Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003. See also Jean Flori, *La guerre sainte: La formation de l'idée de croisade dans l'Occident chrétien*, Paris: Aubier, 2001. 277-91. For a good overview of the evolution of the historiography of these

crusades see Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 100-109.

[5] O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 21.

[6] Tyerman, *God's War*, 655; Lock, *Companion to the Crusades*, 211.

[7] See William Urban, *The Baltic Crusade*, 2nd ed., Chicago: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1994; Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, 2nd ed., London: Macmillan, 1997; Alan V. Murray, (ed.), *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150-1500*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001; Sven Ekdahl, "Crusades and Colonization in the Baltic," in Helen J. Nicholson (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); and Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*.

[8] See Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades* for a different historical schema.

[9] Although scholars once overwhelmingly viewed this type of war as a distortion or perversion of the institution of the crusade, in recent years it has come to be seen instead as perfectly legitimate extension of that institution – little different, in fact, from its application in Iberia or the Baltic. See Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 115-121.

[10] Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?*, 20.

[11] *Ibid.*, 22.

- [11] Ibid., 22.
- [12] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 297-8.
- [13] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 2nd ed., New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005, 112-36. For an alternative periodization see Helen Nicholson, *The Crusades*, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2004, 1-20.
- [14] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 104.
- [15] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 124.
- [16] More detailed summaries of the Second Crusade include Thomas F. Madden, *A Concise History of the Crusades*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, 57-63; John France, *The Crusades and the Expansion of Catholic Christendom, 1000-1714*, New York, NY: Routledge, 2005, 130-139; and Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 121-133.
- [17] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 137-82.
- [18] Ibid., 107.
- [19] More detailed summaries of the Third Crusade include Madden, *A Concise History of the Crusades*, 65-98; and Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 137-45.
- [20] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 137.
- [21] Lock, *The Routledge Companion to the Crusades*, London: Routledge, 2006, 152.
- [22] Madden, *A Concise History of the Crusades*, 81.
- [23] Lock, *Companion to the Crusades*, 156.
- [24] Ibid., 158.
- [25] For summary accounts see Lock, *Companion to the Crusades*, 169-170 and Madden, *A Concise History of the Crusades*, 155-165.
- [26] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 183-214.
- [27] O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, 23.
- [28] France, *The Crusades and the Expansion of Catholic Christendom*, 29.
- [29] Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006, 658.
- [30] Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, 101.
- [31] While some, such as Riley-Smith, have questioned the claim that this was a *pré croisade*, O'Callaghan makes a convincing case that it was. See O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 24-7.
- [32] Ibid., 27-9.
- [33] O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 31.
- [34] Tyerman, *God's War*, 662.
- [35] Lawrence J. McCrank, *Medieval Frontier History in New Catalonia*. No. III, Aldershot: Variorum, 1996 as cited in O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 32.
- [36] Lock, *Companion to the Crusades*, 206, 307.
- [37] O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 35-6.
- [38] Ibid., 36-8.
- [39] Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 103.
- [40] Ibid., 102-3.
- [41] O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 44-6.
- [42] Tyerman, *God's War*, 667.
- [43] This latter crusade was preceded by the promulgation of a Peace and Truce of God in order to ensure the internal tranquility necessary for a successful campaign against the Muslims. O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 47.

- [44] Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 105. 25-6.
- [45] For a discussion of the military religious orders in Iberia, see O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 55-8 and Tyerman, *God's War*, 667-8.
- [46] Tyerman, *God's War*, 668; Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 105.
- [47] See Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*. 2nd ed., London; Macmillan, 1997 for a different historical schema.
- [48] Giles Constable, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2008, 197-204.
- [49] For a translation of this Charter, see *Ibid.*, 211-4.
- [50] Hans-Deitrich Kahl, "Crusade Eschatology as Seen by Saint Bernard in the Years 1146-1148", as cited in Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 111, fn. 53. Regarding the so-called Sybelline prophesies, see also Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147-1254*. Boston: Brill, 2007, 28.
- [51] Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*.
- [52] Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, 65.
- [53] Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*.
- [54] Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, 65.
- [55] Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*.
- [56] One year's remission of sin rather than the plenary indulgences granted by Eugenius in 1147 and typical of the crusades to the Holy Land. Probably in order to make crusades to the Holy Land more appealing, Alexander also offered none of the related privileges and protections. See Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*, 56-65.
- [57] Urban, *The Baltic Crusade*, 2nd ed., Chicago: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1994, 25-6.
- [58] *Ibid.*, 27-8.
- [59] Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*, 72.
- [60] Lock, *Companion to the Crusades*, 220.
- [61] See Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*, 183-6.
- [62] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 197-8.
- [63] Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*, 193.
- [64] Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 115.
- [65] Although scholars once overwhelmingly viewed this type of war as a distortion or perversion of the institution of the crusade, in recent years it has come to be seen instead as perfectly legitimate extension of that institution – little different, in fact, from its application in Iberia or the Baltic. See Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 115-121.
- [66] Other crusades against heretics include the so-called "Hussite Crusade", 1420 to c. 1434 and the Waldensian crusade in the Dauphine, 1487-8. See, respectively, Lock *Routledge Companion to the Crusades*, 201-2 and 204-5.
- [67] For an extended discussion of the nature of Catharism, see Malcom Barber, *The Cathars: Dualist Heretics in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages*, Harlow: Longman, 2000. For an alternative perspective, see Mark Gregory Pegg, *A Most Holy War: The Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- [68] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 167.

The Maxims of Francesco Guicciardini

Francesco Guicciardini (1487-1540) was an Italian statesman and writer. During his lifetime he created 221 maxims which ranged from living a better life to military matters. Here are some of our favourites:

12. One finds almost all the same or similar proverbs, though in different words, in every country, and the reason is that proverbs are born of experience or observation of things which are everywhere alike.
14. Nothing is more precious than friends, therefore waste no opportunity of acquiring them, for men are perpetually in contact with one another, and friends may help and enemies harm at quite unexpected times and places.
22. How often one hears it said: if only one had or had not done such a thing, someone else would or would not have happened. If it were possible to compare what did happen with what might have happened, the falsehood of this notion would be apparent.
32. Ambition is not to be condemned, nor should one revile the ambitious man's desires to attain glory by honourable and worthy means. Such men as these do great and outstanding things, and anyone who lacks this urge is a cold spirit and inclined rather to idleness than to effort. Ambition is pernicious and detestable when its sole end is power. This is usually true of those princes who, when they set it up as an idol to achieve what will lead them to power, set aside conscience, honour, humanity, and all else.
55. Do not spend money against your expectations of future earnings, for they often do not materialize or they turn out to be less than you hoped. On the other hand, the expenses are constantly mounting. This is the fallacy which causes so many merchants to go bankrupt when they borrow money at interest to make greater profits. Everytime these either fail or are delayed, they fall into danger of being overwhelmed by an interest on their debts which never stop or diminish but continually grow and have to be fed.
69. If you look closely you will see that from age to age not only do words and men's way of speaking change, but their clothes, building methods, agriculture, and such things; what is more, even tastes change, so that a food which is prized in one age is often thought less of in another.
70. The real test of men's courage is when a sudden danger comes upon them; the man who can stand up to this - and there are very few who can - may really be called brave and fearless.
72. There is nothing that men ought to desire more on this earth and that can be a source of greater pride than to see their enemy prostrate on the ground and at mercy. This glory is greatly increased by its proper use, that is, by showing mercy and letting it suffice to have conquered.
101. To save oneself from a bestial and cruel tyrant there is no effective rule or sure specific, except what one does for the plague - flee as far and as soon as possible.
112. Messer Antonio da Venafrò used to say with great truth: "Put six or eight clever men together and they become as many madmen." For they cannot agree, and so place everything in question rather than revolve their problems.
123. I find it easy to believe that in every age many things have been regarded as miracles, which were nothing of the sort. Yet this much is certain, every religion has had its miracles, so that miracles are but a feeble proof of the truth of one religion rather than another. Possibly miracles do demonstrate God's power but no more that of the Gentile's God than that of the Christian's God. Indeed it may not be blasphemous to say that miracles, like prophecies, are secrets of nature, that causes of which man's intellect is incapable of reaching.



147. Those who believe that victory in campaigns depends on their being just or unjust are quite wrong, for every day we see the opposite proved true. For not right, but prudence, strength, and good fortune win military victory. It is very true that those who are in the right gain a certain confidence based on the belief God gives victory to just causes. This makes men bold and obstinate, and from these two qualities victory is sometimes born. Hence having a just cause may indirectly help, but it is false to say that it does so directly.

159. I do not censure fasting, prayer, and such pious works which are ordained by the church or recommended by the friars. But the best of virtues is - and by comparison all others are of little weight - not to harm anyone, to help others to best of one's ability.

161. When I think of how many accidents and dangers of infirmity, chance, and violence, in an infinite variety of ways, man's life is exposed, how many things must combine in the year to make a harvest a good one, there is nothing which

surprises me more than to see an old man, a fertile year.

198. Believe me, in the conduct of all affairs, public and private, success depends on finding the right approach. So in one and the same affair managing it one way or another means the difference between success and failure.

202. Little and good says the proverb. It is impossible that a man who talks or writes a great deal, will not put in much that is padding, but a few things can be well considered and concise. Hence it might have been better to choose the best of these axioms than to accumulate so much material.

The *Ricordi* by Francesco Guicciardini has been translated several times – these were taken from *Francesco Guicciardini: Selected Writings*, by Margaret Grayson (Oxford University Press, 1965). You can also read an 1890 edition – *Counsels and Reflections of Francesco Guicciardini*, translated by Ninian Hill Thomson, which is available through [Archive.org](https://www.archive.org)

The Beginning of Medieval Ten Novels from the

Historical fiction was just beginning as literary genre in the 19th century, but soon authors found success in writing about stories set in the Middle Ages. Here are ten of the most famous medieval novels published in the 19th century, which you can download or read for free via Archive.org

Ivanhoe: A Romance

By Sir Walter Scott

It is said that this novel began people's interest in the Middle Ages. Scott had already written several historical novels when he published Ivanhoe in 1820, but it was this work which was perhaps his most successful. Set during the reign of Richard I, it revolves around the lingering enmity between the Normans and Saxons.

<https://archive.org/stream/ivanhoe06scotgoog>

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

By Mark Twain

One of the earliest examples of time travel in literature, Mark Twain's 1889 novel tells the story of Hank Morgan, a 19th century citizen of Hartford, Connecticut, who is transported back to early medieval England and has adventures in King Arthur's court. It is a satire of the romantic view of the Middle Ages created by Sir Walter Scott and others, and portrays medieval people as superstitious fools. By the end of the story the body-count starts to pile up as modern warfare comes to Arthurian England.

<https://archive.org/stream/connecticutyanke1-889twai>

Romola

By George Eliot

Extensively researched, this novel was first published in a serial format between 1862 and 1863. It is set in Florence at the end of the 15th century, when Savonarola controlling the city. While some love this novel, and others believe it is Eliot's worst book, the writer herself called it her best work, saying "I could swear by every sentence as having been written with my best blood, such as it is, and with the most ardent care for veracity of which my nature is capable".

<https://archive.org/stream/romola12eliogoog>

The Hunchback of Notre-Dame

By Victor Hugo

It is this 1831 novel that introduces us to Esmeralda, Quasimodo and the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Set in Paris in the year 1482, it has been praised for its masterful depiction of medieval Paris, its intricately ordered narrative, and its memorable portraits of such stock romantic characters as the gentle monster, the evil cleric, and the beautiful, orphaned heroine. You may have seen one of the many of the movies or plays based on this book, but this 19th century novel is also worth a read.

<https://archive.org/stream/hunchbackofnotre1hugo>

Medieval Historical Fiction: Nineteenth-Century

Hereward the Wake: Last of the English

By Charles Kingsley

It was thanks to this 1866 novel that the 11th century Anglo-Saxon rebel Hereward became a national symbol in England. In this story, Hereward is the son of Leofric, Earl of Mercia, and Lady Godiva, but a rebellious youth. After a series of adventures, including fighting a polar bear, he became the leader of the English resistance against William the Conqueror.

<https://archive.org/stream/herewardwakelas1-1kinggoog>

The Saga of Eric Brighteyes

By H. Rider Haggard

After a trip to Iceland, the popular Victorian adventure writer H. Rider Haggard wrote this book in 1890. One of the first novels set in the Viking Age, it was designed to be like a modernized form of an Icelandic saga.

<https://archive.org/stream/ericbrighteyeswi0-0hagguoft>

The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood of Great Renown in Nottinghamshire

By Howard Pyle

It was in 1883 when Pyle published his collection of tales that made the English rogue in a medieval icon. This novel was aimed at children, so Pyle changed many of the earlier legends to make Robin Hood more of a hero.

<https://archive.org/stream/merryadventureso-00pyle2>

The White Company

By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Although he was more famous for his stories about Sherlock Holmes, Doyle was more proud of historical fiction, including *The White Company*, which tells the story of Alleyne Edricson, a young man who joins a mercenary company as an archer and takes part in the battles of the Hundred Years War.

<https://archive.org/stream/whitecompany00doyluoft>

Anne of Geierstein, or The Maiden of the Mist

By Sir Walter Scott

Following the success of *Ivanhoe*, Scott penned several more novels set in the Middle Ages, including *Anne of Geierstein* in 1829. This novel goes from England in the Wars of the Roses to Switzerland in the midst of their struggles with Duke Charles the Bold.

<https://archive.org/stream/annegeiersteino03-scotgoog>

The Cloister and the Hearth

By Charles Reade

First published in 1861, this novel has been lauded as one of the greatest historical novels in English for its meticulous recreation of 15th-century European life. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, called this novel "in my eyes, the wisest and the most beautiful I have ever read."

<https://archive.org/stream/cloisterandhear08-readgoog>

Margaret Beaufort, Mother of King Henry VII

By Susan Abernethy



Portrait of Lady Margaret Beaufort from the National Portrait Gallery, London

Lady Margaret Beaufort was the matriarch of the Tudor dynasty of Kings in England. Her life was greatly influenced by the turning of the Wheel of Fortune. That she managed to survive the vagaries of the War of Roses in England is something at which to be marveled. We have the memories of her confessor, John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester and Margaret gave him permission to share these memories after her death. Fisher saw the emotional Margaret but most people saw the steely, self-controlled Margaret of politics. She had great presence and a forceful personality. She was skilled and effective and could be ruthless.

Margaret was born on May 31, 1443 at Bletso in Bedfordshire. She was the daughter of John, Earl

of Somerset. Somerset was a grandson of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster who was the third surviving son of King Edward III and Gaunt's mistress and later wife, Katherine Swynford. The children of John of Gaunt and Katherine Swynford were legitimized after their marriage but they were unable to inherit the throne of England. Margaret's mother was Margaret Beauchamp, the daughter and heiress of Sir John Beauchamp of the gentry. Margaret Beauchamp had been previously married to Sir Oliver St. John by whom she had seven children.

As an aristocrat, John Beaufort was to be the longest held English prisoner in France of the Hundred Years' War. When King Henry VI finally arranged his release, he was bitter and financially

Hundred Years' War. When King Henry VI finally arranged his release, he was bitter and financially strapped. The King gave him lands and offices and the title of Duke of Somerset and sent him back to France to fight and make as much money as possible. But Somerset caused trouble in France and the King was furious. When Somerset returned to England, the King refused to meet with him and he faced charges of treason. It is believed he committed suicide just a few days short of Margaret's first birthday. Upon his death Margaret became one of the greatest heiresses in England.

King Henry granted Margaret's wardship to one of his favorite councilors, William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk. There is little on record of Margaret's upbringing but she remained in her mother's custody and she appears to have been affectionate with her mother and her St. John half-siblings. She also received a decent education.

The Earl of Suffolk arranged a marriage between his eight year old son John de la Pole and Margaret when she was six years old. There may have been a marriage ceremony but Margaret was returned to her mother and the marriage was never consummated. When Suffolk was disgraced in April of 1450, the marriage between Margaret and John de la Pole was voided. Margaret never referred to John de la Pole as her first husband.

In 1453, King Henry VI granted the wardship of Margaret to his half-brothers Edmund and Jasper Tudor. Presumably, King Henry intended Margaret to marry one of the Tudors and he may have considered Margaret to be a prospective heir to the throne as a surviving member of the House of Lancaster. In 1455, Margaret was married to the elder of the two brothers, twenty-two year old Edmund, 1st Earl of Richmond.

Edmund was sent to Wales by the King and took Margaret with him. Although Margaret was of a legal age to be married, she was petite and still very much a child. Edmund, in an effort to have an heir and gain the rights to Margaret's fortune, consummated the marriage. She became pregnant in the early part of 1456. Unfortunately in August of 1456, Edmund was captured by an ally of the Duke of York. Edmund was imprisoned

and later released but died of plague in early November at Carmarthen Castle. Margaret was pregnant, only thirteen and a widow. She put herself under the protection of her brother-in-law Jasper in Pembroke Castle and her son Henry Tudor was born there on January 28, 1457.

The birth of Henry had been very hard on Margaret but both mother and child survived. Margaret may have suffered permanent physical damage in the childbirth as there is no record she ever had another pregnancy or child. She spent about a year at Pembroke with her son to whom she became very devoted. She then sought, with the help of her brother-in-law, a new marriage alliance before the King forced another husband on her. An agreement was made between Margaret and the Duke of Buckingham's second son, Henry Stafford in April of 1457 and the marriage was celebrated in January of 1458. This appears to have been a happy marriage. Margaret's son Henry remained in the custody of his uncle Jasper in Pembroke and Margaret and her husband visited him there regularly.

In 1461, after Edward IV became King, Henry Tudor's wardship was sold to Lord Herbert for £1000. Lord Herbert and his wife Anne Devereux supervised his upbringing in a kind and considerate way. Margaret made arrangements allowing for visits with her son and she sent regular messengers to the Herbert's inquiring for news.

In 1466, King Edward granted the manor at Woking to Margaret and her husband. Margaret was proficient in running her household and estates and enjoyed dressing in rich clothes. In 1468, the Staffords entertained King Edward at Woking. In October 1470, Henry joined his mother in a visit to King Henry VI who had just been returned to the throne. Henry then returned to Pembroke. Not long after this visit, Edward IV returned with an army to reclaim the throne.

On April 18, 1471, Edward defeated the Lancastrian forces under the Earl of Warwick at the Battle of Barnet. Margaret's husband Henry was severely wounded in the battle and returned home. After the defeat of King Henry VI's wife Margaret of Anjou at the Battle of Tewkesbury, and the death of her son Edward of Lancaster, King Henry VI was murdered in the Tower of

King Henry VI was murdered in the Tower of London. This left Margaret Beaufort and her son Henry with the best claim to be the heirs of the House of Lancaster. Jasper and Henry Tudor tried to flee to France but were blown off course and landed in Brittany. Margaret's husband Henry Stafford died, mostly likely from his battle wounds on October 4, 1471.

Margaret's political situation was perilous and she immediately sought a new protector. In June of 1472, Margaret married Thomas, Lord Stanley. Stanley was a major landowner in England and he managed to never lead his troops into battle for either the House of Lancaster or York. This marriage was most likely a business arrangement with Margaret getting protection for her land holdings and her wealth and Stanley getting the prestige of her name and her wealth.

Stanley was in King Edward's circle and Margaret did attend court. Her marriage to Stanley was probably agreeable in the beginning. Margaret began working to get her son returned to favor in England. Jasper and Henry had gone to the court of Francis II, Duke of Brittany where they were treated with courtesy but essentially prisoners. Margaret didn't see her son between 1471 and 1485 but she was in constant contact with him.

In 1476, Margaret was in sufficient favor with the Yorkist court of King Edward that she attended Queen Elizabeth Woodville during the reburial ceremony of Edward's father the Duke of York at the church in Fotheringhay. During the christening of Edward's youngest child Bridget in 1482, Margaret was given the honor of holding the infant. Margaret eventually persuaded Edward to allow her son to return to England. In June of 1482, there was a draft pardon drawn up and discussion of Henry marrying Edward's eldest daughter Elizabeth of York. But before all these arrangements could be finalized, King Edward died on April 9, 1483, leaving his twelve year old son Edward as his heir.

With the death of King Edward IV, leaving a child as his heir, another period of political unrest ensued and the War of the Roses resumed. Margaret was caught up in the crossfire of the struggle that ensued as well as contributing to the instability by fighting to put her own son on the throne. King Edward's brother Richard, Duke

of Gloucester had Edward's children declared illegitimate, put aside young King Edward V and Parliament declared the Duke King. He was crowned King as Richard III. King Edward V and his young brother Richard, Duke of York were held in the Tower of London and after some time had passed they disappeared.

The new King was not sure of Margaret's husband's loyalty and for a short time had him imprisoned. But Stanley declared his support for Richard and was released, keeping all of his offices. Lord Stanley and Margaret played a role in the coronation of King Richard III and his wife Anne Neville. Margaret was magnificently dressed and carried the train of the new Queen. She also sat to the left of the Queen during the ceremony and sat near the Queen at the banquet afterwards.

There is some scant evidence that Margaret was already working on a plan to bring her son back to England at the very least; and wanted to have him named as the heir to the House of Lancaster and eventually made King at most. Margaret was not alone in working to oppose the new King. There is not much detail about these plans but when some men were discovered plotting against the King, they were caught and executed.

Margaret solicited the help of her nephew the Duke of Buckingham and of Edward IV's Queen Elizabeth Woodville in her scheme. Part of the plot was the marriage of Margaret's son to the former Queen's eldest daughter, Elizabeth of York. She sent word to Henry in Brittany and he began preparations to return to England with troops.

King Richard was apprised of the rebellion and took his army to fight against Buckingham. There never was a battle due to bad weather but Buckingham was caught and executed. Margaret was attainted for treason by Parliament but because her husband remained loyal to Richard, the death sentence for treason was commuted to life in prison and her goods and lands were confiscated. Margaret's imprisonment was served in the home of her husband. Lord Stanley gave Margaret quite a bit of freedom, allowing her to keep in contact with her son.

Over the next eighteen months, Margaret worked to get her son on the throne. Henry, in

Over the next eighteen months, Margaret worked to get her son on the throne. Henry, in France, gathered supporters and troops and in the summer of 1485, he landed in England and engaged the forces of King Richard III at Bosworth Field. King Richard fought bravely but died on the battlefield and Margaret's son Henry was now King as Henry VII. He couldn't have done it without his mother's help.

Margaret was immediately released from her imprisonment and traveled south for a reunion with her son in London after fourteen years. Henry gave his step-father the title of the Earl of Derby and Margaret was now known as the Countess of Richmond and Derby and "the King's mother". She witnessed Henry's coronation on October 30, 1485 and his marriage to Elizabeth of York on January 18, 1486.

Margaret had a special place in her son's government from the first day, providing him with trusted political advice. He entrusted her with many offices, titles, ceremonies and special commissions. She managed to legally and spiritually obtain independence from her husband so she owned everything in her own right. Henry gave her a home at Coldharbour near London and she made this her main home there along with another residence in the country called Collyweston. She basically acted as Queen, overshadowing her daughter-in-law.

Margaret delighted in the births of her many grandchildren. Prince Arthur married the Spanish princess Catherine of Aragon in 1501 but died soon after of the sweating sickness. She saw her eldest grand-daughter and namesake Margaret Tudor married to King James IV of Scotland in 1503. Her most beautiful grand-daughter Mary would become Queen of France after Margaret's death.

In her later years Margaret made significant religious, educational and literary contributions. She became a patron and benefactor of two colleges at Cambridge University. She commissioned William Caxton to print a French romance book. She translated several devotional

works from French into English and had them printed. Her personal chapel became an important center for the composition of polyphonic music.

Margaret's beloved son King Henry VII died in April of 1509. Margaret lived long enough to see her grandson King Henry VIII marry Catherine of Aragon and witnessed their coronation on June 24th. Perhaps all the celebrations were too much for her as her health was failing. She died five days later at Westminster at the age of sixty-six. Her confessor, John Fisher, gave a eulogy describing her life about a month later. The Wheel of Fortune had finally stopped turning for Margaret.

Further Reading: *Margaret Beaufort: Mother of the Tudor Dynasty* by Elizabeth Norton, section on Margaret Beaufort from *The Women of the Cousins' War: The Duchess, the Queen, and the King's Mother* by Michael Jones, *Blood Sisters: The Hidden Lives of the Women Behind the Wars of the Roses* by Sarah Gristwood, entry on Margaret Beaufort in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* by M. Jones and M. Underwood



Susan Abernethy is the writer of *The Freelance History Writer* and a contributor to *Saints, Sisters, and Sluts*. You can follow on Facebook or on Twitter @SusanAbernethy2

Medieval Videos

The archaeology of leprosy: Challenging stigma



Kori Filipek-Ogden



Durham
University



Kori Filipek-Ogden is a PhD student at Durham University's archaeology department. Kori's research examines Medieval skeletons to study the clinical and social effects of leprosy.



During the Summer of 2014, a team of Irish archaeologists led by Dr Steve Davis from the UCD School of Archaeology, University College Dublin, excavated Tlachtga, an ancient ritual site about 12 miles from the Hill of Tara, Co. Meath, Ireland.