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Cruce Signatus: The Form and Substance of the Crusading Vow, 1095-1216

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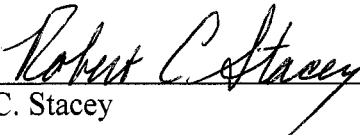
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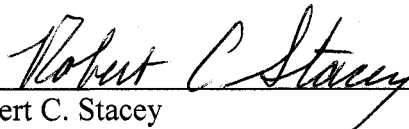
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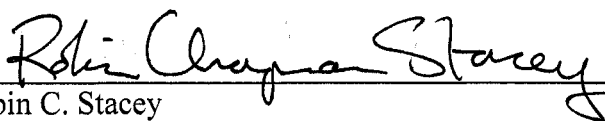


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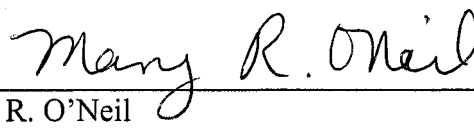
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Abstract

Cruce Signatus: The Form and Substance of the Crusade Vow, 1095-1216

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Modern historical inquiry into the crusade movement continues to be shaped by the overarching question of what exactly the crusade was. Instead of focusing on the ways in which the institutional authorities that summoned and organized these expeditions defined them, this dissertation examines the crusade from the perspective of the participant through an in-depth study of the form and substance of the crusade vow as it existed during the first century of crusading. When Pope Urban II called for the knights of Western Europe to embark upon an armed pilgrimage to liberate Jerusalem in 1095 CE he directed those who answered his call to affirm their intention with a solemn vow. Votaries were instructed to attach a cloth cross to their outer garments while pronouncing their promise aloud. Together these two acts transformed the votary into a crusader or *crucesignatus* - "one signed with the cross." The terms of the vows made by twelfth-century crusaders show that most *crucesignati* associated the cross and its resulting obligations specifically with the penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem. However, in a few small circles the cross was to stand, first and foremost, as a symbol of the crusader's willingness to serve God by risking his life in battle. Because some crusaders believed the votive

obligation was based primarily upon serving in Christ's army, they more readily accepted that the crusade vow might be fulfilled in a variety of locations. That this perception of the crusader's votive obligation came to dominate the way in which the institutional authorities in charge of the crusade conceived of the activity in the thirteenth century was due in no small part to both the recruitment strategies employed after 1187 and the efforts of Pope Innocent II (1198-1216 CE). It was a view that would not go unchallenged by *crucesignati*, however. Just as no single definition of the crusade has been fully accepted by all modern scholars, no one vision of the crusade was shared by all twelfth-century crusaders.

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List of Abbreviations

- Acta Sanctorum* *Acta sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur*, ed. Société des Bollandistes, 82 vols. so far (Antwerp, Venice and Paris, 1643ff).
- Brundage,
Canon Law Brundage, J. A., *Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).
- Bull,
Knightly Piety Bull, M., *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade. The Limousin and Gascony, c. 970 – c.1130* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
- CCCM *Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 213 vols. so far (Turnholt: Brepols, 1971ff).
- Crusades: Idea and Reality* *The Crusades: Idea and Reality, 1095-1274*, trans. L. and J. Riley-Smith, Documents in Medieval History 4 (London: Edward Arnold, 1981).
- Conciliarum* *Conciliarum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. G. Alberigo et al., 3rd edn. (Bologna: Istituto per le scienze religiose, 1973).
- Erdmann,
Origins Erdmann, C., *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, trans. M.W. Baldwin (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977).
- Phillips,
Defenders Phillips, J., *Defenders of the Holy Land. Relations between the Latin East and the West 1119-1187* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).
- FC Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana (1095-1127)*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1913).
- HGL *Histoire générale de Languedoc*, ed. J. Vaissète, C. Devic and A. Molinier, 3rd edn., 16 vols. (Toulouse: E. Privat, 1872-1904).

- Mayer,
The Crusades Mayer, H. E., *The Crusades*, trans. J. Gillingham, 2nd edn.
(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
- MGH Monumenta Germaniae Historica
- MGHS *MGH Scriptorum in Folio et Quatro*, ed. G. H. Pertz *et al.*,
38 vols. so far (Hanover and Leipzig: Monumenta Germaniae
Historica, 1826ff).
- OV Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. M. Chibnall, 6 vols.
(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969-80).
- PL *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina*, comp. J. P.
Migne, 217 vols. and 4 vols. of indexes (Paris: Garnieri
Fratres, 1841-64).
- O'Callaghan,
Reconquest O'Callaghan, J. F., *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*
(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).
- RHC *Recueil des historiens des croisades*, ed. Académie des
Inscriptions et Belle Lettres (Paris: Imprimerie Royale,
1841-1906).
- RHC Oc. *RHC Historiens occidentaux*, 5 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie
nationale, 1872-1906).
- Riley-Smith,
Crusades Riley-Smith, J., *The Crusades. A Short History*
(New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987).
- Riley-Smith,
First Crusade Riley-Smith, J., *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*
(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986).
- Riley-Smith,
First Crusaders Riley-Smith, J., *The First Crusaders, 1095-1131*
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

- Riley-Smith, *What were the Crusades?*
Riley-Smith, J., *What were the Crusades?* 3rd edn. (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002).
- RS *Rolls Series: The Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages*, 99 vols. (London: Longman & Co., 1858ff).
- Sacrorum conciliorum* *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, ed. J. D. Mansi, 31 vols. (Florence and Venice, 1759-98); revised edition of the latter by J.-B. Martin and L. Petit, 53 vols. in 60 (Paris, 1899-27; reprint, Graz, 1960-62).
- Tyerman, *Invention* Tyerman, C., *The Invention of the Crusades* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).
- WT William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, 2 parts, CCCM 63, 63A (Turnholt: Brepols, 1986).

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DEDICATION

To my parents.

William Berry Price and Margaret Edgerton Price

Introduction

On 27 November 1095 CE Pope Urban II urged the knights of Western Europe to embark upon a penitential pilgrimage to the Holy Land.¹ This was to be no ordinary pilgrimage, however. In addition to traveling to Jerusalem to offer prayers at the Holy Sepulchre, the pope wanted pilgrims to engage in warfare on Christ's behalf. He promised to those who vowed to liberate Jerusalem from the "yoke" of the "Turks" the remittance of all penance for their sins.² According to one contemporary, the positive response to this call was immediate and widespread. The anonymous author of the *Gesta Francorum* reported that upon hearing of the pope's offer a great number of knights - amongst which he, a knight in the service of Bohemond of Taranto, was included - "straightaway began to sew the cross on the right shoulders of their garments, saying that they would all with one accord follow in the footsteps of Christ, by whom they had been redeemed from the power of hell."³ The author of the *Gesta* understood the basic components of Urban II's message. The laity, especially those of knightly status, were being offered an unprecedented opportunity to secure their own salvation. Affixing the sign of the cross to their garments, these pilgrims literally "followed in the footsteps of Christ" by visiting the places where Christ lived, died and was resurrected.⁴ Many of these

¹ Unless otherwise noted all dates mentioned take place in the Common Era.

² Baldric of Bourgueil, "Historia Jerosolimitana," *RHC Oc.* 4: 14-15.

³ *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolymitanorum*, ed. and trans. R. Hill (London, 1962), 1-2. See also, K. B. Wolf, "Crusade and Narrative: Bohemond and the *Gesta*," *Journal of Medieval History* 17 (1991), 207-16 and C. Morris, "The *Gesta Francorum* as Narrative History," *Reading Medieval Studies* 19 (1993), 55-71.

⁴ *Gesta Francorum*, 1-2, 8, 92; The idea that crusaders were "following in the footsteps" of Christ is echoed in the other narrative accounts of the First Crusade (many of these authors used the *Gesta* as a source for their own narratives) and in the documents, including charters and letters, which record individual participants' views of the expedition. For a full discussion of the message promoted by Pope Urban II and its reception see, J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095-1131* (Cambridge, 1998), 23-80.

pilgrims, as a result of taking up the cross, would find themselves imitating Christ's ultimate sacrifice, dying for "Christ in that city in which He died for us."⁵

The novelty of Pope Urban's message should not be overlooked. Prior to 1095 the Christian laity had held out little hope of securing their own salvation. Mired in the world, the laity was dependent upon the prayers of the professed religious whose entire lives were dedicated to serving God. Monks and nuns with their vows to remain chaste, live in poverty and in obedience to God's word had served as the exemplar of Christian living to which all should aspire. It was the monastic life that was associated with the cross. Through their self-mortification and sacrifice, the professed religious "carr[ied] the cross of the Lord in mind and in body."⁶ Imitating Christ in the period prior to the calling of the First Crusade (1095-1101) required one's removal from, rather than engagement with the world.⁷ However, at Clermont Urban II did what had been unheard of previously - he invited the laity to try to emulate Christ in a manner more suited to their temper and level of engagement with the world. One contemporary commented on the novelty of this invitation. "God has instituted in our time holy wars, so that the order of knights and the crowd running behind them, who following the example of the ancient pagans have been engaged in slaughtering one another, might find a new way of gaining salvation."⁸ The travail of the journey to the Holy Sepulchre and the effort expended in battling the Saracens was expected to constitute so great an act of penance that all the crusaders' sins and the punishment for them was to be forgiven.

⁵ Baldric of Bourgueil, "Historia Jerosolimitana," *RHC Oc.* 4: 110. Translations of this account are taken from A.C. Krey's *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton, 1921), 33-6.

⁶ "Vita Stephani Muretensis a Stephano de Liciaco seu alio coaeuo redacta" in *Scriptores ordinis Grandimontensis*, ed. J. Becquet, CCCM 8 (Brepols, 1968), 120.

⁷ G. Constable, "The Ideal of the Imitation of Christ," *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge, 1995), 143-248.

⁸ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta per Francos et cinq autres texts*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, CCCM 127A (Brepols, 1996), 86. All translations taken from Robert Levine's *The deeds of God through the Franks: a translation of Guibert de Nogent's Gesta Dei per Francos* (Woodbridge, 1997).

Many participants assumed that death under these circumstances resulted in martyrdom.⁹

The extent to which the resulting pilgrimage – which ended in success with the capture of Jerusalem in July 1099 - was embraced by contemporaries as a miraculous and meritorious activity is confirmed by the speed with which the ideas and language invoked around the First Crusade were used to describe conflicts elsewhere in the Latin Christian world. It also was borne out by the fact that Western Christians continued to “take up the cross” after the liberation of Jerusalem was brought about. The majority of crusaders who assumed the cross after July 1099 vowed to travel to the East so as to aid the newly established Kingdom of Jerusalem. Ultimately, however, the language associated with the crusade, which was used by contemporaries to describe conflicts between Christians living in frontier regions like Saxony or Spain and their pagan neighbors, became more than rhetoric. Thus, in the period separating Urban II’s call in 1095 from the pontificate of Innocent III (1198-1216) one is able to observe the privileges and mechanisms of the crusade granted to those who answered a papal call to defend Christians in areas far removed from Jerusalem. In the twelfth century crusaders fought in the Holy Land; they also, on occasion, were to be found fighting against Muslims in the Iberian peninsula and pagans in Northern Europe. By the beginning of the thirteenth century the pope would direct crusaders against heretics in southern France and his political enemies in Italy. Originally, I had hoped to explain *how* an exercise initially conceived as a way to motivate the Christian laity to direct their aggression towards attaining the goal of liberating Jerusalem from Muslim control and presented as a penitential pilgrimage came to be applied to such a wide variety of military campaigns - campaigns which were not necessarily linked with the Holy Land or with pre-

⁹ J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Philadelphia, 1986), 114-17; H. E. J. Cowdrey, “Martyrdom and the First Crusade,” *Crusade and Settlement: Papers Read at the First Conference of the Society for the Study of Crusades and the Latin East and Presented to R. C. Smail*, ed. P. W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), 46-56; S. Shepkaru, “To Die for God: Martyrs’ Heaven in Hebrew and Latin Crusade Narratives,” *Speculum* 77 (2002), 311-41.

existing pilgrimage traditions. However, as so often happens when embarking upon research, I soon found myself confronted by the fact that the extension of crusading into areas other than the Holy Land was neither as automatic, nor as widely accepted by contemporaries, as has been assumed by modern historians.¹⁰ This, of course, led me to seek an explanation for the reluctance on the part of many contemporaries to see the crusade as an “all-purpose” holy war before the advent of the thirteenth century.¹¹ In this dissertation, therefore, I set out to answer a deceptively simple question: “What did ‘crusading’ mean to crusaders?”

Modern historical inquiry into the crusade movement continues to be shaped by the overarching question of what exactly the crusade was.¹² The traditional interpretation of a crusade sustains that it was a holy war, undertaken with papal sanction, the goal of which was to recover and/or maintain a Christian presence in the Holy Land. This is certainly the interpretation offered in the major works on the topic written during the first half of the twentieth century.¹³ It was definitely this vision of crusading that Hans Eberhard Mayer presented in his 1965 work *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*.¹⁴ Why was it, then, that proposing to define the crusade

¹⁰ The traditional interpretation of a crusade is that it was a holy war, undertaken with papal sanction, the goal of which was to recover and/or maintain a Christian presence in the Holy Land. This is certainly the interpretation offered in the major works on the topic written during the first half of the twentieth century. Among these works, perhaps the best example is Sir Steven Runciman’s *A History of the Crusades*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1951-54). One should also consult H.E. Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans. J. Gillingham, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1988) and *A History of the Crusades*, editor-in-chief K.M. Setton, 6 vols. (Philadelphia, 1955-62; Madison WI, 1969-85). A contrasting view is expounded by J. Riley-Smith, *What were the crusades?*, 3rd edn. (London, 2002), 5; E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, 2nd edn. (New York and London, 1998); G. Constable, “The Second Crusade as seen by Contemporaries,” *Traditio* 9 (1953), 213-79.

¹¹ J. A. Brundage has argued that the transformation of the crusade into an “all-purpose” holy war that the papacy could use to further their political aspirations occurred in the century separating the pontificates of Alexander III (1159-81) and Innocent IV (1243-54). See *Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader* (Madison WI, 1969), 193.

¹² Jonathan Riley-Smith provides an account of the recent historiography of the crusades from its mid-nineteenth century origins in the nationalistic movements of Germany and France to late twentieth-century concerns for understanding ideology and motivation in his “The Crusading Movement and Historians,” *Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. J. Riley-Smith (Oxford, 1995), 1-12.

¹³ Among these works, perhaps the best example is Sir Steven Runciman’s *A History of the Crusades*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1951-54).

¹⁴ H. E. Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (Stuttgart, 1965); *The Crusades*, trans. J. Gillingham (Oxford, 1972).

as “a war which [was] aimed at acquiring or preserving Christian domination over the Sepulchre of our Lord in Jerusalem, i.e. a clear cut objective which can be geographically pinned down to a particular region” sparked off a heated debate about the nature of the crusade?¹⁵ The answer to this lies in the historiography of the twenty years preceding Mayer’s work. While the ‘traditional’ view of the crusades remained the pervasive interpretation, scholars working on a comprehensive history of the crusades began to find it useful to include articles on the *Reconquista* and the Albigensian crusade.¹⁶ This shift came as the result of a growing sense that the application of the ideas of the crusade to struggles fought by Christians against the enemies of Christendom was seen by contemporaries as an integral part of a ‘movement.’¹⁷ An article published by Giles Constable in 1953 argued that contemporaries of the Second Crusade believed that the armies engaged in Spain, the East and across the Elbe River were all part of a single crusade host.¹⁸ Thus, Mayer was not only questioning the validity of recent scholarship, but challenging an alternate and accepted interpretation of the crusade itself.

Jonathan Riley-Smith was to come to the defense of Constable and others who shared his innovative views in *What were the Crusades?*¹⁹ There he suggested that contemporaries believed the crusade to be “an expedition authorized by the pope on Christ’s behalf, the leading participants in which took vows and consequently enjoyed the privileges of protection at home and the Indulgence, which, when the campaign was not destined for the East, was usually equated with that granted to crusaders to the Holy Land.”²⁰ The ‘pluralist’ view of the crusade movement

¹⁵ Mayer, *The Crusades*, 283.

¹⁶ A.P. Evans, “The Albigensian Crusade,” *A History of the Crusades*, ed. K. Setton, 6 vols. (Madison WI, 1969-85) 2: 277-324.

¹⁷ This was an idea expressed in earlier and influential works on the origins and development of the crusade idea, specifically Carl Erdmann’s 1935 study translated into English as *The Origin of the Idea of Crusading*, trans. M. W. Baldwin and W. Goffart (Princeton NJ, 1977) and M. Villey’s *La Croisade: essai sur la formation d’une théorie juridique* (Paris, 1942).

¹⁸ Constable, “The Second Crusade as seen by Contemporaries,” 213-79.

¹⁹ This study was originally published in 1977. J. Riley-Smith, *What were the crusades?*, 3rd edn. (London, 2002).

²⁰ Riley-Smith, *What were the crusades?*, 5.

advanced by Riley-Smith was embraced by a number of scholars who have greatly expanded our knowledge of the scope and breadth of the crusading movement. For example, in his works on thirteenth and fourteenth Italian crusades, Norman Housley has shown that these crusades were commensurate with the crusading ideology of the age.²¹ While perhaps the most vocal proponent of the pluralist interpretations, he is not the only scholar that has set out to show how crusades fought in places other than the Holy Land must be taken into consideration when speaking of the crusade movement. The course of the Northern Crusades has been documented by Erik Christiansen,²² while Elizabeth Siberry has shown that criticism of crusading in areas other than the Holy Land the twelfth and thirteenth century was not as prevalent as once thought.²³ Furthermore, the extent to which expeditions *not* bound for Jerusalem were promoted as viable crusades can also be observed in the sermons of the day as is shown in Christoph Maier's examination of crusade preaching in the thirteenth century.²⁴

As of late, the verbal repartee between the 'traditionalists' and the 'pluralists' has slowly quieted down. Housley has noted that it should not matter that "historians of the crusades are not in firm agreement about the exact contours of their subject [.] They do, after all, agree on many points, including the importance of the Cross, the indulgence, the preaching mechanisms, the continuous involvement of the papacy and traditions of crusading at the level of families, regions and nations."²⁵ Most crusade historians would also agree that the crusades were an expression of the

²¹ N. Housley, *The Italian Crusades: The Papal-Angevin Alliance and the Crusades against Christian Lay Powers, 1254-1343* (Oxford, 1982).

²² E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and Catholic Frontier 1100-1525* (London, 1980). A second revised edition was published by Penguin in 1998.

²³ E. Siberry, *Criticism of Crusading, 1095-1274* (Oxford, 1985). This study refutes an earlier study by P.A. Throop, *Criticism of the Crusades. A Study of Public Opinion and Crusade Propaganda* (Amsterdam, 1940) which attributes the failure of the West to prevent the fall of Acre in 1271 to a lack of enthusiasm for the crusade movement.

²⁴ C. Maier, *Preaching the Crusades. Mendicant Friars and the Cross in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1994) and *Crusade Propaganda and Ideology. Model Sermons for the Preaching of the Cross* (Cambridge, 2000).

²⁵ N. Housley, "Review of Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades*," in *The International History Review*, 21 (June 1999), 455-7.

Christian theory of 'positive violence' – the idea that in certain circumstances directing violence against another human being could be virtuous.²⁶ Thus, the crusades were as much about Christian ideology as they were about the acquisition of territory or conquest for its own sake.

In recent years, historians of crusading have devoted a great deal of attention to exploring and explaining what may or may not have differentiated a crusade from other sorts of armed expeditions that Europeans directed against the enemies of Christendom.²⁷ This trend can be understood as an attempt to apprehend whether medieval Christians, in addition to having a theory of positive violence, also possessed a unified conception of Christian holy war. Historians, therefore, are asking whether or not it is possible or even useful to characterize the crusade as “the epic battle between Islam and Christianity for dominance in the Mediterranean?”²⁸ The pertinence of such a question has only increased in light of such recent world events as the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City on 11 September 2001 and the wars being waged by the United States of America and her allies in Afghanistan and Iraq.²⁹ Why this should be the case is no secret. “Remote in aspiration yet retaining an attractive tang of relevance, crusading powerfully evokes a past while remaining topical.”³⁰ Whether or not links between past and present political, religious and cultural conflicts can be made, historians find it difficult to ignore the resonance and relevance of the study of crusade ideology.³¹

²⁶ For a discussion of how the theme of positive violence is presented in two recent works on the crusades see J. Acocella, “Holy Smoke. What were the crusades really about?” *The New Yorker* (13 December 2004), 92-8.

²⁷ Bull, *Knightly Piety*; Tyerman, *Invention*, esp. pp. 1-29; Housley’s “Review,” 455-7.

²⁸ J. F. O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain* (Philadelphia, 2003), 1.

²⁹ Any attempt to understand the mindset of those who participate in conflicts categorized as ‘holy wars’ can only be welcomed, if only to provide much needed perspective on the issue. It is also useful in gaining a deeper appreciation of the so-called ‘Western’ tradition of holy war. C. Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh, 1999), 590-600; J. Riley-Smith, “Islam and the Crusades in History and Imagination, 8 November 1898 – 11 September 2001,” *Crusades: Volume 2*, ed. B. Z. Kedar and J. Riley-Smith with H. Nicholson (Burlington VT, 2003), 151-67.

³⁰ Tyerman, *Invention*, 1.

³¹ Some historians have tried to downplay the current relevance of their studies. Acocella finds it odd that neither author whose works she reviews – Tom Asbridge on the First Crusade and Jonathan

Understanding the ideological basis of what constituted a ‘crusade ideology’ has taken on a new urgency as a result. I remain uncomfortable with a presentist understanding of the crusades which would suggest that “the rhetoric of crusade, holy war, and *jihād*, with all the intensity of feeling those words conjure is a powerful weapon and is still with us.”³² Nevertheless, I do believe that a more nuanced appreciation of what contemporaries believed the crusade to be is a necessity, if only to show how distinctive notions of Christian holy war are to the time and place in which they develop. This study is undertaken in the hopes of providing a historical understanding of the crusade and the crusader.

By and large, the explanations of what constituted a crusade in the first few centuries of its existence have focused on the ways in which the institutional authorities that summoned and organized these expeditions (in particular, of course, the papacy) defined them.³³ Much less attention has been paid to the ways in which crusaders themselves understood what they were doing.³⁴ Nor has this body of work highlighted, as I hope to do, the influential role crusaders themselves played in determining the nature and character of crusading in the twelfth century. By investigating the changing and frequently contested understandings contemporaries had of the crusading vow during the long first century of the crusading movement, I am trying to shed light on the way in which crusaders saw themselves and the activity in which they engaged.

The centrality of the vow to crusading is not to be doubted. It alone transformed someone into a crusader – literally, a person who was “signed with the cross” or *cruce signatus*.³⁵ Only after having made a formal vow, symbolized by the

Phillips on the Fourth Crusade – directly addresses the current Western rhetoric on Al-Qaeda or the war in Iraq. “Holy Smoke,” 98.

³² O’Callaghan, *Reconquest*, xiv.

³³ Mayer, *The Crusades*, 8-12; Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 13-30; Tyerman, *Invention*, 8-9, 30-98.

³⁴ The seminal works in this regards are offered by Marcus Bull in *Knighly Piety* and Jonathan Riley-Smith in *First Crusaders*. Both authors examine the reactions of eleventh- and twelfth-century Christian society to the crusade message and seek to understand the motivation which drove crusaders in the first few decades of the crusade movement.

³⁵ M. Markowski, “*Crucesignatus*: its origins and early history,” *Journal of Medieval History* 10 (1984), 157-65.

adoption of a cloth cross sewn onto one's outer garments, was an individual eligible to receive the unique combination of temporal and spiritual benefits associated with the crusade.³⁶ Rather than look in detail at the form of the vow and the substance of the votive obligation for those expeditions scholars have identified as crusades, modern scholarship has instead focused primarily on the legal implications and institutional concerns that arose from this sort of commitment. In the first half of the last century Emile Bridrey³⁷ and Michel Villey³⁸ set out to define the legal status of the crusader and his privileges. Their works laid the foundations for the authoritative study published by James Brundage in 1969.³⁹ Unlike its predecessors, *Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader* widens the scope and emphasis to encompass the crusades of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Furthermore, it incorporated the crucial concepts of holy war and pilgrimage which appear to underlie the development of the crusade institution. In coming to terms with the way the crusade functioned in practice, Brundage focused his attention on the crusade vow for the simple reason that, "it is upon the theory of votive obligation that both the obligations and the privileges of the crusaders are largely founded."⁴⁰

In *Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader* Brundage also provided a detailed analysis of the crusader's legal status (especially in canon law) and the legal privileges he was granted as a result. Brundage was primarily concerned with the crusader who traveled to the Holy Land, although his assertion that "there was a

³⁶ R. Somerville, *The Councils of Urban II: I, Decreta Claromontensia*, *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum: Supplementum I* (Amsterdam, 1972), 74; Robert of Rheims, "Historia Hiersolymitana," *RHC Oc.* 3: 729; Ivo of Chartres, "Epistolae," *PL* 162: 176.

³⁷ E. Bridrey, *La Condition juridique des croisés et le privilège de croix: étude d'histoire du droit français* (Paris, 1900) describes in great detail the status of a crusader in the secular courts of France after the thirteenth century. A critique of Bridrey's failure to deal with the evidence provided by the early crusades can be found in A. Gottlob, *Kreuzablass und Almosenablass: Eine Studie über die Frühzeit des Ablasswesens* (Stuttgart, 1906; r.p. Amsterdam, 1965), 140-1.

³⁸ M. Villey's *La Croisade: essai sur la formation d'une théorie juridique* (Paris, 1942) is a study which seeks to explain the theoretical understanding of the crusader and his status in the works of the thirteenth-century canonists.

³⁹ Brundage, *Canon Law*. For a discussion of his goals and the way in which he conceives of his study see pages xiii-xviii.

⁴⁰ Brundage, *Canon Law*, xvii.

continuing effort to reshape the existing, but vaguely defined, institutions governing pilgrims along lines more suited to the particular needs of the crusader” suggests that he believes the crusade vow was of a mutable nature and might be framed in different ways if taken for expeditions in other locations.⁴¹ The scope and breadth of this work was such that most of the subsequent studies concerned with the crusader have been intended to supplement those aspects of Brundage's work that had not received detailed analysis in such a comprehensive treatment of the topic. For example, the argument, advanced by Brundage, that the crusade vow had its origins in the vow of the Christian pilgrim was further substantiated in Jonathan Riley-Smith's work on the First Crusade.⁴²

This study owes a great debt to the work done by Dr. Brundage. His succinct description of the form and the substance of the crusade vow is invaluable to those wishing to understand how the vow taken by those setting out to aid the Holy Land was portrayed in contemporary legal and liturgical texts.⁴³ Though dealing with a similar topic in the hopes of understanding “the place of the crusades in medieval European life,” I chose to examine the crusade vow from the perspective of the crusader rather than the canonist.⁴⁴ As the vow was comprised of a personal statement of intent to carry out a certain series of actions, I believed that by ascertaining what acts individual crusaders promised to complete I would gain access to contemporary notions about what constituted a ‘crusade.’ Establishing the form or procedure followed when making a crusade vow was also of utmost necessity if one hoped, as I did, to locate the crusade within the repertoire of religious pursuits of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Keeping in mind that vows were verbal agreements made between man and God which contemporaries saw little need to record in writing, it should be noted nevertheless that the sources for a study of this sort are abundant, varied, and, for the

⁴¹ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 192.

⁴² Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 22-5; *First Crusaders*, 10-12, 14-19.

⁴³ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 116-22.

⁴⁴ Brundage, *Canon Law*, xviii.

most part, available in print.⁴⁵ Although information pertaining to this topic is to be found in financial, legal, administrative, liturgical and literary material, the three main sources are papal acta, narrative accounts of crusading, and charter material. Papal declarations are helpful in determining what the ecclesiastical hierarchy perceived the obligations and privileges of crusaders to be, and for observing what efforts were made to see that vows were fulfilled. However, to discover more about the crusaders themselves and their experiences on crusade one must turn to the narrative accounts of these expeditions⁴⁶ and charters recording the financial arrangements crusaders made before embarking on crusade.⁴⁷

These sources show that the form of the crusade vow did not change drastically after 1095. The same, however, cannot be said regarding the substance of the crusade vow. Over the course of the twelfth century the original consensus that every crusader was obligated to complete a penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem and take up arms in defense of the Holy Land disintegrated. This left in its wake a variety of understandings regarding the crusade. Crusaders and their views of the crusade fall into similar categories as those used to describe the approaches taken by modern scholars. There were 'traditionalists' - crusaders who continued to associate the cross and the activity it stood for with the Holy Land and the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. There were also some crusaders which might be best described as 'pluralists.' These

⁴⁵ The first example of a written recording of the exact terms of a vow is not to be found before the thirteenth century. In 1226 Louis VIII set out certain conditions that must be met before he would assume the cross. *Layettes du Trésor des Chartes*, ed. A. Teulet, 3 vol. in-4° (Paris, 1863-75), 1: 69-70. On the use of written records in the twelfth century see M. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record, England 1066-1307*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1993), 254-327.

⁴⁶ The basic chronicle collection for the crusades is *Recueil des historiens des croisades*, 16 vols., Académie des Inscriptions et Belle-Lettres (Paris, 1841-1906). In a study of this sort a number of supplementary chronicles and collections that deal directly with the crusades fought outside the Holy Land are indispensable. In particular, Arnold of Lübeck, "Chronica Slavorum a. 1172-1209," ed. J.M. Lappenberg, *MGHS rer. Germ* 14 (Hanover, 1868) and *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. J.A. Brundage (Madison WI, 1961) provide valuable insight into the Northern crusades. For Spain, there are *Las Crónicas latinas de la Reconquista*, ed. M. Huici, 2 vols. (Valencia, 1913).

⁴⁷ Giles Constable drew attention to the potential richness of this type of source for showing what crusader's motivations for crusading were and what they believed crusades to be in "Medieval Charters as a Source for the History of the Crusades," *Crusade and Settlement*, ed. P.W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), 73-89.

crusaders viewed the crusade as a figurative pilgrimage, choosing instead to see the possibilities of an army dedicated to fighting in defense of the Church. From their perspective the crusade was essentially a penitential war that could be fought anywhere enemies of the Church were to be found, in order to protect and reform Christendom. The vows made by crusaders from the late twelfth century will increasingly reflect this broader understanding of the crusade, though the ties binding the cross to Jerusalem remained strong. This study documents how the substance of the crusade vow shifted over time and in response to various challenges faced by the crusaders and those who promoted and organized these ventures.

Although diverse understandings of the crusade co-exist during this era, the organization of this study is chronological. Chapter One locates the origins of the crusade vow in pre-existing practices associated with Christian pilgrimage. I also focus on the unique aspects of the vow associated with the cross as they were appreciated by those who observed and participated in the First Crusade. Once Jerusalem had been liberated in July 1099, the immediate reason for the 'crusade' evaporated. Even with Jerusalem secured, however, Western Europeans continued to assume the cross. Therefore, Chapter Two is devoted to an examination of the substance of the crusade obligation after 1099. In particular, I explain how the mechanisms of crusade – specifically the crusade vow and the spiritual privileges associated with the cross – came to be applied, through the efforts of a small group of ecclesiastics and a few members of the laity, to pre-existing conflicts against non-Christians. The most salient example of the expansion of the ideology and mechanics of the crusade was the Second Crusade (1147-49) which was fought on three fronts: in the Levant, in the Baltic and in the Iberian Peninsula. The substance of the vow taken by those who fought as crusaders on the frontiers of Europe are thus compared with the terms of the vows taken for the Holy Land in the same period so as to see how and if the substance of the votive obligation altered as a result of the geographic displacement of the crusade. The failure of the Second Crusade was to have a tremendous influence on the next stage of the crusade's development. Chapters

Three and Four document the form and substance of the vows taken by crusaders between 1150 and 1198. On the whole, contemporaries in the North and in Spain chose not to repeat the experiment of 1147-49. When crusading privileges are extended to those who provide military aid to those lay leaders defending frontier regions it is usually done at the request of the churchmen serving in these areas. Very little effort was made by lay rulers to implement the mechanisms of the crusade in their struggles against non-Christians. While it may have impeded the crusade's transformation into a holy war in some arenas, the experience of the Second Crusade brought with it the message that in future expeditions to the Levant must be organized as military operations. Even as institutional authorities came increasingly to define the crusader's responsibility in terms of 'serving' Christ, the identification of the cross with the pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre was upheld by many crusaders. As it is argued in Chapter Four, this was to be especially true after the loss of Jerusalem to Saladin and his forces in 1187. Chapters Five and Six are dedicated to the transformation of the crusade vow during the pontificate of Innocent III. During the eighteen years of his pontificate the pope promoted a vision of the crusade which preferenced the figurative pilgrimage the cross entailed over the physical pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. The pope believed the 'crusade' to be an activity required of all Christians, but it was an activity with a far broader definition than had existed previously. Innocent III did not require all crusaders to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in order to receive the plenary indulgence; it was enough to "take up the cross" as a soldier of Christ and to serve him in a way best suited to one's own means and skills as well in those places where one's services were needed most. This conception of the crusade was to be reflected in the vows crusaders made and the ways these vows came to be fulfilled from the thirteenth century on. After 1216 it was no longer possible to say that the cross was linked exclusively with Jerusalem.

Whether Pope Urban II envisioned that the form of pilgrimage he proposed at Clermont in 1095 would become a permanent fixture in the repertoire of religious

pursuits open to the laity is not known. While drawing on existing traditions of pilgrimage and holy war, the expedition undertaken by those signed with the cross was novel and unique in the sense that the original purpose of such an activity had ceased to exist after the capture of Jerusalem. While it is certain is that the pope's contemporaries felt little compunction about adopting the new hybrid of pilgrimage and holy war as the primary way in which to provide military aid to the newly established and terminally weak Kingdom of Jerusalem, it is not at all clear that large numbers were ready to deploy the *crucesignati* elsewhere. Primarily because of the original characterization of the crusade as a pilgrimage many contemporaries held fast to the idea that those who signed themselves with the cross had an obligation to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. Others, however, were to hone in on the innate possibilities of an army willing to fight against the enemies of Christ on the Church's behalf. That the latter view came to dominate the way in which the institutional authorities in charge of the crusades conceived of the activity in the thirteenth century was due in no small part to the recruitment strategies employed after 1187 and the efforts of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216 CE). It was a view that would not go unchallenged by *crucesignati*, however. Just as no single definition of the crusade has been fully accepted by all modern scholars, no one vision of the crusade was shared by all crusaders. If indeed, there was a unified theory of Christian holy war, it did not rest solely on the crusade – at least in the twelfth century.

Chapter One: The Origins of the Crusade Vow

While a significant amount of what Pope Urban II proposed at Clermont on 27 November 1095 must have struck those who listened to his “long and inspiring sermon” as conventional, the idea of an armed pilgrimage to liberate Jerusalem was patently not.¹ Due in no small part to the efforts of the reform papacy, the notion that fighting on behalf of the Church could be spiritually meritorious had gained currency over the course of the eleventh century.² Thus far, however, pilgrimage and warfare were conceived of as two very distinct and irreconcilable activities. In the eleventh century it was common to enjoin pilgrimages as penance, but up until late November 1095 pilgrims had been expressly forbidden from carrying weapons or had decided against arming themselves in recognition of their status as penitents.³ In insisting that those who wished to “substitute the journey for all penance for sin”⁴ be confessed penitents, and also that they “struggle for Jerusalem in Christian battle line,”⁵ Urban II was linking two practices which had hitherto been divergent. In doing so, he created both a new form of penitential pilgrimage and a new type of holy war – the crusade.

The extent to which contemporaries understood the dual nature of the expedition proposed by Urban II at Clermont is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the form and substance of the vow made by those who “determined upon this holy pilgrimage.”⁶ Because the promise made by the men and women who answered the pope’s call in 1095-96 was similar in form to the vows eleventh century pilgrims

¹ Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. M. Chibnall, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1969-79), 5: 14, 16-18; Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 23-52; Contrast with Tyerman, *Invention of the Crusades*, 18-9.

² C. Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, trans. M.W. Baldwin (Princeton, 1977), 229-68; Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 42-52.

³ C. Vogel, “Le Pèlerinage pénitentiel,” in *Pellegrinaggi e culto dei Santi in Europa fino alla I^a Crociata* (Todi, 1963), 37-94; Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 38-9.

⁴ R. Somerville, *The Councils of Urban II: I, Decreta Claromontensia*, *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum: Supplementum I* (Amsterdam, 1972), 74.

⁵ Baldric of Bourgueil, “Historia Jerosolimitana,” *RHC Oc.* 4: 14-15.

⁶ Robert of Rheims, “Historia Hiersolimitana,” *RHC Oc.* 3: 729. Translated by D. C. Munro in *Urban II and the Crusaders*, University of Pennsylvania Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History, Volume 1, no. 2 (Philadelphia, 1895)

made prior to their departure and also adheres to contemporary notions of votive obligation, some historians have assumed that there was little difference between the pilgrim's vow and that taken by the crusader.⁷ But although many, if not most, pilgrims cemented their intention to journey to a specific shrine with a vow, it did not appear that the vow itself was required or served as a pre-requisite for pilgrimage in the same way it did for the crusade.⁸ Furthermore, to assert that there was little to distinguish crusading from pilgrimage or other penitential activities implies that late eleventh-century society lacked the wherewithal to step beyond the bounds of previous experience, even when faced with what was undoubtedly unfamiliar.⁹ This is incorrect. Contemporary observers were struck by the novelty of the pilgrimage proposed by Urban II.¹⁰ One of the many chroniclers of the First Crusade, Guibert of Nogent, recounted for his audience many of the events leading up to "the recent and incomparable victory of the expedition to Jerusalem. Those of us who have not grown foolish glory so much in it that we rejoice that our times are ennobled with a title no former ones have deserved."¹¹ According to his biographer, Tancred of Hauteville, a Norman knight living in southern Italy, had "been uncertain whether to follow in the footsteps of the Gospel or the world," but upon hearing of the proposed

⁷ J.A. Brundage, "Cruce signari; the Rite for Taking the Cross in England," *Traditio* 22 (1966), 289-310; Brundage, *Canon Law*, 17-18, 31-3, 119-22; Tyerman, *Invention*, 10, 21-3. For another perspective see, Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 81-2.

⁸ For example, those who participated in the large-scale German pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1064-65 were reported to have taken a vow. See, "Annales Altahenses Maiores," ed. G.H. Pertz, *MGHS* 20: 815. Aryeh Grabois argues that the eleventh century saw an increase in the numbers of pilgrims who took to the road and a regularization of ritual associated with pilgrimage, including a distinctive habit and the blessing ceremony. He does not mention the prevalence of a vow. See, *Le pèlerin occidental en Terre sainte au Moyen âge* (Brussels, 1998), 35-8.

⁹ M. Bull, "Views of Muslims and of Jerusalem in miracle stories, c.1000 – c.1200: reflections on the study of first crusader's motivations," *The Experience of Crusading, Volume One*, ed. M. Bull and N. Housley (Cambridge, 2003), 17-20.

¹⁰ *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolymitanorum*, ed. R. Hill (Oxford, 1962), 1-2; Robert of Rheims, "Historia," 723.

¹¹ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta per Francos et cinq autres texts*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, CCCM 127A (Turnholt, 1996), 86. For a discussion of Guibert of Nogent and other accounts of the First Crusade see Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, chapter 6 and Bull, "Views," 13-15.

expedition to the East saw that had been granted the previously unimaginable, the opportunity to do both.¹²

While it is true that the successful outcome of the First Crusade influenced the way in which authors portrayed the expedition to Jerusalem, it is equally certain that contemporaries perceived the distinctive nature of this undertaking from the start.¹³ The crusade was both based upon and a significant departure from the norms associated with eleventh-century penitential pilgrimage, a reality manifested in the crusader's vow. From the moment of its inception the form of the crusade vow and the substance of the votive obligation reflected the core attributes – pilgrimage and military service - of the activity known as 'crusading.'¹⁴ Examining the origins of the crusade vow within the context of its pilgrimage roots and focusing on the distinct characteristics of the vow taken for the First Crusade should allow for a greater appreciation of the way in which contemporaries understood the experience of crusading in the late eleventh century.

The Vow and Christian Society

It was the desire to document the glory and mercy of God that led the monk Guibert of Nogent to compose an account of the First Crusade.¹⁵ This same desire lay behind Guibert's autobiography or "confessions," in which he sought to acquire self-knowledge in the eventual hope of coming to a greater understanding of the

¹² Ralph of Caen, "Gesta Tancredi," *RHC Oc.* 3, 605-06. Translations taken from Krey's *First Crusade*.

¹³ Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 135-52.

¹⁴ The designation of this activity as a 'crusade' comes from the Latin describing the act of taking the cross. An individual who took the cross was known as *crucesignatus* from at least the mid-twelfth century on, but the term was not employed consistently until the thirteenth century. Instead, the expeditions undertaken by armed pilgrims were referred to as pilgrimages. M. Markowski, "Crucesignatus: its origins and early history," *Journal of Medieval History* 10 (1984), 157-65. This terminology has proved problematic for some historians. See, for example, Tyerman, *Invention*, 27-8.

¹⁵ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 327.

clemency and compassion shown by God to those who perpetually sinned.¹⁶ In reading *De Vita Sua* one learns a great deal about how one man conceived of his relationship with God. At the same time, however, the text allows one to gain one's bearings in the cultural milieu in which Guibert of Nogent operated. This is the same environment out of which the crusade was to emerge. Guibert, like Urban II, was born to a noble family in northern France in the middle of the eleventh century.¹⁷ When recounting the circumstances which led him to embark upon life as a professed religious, Guibert of Nogent gave pride of place to the vow made by his father at the time of his birth. It was feared that neither mother nor child would survive labor, and so in this time of great need Guibert's father, Evrard, along with his friends and kinsfolk,

fled for help to the altar of the Lady Mary, and to her . . . this vow was made, and in the place of an offering this gift laid upon the gracious Lady's altar; that should a male child be born he should be given up to the religious life in the service of God and the Lady, and if one of the inferior sex, she should be handed over to the corresponding calling.¹⁸

Their prayers were answered and both Guibert and his mother survived the ordeal of childbirth. Evrard died some eight months later leaving his wife and son to fulfill the terms of his promise. As can be observed from what happened subsequently, the vow made by Evrard was believed to be binding on both the votary and his kin.¹⁹ While other children,

wandered everywhere at will and were unchecked in the indulgence of such inclinations as were natural at their age, [Guibert], hedged with constant restraints and dressed in clerical garb, would sit and look at the troop of players like a beast awaiting sacrifice.²⁰

¹⁶ *Self and Society in Medieval France: The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent*, ed. J. F. Benton (Toronto, 1984), 35-7.

¹⁷ J. Rubenstein, *Guibert of Nogent: Portrait of a Medieval Mind* (New York, 2002), 11-12. For another interpretation see Benton's introduction to his translation of Guibert's autobiography, *Self and Society*, 31-3; A. Becker, *Papst Urban II. (1088-1099)*, 2 vols. (Munich, 1964-88).

¹⁸ Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society*, 42.

¹⁹ The belief that an obligation from a vow might pass on to one's heirs was longstanding, however, it would not be incorporated into canon law until the thirteenth century. Brundage, *Canon Law*, 78, n. 40; Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society*, 44.

²⁰ Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society*, 46.

After her husband's death, Guibert's mother raised her son in a manner that befitted the vocation to which he had been promised.

Two things that are of import for those seeking to understand how people living in the eleventh century approached vows can be gleaned from this description of Guibert of Nogent's early years. The first was that solemn vows were binding. Guibert's own wishes in this matter were irrelevant. As much as he might have wished to play as other children did, Guibert could not on account of the vow his father had made. The only choice that he does seem to have been allowed to make was to decide what sort of clerical life he wished to embark upon. Rather than become a member of the secular clergy as his parents seem to have intended, Guibert chose to join a monastery.²¹ The gift of his child which Evrard had voluntarily promised the Virgin was fulfilled when Guibert became a monk at the monastery of Saint-Germer of Fly.²² In consecrating his life to God and agreeing to live under the Benedictine rule Guibert made his own vow – promising obedience, chastity and stability.²³ The second item of interest regards Guibert's appearance. Guibert assumed a distinctive costume and was expected to behave in a manner appropriate to his status as a future clergyman even before he took his own formal vows that would alter his legal status. Presumably this was intended to signal to others that he was promised to the Church.

In considering the audience of clerics, monks and laymen assembled at Clermont in November 1095, one has to imagine that they – like Guibert and his father Evrard²⁴ - would have found it expedient, if not necessary, on occasion to voluntarily promise God that they would accomplish certain deeds in return for divine

²¹ This was not a case of child oblation – the gift of a child to be raised in a monastery. See M. De Jong, *In Samuel's Image: Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Leiden, 1996), 1-16, 126-55; Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society*, 76-7.

²² According to the ninth century theologian Radbertus of Corbie, the gift of a child to the Church was the purest expression of *voluntas*. He stressed the voluntary nature of the decision made by an oblate's parents in a sermon to a congregation of nuns. Paschasius Radbertus, *Exposito in psalmum XLIV*, ed. B. Paulus, CCCM 94 (Turnholt, 1991), 103.

²³ Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society*, 77-8.

²⁴ Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society*, 42.

favor. This type of pledge, known as a *votum*, or vow was a well-established and familiar, if not ubiquitous, part of religious life in the period leading up to the First Crusade. Both the Old and New Testament comment on the practice of making solemn and voluntary promises to God.²⁵ Although not required, once a vow had been made scripture suggested that it be treated seriously.

When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not be slack to pay it; for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and it would be a sin in you. But if you refrain from vowing it shall be no sin in you. You shall be careful to perform what has passed your lips, for you have voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth.²⁶

As noted in Guibert's case, it was commonly held that to break the terms of a vow was a sin; and if not fulfilled before one's death, a vow could seriously jeopardize one's chances of salvation. Guibert tells of an unnamed monk, who despite having been allowed by his abbot to change monasteries in search of stricter adherence to the Benedictine rule, was charged with breaking his vow of stability when it came time for his soul to be judged after his death. It was clear that despite his "devotion . . . the devils" did not have "an unjust case" – the monk was, in fact, guilty of perjury according to eleventh-century notions of monastic obligation.²⁷ Even a short delay in fulfilling the terms of a vow could bring serious repercussions. One woman who vowed to visit the shrine of Our Lady at Rocamadour if her sight was restored had her prayers answered almost at once. "Seeming to forget the benefit she had received, however, the woman put off performing her vow. The Mother of the Lord, as if impatient at her delay, inflicted a harsher wound upon her, thereby forcing her to come to her."²⁸ To avoid any further punishment the woman set out on the

²⁵ Leviticus 27 is devoted to the problems of vows and their obligations. Christ spoke of the binding nature of vows in Matthew 15: 3-6. Early Christians, like St. Paul, made vows, Acts 8:18. Also see, Brundage, *Canon Law*, 33 n. 9.

²⁶ Deuteronomy 23: 21-23. Revised Standard Version.

²⁷ Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society*, 220-1.

²⁸ Numerous examples of the punishment meted out to those who did not fulfill their vows can be found in the miracle collections associated with saints. For a discussion of these collections and the way they can be used see, Marcus Bull's introduction to *The Miracles of Our Lady of Rocamadour*.

pilgrimage she had promised and was promptly healed of both afflictions.²⁹ In this case the votary was lucky enough to be granted the chance to reconsider the importance of fulfilling a vow in this life.

The binding nature of the vow meant that it was important to consider the full implications of what one promised before obligating oneself in this manner. St. Augustine warned one couple about the dangers inherent in taking a vow of chastity. "You will be as much worse off if you break your word to God as you will be blessed if you keep it."³⁰ Making a voluntary promise to God was not to be done with impetuosity. This was especially true for those who, like monks and nuns, vowed to make a permanent conversion in the way in which they lived their lives. The seriousness of this sort of commitment would be recognized in law during the twelfth century when church authorities decreed that no person could commit himself or herself to the monastic life until he or she had attained their majority and took their vow as an adult.³¹

The benefit arising from the fulfillment of a vow was worth the wait or accompanying hardship. Those who completed what they had promised could expect to find themselves the recipient of divine favor. This was as true for those who made a more temporary commitment, such as promising to journey to a specific holy site in order to offer prayers. Gregorian reformer Peter Damian asserted that "divine mercy is not far with its protection from those whom it considers to be devotedly laboring in its service."³² He recounted how eight men who found themselves without food in inhospitable territory on their return from Jerusalem after "having

Analysis and Translation (Woodbridge, 1999), 11-20, 103. This is a translation of a miracle collection composed around 1172-73. An excellent eleventh-century example of the same sort of collection is the *Liber Miraculorum Sancte Fidis*, ed. A. Bouillet (Paris, 1897) which has been translated into English as *The Book of Sainte Foy* by Pamela Sheighorn (Philadelphia, 1995).

²⁹ *Miracles of Our Lady of Rocamadour*, 103.

³⁰ Jerome, "Letter 127: To Armentarius and Paulina" in *Epistolae* ed. A. Goldbacher and J. Divjak, (Prague, Vienna and Leipzig, 1895-1981), 44: 27-8.

³¹ W. M. Plöchl, *Geschichte des Kirchenrechts* 2 vols. (Vienna, 1953-62), 2: 253.

³² Peter Damian, "Letter 151" in *Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani*, ed. K. Reindel, MGH Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit 4, 4 vols. (Munich, 1983-93), 4: 4-5. Translated in D. Webb, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in the Medieval West*, International Library of Historical Studies 12 (New York, 1999), 37-9.

fulfilled the vow of their pious desire,” called upon God to come to their rescue: moments after they finished praying a huge loaf of bread appeared.³³ For one tenth-century man, the benefit of promising a gift of serfs to the Abbey of Saint Trond was patent; he “was confident that we shall undoubtedly receive from God, who rewards all deeds, unfailing reward at the end of this life.”³⁴

The fundamentals of votive obligation – that a vow was voluntary, that the votary was responsible for seeing that the promise was fulfilled in a timely manner and that upon completion of what was vowed the votary would be rewarded - were widely understood in the eleventh century, though one would have to wait until the mid-twelfth century for a precise juridical statement concerning the vow.³⁵ The frequency with which vows are discussed in varied sources in the period leading up to Urban II’s announcement at Clermont allows insight not only into how votive obligation was understood, but also into the situations where men and women made vows.³⁶ The form and substance of the vows can also be elicited from these accounts. Some vows were intended to mark a lifetime commitment. As in the case of the couple St. Augustine wrote to in the fifth century, men and women continued to vow themselves to chastity or, in some cases, perpetual virginity while remaining in the world.³⁷ One also sees men and women promising to spend the rest of their lives employed in the worship of God as members of a religious community governed by a rule.³⁸ Even the eleventh century definition of a legal marriage rested on a public exchange of vows.³⁹

³³ *Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani*, 4: 5.

³⁴ This gift of serfs was recorded in the abbey’s cartulary in 938 CE. *Cartulaire de l’Abbaye de Saint-Trond*, ed. C. Piot (Brussels, 1870), 7.

³⁵ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 36.

³⁶ A variety of sources mention vows. These include, but are not limited to, miracle collections, saints’ lives, monastic rules, and liturgy.

³⁷ “The Penitential of Cummean (c. 650)” in *Medieval Handbooks of Penance. A Translation of the principal ‘libri poenitentiales’ and selections from related documents*, ed. J. T. McNeill and H. M. Gamer (New York, 1938), 104-05; D. Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Society* (Princeton NJ, 2001), 8-9.

³⁸ C. Capelle, *Le Voeu d’obéissance des origines au XIIIe siècle*. Etude juridique. (Paris, 1959), 239.

³⁹ J. A. Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago, 1987), 189-90.

Less permanent commitments might also be cemented with a vow in the hopes that the individual would receive immediate assistance in temporal affairs. The compiler of the miracles associated with the shrine of St. Foy in Conques tells of a young man from Auvergne who, “worried about a distressing situation and filled with unbearable anxiety,” vowed that he would give his best ring – set with brilliant green jasper – to the saint if she would help him with his affliction.⁴⁰ Vows were thought to be especially effective ways of demonstrating that one was serious in their devotion to God or to a particular saint. In the habit of taking stock “of what was most essential for his soul” King Alfred the Great, who ruled the kingdom of Wessex from 871 to 899, “promised to render to God, of his own accord and with all his strength, in so far as his health and resources and abilities would allow” half of his thought and action each day.⁴¹ That a promise of this sort was voluntary was emphasized by the author of the king’s biography, lending support to the notion that the fundamentals of votive obligation were widely understood in Latin Christendom, even without the existence of the precise juridical statement which would emerge in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁴²

The substance or specific terms of a vow varied according to the promise being made: vows might vary from a pledge that one would live out one’s days in a certain manner to a promise to complete a specific task. In his *Rule for Virgins* Caesarius of Arles noted that a public and solemn vow marked the definitive entry into the monastic community.⁴³ The Benedictine Rule outlined the terms of the

⁴⁰ *Book of Sainte Foy*, 86-7.

⁴¹ Asser, *The Life of King Alfred*, trans. S. Keynes and M. Lapidge (London, 1983), 107-08.

⁴² Asser, *King Alfred*, 107-08; Guibert of Nogent also stresses that his monastic vow was voluntary. See, *Self and Society*, 76-9. Chapter 58 of the Benedictine Rule states that those who wish to become monks are to be made fully aware of the binding nature of the vow they will make prior to their profession. See, Benedict of Monte-Cassino, *Regula*, ed. R. Hanslik, *Corpus scriptorium ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 75 (Vindobonae, 1960), 133-8. Translation taken from *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, trans. with an introduction and notes by A. C. Meisel and M. L. del Mastro (New York, 1975).

⁴³ Caesarius of Arles, “Regula ad virgines,” ed. A. de Vogüé in *Césaire d’Arles, Oeuvres monastiques*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1988), 1: 184. The voluntary nature of the vow would be emphasized in the eighth and ninth centuries when forced entry into religious life had become a political instrument implemented by the Carolingian clergy. De Jong, *In Samuel’s Image*, 263-5; R. McKitterick, *The*

promises one should make before being admitted to the monastic community. The new brother was to “promise before God and his saints to be stable, obedient and to live as a monk.”⁴⁴ If getting married, each partner was expected to pronounce verbally the promise that they took the other as husband or wife.⁴⁵ Other less transformative promises included a vow that one would establish a monastic community, give a gift to a church or shrine, offer prayers at certain intervals or complete a pilgrimage.⁴⁶

Theoretically, as an agreement between man and God a vow needed only to be decided upon mentally in order to be binding.⁴⁷ Thus, one eleventh-century knight who was horribly disfigured in battle – “his jaw was severed on one side and on the other almost cut off to the middle and the root of the tongue was separated from his throat” - making speech impossible, vowed that he would go to the shrine of Saint Foy in Conques without speaking a word.⁴⁸ Rather, he “thought that he would have himself carried down to Saint Foy the next day,” communicating his instructions to his servants non-verbally.⁴⁹ This type of vow, which would later be defined in canon law as a private vow, was morally binding but not enforceable by any temporal authority.⁵⁰

Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reform, 789-895 (London, 1977), 13-14; P. Schmitz, “L’Influence de S. Benoît d’Aniane dans l’Histoire de l’ordre de S. Benoît,” *Settimane* 4 (Spoleto, 1975), 401-15.

⁴⁴ Benedict, *Regula*, 136.

⁴⁵ C. N. Brooke, *The Medieval Idea of Marriage* (Oxford, 1988), 137; Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society*, 189-90.

⁴⁶ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 153-66;. Compare with S.D. White, *Custom Kinship and Gifts to the Saints: The Laudatio Parentum in Western France, 1050-1150* (Chapel Hill, 1988). For a specific example of the way a vow like this was made and completed see the account of Fulk Nera’s foundation of Beaulieu-lès-Loches in Rodulfus Glaber’s *Historium Libri Quinque*, ed. J. France (Oxford, 1989), 60-3.

⁴⁷ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 41. This notion will be explored in some detail by Gratian in C.17. q.1 d. p. c. 4 of the *Concordia discordantium canonum*. This can be found in volume one of the *Corpus iuris canonici una cum glossis*, ed. E. Friedberg, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1879; r.p. Graz, 1959). For the dating of Gratian’s collection see, A. Winroth, *The Making of Gratian’s Decretum* (Cambridge, 2000), 122-45.

⁴⁸ *Book of Saint Foy*, 111-13.

⁴⁹ *Book of Saint Foy*, 113.

⁵⁰ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 33-4, 36-7, 45. The legal distinction between private and solemn vows was made for the first time c. 1158 in Peter Lombard’s *Sententiae*, 4: 38. 2 in *PL* 192: 932.

There was, however, another category of vow that co-existed with the more private and personal vow described above in the period prior to the calling of the First Crusade. This was the public or solemn vow, as it would be known in the legal texts of the twelfth century: a promise stated aloud in the presence of witnesses and made with the knowledge and blessing of the Church.⁵¹ Vows that required some sort of public performance included those which would bring about an alteration in lifestyle and often, as a consequence, a change in legal status. Though the substance of these vows differed, depending on what sort of transformation one wished to enact, it appears that the form public vows took was remarkably similar. The trials and tribulations of the Anglo-Saxon recluse, Christina of Markyate, as described by an anonymous biographer who knew his subject, sheds light on the way in which people went about making a vow to remain celibate in the first few decades of the twelfth century.⁵² On her return from a pilgrimage to the monastery of St. Albans, Christina promised God she would remain a virgin. She made this promise during mass held at the church in the village of Shillington. After the gospel reading, she approached the altar and offered a penny and made her vow. That she offered herself “in her heart” suggests that the vow itself was not spoken aloud; however, the very next day Christina made her vow known to a canon of Huntingdon who “confirmed the virgin’s vow before God.”⁵³ Likewise, the promise made by the convert to monasticism was to be made in the oratory, in the presence of the entire community.⁵⁴ After pronouncing the vow verbally, the votary would then write out the promise and place it on the altar.⁵⁵ The rest of the community would offer a blessing to welcome the new brother and confirm his profession.⁵⁶ Similarly, over

⁵¹ Earlier practice suggests that certain vows consistently required public confirmation. Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, 932

⁵² *The life of Christina of Markyate : a twelfth century recluse*, ed. and trans. C. H. Talbot (Oxford, 1987), 6-8. Christina was born c. 1097.

⁵³ *Christina of Markyate*, 38-41.

⁵⁴ Benedict, *Regula*, 136.

⁵⁵ Evrard had felt it necessary to place an offering on the altar so as to have the Virgin Mary accede to his demand. In lieu of a monetary gift his son Guibert was offered. In a similar manner, the written promise stood in place of the votary who was offering himself to Christ as a gift.

⁵⁶ Benedict, *Regula*, 136

the course of the eleventh century reformers worked to establish that a marriage had to be contracted in public – both parties vowing that they would take the other as husband or wife in the presence of witnesses – and then blessed by a priest in order to be recognized as legitimate.⁵⁷ In each case the formulation of the solemn vow followed a recognizable pattern. The votary was to make his or her vow in public (if not aloud) and in the presence of witnesses. If, as in Christina’s case, those witnesses were not aware of the substance of her vow, the vow should be confirmed by a witness as soon as possible thereafter. After the vow was made, the votary received the blessing of a member of the clergy.

Each of these actions was intended to cement the votary and his or her vow in the minds of those who were present to witness the transformation from one status to another. So too was the assumption of distinctive pieces of clothing by the votary. For example, after a new monk had been blessed by the community, he was instructed to remove his own clothing and to assume the monastic habit. “His old clothing is to be kept in the wardrobe for if he should be persuaded by the devil to leave the monastery, he will be stripped of his habit and expelled.”⁵⁸ Both men and women received a monastic habit. Women were invested with a veil at the ceremony in which they consecrated their lives to Christ, and men were given the tonsure.⁵⁹ The clothing worn by the monk or the nun was an outward manifestation of the vow he or she had made aloud and in the presence of witnesses. So much were the two identified that the assumption of a habit might theoretically have been assumed to take the place of the pronouncement of a vow.⁶⁰ According to St. Anselm, King

⁵⁷ This can be seen as part of the Church’s effort to sacralize marriage. Almost without exception canons from the eleventh century do not require that the couple receive a nuptial blessing from a priest in order to make the marriage valid. Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society*, 189-91.

⁵⁸ Benedict, *Regula*, 136.

⁵⁹ R. Metz, *La consecration des vierges dans l’église romaine: Étude d’histoire de la liturgie* (Paris, 1954), 350-1.; G. Constable, “The Ceremonies and Symbolism of Entering Religious Life and Taking the Monastic Habit, from the Fourth to the Twelfth Century,” in *Horizons mains-itinéraires spirituels (v^e-xvii^e siècles, 1. Mentalités et sociétés*, ed. H. DuBois, J.-C. Hocquet and A. Vauchez (Paris, 1987), 27-34; G. Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1996), 190.

⁶⁰ During the eighth and ninth century political opponents of the Carolingians were oftentimes forced into receiving the tonsure so as to remove them from access to power. In most cases, however, it was

Harold's daughter Gunnilda was a nun even though she had not been consecrated by a bishop or read her profession in his presence. However,

the fact that you publicly and privately wore the habit of the holy way of life, by which you proclaimed to all that you were dedicated to God no less than by reading a profession, is in itself a manifest and undeniable profession.⁶¹

As Anselm pointed out, the distinctive dress of the monastic profession was a recognizable sign that a solemn promise had been made and an obligation assumed. It alerted those who had not been present at the profession of an individual's vow of his or her new status within Christian society.

As stated previously, a well-defined doctrine of the vow and its obligations did not exist in Western canon law at the time Urban II preached the crusade. But systematic thought was beginning to be devoted to the questions. In two contemporaneous collections of canon law, the *Decretum* and the *Panormia*, an effort was made to collect and analyze the earlier references to vows in the patristic writings and in the decrees of popes and church councils with the intent of providing a tool for bishops to use in their pastoral capacity.⁶² Ivo of Chartres's collection only

understood that the new monk must admit in public that the assumption of his new status was voluntary. Thus, the notion that the monastic vow, like all other promises made to God, was undertaken voluntarily could be maintained. De Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, 79-81, 254-7, 262-3.

⁶¹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, ed. F.S. Schmitt, 6 vols. (Edinburgh, 1946-61), 4: 44-5. It is also interesting to note that apparently the terms of the vow were established enough already written by another party and that the candidate was to read them aloud.

⁶² Brundage, *Canon Law*, 36; R. Southern, *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe* (Oxford, 1995), 256-7. The printed versions of Ivo of Chartres *Decretum* and *Panormia* edited in volume 161 of the *Patrologia cursus completus. Series Latin.*, published by J. P. Migne are generally held to be untrustworthy. Dr. Martin Brett is in the process of annotating Migne's edition of the *Decretum*. A provisional web text of the *Panormia* is available online at <http://wtfaculty.wtamu.edu/~bbrasington/panormia.html> I will reference the Migne version of the *Decretum* and *Panormia* but also indicate in which capitula the reference is to be found. The early dating of the *Panormia* to c. 1095 has been a source of mild trouble for some time. It was first seriously challenged by R. Sprandel in his monograph, *Ivo von Chartres und seine Stellung in der Kirchengeschichte* (Stuttgart, 1962). Martin Brett called all the established dates into question in "Urban II and the collections attributed to Ivo of Chartres," *Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Medieval Canon Law* ed. S. Chodorow, Monumenta iuris canonici. Series C, Subsidia, 9 (Vatican City, 1992) 27-46. Also see his article entitled, "The sources and influence of Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal MS 713," *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Medieval Canon Law. Munich, 13-18 July 1992*, Monumenta iuris canonici Series C: Subsidia, 10 (Vatican City, 1997), 149-67. In recent email correspondence Dr. Brett has assured me that "things have moved on since then,

covers those vows which create a permanent obligation: namely, the vows taken by monks, the vow of virginity, the vow of celibacy or chastity and the marriage vow. These vows were ones that were most likely to come into conflict with pre-existing promises or obligations and thus often needed to be resolved by way of adjudication. Ivo of Chartres offered five observations on the nature of vows: that what is vowed must be done or one will be punished; actions that were legal before taking a vow may not be appropriate after taking a vow if they invalidate the vow;⁶³ foolish vows should not be kept and are not legally binding;⁶⁴ a monk may not take a vow without his abbot's permission;⁶⁵ and one vow cannot be overturned by another.⁶⁶ These were the basic concepts from which a juridical theory of the vow was to be developed in the following century.

Solemn or public vows were believed to be legally enforceable in the temporal realm. The Church was expected to levy sanctions against those votaries who did not do what they had promised God they would. In the case of the monastic vow, the abbot possessed the authority to expel a monk from his community if it was perceived that he was not fulfilling the terms of his vow.⁶⁷ The Church was also responsible for seeing that the solemn vow was respected and upheld by all parties. Christina of Markyate's parents could not overturn their daughter's vow of chastity by pushing her into a marriage. "No bishop under heaven" could force a vowed virgin into marriage "if according to her vow she wishes to keep herself for God to

and I now accept that some version of the *Decretum* was in existence around 1095; this owes much to the work of my current research student, Christof Rolker, who is at Queens' here doing a PhD. The case for supposing that the *Panormia* is significantly later is now stronger, thanks to his work. The terminus *ante quem* for *Panormia* looks around 1125, but this may change at any time." M. Brett, "Re: Question regarding Ivo of Chartres," 28 September 2004, personal email (28 September 2004).

⁶³ Ivo of Chartres, "Decretum," *PL* 161: 549, 599 (D. 8 c. 73), 614; Ivo of Chartres, "Panormia," *PL* 161: 1173, 1175-7. (Liber 3. c. 136).

⁶⁴ Ivo of Chartres, "Decretum," 796. (D. 12 c. 64). St. Basil of Caesarea had noted that "it has seemed to me ridiculous that any one should make a vow to abstain from swine's flesh. Be so good as to teach men to abstain from foolish vows and promises. Represent the use to be quite indifferent. No creature of God, received with thanksgiving, is to be rejected. The vow is ridiculous; the abstinence unnecessary." Letter 199 translated on the Early Church Fathers website. Accessed 15 August 2005 <<http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/NPNF2-08/Npnf2-08-217.htm>>.

⁶⁵ Ivo of Chartres, "Decretum," 553. (D. 7 c. 36).

⁶⁶ Ivo of Chartres, "Decretum," 614. (D. 8 c. 137).

⁶⁷ Benedict, *Regula*, 137-8.

serve him freely and for no man besides.”⁶⁸ Nor was it likely that Christina herself would have been able to overturn her vow by agreeing to a marriage in which the relationship was to be consummated. Only a bishop had the authority – under what were understood to be extenuating circumstances - to absolve an individual from the obligation resulting from a vow or to authorize the substitution of another obligation in its place. The function of the rituals and practices associated with the vow, therefore, was to solemnize the vow and make it known to the ecclesiastical authorities who were responsible for seeing that the terms of the vow were completed in an appropriate manner. In the eleventh century, those vows which followed this pattern consistently and so brought the votary under the jurisdiction and protection of the Church were the vows one took to become a monk or nun, the vow of virginity and, it would seem, the vow made by some, if not all, pilgrims.

Pilgrimage Vows

The most significant feature of eleventh-century pilgrimage was its variety of forms and destinations.⁶⁹ Pilgrims traveled to shrines at their local religious establishment and as far away as Rome or Jerusalem, out of devotion for the saint or to complete an enjoined penance. At the heart of pilgrimage lay the belief that visiting a certain site would allow the individual to accrue spiritual benefits. From a very early date, Christians had venerated objects associated with martyrs, in particular their bodily remains.⁷⁰ Because it was believed that these martyrs were beloved in the eyes of God, objects and places associated with them were thought to be imbued with holiness. One third-century bishop explained that “when one touches the bones of a martyr, one shares in the holiness which is present in the grace

⁶⁸ *Christina of Markyate*, 64-5.

⁶⁹ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 217.

⁷⁰ R. Van Dam notes that in the second century of the Common Era the remains of the martyr Polycarp were collected and an annual celebration took place at his tombs. See his entry on “Relics” in *Late Antiquity: a Guide to the Post-Classical World*, ed. G. Bowerstock, P. Brown and O. Grabar (Cambridge MA, 1999), 667-8. For the rise of the cult of relics in Western Europe see P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981).

inhering in the body.”⁷¹ Saints were also thought to act as effective intercessors between man and God. If approached with reverence and devotion the saint might prevail upon God to act in the material world. Through their interventions the saints “brought to their shrines and to the landscape itself a fragrant touch of Paradise.”⁷² Proximity to the relic was an obvious requisite for showing reverence for the saint’s intercessory power and for sharing in the saint’s or martyr’s grace. Thus, one sees men and women traveling to the places where these relics were kept. Writing c.1015, Aimo of Fleury recounts how the parents of a crippled girl took her first to the shrines of St. Denis and St. Martial in hopes of finding a cure. Only when a visit was paid to the local shrine of St. Benedict at Fleury was the girl cured.⁷³ The intent of this parable was to demonstrate that St. Benedict was more powerful a saint than other saints popular amongst eleventh-century Franks.⁷⁴ However, it also makes the important point that pilgrimage did not have to be long and arduous in order to be effective. In this case, the lesson learned by these parents was that their local saint was more likely to hear their prayers.

The majority of late-antique and early-medieval pilgrimage was local.⁷⁵ However, Christians from all over Europe thought it desirable to travel to Jerusalem.⁷⁶ This was the city where Christ ministered, preached, died, and was resurrected. “No other sentiment draws men to Jerusalem than the desire to see and touch the places where Christ was physically present,”⁷⁷ noted Paulinus of Nola in the fourth century. Viewing the places where Christ himself walked, Christians could

⁷¹ Basil of Caesarea, *Patrologia cursus completes. Series Graeca*, ed. J.P. Migne, 162 vols. (Garnier: Paris, 1857-91) 30:112. Translated in R.L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought* (New Haven, 1992), 115.

⁷² P. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom. Triumph and Diversity AD 200-1000* (Oxford, 1996), 102.

⁷³ *Les Miracles de saint Benoît*, ed. E. de Certain (Paris, 1858), 169-70.

⁷⁴ A. Davril, “Un monastère et son patron. Saint Benoît, patron et protecteur de l’abbaye de Fleury,” *Cahiers de recherches médiévales* 8 (2001), 43-55. For a discussion of the competitive interaction between monastic foundations in this era see P. Geary, *Futura Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton NJ, 1990).

⁷⁵ Webb, *Pilgrims*, 16; Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 217-30.

⁷⁶ R. Van Dam, *Saints and their Miracles in Late Antique Gaul* (Princeton, 1993), 11-13, 116-28.

⁷⁷ Paulinus of Nola, *Letters of St. Paulinus of Nola*, trans. and ann. by P.G. Walsh (Westminster MD, 1967), 273.

“recall God’s former presence on earth and demonstrate the ancient basis of [their present] beliefs.”⁷⁸ What made Jerusalem distinct was the consecration therein of relics associated with the most powerful intercessor of all, Christ, in combination with those left behind by the Old Testament prophets and the early Christian saints and martyrs.⁷⁹ As such, it was deemed the ideal place to go in order to expiate serious sin. When the count of Anjou, Fulk Nera “had shed much blood in many battles and in many places he was driven by fear of hell to go to our Savior’s Sepulchre at Jerusalem.”⁸⁰ Knowing “that earthly life is fragile and doubtful and the end of every mortal existence uncertain” so as to “bewail my sins with tears” Hervé, the archdeacon of Saint Croix of Orléans, journeyed to Jerusalem around 1030.⁸¹ He would return with relics from the Holy Sepulchre to build and endow a priory in which they could be venerated by locals for the ongoing remission of his sins and those of his family.

The idea that pilgrimage was spiritually meritorious was widespread;⁸² that it could be used to expiate sin was something that became increasingly accepted over time. From the seventh century onwards pilgrimage was imposed as a penance by ecclesiastical authorities – especially for those crimes which were of a serious and public nature.⁸³ Enjoining a pilgrimage to Jerusalem was thought to be especially suited for those who were “sunk in the mire of the world.”⁸⁴ Supervising the correction of simoniacs in the diocese of Milan in 1060, Peter Damian sent those clerics who confessed to this sin to Rome or Tours. In the case of the Marquis Raniero, a layman involved in buying and selling church offices however, Damian

⁷⁸ Paulinus of Nola, *Letters*, 273-4.

⁷⁹ A succinct formulation of this view is to be found in Jerome’s Letter 46 written to Marcella on behalf of Paula and Eustochium. Jerome, *Letters*, ed. J. Labourt, 8 vols. (Paris, 1949-63), 2: 100-14.

⁸⁰ Rodulfus Glaber, *Historium*, 60-1.

⁸¹ “Un pèlerinage à Jérusalem dans la première moitié de xi^e siècle,” ed. M. Jules Doinel, *Bibliothèque de l’Ecole de Chartes* 51 (1890), 204-06.

⁸² Some churchmen did criticize pilgrimage on the grounds that unless one set out with the right intentions it was of little value. Pilgrimages were also thought to be quite dangerous for monks and nuns who had, after all promised stability. G. Constable, “Opposition to Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages,” *Studia Gratiana* 19 (Rome, 1976), 125-46.

⁸³ C. Vogel, “Le pèlerinage pénitential,” *Revue des Sciences religieuses* 38 (1964), 113-15.

⁸⁴ *Briefe des Petrus Damianus*, 4: 1.

decided that a stiffer penance was needed. The marquis, he declared, “should go to Jerusalem, and satisfy the divine justice with a lengthy pilgrimage”⁸⁵ Fulk Nera found it necessary to travel to Jerusalem in 1003 in the hope that God would forgive him for his sins. “Because he was an intrepid man he returned from there exultant, and for a time moderated his customary ferocity.”⁸⁶ However, life once again would intervene and the count again built up an abundance of penance. The count was to return to Jerusalem at least twice, if not three more times before his death in 1040.⁸⁷ It is not certain that the count of Anjou had these pilgrimage enjoined as a penance. An imposed penitential pilgrimage was not the only form of pilgrimage extant in this period. It co-existed alongside pilgrimage embarked upon voluntarily out of devotion for God and his saints. Pilgrims embarking upon a devotional pilgrimage also expected to be rewarded for their exertion on behalf of the saint. In this sense, both the enjoined pilgrimage and the devotional pilgrimage were acts of penitence and reconciliation. “Traveling in this manner” Christians “provid[ed] for themselves the tranquil lodging place of the fatherland.”⁸⁸

The frequency with which vows are mentioned in conjunction with devotional pilgrimage in early medieval sources suggests that the enunciation of the desire or intention to visit a particular shrine was itself an important part of pilgrimage. In the ninth century, for example, Saint Liutberga, too young to take the vows that would allow her to join a religious community, instead took to the road with Gisla, Charlemagne’s daughter. “Afterward, she asserted that this had happened by divine will because she had vowed to be a pilgrim and God, to whom she had given herself in her mind, had made it possible.”⁸⁹ William, the devotee of Saint Foy who traveled to Conques from the Auvergne, considered a visit to the shrine an

⁸⁵ *Briefe des Petrus Damianus*, 4: 1.

⁸⁶ Rodulfus Glaber, *Historium*, 60-1.

⁸⁷ B.S. Bachrach, “The pilgrimage of Fulk Nera, Count of the Angevins, 987-1040,” *Religion, Culture and Society in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of Richard E. Sullivan*, ed. T. F. X. Noble and J. J. Contreni, *Studies in Medieval Culture* 23 (Kalamazoo, 1987), 205-28.

⁸⁸ *Briefe des Petrus Damianus*, 4: 1.

⁸⁹ “Vita S. Liutberga,” ed. G.H. Pertz, *MGHS* 4: 158. Translated by Jo Ann McNamara for the Internet Medieval Sourcebook, 1997 < <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/liutberga.html> >

integral part of the vow to give the saint his best ring.⁹⁰ Only thirty years before Urban II's sermon at Clermont, the bishop of Bamberg led a pilgrimage comprised of a large group of clergy and laity "from eastern France as well as Bavaria" to Jerusalem where they "fulfilled their vows."⁹¹

Why would pilgrims have found it necessary to cement their intention to take leave of their home in order to visit a holy site – whether it was far away like Jerusalem, or as in William's case, relatively near by – with a vow? The answer lies in the way in which pilgrims and pilgrimage was understood by contemporaries. Pilgrims were a distinct category of travelers – expected to journey to and from shrines for the sole purpose of prayer and penitence. In acknowledgment of the pious purpose of their journey, pilgrims were expected to travel unarmed while outside the jurisdiction of their own diocese.⁹² Thus, one sees a Provençal knight by the name of Boso vowing that he would "lay down his arms, succor orphans and widows henceforth and visit the shrines of the apostles Peter and Paul once a year, and more if he could, for the rest of his life."⁹³ Recognizing the difficulties and dangers that would be associated with travel as an unarmed penitent, pilgrims had been granted a privileged status in the secular and ecclesiastical law of the early middle ages.⁹⁴ Though the change in status was essentially temporary - one was only a pilgrim for the duration of one's travel to and from a shrine - it was a legally transformative experience. In the same way conversion to the religious life or marriage brought a new status within society, so too did the decision to go on pilgrimage.

⁹⁰ *Book of Sainte Foy*, 86-7.

⁹¹ "Annales Altahenses Maiores," 815.

⁹² On his return from visiting the shrine at Conques, a warrior called Gerard was taken unawares by an enemy and fifty of his knights. His foe saw this as an opportunity to attack Gerard at a weak moment. Gerard was forced to defend himself with a "peasant's sword" as he had none of the usual accoutrements associated with his status. *Book of Sainte Foy*, 70.

⁹³ *Acta sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur*, ed. Société des Bollandistes, 82 vols. so far (Antwerp, Venice and Paris, 1643ff), June 2, 107-08.

⁹⁴ For a discussion of the legal privileges accorded to the pilgrim up to and including the eleventh century see, Brundage, *Canon Law*, 11-17.

Over time a recognizable and accepted framework confirming one's legal status as a pilgrim developed.⁹⁵ From the Carolingian period onwards an effort to regulate and regularize religious practice and belief led ecclesiastical and royal authorities to demand that *all* pilgrims – not just those who had a pilgrimage assigned to them by a confessor – receive the blessing of their own priest before setting out on pilgrimage.⁹⁶ Bishop Haito of Basel (807-23), decreed that “anyone who wishes to go to the shrine of the blessed apostles by reason of prayer shall confess his sins at home and thus set out; for the power of binding and loosing belongs to his own bishop and priest.”⁹⁷ In addition to receiving a blessing from a member of the clergy, this ceremony saw pilgrims adopt a distinctive dress, and formally pronounce one's intention to go pilgrimage.

Liturgies for the blessing of the pilgrim from the middle of the eleventh century survive.⁹⁸ These liturgies record that the officiator initiated the ceremony by blessing the pilgrim. Immediately afterwards, he would bless and then bestow the staff and a purse or satchel upon the pilgrim.⁹⁹ Like the monastic habit, the pilgrimage symbols were revered as signs that the individual was engaged in a pious and penitential undertaking.¹⁰⁰ It also made the pilgrim easily identifiable to the rest

⁹⁵ The royal decrees regarding the necessary blessing of pilgrims all but disappear in the second half of the ninth century. However, the notion that pilgrims constituted a distinct class of traveler was a feature of decrees issued by local councils of lay and religious leaders in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and by the reform popes. *Canon Law*, 12-3; Grabois, *Le pèlerin occidental*, 35-7.

⁹⁶ Webb, *Pilgrims*, 13; Council of Châlons (813) in *MGH Legum*, ed. G.H. Pertz, 5 vols. (Hanover, 1835-89) 2: 282-3.

⁹⁷ “Capitularia Regum Francorum 1,” in *MGH Legum* 2: 93.

⁹⁸ *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye cardinale de la Trinité de Vendôme*, ed. C. Metais, 5 vols. (Paris, 1893), 1: no. 80; L. Vasquez de Parga, J.M Lacarra, and J.U. Riu, *Las Peregrinaciones á Santiago de Compostela*, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1948-9), 3:146-7; *Le Pontifical Romano-Germanique du Dixième Siècle*, ed. C. Vogel and R. Elze, *Studi e Testi* 226-227, 269 (Vatican City, 1963-72), 2: 228, 362.

⁹⁹ The eighth century “Life of St Trudo” recounted an occasion where a robber assumed the habit of a pilgrim as a disguise so as to rob the abbey. *MGH Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum*, 6: 296-7; *Le pontifical Romano Germanique*, 362.

¹⁰⁰ A knight by the name of Raymond on his return from Jerusalem was captured by Saracens who hoped to rob him of any gold he might have been carrying with him. In the process they stripped off his “sheepskin garment – something that ought to be treated with reverence” and threw it on an open fire. The pilgrim prayed to Saint Foy who preserved the garment intact. *Book of Sainte Foy*, 168-9. See also discussion of links between forced tonsure and public penance in De Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, 257-63.

of society. With a distinctive costume attesting to his status, the pilgrim could be assured that he or she would receive the protection and hospitality customarily extended to pilgrims.¹⁰¹ The blessing ceremony also serves as the best piece of evidence that pilgrims were in the habit of making solemn vows to complete a pilgrimage. The liturgy required the participants in and witnesses to the ceremony to respond verbally to prompts (*alia*) made by the officiator, implying that pilgrims made a public declaration of his or her intention to complete a pilgrimage.¹⁰²

One would not expect those who had pilgrimage enjoined on them as a penance to make a vow – it would be superfluous. The act of confession created a binding obligation between God and man. In seeking absolution, the penitent voluntarily agreed to make amends for any wrongdoing and to make satisfaction to God for any sinful behavior in which he or she had engaged. One was obliged to do the penance allotted by the confessor, or suffer the consequences both temporal and eternal. However, in the case of those pilgrims who chose to travel to a certain shrine in order to demonstrate the depth of their devotion, the public bestowal of a blessing in concert with the assumption of the symbols of pilgrimage resulted in the creation of a binding obligation. All pilgrims felt the duty to complete their pilgrimage in the ‘correct’ manner.¹⁰³ Whether a pilgrim had the pilgrimage enjoined as a penance or vowed to undertake a pilgrimage he or she was obliged to travel to the desired locale and to venerate the relics located there, as did a large group of men and women pilgrims who gathered outside Fleury in order to behold the relics held inside the

¹⁰¹ J. Riley-Smith, “An Army on Pilgrimage,” typescript, 2002 (in J. Riley-Smith’s possession), 7-9; P. Alphandéry, *La chrétienté et l’idée de croisade*, ed. A. Dupront, 2 vols. (Paris, 1954-59), 1: 26.

¹⁰² *Le pontifical Romano-Germanique*, 227-8; F. Garrisson, “A propos des pèlerins et de leur condition juridique,” *Etudes Historiques du Droit Canonique*, ed. G. Le Bras (Paris, 1965), 2: 1174-5; S. Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance 900-1050* (Woodbridge, 2001), 73-4; Vogel, “Le Pèlerinage pénitentiel,” 43. By the 13th century pilgrimage was recognized as a “non-solemn public penance.” See, M. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France* (Ithaca, 1995), 115-16, 125.

¹⁰³ In the eleventh-century, the church does not appear that to have had a systematic way of dealing with those pilgrims who did not complete the pilgrimage they had promised to undertake. In most cases it seems that much of the enforcement was actually taken care of by the saints themselves. *The Book of Sainte Foy*, for example, documents various cases where Saint Foy imposes a temporal punishment on those who do not follow her wishes to the letter. *Book of Sainte Foy*, 86-8, 92-3, 135-6.

abbey church. According to custom, however, women were not allowed to penetrate into the interior of the monastery where the relics were located.

These people, who had come a long way in pursuit of the relics begged that they should be permitted, in answer to their prayers, to enter the church in which the relics of the saint had been deposited and fulfill their vows. . . . With difficulty, they prevailed on the abbot and monks to erect a pavilion outside the portal of the monastery . . . and here the relics were brought.¹⁰⁴

After these pilgrims had the chance to see the relics they felt comfortable returning from whence they came. The substance of the pilgrimage vow would seem in this case, as in others, to have been place and task specific. One promised to travel to a particular locale and once there venerate the relics associated with the site before returning home. Once one had reached the designated spot and worshiped there the pilgrim secured release from the obligation one had acquired. The idea that the pilgrimage vow was discharged only once one reached a shrine and offered prayers there figured prominently in the vow made by individuals who responded to the call made by Urban II at Clermont in November 1095.

The Introduction of the Crusade Vow and the Cross

Accompanied by a sizeable and impressive entourage of high-ranking ecclesiastics, Pope Urban II traveled through France in 1096 as winter turned to spring, dedicating churches and altars, holding councils and preaching to the large audiences who gathered wherever he paused. As part of his overall goal of reforming the French church and Christian society as a whole, this tour of the French dioceses served to promote the armed pilgrimage to Jerusalem announced at Clermont on 27 November 1095.¹⁰⁵ The pope must have hoped that his personal proclamation of the crusade would spur recruitment. He was correct in thinking so.¹⁰⁶ As one chronicler observed, “the seed sown by him, not only in our region, but throughout the world”

¹⁰⁴ E. de Certain, *Les Miracles de Saint Benoit* (Paris, 1858), 64-5.

¹⁰⁵ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 54-60.

¹⁰⁶ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 75. See also, *Gesta Francorum*, 1-2; OV, 5: 229.

swelled “into grain.”¹⁰⁷ This was not the only measure Urban undertook to spread the news this unprecedented opportunity to serve God as soldiers of Christ.¹⁰⁸ Clerics present at Clermont had been instructed to preach the crusade in advance of the pope’s arrival in the localities and in those areas he would not be visiting in person.¹⁰⁹ This speaks to a significant degree of forethought and planning, an impression that grows ever stronger as one examines the consistency with which the pope’s message was delivered and received.¹¹⁰ Urban asked the arms-bearing classes to travel to the Holy Land and once there, to fight a war on Christ’s behalf for the recovery of Jerusalem.¹¹¹ While based upon conventional expressions of lay piety the pilgrimage preached at Clermont must also be understood as a break with established practice.¹¹² The most obvious distinction between the pilgrim who traveled to the Holy Land in 1096 for the purpose of liberating Jerusalem from Muslim rule in return for the remission of sin and the typical penitential pilgrim was that the former was not only allowed to bear arms, but was positively encouraged to do so.¹¹³ As contemporary observers appreciated, the papal command to take up arms immediately signaled the difference between this pilgrimage and all other pilgrimages.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, it is important to realize that Urban II conceived of this expedition as a pilgrimage and that those who answered his call believed themselves to be pilgrims.¹¹⁵

Urban II was reported to have told the assembly at Clermont that anyone who “shall determine upon this holy pilgrimage . . . shall make [a] vow to God to that

¹⁰⁷ Geoffrey of Le Chalard, “Dictamen de primordiis ecclesiae Castsliensis,” *RHC Oc.*, 5: 348.

¹⁰⁸ Baldric of Bourgeil, “Historia,” 16; Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana (1095-1127)*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg, 1913), 140-3. Translated by F. R. Ryan S.S.J. as *A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem, 1095-1127*, ed. with an introduction by H.S. Fink (Knoxville TN, 1969).

¹⁰⁹ Baldric of Bourgeil, “Historia,” 15.

¹¹⁰ R. Somerville, “The Council of Clermont (1095) and Latin Christian Society,” *Archivum Historiae Pontificae*, 12 (1974), 57-62, 79.

¹¹¹ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 55.

¹¹² Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 23-52; Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 250-81 Compare Tyerman, *Invention*, 18-19.

¹¹³ Riley-Smith, “Army on Pilgrimage,” 7-10.

¹¹⁴ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 87; OV, 5: 16; Ralph of Caen. *Gesta Tancredi*, 605-06.

¹¹⁵ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 33; Riley-Smith, *What were the Crusades?*, 54-5.

effect.”¹¹⁶ The pope’s own letters regarding the crusade also indicate that those preparing for the expedition took vows. Out of four papal letters extant from the period 1095-1099, the vow is mentioned in three. In a letter sent to “all the faithful in Flanders,” the pope commanded that “any men among you [who] take this vow” were to be ready to depart for Jerusalem on Assumption Day.¹¹⁷ The fleeting reference to a vow suggests that the recipients were familiar with the idea that this expedition required a vow; and furthermore, that they would know what form the vow would take. The pope made a similar supposition in a letter written to the counts of Besalú, Empurias, Roussillon and Cerdaña after January 1096. Here Urban ordered that those who “have made up their mind to go to Asia” should fulfill the vow by fighting the Saracens in Spain instead.¹¹⁸ In a letter dated 7 October 1096 and addressed to the monks of the congregation of Vallombrosa the pope reminds the brothers that they were, according to the legal norms of the day, forbidden from making a vow to go on this pilgrimage as they had “already vowed themselves to spiritual warfare.”¹¹⁹ Following the precepts of canon law, Urban II reminded the monk that one vow cannot overturn another. At their profession monks vowed stability; a vow to complete a pilgrimage was incompatible with the previous obligation. The inference here was also that those who took the cross vowed to engage in a battle against physical rather than spiritual foes.

That one should be legally committed to fighting on the Church’s behalf was first enunciated by Urban II at the Council of Piacenza in March 1095.¹²⁰ Here

¹¹⁶ Robert of Rheims, “Historia,” 729. See also, FC, 140-1; Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 117; Robert of Rheims, “Historia,” 729.

¹¹⁷ August 15, 1096 was the scheduled date for departure. *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088-1100*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck, 1901; r.p. New York, 1973), 136; *The Crusades: Idea and Reality, 1095-1274*, trans. L. and J. Riley-Smith (London, 1981), 38.

¹¹⁸ *Papsturkunden in Spanien : vorarbeiten zur Hispania Pontificia: I. Kalalanien*, ed. P. Kehr (Berlin, 1926), 287-8; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 40.

¹¹⁹ “Papsturkunden in Florenz,” ed. W. Wiederhold, *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Phil.-hist. Kl.* (1901), 313-14.

¹²⁰ Urban II may have taken his cue from his predecessors. Gregory VII who had various European nobles swear oaths that they would assist St. Peter by providing military service to the papacy. Gregory VII, *Das Register Gregors VII*, ed. E. Caspar, MGH Epistolae selectae 2 (Berlin, 1920-23), 122-5, 130-5 190, 601-03.

Byzantine legates implored the pope to send military aid to assist them in the struggle against the pagans who were at that very moment approaching the walls of Constantinople. The pope's immediate response was to urge those present "to promise by taking an oath, to aid the emperor most faithfully as they were able against the infidel."¹²¹ It is not known if any among them did so. The pope had been involved in negotiations with Alexius I over the provision of military aid to the empire since the beginning of his pontificate, suggesting that his response at Piacenza was not necessarily impromptu.¹²² However, the level of commitment suggested by the pope was significantly greater at Clermont than at Piacenza. The crusade was a proper *votum*, a promise made to God rather than an oath or promise made to another man.¹²³ This shift from oath to vow can be explained by the pope's decision to link the protection of the eastern Church with a large-scale penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Those who participated in this expedition would be released from "all penance imposed for their sins, of which they had made full confession."¹²⁴

Urban II required (and his audience assumed) that a vow was a necessary prerequisite for participants because the crusade was framed as a voluntary penitential pilgrimage. Contemporaries who undertook a pilgrimage as a self-imposed penance or in the hope of gaining some sort of spiritual benefit were accustomed to making vows before embarking on their journeys. Those who had the crusade formally enjoined upon them as a penance by an ecclesiastical authority would also incur an obligation to see that they completed the penance assigned them. Neither group of pilgrims would have seen anything unusual in the pope's request that they formally commit themselves to this endeavor with a vow. In this sense, the crusade vow was not revolutionary. Eleventh century pilgrims were accustomed to making vows.

¹²¹ Bernold of St. Blaisen, "Chronicon," *MGHS* 5: 462.

¹²² Erdmann *Origins*, 325-8; Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 13-15.

¹²³ Bernold of St. Blaisen records that Urban II asked men to "*iureiurando promitterent*" at Piacenza. "Chronicon," 542. In letters concerning the expedition to Jerusalem, Urban II refers to the commitment required of those who participate as a "*votum*." See *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, 137 and "Papsturkunden in Florenz," 313-14; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 38-9.

¹²⁴ Somerville, *Councils of Urban II*, 74.

The novelty of the crusade lay instead with two other of the pope's directives. Clearly pilgrims were being asked to go to Jerusalem in order to venerate Christ. At the same time, however, they were also called to fight on Christ's behalf so as to liberate the city where he lived and died from the infidel.¹²⁵ Previously pilgrims had been forbidden from carrying weapons. These pilgrims, however, were positively encouraged - even required - to bear arms. This stipulation was to change the appearance of these pilgrims, as was the pope's command that those who set out to liberate Jerusalem attach a cross to their garments to symbolize their willingness to die for Christ. Robert of Rheims, a French monk who wrote an account of the crusade around 1107, was present at Clermont in November 1095.¹²⁶ In his *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Robert has the pope conclude his speech at Clermont with the command that

whosoever, therefore, shall determine upon this holy pilgrimage and shall make his vow to that effect and shall offer himself to Him as a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, shall wear the sign of the cross of the Lord on his front or on his breast. When, truly, having fulfilled his vow he wishes to return, let him place the cross on his back between his shoulders. Such twofold action will fulfill the precept of the Lord as he commands in the Gospel; 'He that does not take up his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me.'¹²⁷

Just as pilgrims had previously been forbidden from bearing arms, medieval history offers no earlier example of a company of laymen adopting a distinctive emblem for their clothes.¹²⁸ The cross captured the interest of people living at the end of the eleventh century and distinguished these pilgrims from all who had preceded them on the road to Jerusalem.

¹²⁵ "Once cherished possessions were sold at low price, and arms were bought to be the instruments of divine vengeance on the Saracens." OV, 5: 16.

¹²⁶ Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 135-7.

¹²⁷ Robert of Rheims, "Historia," 729-30.

¹²⁸ M. Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven and London, 1984), 125-42.

Contemporary sources commented upon the novel appearance of the pilgrims who set out for the East in 1095-96.¹²⁹ Bohemond of Taranto was in the midst of besieging Amalfi when he

heard that an immense army of Frankish crusaders had arrived, going to the Holy Sepulchre and ready to fight the pagans. So he began to make careful enquiries as to the arms they carried, the badge which they wore in Christ's pilgrimage and the war-cry which they shouted.¹³⁰

It is not that "*innumerabilem gentem Christianorum de Francis*" were traveling to the Holy Land that draws Bohemond's attention; rather, it was precisely those elements of the crusade that differentiated it from other expressions of pious behavior of this period that struck him. These pilgrims were distinct because they were armed, wore a cross and used "God wills it" as their battle cry.¹³¹

According to contemporaries, Urban's choice of a cross was inspired. What better emblem for the "soldiery of God," asked one commentator, than the "stigmata of the Lord's passion?"¹³² These pilgrims literally took up the cross to follow in Christ's own footsteps. As such they were laying "down the girdle of such [worldly] knighthood" and advancing "as knights of Christ."¹³³ It was "a sign well-suited to so honorable a profession," embodying the mission and goal of the *miles Christi*.¹³⁴ It reinforced the idea that the crusader - suffering much hardship, perhaps even dying, while fighting his way to the Holy Sepulchre - was imitating Christ at the moment of his passion.¹³⁵ The cross also singled out individuals as members of an

¹²⁹ Erdmann, *Origins*, 317-18.

¹³⁰ *The Deeds of the Franks and the other Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, ed. R. Hill (Oxford, 1962), 7. For a discussion of the events leading up to Bohemond's taking of the cross see R. B. Yewdale, *Bohemond I, Prince of Antioch* (Princeton, 1924), 34-6.

¹³¹ This cry had first been heard at Clermont as the audience's response to the pope's message. Robert of Rheims, "Historia," 729-30.

¹³² Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 117.

¹³³ Baldric of Bourgeil, "Historia," 16.

¹³⁴ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 117.

¹³⁵ Gregory VII had already promoted the idea that it was possible for a warrior to imitate Christ by laying down his life on the behalf of the Church. H. E. J. Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085* (Oxford, 1998), 652-8. See also W. J. Purkis, "Stigmata on the First Crusade," *Signs, Wonders and*

army that transcended local or regional boundaries: it was to God that the soldiers of Christ owed their obedience. “Christ would be the standard-bearer and inseparable fore-runner.”¹³⁶

Urban II did not explain why he wished the soldiers in the army of God to wear a cross.¹³⁷ Those who observed the events of 1095-1101 seem to have had their own interpretations of the pope’s actions. The anonymous author of the *Gesta Francorum* interpreted the cross in religious terms. In assuming the symbol of Christ’s martyrdom, he and his compatriots bore crosses in imitation of the Savior.¹³⁸ Undoubtedly, this was one of the ideas the pope wished to convey to his audience. The gospel texts quoted by Urban in his sermon at Clermont were linked primarily with recruitment to the monastic profession. According to the pope, taking the cross was an act on par with that of devoting one’s life to Christ as a monk or nun. Unlike a nun or monk, however, the commitment required of the crusader was never intended to be permanent. When the pilgrim returned from Jerusalem he could be expected to once again take up his occupation and his responsibilities in a violent society. However, he would return home with the slate wiped clean of all sin. While he was certainly encouraged by the Church to take advantage of the state he found himself to embark upon a new life what behavior he chose to engage in was in the end up to him.¹³⁹ One of the most prominent features of the piety of the laity in the period before the First Crusade was that it was expressed through close association with the spiritual resources of the monastic and clerical elite.¹⁴⁰ The crusade presented Christians “with an alternative model for imitating Christ, and a new

Miracles: Representations of Divine Power in the Life of the Church, ed. K. Cooper and J. Gregory, Studies in Church History 41 (Woodbridge, 2005), 99-108.

¹³⁶ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 116.

¹³⁷ In surviving letters of this period, Urban II does not mention the cross. *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, 136-8; “Papsturkunden in Florenz,” 313-14; *Papsturkunden in Spanien*, 287-8; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 38-40.

¹³⁸ *Gesta Francorum*, ix-xiii, 1-2.

¹³⁹ Some crusaders, like Raymond of Toulouse and Stephen of Blois, chose to devote their lives to serving Christ as soldiers. Others like Raimbold Croton and Robert of Normandy may have come back in a religious frame of mind, but were not long in returning to previous behavior patterns. OV, 5: 300-01, 343-4; 6: 96-7, 158-9.

¹⁴⁰ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 285-6.

form of religious observance specifically designed for the laity.”¹⁴¹ The crusade allowed laymen to assume more direct responsibility for their salvation by “tak[ing] up crosses to follow Christ”.¹⁴²

Another chronicler who was struck by the novelty of penitential pilgrims bearing arms thought that the pope had

ordered that all going there should bear the sign of the cross on their shoulders or on their chests, fixed in some way to their clothes, to show that while on so great a journey they were engaged in a religious exercise and pilgrimage. This is so they should not be hindered by anyone who saw them.¹⁴³

Contemporaries recognized that the way in which this pilgrimage was to be conducted was unusual and might cause confusion amongst those who had not heard the preaching of the crusade. It was a valid concern. During the course of the march to the East the crusading host found that the inhabitants of Castoria refused to sell provisions to them “because they were much afraid of us, taking us to be no pilgrims but plunderers, come to lay waste to the land and to kill them.”¹⁴⁴ Both the emotional and practical concerns of the pilgrimage proposed by Urban II were served with the introduction of the cross. Whether both were a part of the pope’s reasoning on the matter remains uncertain. But regardless of the motivation behind its introduction, the cross was to have an impact on the way in which this particular pilgrimage was conceived.

Taking the Cross: the evidence, 1095-1101

The vow associated with the armed pilgrimage to Jerusalem was a solemn vow – one pronounced in public in the presence of witnesses and with the knowledge

¹⁴¹ Purkis, “Stigmata on the First Crusade,” 99-108.

¹⁴² *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe*, 164.

¹⁴³ “Historia peregrinorum euntium Jerusalem,” *RHC Oc.* 3: 169-70.

¹⁴⁴ *Gesta Francorum*, 8.

of the Church.¹⁴⁵ Fulcher of Chartres, who himself vowed to accompany the crusading host of 1095, reports that at Clermont “many in the audience solemnly promised to go.”¹⁴⁶ Like Fulcher, most people made their vows and assumed the sign of the cross at large and emotional gatherings like the one at Clermont, or at those presided over by Urban II in Limoges, Angers and Tours.¹⁴⁷ In March 1096 Aimery of Courron and Hugh of Chaumont-sur-Loire, the lord of Amboise, “together with many others attached the sign of the holy cross on their mantles in the presence of the pope in the basilica of Marmoutier.”¹⁴⁸ In doing so they were ensuring that the vow was made in public in the presence of witnesses. The actual wording of the promise is unknown. It is easily assumed, knowing what we do about traditional pilgrimage vows, that the vow to crusade must have been pronounced aloud and in the present tense.¹⁴⁹ Both crusaders and ecclesiastical authorities certainly classified the crusade vow as a solemn vow, believing that the Church had the authority and obligation to see that the vow was completed.¹⁵⁰ In 1099 Pope Paschal II directed the prelates of France to compel those who had taken the cross “to proceed to that place, unless they are hindered by the stumbling block of poverty. Otherwise, we decree that they be treated as infamous persons.”¹⁵¹

Taking the cross and making a vow were conflated in the mind of contemporaries, as were the acts themselves.¹⁵² At the command of the pope a cross

¹⁴⁵ Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, 932. Bishop Adhemar of Le Puy, the first to take the cross, asked the pope for his permission to undertake this journey, received Urban’s blessing and took the cross in front of the assembly at Clermont. The series of actions described in FC, 138-9 and in OV, 5: 16. Orderic Vitalis also suggested that this had all the attributes of a ‘solemn’ vow.

¹⁴⁶ FC, 140-1.

¹⁴⁷ “Notitiae duae Lemoviscenses de praedicatione cruces in Aquitania,” *RHC Oc.* 5: 352-3; Geoffrey of Le Chalard, 5: 348; Fulk IV of Anjou, “Gesta Andegavensium peregrinorum,” *RHC Oc.*, 5: 345-6, 352-3.

¹⁴⁸ “Gesta Ambaziensium dominorum,” ed. L. Halphen and R. Poupardin, *Chroniques des comtes d’Anjou et des seigneurs d’Amboise* (Paris, 1913), 101-02.

¹⁴⁹ M. Purcell, has argued that there was “no public emission of vows.” *Papal Crusading Policy, 1244-1291* (Leiden, 1975), 200. I believe evidence suggests otherwise.

¹⁵⁰ Letter of Archbishop Manassas II of Rheims to Bishop Lambert of Arras, 1099 in *Kreuzzugsbriefe* 175-6.

¹⁵¹ *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, 175.

¹⁵² This appears to have been similar to St. Anselm’s ideas regarding the monastic habit. See note 61 above.

was to be sewn on to one's clothing either directly after pronouncing the vow or at the same time. The immediacy with which this was done is illustrated by a well-known episode from the *Gesta Francorum*. Upon hearing of the crusade, Bohemond of Taranto, "inspired by the Holy Ghost, offered the most valuable cloak which he had to be cut up forthwith and made into crosses, and most of the knights who were at the siege of [Amalfi] began to join him at once."¹⁵³ When Stephen of Neublans came before Abbot Hugh of Cluny and "opened [his] heart to him about this journey and made this gift into his hand, he placed the sign of salvation that is the holy cross, on [Stephen's] shoulder and a ring on [his] finger."¹⁵⁴ The cross "served as an outward symbol of devotion to their inward faith" in the same way a monk's habit displayed his dedication to a chosen path.¹⁵⁵

The guidelines governing the appearance of the cross were rather broad. The cross could be made of any sort of cloth. Some were made of "silken or woven gold," others cut from more modest material.¹⁵⁶ The cross was fixed to the votary's outer garments – so as to be visible to others.¹⁵⁷ The placement of the symbol seems to have varied; most sources report only that the cross was to be affixed to one's clothing without specifying where.¹⁵⁸ A few accounts specifically mention that it was to be placed on the right shoulder.¹⁵⁹ This was no doubt to act as an allusion to the way in which Christ was reported to have carried his cross to Golgotha. The Franks "straightaway began to sew the cross on the right shoulder of their garments, saying that they would with one accord follow in the footsteps of Christ, by whom they had redeemed from the power of hell."¹⁶⁰ Other sources suggest that the cross

¹⁵³ *Gesta Francorum*, 1-2.

¹⁵⁴ *Recueil des Chartes de l'abbaye de Cluny*, ed. A. Bernard and A. Bruel, 6 vols. (Paris, 1876-1903), 5: 89.

¹⁵⁵ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. R.A.B. Minors R.M. Thompson and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1998), 602-03.

¹⁵⁶ FC, 140; Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 117.

¹⁵⁷ FC, 141-142 ; Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 117.

¹⁵⁸ Baldric of Bourgeil, "Historia," 16; Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 117.

¹⁵⁹ FC 140-141; *Recueil de Cluny*, 5: 82.

¹⁶⁰ *Gesta Francorum*, 1-2.

was placed on one's breast or front.¹⁶¹ The word to describe the placement of the cross in Robert of Rheims account (*fons*) could mean either 'front' or 'forehead'.¹⁶² There is evidence that this term was used in the preaching of the crusade and, at least in one case, appears to have been understood in the latter sense. Godfrey of Bouillon's chaplain, Abbot Baldwin,

cut into his forehead, by I know not what means the sign of the cross which ordinarily was made out of some kind of material and affixed to clothing. It did not look as though it had been painted on, but as though it had been inflicted like a wound received in battle.¹⁶³

The cross indicated the crusader's legal status as an armed pilgrim, it was not intended to be a permanent feature of the individual's attire.¹⁶⁴ Indeed, it was made clear that the cross was to be worn only until the terms of the vow were completed.¹⁶⁵ One chronicler suggests that once the vow had been fulfilled the cross should be placed on the back, between the shoulders, when one began the journey home.¹⁶⁶ This would seem a logical solution to the problem of telling whom amongst the crusaders had completed their vows and who had not; however, aside from this one account there is no evidence that this action was required or ever put into practice.

The process of taking the cross seems to have encompassed a number of other activities besides making a vow and immediately marking oneself with a cross. Those who wished to receive the spiritual benefits promised by the pope were also to

¹⁶¹ Robert of Rheims, "Historia," 729-30.

¹⁶² Robert of Rheims, "Historia," 729-30. "... *signum Dominicae Crucis in fronte sua sive in pectore praeferat.*" For an interpretation of the physical manifestations of the cross on crusader's bodies on the First Crusade see, Purkis, "Stigmata on the First Crusade," 99-108.

¹⁶³ Ekkehard of Aura "Hierosolymitana," *RHC Oc.* 5: 19. While in Europe the abbot told people that the mark had suddenly appeared and must have been the work of an angel. He was able to finance his journey to the East on the oblations he received as a result. Baldwin would repent at Antioch and go on to become the first archbishop of Caesarea. Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 196-7, 330-1.

¹⁶⁴ Abbot Baldwin was only one of several crusader to make the cross a permanent feature of one's appearance. Albert of Aachen, "Historia Hierosolymitana," *RHC Oc.*, 4: 291, 292; Bernold of St. Blasien, "Chronicon," 464; Baldric of Bourgeil, "Historia," 17, FC, 169-70; OV, 5: 30.

¹⁶⁵ OV, 5: 230.

¹⁶⁶ Robert of Rheims, "Historia," 729-30.

make full confession of their sins,¹⁶⁷ and gain permission or a blessing from their priest or bishop.¹⁶⁸ They also appear to have received the pilgrimage staff and purse before setting out for Jerusalem.¹⁶⁹ Each of these acts deserves examination in its own right, for the simple reason that all were considered to be part of taking the cross, even though they often occurred upon different occasions by those who sought the remission of sins offered by Pope Urban II in the winter of 1095.

For Urban II and his audience the armed pilgrimage to Jerusalem was to be a penitential exercise. As Orderic Vitalis reports, the pope

urged all capable of bearing adequate arms to march against the enemies of God; and by the will of God, he absolved all penitents from their sins from the moment that they took the cross of Christ, and with fatherly consideration excused them from any obligation to fast or to mortify the flesh in other ways. Like a wise and kind physician, he fully realized that those who set out on the pilgrimage would suffer from every kind of danger at almost all times, and would be tormented by changes of fortune, both good and ill, through which the ardent servants of Christ would be cleansed from all the guilt of their sins.¹⁷⁰

The two acts – completing the journey to the Holy Land and participating in the liberation of the Eastern Church – together would act as satisfactory penance for all confessed sins. According to Baldric of Bourgeil, those who wished to partake in this indulgence were to confess “the disgrace of their sins” and priests were commanded to grant them “speedy pardon.”¹⁷¹ Knights, like those from the castle of Mezenc who wished to take “the road to Jerusalem,” were prompted to confess their wrong-doing and make amends for previous behavior.¹⁷² “The Lord Adhémar, bishop of Le Puy, was asked to absolve them from their crime. Wondering at their cruelty, he absolved them from the crime they had committed because they were hastening to join the

¹⁶⁷ Baldric of Bourgeil, “Historia,” 15; FC, 137-8; OV, 5: 16.

¹⁶⁸ Baldric of Bourgeil, “Historia,” 15; FC, 137-8; OV, 5: 16.

¹⁶⁹ Ekkehard of Aura, “Chronicon Universale,” *MGHS* 6: 214.

¹⁷⁰ OV, 5: 16-18.

¹⁷¹ Baldric of Bourgeil, “Historia,” 16.

¹⁷² *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de St. Chaffre du Monastier*, ed. C.U.J. Chevalier (Paris, 1884), 140-1.

expedition to Jerusalem and had promised amendment and correction.”¹⁷³ “After “confession of their sins and with purified spirits” many Christians from every walk of life “consecrated themselves to go where they were bidden.”¹⁷⁴

Urban II was adamant that priests and clerics interested to accompanying the host to the East take an additional step in preparation for assuming the cross. Without exception members of the clergy were to ask permission of their superior, for the “journey would profit them nothing if they went without permission.”¹⁷⁵ On bended knee, Adhemar of Le Puy, “sought permission and blessing from the pope” to go on this journey immediately following Urban’s sermon at Clermont.¹⁷⁶ In doing so, he modeled the behavior the pope expected from those who joined the bishop of Le Puy in taking the road to Jerusalem.

The lay crusader was also to receive a priestly benediction before embarking on the expedition to liberate Jerusalem. By requiring that those who vowed to crusade get the official blessing of the church, Urban II may have hoped to weed out those unsuited to the task at hand. The pope was calling for an army of God to liberate the Holy Land “from the Muslims, and for penitence and for the remission of sins.”¹⁷⁷ While the crusade was a pilgrimage to the holiest of sites it also went undisguised as a military exercise.¹⁷⁸ It would be dangerous and inexpedient to allow those unsuited to warfare to accompany the host. Urban II did not

command or advise that the old or feeble or those unfit for bearing arms, undertake this journey; nor ought women to set out at all, without their husbands or brothers or legal guardians. For such are more of a hindrance than aid, more of a burden than an advantage.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷³ *Cartulaire Chaffre du Monastier*, 140-1.

¹⁷⁴ FC, 140-1.

¹⁷⁵ Robert of Rheims, “Historia,” 729-30; This point is raised in Urban II’s letters to the monks of Vallombrosa and to his supporters in Bologna. “Papsturkunden in Florenz,” 313-14.

¹⁷⁶ Baldric of Bourgeil, “Historia,” 16.

¹⁷⁷ “Chronica monasterii Casinensis,” *MGHS* 34: 475.

¹⁷⁸ Siegbert of Gembloux, *Leodicensium epistola adversus Paschalam papam*, ed. E. Sackur, *MGH Libelli de lite imperatorum et pontificum saeculis XI et XII conscripti* (Hanover, 1891-97), 463-4. For a discussion of Siegbert’s critique of penitential warfare see Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII*, 657-9.

¹⁷⁹ Robert of Rheims, “Historia,” 729.

However, there was no effective way in which the papacy could forbid any of the faithful to go, excluding ecclesiastics over whom the Church had authority; pilgrimage had always been open to everyone, especially the penitent. Theoretically, the clergy had two chances to try and convince those unsuited to the pilgrimage that they should not embark on the crusade. Their first option was to dissuade would-be crusaders from assuming the cross. Surviving evidence suggests that a considerable number of crusaders actually received the cross itself from the hands of a priest or bishop, or assumed the cross in a place where member of the clergy were present. As noted above, Aimery of Courron and the lord of Amboise, Hugh of Chaumont-sur-Loire, took the cross in the presence of the pope.¹⁸⁰ Adhemar, bishop of Le Puy, received the cross from Urban II, as did Raymond of St. Gilles, count of Toulouse.¹⁸¹ The blessing of which Urban II speaks was an additional requirement, one bestowed after the vow had been made but before the votary set out for Jerusalem - not as one might assume, prior to taking the vow. The noblewoman Emerias of Altejas,

who had put a cross on her right shoulder to go to Jerusalem, journeyed to [Toulouse] and came in to see the bishop of Toulouse to receive a blessing from him. Having given his blessing, the bishop said to her that it would be better if she would build a house in God's honor where the poor of Christ could be received.¹⁸²

Thus, the second opportunity for the clergy to assess the crusader's suitability came just before the crusader embarked upon his or her pilgrimage.

The nature and timing of the blessing implies that Urban II was simply making reference to a practice that was a traditional element of pilgrimage rather than establishing a way in which to assess whether or not a crusader would prove a competent soldier. Before setting out on any pilgrimage, a pilgrim was expected to visit his or her local religious establishment to ask for prayers and to receive the

¹⁸⁰ "Gesta Ambaziensium dominorum," 101-02.

¹⁸¹ Baldric of Bourgeuil, "Historia," 16.

¹⁸² *Histoire générale de Languedoc*, ed. J. Vaissète, C. Devic and A. Molinier, 3rd edn., 16 vols. (Toulouse, 1872-1904), 5: 757.

blessing of the Church.¹⁸³ At this point in time pilgrims received the ‘dress’ and symbols associated with pilgrimage – the staff and the purse. Before departing for Jerusalem in 1096 Viscount Herbert II of Thouars would receive the pilgrimage insignia from Peter, the bishop of Poitiers, as did Miles of Vignory at the abbey of Saint-Bénigne of Dijon.¹⁸⁴ At the time of the First Crusade the assumption of the cross and the reception of the symbols of pilgrimage were two separate and distinct rituals, though both were presided over by a member of the clergy. Gradually, the two ceremonies may have been conflated into one as they were for Bardoul who “received the cross and dress (i.e., the script and staff of the pilgrim) because he want[ed] to go to Jerusalem” in 1147.¹⁸⁵ The fact that the crusade vow and the pilgrimage vow have a similar substance and that the ceremony for blessing the crusade developed out of the ceremony for blessing the pilgrim has led at least one scholar to assert that “there was little distinction between pilgrims and crusaders.”¹⁸⁶

In one sense this assertion is correct. The form which the crusade vow took does follow the model provided by the pilgrimage vow and crusaders were cognizant of the responsibilities and rights associated with their status as pilgrims. Nevertheless, there was something quite distinctive about those who signed themselves with the cross. As Ekkehard of Aura noted,

many showed the sign of the cross miraculously imprinted on their foreheads or their clothes or on some part of their body, and believed that by this mark they had been enrolled in the army of the Lord. Others again, prompted by sudden change of mind or enlightened by nocturnal visions, resolved to put off familiar things and sew the sign of mortification on their vestments, while larger numbers of the people than you would think possible ran headlong to

¹⁸³ *Le pontifical Romano-Germanique*, 227-8.

¹⁸⁴ “Prioratus de Casa-Vicecomitis,” ed. P. Marchegay, *Cartulaires du-Bas-Poitou* (L. Gasté, 1877), 341; *Chartes et documents de Saint-Bénigne de Dijon, prieurés, et dépendances des origines à 1300*, ed. G. Chevrier and M. Chaume, (Dijon, 1943), 2: 172.

¹⁸⁵ (*cruce et habita*) “Cartulaire de l’abbaye de Saint-Sulpice-la-Fôret,” ed. P. Anger, *Bulletin et Mémoires de la société archéologique d’Ille-et-Vilaine*, 35 (1906), 350; J.A. Brundage, “*Cruce signari*,” 289-310; *Canon Law*, 119-20.

¹⁸⁶ Tyerman, *Invention*, 21-2.

the churches, and in a new rite priestly benediction was bestowed on their swords along with their staffs.¹⁸⁷

What this passage clearly demonstrates is that while crusaders believed themselves to fall into the category of pilgrims there were elements of both the form of the vow and the obligation incurred by the votary that differed from normal practice. To put it simply, these pilgrims were also soldiers and their swords were as important to the task they had vowed to complete as was the staff they carried. Contemporaries had little trouble distinguishing between the traditional pilgrims and the crusaders. The cross worn by the crusaders for the duration of their journey signified that these pilgrims belonged to the army of Christ as did the swords they carried.

Still aware of their status as pilgrims crusaders tended only to carry weapons only so long as they intended to engage the Saracens in battle. The cross did not grant the crusader free license to engage in violence.¹⁸⁸ Weapons were evidently only to be employed in pursuit of the liberation of Jerusalem. Upon reaching Rome a number of crusaders found themselves deserted by their leaders. "Fearing future want, [these crusaders] sold their bows, took up their pilgrim's staves and returned to their homes."¹⁸⁹ Since they would not be going on to fulfill the pilgrimage to Jerusalem their weapons were no longer of use to them; they returned home as pilgrims who had completed a pilgrimage to Rome. Once crusaders completed the task which they had set out to accomplish, most cast aside their weapons returning home in the guise of typical penitential pilgrims.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Ekkehard of Aura, "Chronicon," 214.

¹⁸⁸ The German crusaders who attacked the Jewish communities of the Rhineland were criticized by some contemporaries. Albert of Aachen, "Historia," 291-3. On the Christian sources for the Rhineland pogoms see R. Chazen, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1987), 38-40 and J. Riley-Smith, "The First Crusade and the Perspective of the Jews," *Studies in Church History* 21 (1984), 51-72.

¹⁸⁹ FC, 168.

¹⁹⁰ Albert of Aachen, "Historia," 499-500.

The Substance of the Crusading Vow

Before entering into a discussion of what the individual promised to do when he or she took the cross, it should be emphasized that no written record of the phrasing or substance of a crusade vow survives before 1226.¹⁹¹ Even in this case, the reason the terms of the vow are recorded in writing was because they were unusual. King Louis VIII of France wished to place conditions on the vow he would take for the Albigensian Crusade (1209-1226). Otherwise, there would have been no reason for the king to record it. The nature of the vow – a verbal act made in the presence of witnesses – rendered written records unnecessary. In order to discern the substance of the crusade vow one must examine a variety of sources related to the business of the crusade – papal bulls, charters, chronicles and the like. Oftentimes the actions of crusaders provide the clearest evidence of what individuals believed their obligations to consist.

Due to the efforts of Jonathan Riley-Smith in *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* we now have a much clearer picture of what Urban II proposed at Clermont in 1095. The pope called for an armed penitential pilgrimage to liberate the eastern Church, and especially Jerusalem, from Muslim occupation.¹⁹² The extent to which his audience understood the message is a topic addressed in another of Professor Riley-Smith's works, *The First Crusaders, 1095-1131*. Here he argues that the essence of the pope's message – that the crusaders would be performing a penance which would contribute to their future salvation – was understood, as was the idea that the penance encompassed both the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the provision of military service.¹⁹³ The evidence for this assertion is to be found in the charters which record the financial and spiritual arrangements made by crusaders in preparation for their departure.¹⁹⁴ Urban II was reported to have told the audience at

¹⁹¹ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 116-18.

¹⁹² Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 22.

¹⁹³ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 68-75.

¹⁹⁴ Giles Constable emphasized the importance of charters for the history of the crusades in his article, "Medieval Charters as a Source for the History of the Crusades," *Crusade and Settlement: Papers*

Clermont to spend the winter of 1095-96 collecting the money owed to them and the expenses for the journey.¹⁹⁵ Often in return for a subsidy or for prayers, the crusader would agree to recognize certain disputed claims to property or rights. In 1096 a certain nobleman called Wolfker,

desiring to fulfill that precept of the Gospel, 'Whosoever wishes to come after me' decided to go to Jerusalem, but because he did not have much money, he handed over his farm . . . to the Lord Abbot Hartmann before the altar of St Mary for 20 marks.¹⁹⁶

This is just one of many examples, all of which emphasize the importance of Jerusalem as the goal of the journey.¹⁹⁷

In the charters there are often explanations as to why the individual was traveling to Jerusalem. This allows the historian a glimpse of what individual crusaders believed they had vowed to accomplish. The knight Amanieu of Loubens "inspired by love of the Holy Spirit" was "to go to fight in Jerusalem and to kill those opposed to the Christian religion."¹⁹⁸ Achard of Montmerle was going to "Jerusalem to fight for God against the pagans and the Muslims."¹⁹⁹ And two brothers from Signes intended to go to "Jerusalem on the one hand for the grace of the pilgrimage and on the other, under the protection of God, to wipe out the defilement of the pagans."²⁰⁰ These charters emphasize the extent to which this particular pilgrimage differed from those which preceded it. It was, in the words of the leaders of the crusade, "the war which is your [Urban II's] own."²⁰¹ The substance of the vow associated with the cross must have included some reference to

Read at the First Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East and presented to R.C. Smail, ed. P.W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), 73-89.

¹⁹⁵ FC, 137-8.

¹⁹⁶ *Die Traditionsbücher des Benediktinerstiftes Göttweig*, ed. A. F. Fuchs (Leipzig and Vienna, 1931), 194.

¹⁹⁷ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 67.

¹⁹⁸ "Cartulaire du prieuré de St. Pierre de la Réole," ed. C. Grellet-Balguerrie, *Archives historiques du département de la Gironde* 5 (1863), 140.

¹⁹⁹ *Recueil Cluny*, 5: 51-2.

²⁰⁰ *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Victor de Marseille*, ed. B.E.C. Guérard, 2 vols. (Paris, 1857), 1: 169.

²⁰¹ *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, 164-5.

the fact that the votary intended to fight while on the way to Jerusalem. This was the ostensible reason some pilgrims who were unsuited to a military undertaking of this sort were urged not to join this expedition and to have their vows commuted to some other pious activity.²⁰²

Fighting alone did not discharge the crusader from his vow. This was only accomplished upon reaching the Holy City and praying at the Holy Sepulchre. In July 1099, “stained up to the ankles with the blood of the slain” the crusaders succeeded in cleansing Jerusalem “from the contagion of the heathen inhabiting it . . . and [had] restored it to its former rank.” Only upon reaching Jerusalem on Christmas 1099 was Fulcher of Chartres to remark that “with the visit to this city, [my] labor of long duration was consummated.”²⁰³ Most crusaders returned to their native lands “after they had been immersed in the Jordan River and had gathered branches of palms from Jericho.”²⁰⁴ Contemporaries focused on the obligation crusaders had to complete the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. On 11 September 1098 Bohemond of Taranto wrote to Pope Urban II from Antioch asking if it was true that the pope had allowed those signed with the cross to remain in Christendom. He claimed to be astonished at this news “because, being the originator of the holy journey as you are, those putting off the holy journey should have no counsel or anything good from you until they complete the journey they have begun.”²⁰⁵ Those crusaders like Stephen of Blois and Hugh of Vermandois who abandoned the host at Antioch and returned to the West had certainly provided the host with military service, yet they were condemned by their fellow crusaders because they did not stay to attack Jerusalem.²⁰⁶ The pope threatened to excommunicate them if they did not return to the East and complete their pilgrimage.²⁰⁷

²⁰² HGL, 5: 757.

²⁰³ FC, 301, 305-06, 391-2.

²⁰⁴ FC, 318, 322, 334.

²⁰⁵ *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, 165.

²⁰⁶ J.A. Brundage, “An Errant Crusader: Stephen of Blois,” *Traditio* 16 (1960), 380-95.

²⁰⁷ *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, 174-6; Hugh of Flavigny, “Chronicon,” *MGHS* 8: 487; *OV*, 5: 322-4.

A twelfth-century statue now located in the Musée Historique Lorrain, depicts a man and woman embracing. Clothed plainly, the man holds a staff in his right hand; a purse hangs from his mid-section. On his upper chest a cross, approximately six by six inches, is sewn onto his tunic. The staff and purse mark the man out as a pilgrim; the cross shows that he was also a crusader.²⁰⁸ Visual and written evidence clearly shows that the crusader was conceived of as a new category of pilgrim. Similar in many ways to the pre-existing pilgrimage vow, the crusade vow reflected the unusual character of the expedition which those who assumed the sign of the cross undertook at the behest of the pope. These pilgrims vowed to fight to liberate the Holy Land and so as to be able to offer their prayers at the Holy Sepulchre. When, in March 1101, Paschal II felt it necessary to turn back Castilian crusaders he “asked their compatriots not to deride them for not fulfilling their vows.” Though they may not have completed the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, “in using all their strength to fight the Moabites and Moors” Paschal declared that “they were carrying out their penance.”²⁰⁹ Contemporaries did not simply use the model provided by the pilgrimage vow, they adapted it. The form and substance of the vow the crusader took reflected the unusual character of the expedition which they undertook at the behest of the pope, and which could only be fulfilled when they had completed a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

²⁰⁸ This statue is thought to represent Count Hugh I of Vaudémont, who accompanied the forces of Louis VII to the Holy Land in 1147, and his wife Aigeline of Burgundy who remained at home. For a discussion of this sculpture see N. Kennan-Kedar and B.Z. Kedar, “The Significance of the Sculptural Group: *Le Retour des Croisés*” in *Dei Gesta per Francos: Etudes sur la croisades dédiées à Jean Richard*, ed. M. Balard, B.Z. Kedar and J. Riley-Smith (Aldershot, 2001), 29-44.

²⁰⁹ Paschal II, “Epistolae et Privilegia,” *PL* 163: 45.

Chapter Two: The Establishment of the Crusade Vow, 1102-1148

On 15 July 1099 the crusade army took Jerusalem. The capture of the holy city brought an end to the First Crusade and to the crusader's votive obligation. At this decisive moment it was not a foregone conclusion that the crusade would live on as a distinct form of penitential pilgrimage. If anything, the hybrid activity proposed by Urban II at Clermont was place and task specific. The vow taken by First Crusaders required pilgrims to travel to and then liberate Jerusalem. Even with the liberation of Jerusalem secured, however, Western Europeans continued to assume the cross. This was due in large part to the success of the First Crusade, both in establishing a tenuous foothold in the Levant and in providing a new and compelling variant of the traditional penitential pilgrimage. It does however, beg the obvious question. Now that Jerusalem had been freed from the "impious hands of the Turks," what goal would those who took the cross aspire to reach?¹ Or, to phrase the question in another way; of what would the substance of the crusade obligation consist after July 1099?

The most coherent contemporary statement regarding the substance of the crusade vow is found in book ten of Orderic Vitalis's *Historia Ecclesiastica*.² Written around 1130, it recounts a conversation between Helias of La Flèche, later Count of Maine, and William Rufus, king of England which allegedly took place at the time of the First Crusade.³ The two men found themselves at odds over who was to hold the county of Maine. At Rouen, Helias announced that "on the pope's advice I have taken the cross of the Lord in his service and vowed before God to travel to Jerusalem with many noble pilgrims."⁴ He asked the king for a guarantee of peace in his absence. Rufus refused to agree to this request or to settle the matter in court. The English king

¹ Baldric of Bourgueil, "Historia Jerosolimitana," *RHC Oc.* 4: 110.

² Orderic Vitalis (c.1075-1142) was an Anglo-Norman monk of the abbey of St. Evroul-en-Ouche who was commissioned by his superiors to write a history of the foundation. His history grew into a work detailing the history of his own age. For an introduction to the author and his work, see M. Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis: Norman Monks and Norman Knights* (Rochester, 1996). The most complete edition of his history is also edited by M. Chibnall. Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. M. Chibnall, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1969-89).

³ The account of this conversation is found in volume five of Orderic's history. OV, 5: 228-33.

⁴ OV, 5: 228.

saw the departure of Helias on crusade in the same light as he saw Robert of Normandy's assumption of the cross – as an opportunity to acquire territory in northern France.⁵ He fully intended to take advantage of Helias's absence to recover Le Mans and the county of Maine.⁶ Rufus declared that he would pursue his case against Helias with “swords and lances and showers of missiles.”⁷ It is Helias's response to the king's pronouncement which draws the interest of crusade historians, setting out in explicit terms what sort of activity the crusade was understood to be and what the votive obligation that accompanied the cross entailed.⁸ “Originally,” said Helias,

my desire was to fight against the infidel in the name of the Lord, but now it appears I have a battle nearer home against the enemies of Christ. Every man who opposes truth and justice proves himself an enemy of God [...] . . . I will not abandon the cross of our Savior which I have taken up as a pilgrim, but will have it engraved on my shield and helmet and all my arms [...] . . . Fortified by this symbol I will move against the enemies of peace and right, and defend Christian lands in battle . . . and wait for a better time when I may fulfill my vow.⁹

There are several things of interest contained in this speech. The first is Helias of La Flèche's suggestion that enemies of Christ were to be found anywhere and everywhere. He asserted that that battles against those who oppose Christ and the Church are not necessarily limited to far away places inhabited by the infidel. Rather, in his particular situation, they were found close to home. William Rufus made himself an enemy of the Church from the moment he voiced his intention to seize the property of a crusader in the crusader's absence. As Helias understood it, it was the duty of those who wear the cross to oppose the enemies of Christ no matter where they

⁵ Robert had pledged his duchy to his brother, William Rufus, for a term of five years. In return, William provided him with 10,000 silver marks so that Robert could finance his expedition to the East. OV, 5: 26-7, 208-09.

⁶ William I had held Maine and Le Mans in the past. Helias of La Flèche believed his ancestral claim to the county was stronger than the king's and was willing to have the matter decided by “kings, counts and bishops.” OV, 5: 230.

⁷ OV, 5: 230.

⁸ Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 40-1.

⁹ OV, 5: 230.

were found, insinuating that his forthcoming attack on William Rufus was on par with battles fought against the infidel. It is with some surprise therefore that one comes to realize in light of this linking of the internal and external fronts, no suggestion was made to the effect that taking up arms in defense of his own territory would relieve Helias of his votive obligation. In other words, Helias did not attempt to commute his vow to travel to Jerusalem and fight there into a vow to fight the king of England. On the contrary, Helias was fully cognizant that he had to complete the terms of his vow – which included undertaking a pilgrimage to the Holy Land - at a later date.

By emphasizing his status as a crusader Helias hoped to accomplish several things. The first was to justify his attack upon the king and at the same time gain the moral high-ground in what was a basically a dispute over property rights. One hears this in the assertion that, “every man who opposes truth and justice proves himself an enemy of God.”¹⁰ The second reason for highlighting his identity as a crusader has much to do with the traditional role ascribed to the penitential pilgrim. As a pilgrim, Helias of La Flèche would usually have been barred from bearing arms or engaging in battle. In emblazoning the symbol of the cross on all of his accoutrements of warfare, Helias publicized his status as the one breed of pilgrim who not only had the right to bear arms, but also an obligation to do. As a crusader, he might also have reasonably expected that the Church would support his claims and protect his property. The law stating that the pilgrim’s person was not to suffer attack was long established, while the idea that a pilgrim’s property should be respected was new and associated primarily with the crusade.¹¹ Paschal II appears to have decreed prior to 1099 that the

¹⁰ OV, 5: 230.

¹¹ The reasons for this additional concession are not entirely clear. However, considering that Urban II hoped to raise an army of Frankish knights and nobles who undoubtedly felt uneasy about leaving their land unprotected while away - unscrupulous neighbors, like the king of England, might be tempted by the opportunity the crusader’s absence afforded - it probably was a way to offer these crusaders a measure of security. Theoretically, anyone who attacked a crusader’s property or confiscated his goods while he was fighting the infidel in the East could be prosecuted by the Church. Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 135-7.

family, property and possessions of the crusaders were to be protected in their absence and that the Church would take on the responsibility of seeing that this happened.¹²

Almost certainly Orderic Vitalis embellished the exchange between Helias of La Flèche and William Rufus. He composed this section of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* at least thirty years after the conversation in question took place. It cannot be assumed, therefore, that the declaration Orderic attributes to Helias of La Flèche was an adequate representation of the views held by crusaders who participated in the First Crusade.¹³ What this exchange does provide, however, is a statement of what the votive obligation associated with the cross was thought to consist in the decades following the capture of Jerusalem. Like almost everyone else living in Western Europe during the 1130s, Orderic Vitalis recognized a 'crusader' when he saw one. The cross signified to observers that those wearing it had promised to complete a specific task: according to Orderic Vitalis, the substance of this obligation was to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and at some point along the way provide military service in defense of Christians and Christian territory.¹⁴

Although it is oftentimes difficult for modern observers to distinguish crusading from the other expressions of pious violence or from other sorts of pilgrimages to Jerusalem which carry on as normal even after the success of the First Crusade, many modern crusade historians believe that people living at the time had no

¹² See the discussion of privileges granted to pilgrims and crusaders in Brundage, *Canon Law*, 161-2, 165-9. According to a letter written by Paschal II, his predecessor Urban II had taken crusaders and their property under ecclesiastical protection. *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088-1100*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck, 1901; r.p. New York, 1973), 174-5. The grant of this privilege was confirmed at the First Lateran Council in 1123. Canon 10 of the First Lateran Council. *Conciliarum*, 192.

¹³ For the dating of this section of Orderic Vitalis's work see M. Chibnall's "Introduction" to volume five of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, xi-xiii.

¹⁴ For Orderic Vitalis, this was only one option open to those who physically assumed the cross – individuals whom he describes as "*cruce signato*" (signed with the cross). His use of this term, instead of *peregrinos*, or pilgrims (which the majority of his contemporaries chose), was prescient as it is the term which would be widely used to describe crusaders in the thirteenth century. See, M. Markowski, "*Crucesignatus*: its origins and early history," *Journal of Medieval History* 10 (1984), 157-65; Tyerman, *Invention*, 27-8.

such trouble.¹⁵ As Jonathan Riley-Smith has remarked, “contemporaries knew perfectly well what a crusade was.”¹⁶ No doubt this is the correct position to take in reference to the cross: contemporaries were aware that the cross brought with it a unique set of obligations.¹⁷ It is a stance, however, in desperate need of qualification for the simple reason that it assumes a uniformity and consensus of opinion that patently did not exist in the first half of the twelfth century.¹⁸ In examining when and where people assumed the cross in the period following the First Crusade, as well as the substance of the vow associated with the cross, it becomes clear that Orderic Vitalis’s interpretation of the crusade obligation was not the only one that exists. Indeed, in the time leading up to the Second Crusade (1146-48) at least two different views concerning the obligations assumed by the crusader when he took the cross were in circulation. Orderic Vitalis touched upon them both in the speech he attributed to Helias of La Flèche.

Briefly stated, the overwhelming majority of twelfth-century crusaders maintained, as did Helias, that the cross imposed an obligation to complete a penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Many crusaders assumed that they would provide military service on the way to the Holy Sepulchre, as had their predecessors. After 1099, however, it was possible for a crusader to complete his pilgrimage to Jerusalem *before* he engaged the enemies of Christ in battle. In order to fulfill the military aspect of their obligation, some crusaders joined military expeditions organized by the leaders of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem after completing their devotions at the Holy Sepulchre but before returning to their homes in the West.

¹⁵ Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades. A Short History* (New Haven and London, 1987), 88-108. Experiencing difficulty in distinguishing between crusades and other penitential activities, Christopher Tyerman argued that it is doubtful “crusading” existed before the thirteenth century. *Invention*, 8-29.

¹⁶ Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?*, 2.

¹⁷ The impressive numbers of narratives commemorating the experience of the First Crusade serve as evidence that contemporaries felt it necessary to identify and classify the unique events of 1096-1101. “To write about the crusade was not simply to register its existence, but also to frame formal understandings that discarded what was judged irrelevant, excluded counter interpretations, tided up loose ends, and worked towards some point of closure.” M. Bull, “Views of Muslims and of Jerusalem in miracle stories, c.1000 – c.1200: reflections on the study of first crusaders’ motivations,” in *The Experience of Crusading. Volume One: Western Approaches*, ed. M. Bull and N. Housley (Cambridge, 2003), 14.

¹⁸ Tyerman, *Invention*, 23.

On the other hand, a grander vision of the responsibilities of soldiers vowed to serve Christ, harkening back to Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085), remained current in a few small circles comprised mainly of clerics. In the 1070s the pope had put forth the idea of a body of knights recruited from all over Europe bound to the Church and its head as vassals were to their lord.¹⁹ These *fideles* (faithful) or *milites sancti Petri* (knights of St. Peter) would be summoned whenever the Church was in need of protection.²⁰ Some individuals, especially in papal circles, saw the future of the *miles Christi*, or soldiers of Christ, in a similar light. In their view, the crusade should not be limited to the Holy Land. A crusade was defined by what it did, rather than where it was fought. The sign of the cross involved an obligation to participate in an armed struggle against anyone who threatened the Church or Christians; it did not necessarily require the votary to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem or any other holy site. The risk incurred in fighting and the effort expended in battle served as satisfactory penance in itself. For those who perceived the crusade in this light the cross was less a symbol of the physical site where Christ died and more a badge that signified for whom these knights fought and what was being risked.²¹ The man who offered

himself to Him as a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, shall wear a sign of the cross of the Lord on his forehead or on his breast . . . [This] action will fulfill the precept of the Lord, as He commands in the Gospel, 'He that takes not his cross and follows after me, is not worthy of me.'²²

The co-existence of and interplay between these conceptions of the crusade obligation determined the nature of crusading and the substance of the crusade vow throughout the first half of the twelfth century. In 1146, however, these alternate

¹⁹ I.S. Robinson, "Gregory VII and the Soldiers of Christ," *History* 58 (1973), 178-80.

²⁰ Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 6-8; H.E.J. Cowdrey, "Pope Gregory VII's 'Crusading' Plans of 1074," *Outremer: studies in the history of the crusading kingdom of Jerusalem presented to Joshua Prawer*, ed. B.Z. Kedar, H.E. Mayer, and R.C. Smail (Jerusalem, 1982), 27-40.

²¹ The bishop of Limoges described one of his flock as "carrying Christ's cross to Jerusalem." "Un acte de l'évêque Pierre de Limoges (1101)," ed. J. Becquet, *Bulletin de la société archéologique et historiques du Limousin* 112 (1985), 18. See also, *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolymitanorum*, ed. and trans. R. Hill (Oxford, 1962), ix-xiii, 1-2; Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta per Francos et cinq autres texts*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, CCCM 127A (Turnholt, 1996), 117.

²² Robert of Rheims, "Historia Iherosolimitana," *RHC Oc.*, 3: 723.

understandings of the crusade would collide, resulting in a three-pronged offensive against non-believers. At that moment, a more inclusive and universally adopted definition of crusade that melded the various visions together emerged. To trace how this came about, however, we must return to the summer of 1099 to consider how and in what form the 'crusade' could continue, now that Jerusalem had been restored to Christian rule.

The Capture of Jerusalem and the Future of Crusading

The impressive number of contemporary narrative accounts of the First Crusade attest to the need felt by bystanders and participants to record and explain the unexpected and unlikely success of the expedition to the Holy Land.²³ Though they vary in focus and emphasis, these accounts resemble each other in presenting the First Crusade as a unique and unprecedented episode in human history.²⁴ One chronicler went so far as to place the crusade in the same context as the creation and redemption of humankind.²⁵ It was clear that an event of this magnitude could not be repeated, nor did it need to be; for, "the boundless compassion of almighty God deigned in our time to wrest the church in Asia from the hands of the Turks and to open to Christian soldiers the very city of the Lord's suffering and burial"²⁶ The crusade had fulfilled its objective. Jerusalem had been liberated. The First Crusade itself was inimitable, but from the perspective of hindsight it is clear that the same cannot be said of the activity known as 'crusading'.

The future of crusading was secured in no small way by the unique set of circumstances that arose in the Levant immediately following the capture of Jerusalem. Within the first eight days of its capture, significant numbers of crusaders "having seen Jerusalem" collected palms from the river Jordan and then hurried to the

²³ Bull, "Views," 14-15. A survey of the principal narrative sources is found in R. Hiestand, "Il cronista medievale e il suo pubblico: Alcune osservazioni in margine alla storiografia della crociate," *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Napoli* 27 (1984-5), 207-27.

²⁴ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 86-8. For a modern interpretation that emphasizes the uniqueness of what occurred in 1096-99 see Tyerman, *Invention*, 4-28.

²⁵ Robert of Rheims, "Historia," 723.

²⁶ Paschal II, "Epistolae et Privilegia," *PL* 163: 45.

port of Jaffa so that they might return home “by whatever means they could.”²⁷ After the departure of crusaders back to Europe, the Latin Settlements were left with a relatively small population of men able to defend the newly-occupied territory against outside incursions or to assist in the acquisition of new lands. The summer of 1100 saw no more than 300 knights and about the same number of foot-soldiers left in the Kingdom of Jerusalem.²⁸ Letters reporting the victorious outcome of the crusade and the election of Godfrey of Bouillon as “defender of the church of the Holy Sepulchre” written during this period ask the pope and bishops of the West “to constrain by threat all those who vowed to go on the expedition and took the cross upon themselves to set out for Jerusalem.”²⁹

Late in 1099, Pope Paschal II (1099-1118) responded to these exhortations from the East. Writing to the prelates of Gaul, the pope ordered them to compel those who had taken the cross anytime in the past four years to hasten to the aid of Jerusalem. He was especially interested in seeing that those who abandoned the siege at Antioch return to the Holy Land and fulfill their pilgrimage.³⁰ Christians, he wrote, “ought to follow divine grace with what means he has given us and aid effectively our brethren who have remained in those districts which were once the lands of the people of Palestine or Canaan.”³¹ A significant number of new recruits were also to respond to the pope's plea to “strive for remission and forgiveness of their sins by hastening to our mother church of the East.”³² Stephen of Neublans, whose cross was placed on his shoulder by the abbot of Cluny in 1100, “decided to go to Jerusalem where God was

²⁷ Raymond of Aguilers, *Le "Liber" de Raymond d'Aguilers*, ed. and trans. J.H. and L.L. Hill (Paris, 1969), 153-4.

²⁸ FC, 389.

²⁹ Letter of Archbishop Manassas II of Rheims to Bishop Lambert of Arras, 1099 in *Kreuzzugsbriefe* 175-6.

³⁰ Pope Paschal II wrote to the clergy of France on the capture of Jerusalem in December 1099. “Epistolae,” 45

³¹ Paschal II, “Epistolae,” 45. As Riley-Smith argues the expedition of crusaders to the East in 1101 (many of whom may have responded to this invitation) should be understood as part of the 1096 expedition. At the same time it is interesting to note that even at this early stage the objective of raising troops differed from that originally expressed by Urban II in 1095. Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 120-34.

³² For example, *Chartes et documents de Saint-Bénigne de Dijon*, ed. G. Chevrier and M. Chaume, 2 vols. (Dijon, 1943), 2: 171. See also, Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 126-9.

seen as man and had dealings with men” so that he might “adore his feet in the place where they trod.”³³

Without exception the crusaders who assumed the cross from the summer of 1099 and throughout 1100, both at the pope’s urging and in response to the news of the victory, continued to identify themselves as pilgrims. And without doubt Jerusalem was the goal of their pilgrimage.³⁴ As to what use their arms were to be put, that was a very different matter.³⁵ Urban II had suggested that those recruited by the archbishop of Milan in spring 1099, even before Jerusalem had been captured, might want to conquer Egypt.³⁶ The Lombards - who had responded to Urban’s preaching in the north of Italy in the spring of 1099 - were under the impression that they should strive to capture new territory. After Urban’s death in 1099, however his successor Paschal II urged them to provide aid to the Christians now occupying the Holy Land.³⁷ These different goals may go a long way towards explaining the outcome of the battles fought in 1100-01.³⁸ Though there may not have been agreement as to the best way to aid the Holy Land, no one was questioning that the cross still carried with it an obligation to participate in a military venture in the Holy Land. Those who took up the cross in 1099-1100 continued to conceive of themselves as both soldiers and pilgrims.

Although crusading remained a distinct undertaking, it was accommodated within the existing repertoire of penitential practice and did not immediately supplant earlier traditions of penitential pilgrimage or penitential warfare. After 1095 the character of any expedition or pilgrimage to Jerusalem cannot be assumed without a closer look at how it is portrayed in the sources. One cannot presume that every conflict against non-Christians or enemies of the Church in which participants were

³³ *Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Cluny*, ed. A. Bernard and A. Bruel, 6 vols. (Paris, 1876-1903), 5: 89, 108.

³⁴ Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 126-7.

³⁵ Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 126-9.

³⁶ Landulf the Younger of Milan, “Historia Mediolanensis,” *MGHS*, 20: 22.

³⁷ *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, 174-5; Geoffroy of Le Châlard. “Dictamen de primordiis ecclesiae Castaliensis,” *RHC Occ.*, 5: 348.

³⁸ Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 126-33. Aimé of Monte Cassino, *Storia de' Normanni*, ed. V. de Bartholomaeis, *Fonti per la Storia d'Italia* 76 (Rome, 1935), 138-9, 154; “Vita et Obitus S. Leonis Noni Pape,” ed. S. Borgia, *Memorie istoriche della pontificia città di Benevento*, 2 (Rome, 1764), 320; “Chronica monasterii Casinensis,” *MGHS* 34: 453.

granted a remission of sin by the papacy should be classified as a crusade. It is the cross and the substance of the vow for which it stands that continues to distinguish the crusade from the traditional penitential pilgrimage and from other expressions of holy violence. By this accounting neither the pilgrimage to Jerusalem proposed by the Emperor Henry IV in 1103, nor the military action Paschal II urged Robert of Flanders to take against him, were conceived as crusades by contemporaries, even though both share surface similarities with and are described in a similar manner as the activities undertaken by crusaders.³⁹

In late December 1102 the princes of Germany gathered in Mainz to celebrate Christmas in the company of Henry IV and to confirm by oath that the recently established peace would be maintained throughout the kingdom.⁴⁰ On 6 January 1103 it was announced that the emperor would hand over the governing of the kingdom to his son and travel to Jerusalem.⁴¹ It was a journey that never got beyond the planning stage. In February 1104, the king's son rebelled against him and the rest of Henry IV's life was devoted to re-establishing royal control over the rebellious German princes who supported his son.⁴²

At this stage it is interesting to contemplate what sort of journey Henry IV was proposing. Considering the conflict that had been waged between papacy and emperor in the previous twenty-five years, it might well have been an attempt at launching a 'crusade' in which the emperor could reassert his role as defender of Christendom. Or, in light of the attempts he had been making to restore peace and catholic unity, it might have been intended as a penitential pilgrimage by which the king hoped to

³⁹ While the expedition urged on Robert of Flanders is interpreted as a "penitential war" rather than a crusade, the vow taken by Henry IV usually is portrayed as a crusade vow gone unfulfilled. N. Housley, "Crusades against Christians: their origins and early development, c.1000-1216," *Crusade and Settlement*, ed. P. W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), 20; Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 238.

⁴⁰ *Vita Henrici IV imperatoris*, ed. W. Wattenbach and W. Eberhard, *MGHS rerum germanicarum in usum scholarum* 58 (Hanover, 1899), 28-9.

⁴¹ *MGH Constitutiones*, 1: 125-6; *Annales Hildesheimenses*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGHS in usum scholarum* (Hanover, 1878), 50; Otto of Freising, *Chronicon*, ed. G.H. Pertz, *MGHS in usum scholarum*, (Hanover, 1867), 303; Ekkehard of Aura, "Chronicon Universale," ed. G. Waitz, *MGHS*, 6: 987.

⁴² Henry IV died at Liège, 7 August, 1106. For a comprehensive study of his reign see, I. S. Robinson, *Henry IV of Germany, 1056-1106* (Cambridge, 1999).

impress the pope and have his excommunication lifted. If it was the latter, one needs to determine whether Henry IV planned to bear arms as a crusader or to undertake this pilgrimage in the traditional manner, as an unarmed penitent. Contemporary treatments of the council held at Mainz taken in conjunction with Henry IV's own explanation of why he wished to travel to Jerusalem, validate the latter interpretation.⁴³

Henry's letter to his godfather, Abbot Hugh of Cluny, provides the clearest statement as to the nature of the journey the king intended and his motivations for setting out for Jerusalem. In it Henry describes his pilgrimage to Jerusalem as a way to give thanks for achieving reconciliation with the Church that he could not hope to bring about without "God's grace" and his godfather's intervention.⁴⁴ Abbot Hugh had been involved in previous efforts to reconcile emperor and papacy.⁴⁵ At Canossa in January 1077 he had subscribed, on behalf of Henry, to the agreement between pope and king.⁴⁶ Though it had been at least nine years, if not more, since they had been in contact, Henry was hoping that his godfather might once again intercede on his behalf, if only to have his and the monks' prayers for a successful outcome to the effort to "make good the ruin of the Church that was caused by us, through the restoration of peace and justice."⁴⁷ Furthermore, the king told Hugh, if he was able "to reconcile kingship and priesthood, we are determined to go to Jerusalem and see the Holy Land in which our Lord appeared in the flesh and dwelled among men."⁴⁸ His godfather would have understood this act as an offering of penance; it was Hugh's belief that pilgrimage could help the laity to remit sins that allowed him to accept and support the First Crusade.⁴⁹ The placing of the pilgrimage after correcting the wrongs done to the

⁴³ *Annales Hildesheimenses*, 50; Ekkehard of Aura, "Chronicon Universale," 987; Otto of Freising, *Chronicon*, 303; *Die Briefe Henricus IV*, ed. C. Erdmann in MGH Deutsches Mittelalter (Leipzig, 1937), 39-40.

⁴⁴ *Briefe Henricus IV*, 40.

⁴⁵ J.H. Lynch, "Hugh I of Cluny's Sponsorship of Henry IV: its Context and Consequences," *Speculum*, 60 (1985), 800-36, esp. 823.

⁴⁶ Lambert of Hersfeld, *Annalen*, ed. W.D. Fritz, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters 13* (Darmstadt, 2000), 408.

⁴⁷ *Briefe Henricus IV*, 40.

⁴⁸ *Briefe Henricus IV*, 40.

⁴⁹ H.E.J. Cowdrey, "Cluny and the First Crusade," *Revue Bénédictine*, 83 (1973), 292-3, 309.

Church in Germany suggests that Henry IV also hoped that this pilgrimage would act as penance for his willful actions against the Church.

In fact, had the pilgrimage to Jerusalem taken place, it “would have been the most spectacular of Henry IV’s acts of penance.”⁵⁰ At the council itself, the king was said to be going to Jerusalem “on account of his transgressions” and “to make satisfaction to Christ for his sins.”⁵¹ Ekkehard of Aura records that the emperor “had it preached publicly by Bishop Emehard [of Würzberg] that he would transfer the government to his son and visit the Lord’s Sepulchre.”⁵² Considering the enmity with which this author broaches the topic, it is best to approach his account with some caution. Nevertheless, if Henry had it preached publicly by another, rather than announcing his intention himself, it might suggest that he was having this pilgrimage formally imposed as a penance for his actions against the Church. The bishop of Würzberg had submitted to the papacy and was one of a trio of bishops who while loyal to the emperor also kept in contact with the Gregorian party in Saxony and actively worked towards reconciliation between the two factions.⁵³ This may have been the way in which the emperor could be assured that the act would be spiritually beneficial for him; unlike his contemporaries who took the cross for the First Crusade or planned a crusade with the assent of the pope, Henry IV had no guarantee that this act would result in a remission of all his confessed sins. By having the pilgrimage enjoined as a penance, he could be reassured that God would accept this act of voluntary devotion. There is no direct evidence that the emperor intended to carry arms on his pilgrimage, or that he was planning to fight on his way to the Holy Land. Nevertheless, historians have classified this intended journey as a crusade because of the public way in which Henry IV went about signifying his intention to undertake a penitential pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Robinson, *Henry IV*, 310; Mayer, *The Crusades*, 65.

⁵¹ *Annales Hildesheimenses*, 50; Ekkehard of Aura, “Chronicon,” 989.

⁵² Ekkehard of Aura, “Chronicon,” 987.

⁵³ Robinson, *Henry IV*, 311.

⁵⁴ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 10; Mayer, *Crusades*, 65.

A number of the preparations Henry IV made in advance of his departure for Jerusalem resemble those taken by crusaders. For example, one is hard pressed not to see similarities between the setting of the announcement of the First Crusade and Henry IV's declaration that he would be going to Jerusalem. Various accounts agree that it was made during the celebration of Christmas at the imperial court - one account places it during mass on the feast of the Epiphany - in the presence of all the lay and ecclesiastical princes of the realm.⁵⁵ These men had been "summoned to court" so that "the peace [might] be confirmed on oath throughout the whole kingdom."⁵⁶ It also appears as though the peace agreement might have been proclaimed on the same day as Henry's promise to travel to the Holy Sepulchre.⁵⁷ In these circumstances, it would be difficult not to see this as a conscious imitation of Urban II's preaching of the crusade at the peace council held at Clermont in 1095.⁵⁸ Similarities aside however, it should be recognized that throughout his reign Henry IV had taken his position as the temporal ruler of Latin Christendom seriously. The emperor was to be the source of peace and to seek concord. This was especially true in the struggle with Gregory VII in the 1070s and 1080s. The peace councils so prominent in Aquitaine and Burgundy in the tenth century had found a home in Germany in the eleventh, where they were more the tools of the lay prince than the church, and based on provinces in a territorial sense rather than on ecclesiastical boundaries. The Mainz Council in 1103 was one of these *Landfrieden* writ large; once again it marked out the claim of the king to be the source of peace in his lands.⁵⁹ In any case, it has now been convincingly argued that "the peace and truce of God were

⁵⁵ "*Imper natalem Domini Mogontie celebravit; ubi principes convenerunt; et in epyphania Domini Emehardus Wiceburgensis episcopus apud Sanctum Martinum cantavit, et inter missarum sollempnia . . . imperator . . . promittebat pro delictis suis Hiersolimam pergere . . .*" *Annales Hildesheimenses*, 50. See also Ekkehard of Aura, "Chronicon," 987 and Otto of Freising, *Chronicon*, 303.

⁵⁶ "Vita Henrici IV," 8: 28-9.

⁵⁷ *MGH Constitutiones*, 1: 125-6.

⁵⁸ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 10.

⁵⁹ H. E. J. Cowdrey, "From the Peace of God to the First Crusade," *La primera cruzada, novecientos años después: el concilio de Clermont y los orígenes del movimiento Cruzado*, ed. L. García-Guijarro Ramos (Castile, 1997), 51-61.

envisioned as a condition for the expedition to the East; they were never integrated into thought or practice about it.”⁶⁰

Like Urban II, the emperor also seems to have made use of theatrical touches to bolster the importance of his announcement. The Hildesheim annalist notes that during mass on Epiphany, the emperor “as if compelled by his soul promised God that he would go to Jerusalem on account of his transgression.”⁶¹ In “publicly announcing” his intention to visit the Holy Sepulchre, Henry IV was making a traditional pilgrimage vow – a promise made to God that he would travel to Jerusalem, spoken aloud in the present tense and in the presence of witnesses. On the surface it would appear to have been similar to those made by men and women in 1095, in that it too focused on the penitential journey to the Holy Land. More telling, however, is that there is no mention of the coming journey as an *expeditio* or expedition. Crusaders had described the First Crusade as both an expedition (*expedito*) and pilgrimage (*peregrinatio*).⁶²

It is true that Henry’s declaration seems to have inspired others present at the council to engage in the same sort of activity. “The king’s plan acquired great favor throughout the kingdom, among the people as much as amongst the princes and clerics; and many from the various regions of the kingdom vowed themselves to the same journey.”⁶³ This does not, however, necessarily imply that Henry IV was to lead a crusading expedition to the East; the eleventh century had seen several large groups of non-crusading pilgrims heading to the Holy Land.⁶⁴ The number of those who accompanied the bishop of Bamberg to Jerusalem in 1064 was estimated to have been between 7,000 and 12,000.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Cowdrey, “Peace of God,” 61.

⁶¹ *Annales Hildesheimenses*, 50.

⁶² Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 67, 74-5.

⁶³ Ekkehard of Aura, “Chronicon,” 987; Otto of Freising, *Chronicon*, 303.

⁶⁴ A. Graboïs, *Le pèlerin occidental en Terre sainte au Moyen âge* (Brussels, 1998), 35-8; Adhémar of Chabannes, *Chronicon*, ed. J. Chavanon (Paris, 1897), 189-90; Hugh of Flavigny, “Chronicon,” *MGHS* 8: 393-7; Hariulf, “Chronicon Centulense,” ed. F. Lot in *Chronique de l’abbaye de Saint-Riquier* (Paris, 1894), 210-11.

⁶⁵ *Annales Altahenses maiores*, ed. E. L. B. Ab Oefele, *MGHS in usum scholarum*, (Hanover, 1891), 66-71; Lambert of Hersfeld, *Opera*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGHS in usum scholarum* (Hanover and

What remains problematic is determining whether or not Henry's vow should be considered a crusading vow. There is no mention of taking a cross in association with this vow, nor is there a connection made between this pilgrimage and the recent military triumph in the recovery of the Holy Land, or even of the continuing needs of the newly established Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. This is true even in the account given in chronicles where the exploits of the First Crusaders were detailed, or where the author himself had been on crusade.⁶⁶ Contemporary authors were primarily occupied with whether or not the emperor was sincere in his desire to maintain the peace and hand over the kingdom to his son, not with the character of the intended expedition per se.⁶⁷

It appears, therefore, that what Henry IV proposed on 6 January 1103 was a penitential pilgrimage to the Holy Land, one in which he would travel unarmed as was customary.⁶⁸ It is clear that Henry IV believed that it was necessary for him to signify to his people and the papacy that his intention to travel to Jerusalem and atone for his sins was sincere. In the end, even this level of commitment to a penitential activity was not enough to convince Paschal II that Henry IV truly wished to reconcile with the reform papacy. A mere two weeks after Henry's pronouncement at Mainz the pope wrote to Robert II of Flanders, who had participated in the First Crusade, urging him and his followers to reach the heavenly Jerusalem by fighting on behalf of the reformers against Henry IV.⁶⁹ However one should be careful in seeing in this a straight application of the crusade to the papacy's own struggle. Nothing indicates that Paschal II expected the count of Flanders to take the cross before setting out against

Leipzig, 1894), 92-100; Marianus Scottus, "Chronicon," *MGHS* 5: 558-9; Sigeburt of Gembloux, "Chronica," *MGHS* 6: 361; "Vita Altmanni episcopo Pataviensis," *MGHS* 12: 230; *Mainzer Urkundenbuch*, ed. M. Stimming and P. Acht, 2 vols. (Darmstadt, 1968-72) 1: 199-200; OV, 2: 90.

⁶⁶ Both Ekkehard of Aura and Otto of Freising would accompany crusaders to the East.

⁶⁷ *Annales Hildesheimenses*, 50-1; Ekkehard of Aura, "Chronicon," 987.

⁶⁸ The continuation of this tradition even after the events of 1095-1099 is well documented. Some crusaders even chose to leave their weapons in Jerusalem, returning to the West as pilgrims. J. Riley-Smith, "An Army on Pilgrimage," typescript, 2002 (in J. Riley-Smith's possession), 9-10.

⁶⁹ Paschal II, "Epistolae," 108.

his neighbor.⁷⁰ The count had come to the aid of the reform papacy in the past, and Paschal II was undoubtedly hoping that the offer of a “remission of sins” would encourage him to do so again. In other words, Paschal II was quick to revert to the pattern of warfare on behalf of the Church first practiced by Gregory VII in his struggle with Henry IV.⁷¹ Those faithful to the pope, like Matilda of Tuscany, were “ordered to fight the emperor Henry for the remission of sins.” They were not, however, urged to wear a cross, nor asked to complete a pilgrimage.⁷² Paschal II’s plea to the count serves as evidence that the papacy, while not hesitant to use the language of crusading, did not immediately transfer its mechanisms and privileges to all conflicts which they supported or hoped to encourage laymen to undertake on their behalf.

It is not that the idea of crusade was not appealing to contemporaries; the opposite is true. The success of the First Crusade produced amongst a number of clerical authors the “tendency to transfer the ideas and extravagant language” of the crusade “to any conflict about which the promoters or participants felt strongly.”⁷³ For example, around 1107/1108 a Flemish cleric appealed to the clergy of the provinces of Mainz and Cologne, the county of Flanders and the duchy of Lorraine, asking them to urge the knights under their care to take up arms against the pagan Wends, “the enemies of Christ.”⁷⁴ Christians needed to

⁷⁰ Sigebert of Gembloux condemned Paschal II for this letter precisely because the pope was offering the count and his men remission of sins “without penance and confession.” The crusade was different because it had required participants to undertake the journey to Jerusalem as a penance. Sigebert notes that up until this moment, “to such a custom of binding from loosing you [the pope] have hitherto held fast.” in *Leodicensium epistola adversus Pascham papam*, ed. E. Sackur, *MGH Libellii de lite imperatorum et pontificum saeculis XI et XII conscripti* 2: 463-4.

⁷¹ The traditional view, expressed by St. Augustine, was that soldiers engaged in a holy war would incur no blame for doing what was essentially a duty. In the eleventh century the idea that in certain circumstances violence could be virtuous had grown in popularity. However, to assert that the act of fighting in a just war could be spiritually beneficial – that the experience of placing oneself in physical danger might serve as penance – was revolutionary. Contemporaries attributed the of penitential war to Gregory VII. F.H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1975), 16-39. Housley, “Crusades against Christians,” 20-1; Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 48-52.

⁷² Sigebert of Gembloux, *Leodicensium epistola*, 464.

⁷³ Riley-Smith, *Crusades*, 88.

⁷⁴ W. Wattenbach, “Handschriftliches,” *Neues Archiv* 7 (1882), 7: 624-6; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 75-7. For an interpretation of this charter see G. Constable, “The Place of the Magdeburg Charter of

arise [and] take up your shields against the enemies of Christ Sally forth and come all lovers of Christ and the Church, and prepare yourselves just as did the men of Gaul for the liberation of Jerusalem.⁷⁵

The rhetoric of crusading and the First Crusade itself was clearly invoked here. The Slavic church was identified as “our Jerusalem, which from the beginning was free” but lately had been made a slave. For the author of this letter, Christians had a solemn duty to liberate this “Jerusalem” just as they had the historical city where Christ lived and died.⁷⁶ But despite of all these allusions to the First Crusade and crusading, this plea would not result in the organization of a ‘crusade’ against the Wends, nor is it likely that this was what the author intended. It is doubtful that the author wished the knights of Flanders, Lorraine, the province of Mainz or Cologne to take up the cross – this potent symbol is never mentioned. Similarly, the soldiers who might respond to this call were not promised they would be relieved of an amount of penance in return for their effort. The example of crusading was invoked to inspire Christians to protect the Church in a new locale. It did not prove successful. So far as we know, no one responded to the call.⁷⁷ That the apparatus of the crusade was not mentioned or thought applicable to this struggle is also telling. For this author, at least, the crusade itself probably remained tied to the Eastern Church and Jerusalem.

The popes of the early twelfth century were certainly not ignorant of the similarity between the First Crusade and other conflicts, especially those being waged by Christians against Muslims for the liberation of Christian territory and people. Urban II and later, Paschal II, would link the efforts of crusaders in the East to other struggles which pitted Christians against Muslims. This may have occurred as early as July 1096. Urban II wrote to tell men who had been engaged in the recovery of Tarragona, that “it is no virtue to rescue Christians from the Saracens in one place,

1107/08 in the History of Eastern Germany and of the Crusades,” in *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Kaspar Elm zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. F. J. Felten, Berliner Historische Studien 31: Ordensstudien 13, (Berlin, 1999), 283-99.

⁷⁵ Constable, “Magdeburg Charter,” 297.

⁷⁶ Wattenbach, “Handschriftliches,” 626; Constable, “Magdeburg Charter,” 293-4, n. 52.

⁷⁷ Constable, “Magdeburg Charter,” 286.

only to expose them to the tyranny and oppression of the Saracens in another.”⁷⁸ He went on to suggest that any man who had “made up his mind to go to the East, should try to fulfill his vow here instead.”⁷⁹ To put it another way, the pope proposed that any crusader who had assumed the cross for the journey to Jerusalem in the regions of Besalú, Empurias, Roussillon and Cerdaña might commute the vow they had taken to travel to the Holy Land and liberate the eastern Church into an obligation to liberate the church of Tarragona from Muslim rule. Commutation had long been established as a way to alter the terms of a vow without doing away with the votive obligation entirely. In commuting a vow, the votary substituted another obligation (in this case, an obligation to liberate Tarragona) in place of the one originally assumed (a promise to travel to and liberate Jerusalem).⁸⁰ The papacy saw the efforts to liberate Tarragona as being similar to those expended on a pilgrimage to the East – a point that Urban had been stressing since the beginning of his pontificate.⁸¹ In 1089 the pope encouraged any Catalan who wished to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem “or other places in a spirit of penitence” to aid in the restoration of the church of Tarragona instead.⁸² The pope promised that those who did participate in the recovery of Tarragona would receive the same remission of penance as they would have been granted had they completed a pilgrimage.⁸³ However, one should be careful not to assume that the effort to recover Tarragona in either 1089 or 1096 was considered by the pope or his contemporaries to be a crusade. There is no evidence to suggest that at any point in time Urban II urged individuals to take the cross for the sole purpose of aiding in the recovery of Tarragona.

For Urban II, as for the laymen who received this letter, the cross continued to denote an obligation to undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This was in spite of the

⁷⁸ Urban II to the counts of Besalú, Empurias, Roussillon and Cerdaña and their knights, c. January 1096 - 29 July 1099 in *Papsturkunden in Spanien. I Katalonien*, ed. P. Kehr (Berlin, 1926), 287-8; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 40.

⁷⁹ *Papsturkunden in Spanien. I Katalonien*, 287-8; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 40.

⁸⁰ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 43, n.51.

⁸¹ For a different interpretation see, J.F. O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain* (Philadelphia, 2003), 32-5.

⁸² *Papsturkunden in Spanien. I Katalonien*, 287-8.

⁸³ D. Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia hasta Inocencio III (963-1216)* (Rome, 1955), 46-53.

fact that the many members of the Spanish nobility were engaged in a similar struggle to liberate the Christian territory from Muslim oppressors. Many of the same men who fought Muslims in the Iberian peninsula took the cross for the crusade to liberate Jerusalem. A significant number chose not to commute their vows. The lure of Jerusalem remained strong. Count Guillem Ramon of Cerdaña, one of the laymen to whom Urban II addressed his letter, along with other Catalans such as Count Fernando Díaz of Asturias and Pedro Gutiérrez, would ignore Urban's directive and participate in the First Crusade.⁸⁴ Archbishop Bernard of Toledo, "signed with the sign of the cross," arrived in Rome on his way to Jerusalem in May 1099; Urban II absolved him of his vow and sent him home to look after his diocese.⁸⁵ If the archbishop went via Rome expressly for that purpose, it suggests that he believed the obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem remained suitably compelling to require the pope's absolution. Contemporaries obviously had their reservations about the applicability of the cross and its obligations to other conflicts and, surprisingly, about the efficacy of commuting crusader vows to other arenas. In 1101, when Paschal II turned back Castilian crusaders from their pilgrimage to Jerusalem so that they could fight Muslims in Spain, he had to ask their "compatriots not to deride [these crusaders] for not fulfilling their vows," because though they may not have completed the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, "in using all their strength to fight the Moabites and Moors they carry out their penance."⁸⁶ While they expected to fight along the way, crusaders regarded the completion of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem as an even more compelling aspect of taking up the cross and receiving the remission of penance associated with it.

It is clear in retrospect that the original link between the cross and the Jerusalem pilgrimage served as an obstacle to the immediate and widespread

⁸⁴ A. Ubieto Arteta, "La participación navarro-aragonesa en la primera cruzada," *Príncipe de Viana* 8 (1947), 357-83.

⁸⁵ Rodrigo Juménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie sive Historia Gothica*, Ed. J. Fernández Valverde, CCCM 72 (Turnholt, 1987), 209-10; Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 107.

⁸⁶ Paschal II, "Epistolae," 45. Amongst those whom Paschal II, a former legate in Spain, convinced to commute their vow was King Peter I of Aragón. In 1100 the king of Aragón "accepted the cross to go to the region of Jerusalem." In February 1101 Pedro is observed in front of Zaragoza "with the banner of Christ." *Colección diplomática de Pedro I de Aragón y Navarra*, ed. A. Ubieto Arteta (Zaragoza, 1951), 113, n. 6 and 115, n. 9.

expansion of the crusade as the prevailing model of religious violence outside the Holy Land. Crusaders identified the cross with Jerusalem, the site of Christ's crucifixion.⁸⁷ The discharge of the crusade vow was accomplished only when one visited the Holy Sepulchre and offered prayers there. After doing so, there was no longer an obligation to remain in the Holy Land. This helps explain the unusual vow – "to serve God and the Holy Sepulchre" – made by Bertrand of St. Gilles in 1108-09.⁸⁸ Bertrand gave up a secure patrimony in the West in order to consolidate the territorial gains his father, Raymond of St. Gilles, had made in the aftermath of the First Crusade. Though he planned to visit Jerusalem once in the Levant, his commitment to the struggle against the pagans in the Levant was intended to be long-term; and, as such was distinct from that taken by those who assumed the cross.⁸⁹

At the same time, it is also clear that a concurrent view which emphasized the similarities between the crusade and struggles against pagans in the North and Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula was alive and well from the very inception of the movement. The challenge for those who defined the crusade by what it did, rather than where it went, would be not only to apply the rhetoric of the crusade to other conflicts but to import the apparatus of the crusade as well.⁹⁰ By default, this would mean an alteration of the substance of the vow. However, as we shall see – at least during the first quarter of the twelfth century – the substance of the crusade vow, almost without

⁸⁷ William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, 2 parts, CCCM 63, 63A (Turnholt, 1986), 138. Translations of this chronicle were taken from *A History of Deeds Done beyond the Sea by William, Archbishop of Tyre*, trans. E. A. Babcock and A. C. Krey (New York, 1943). For the crusade as a physical *imitatio Christi* see W.J. Purkis, "Stigmata on the First Crusade," *Signs, Wonders and Miracles: Representations of Divine Power in the Life of the Church*, ed. K. Cooper and J. Gregory, Studies in Church History, 41 (Woodbridge, 2005), 99-108.

⁸⁸ Caffaro, "De liberatione civitatem orientis," ed. L.T. Belgrano, *Annali Genovesi I*, Fonti per la storia d'Italia 2 (Genoa, 1890), 123; *HGL*, 3: 580. There is some evidence to suggest that his father Raymond had made a similar pledge once in the Holy Land. *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint Victor Marseille*, ed. B.E.C. Guérard, 2 vols. (Paris, 1857), 2: 802.

⁸⁹ FC, 40; *Gesta comitum Barcinonensium*, ed. L. Barrau Dinigo and J. Masso Torrents, *Chronique Catalnes 2* (Barcelona, 1925), 11. Riley-Smith calls men like Bertrand of St. Gilles, who served in the East for a few years or more out of devotion to the Holy Land, "para-crusaders." Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 158-9.

⁹⁰ At this stage I would hesitate to suggest that this is how Urban II or Paschal II understand what they were doing in relation to Spain. They had crusaders *commute* their vows to travel to and liberate Jerusalem, not make specific vows to aid the Spanish church.

exception, continued to be based upon a promise to travel to Jerusalem. The crusade was to survive after 1099 primarily as a means of providing those Western Europeans who had settled in the East with military aid.

The “Third Expedition to the East:” Crusaders and their Vows, 1101-1110

Had Henry IV undertaken his vowed pilgrimage in 1103, the emperor would not have found himself alone on the road to Jerusalem. According to Fulcher of Chartres, a cleric who had accompanied the First Crusade host and remained in the East as King Baldwin’s chaplain, there were a significant number of pilgrims who came on devotional pilgrimage to Jerusalem after 1099 – “*ut Hierusalem peregrinarentur.*”⁹¹ The pilgrim Saewulf who reached Jerusalem around 1102 recounts how his party “traveled from Jaffa, to the city of Jerusalem two days journey, by a mountainous route which is very difficult and dangerous, as the Saracens are always seeking to ambush the Christians. . . on the lookout day and night for anyone they can easily attack.”⁹² That these pilgrims were unable to defend themselves is taken for granted.⁹³ Some of these pilgrims, appreciating the perilous state of affairs in which the newly founded settlement found itself – as noted previously, the departure of crusaders back to Europe had left a relatively small population of men able to defend the Latin Settlements and the pilgrimage route - agreed to assist the kingdom by serving a short stint as arms-bearers after they completed their devotions.⁹⁴ The impact

⁹¹ FC, 543-8.

⁹² *Realtio de peregrinatione Saewulfi ad Hiersolymam et Terram Sanctum*, ed. W. R. B. Brownlow, Palestine Pilgrim’s Text Society (London, 1892), 36.

⁹³ J. Riley-Smith, “An Army on Pilgrimage,” typescript, 2002 (in J. Riley-Smith’s possession), 12-13; FC, 543-8; Albert of Aachen also writes of pilgrims who came “*desiderio adorandi in Iherusalem.*” Only after they had completed their devotions did some of these pilgrims take up arms; there is no evidence that along with weapons they assumed the cross. The idea was that since they were no longer pilgrims, they might engage in warfare. According to Albert this was because Christ had taught that “his faithful followers first seek the kingdom of God and afterwards to find all the beneficial things they sought.” See Albert of Aachen, “*Historia Hierosolymitana*,” *RHC Oc.*, 4: 675, 677.

⁹⁴ FC, 490.

of their assistance was substantial. In 1105 the Egyptians planned an invasion “because we were so few and were without the help of the usual pilgrims.”⁹⁵

Ensuring the safety of pilgrims on their way to the Holy Sepulchre continued to be of especial concern to Latin Christians in the period after 1099, both those living in the East and also in the West. Encouraging those same pilgrims to take up arms once they had completed their devotions and discharged their votive or penitential obligation at the Holy Sepulchre was one solution. Another answer to this problem would be to allow a group of knights living as a religious community to devote themselves to escorting and guarding pilgrims along the road to Jerusalem, an idea that would gain currency as the century progressed.⁹⁶ Yet another option was to eradicate certain threats once and for all. It is in this context that one should place what Orderic Vitalis called “the third expedition from the West [to] set out for Jerusalem.”⁹⁷ Bohemond, lord of Taranto and Antioch, had returned to the West in the spring of 1106, ostensibly to fulfill a vow he had made while held captive in the Danishmend’s prison by visiting St. Leonard tomb in the Limousin.⁹⁸ He also managed to find himself a bride, Constance, the daughter of Philip I of France, and to recruit an impressive number of men for what can only be described as a new crusade.⁹⁹

Orderic’s choice of language shows that he identified the expedition planned in 1106 as the same sort of activity as that introduced by Urban II at Clermont. The documentary evidence supports this view. Accompanied by a papal legate, Bruno of Segni, Bohemond tirelessly canvassed Italy and Gaul in the spring and summer of 1106. His original plans included a visit to England, but he was thwarted in this desire by King Henry I who “fearing that [Bohemond] might tempt away his best knights, advised him instead not to risk a winter voyage, particularly as he would be crossing to

⁹⁵ FC, 490.

⁹⁶ Though the Templars would go on to accept other military responsibilities as part of their religious vocation, this remained a chief concern. A. Forey, *The Military Orders from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries* (London, 1992), 6.

⁹⁷ OV, 3: 182-3.

⁹⁸ OV, 6: 68-9.

⁹⁹ OV, 6: 70-2 Suger, “Vita Ludovici VI,” *RHGF*, 12: 18. English translation taken from *The Deeds of Louis the Fat*, trans. R. Cusimano and J. Moorhead (Washington D.C., 1992).

Normandy before Easter and could confer with him there.”¹⁰⁰ One gets a sense of the theatrical nature of these occasions from a description of Bohemond’s sermon at his wedding feast in Chartres.

The duke, who made a fine figure even among the greatest, proceeded to the church, mounted the pulpit before the altar of the blessed Virgin and Mother, and there related to the huge throng that had assembled all his deeds and adventures, urged all who bore arms to attack the [Byzantine] Emperor with him, and promised his chosen adjuncts wealthy towns and castles. Many were kindled by his words and, taking the Lord’s cross, left all their belongings and set out on the road to Jerusalem like men hastening to a feast.¹⁰¹

In the eyes of those who observed the recruitment campaign and those who chose to participate, this expedition was directly associated with the expedition that had left the West almost ten years previously. The presence of a papal legate, the reference to a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the assumption of the cross by participants, and the substance of the vow taken by those who took the cross in 1106 demonstrate that the host sailing from Brindisi on 7 October 1107 was indeed setting out on crusade.¹⁰²

The crusade host’s objective was to gain control over the Byzantine Empire.¹⁰³ Six days after the arrival of the host on the Albanian coast, the army set out to capture the Byzantine fortress at Durazzo. Feelings against Alexius I had been running high since the fiasco of 1101, for which in many quarters, perhaps even in the papal curia, he had been blamed.¹⁰⁴ In Bohemond’s entourage were a number of Greeks and Thracians who “further stirred up the warlike Franks to fury” against Alexius.¹⁰⁵ Fulcher of Chartres was convinced that

¹⁰⁰ OV, 6: 68-9.

¹⁰¹ OV, 6: 70-2.

¹⁰² Evidence shows that a number of those soldiers accompanying Bohemond affixed the cross to their garments as pilgrims on the First Crusade had. OV, 6: 70-72; Ivo of Chartres, “Epistolae,” *PL* 162: 176.

¹⁰³ R.B. Yewdale, *Bohemond I, Prince of Antioch* (Princeton, 1924), 107-09. For a slightly different interpretation see, J.G. Rowe, “Paschal II, Bohemond of Antioch and the Byzantine Empire,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 49 (1966), 165-202.

¹⁰⁴ Bartolf of Nangeio, “Gesta Francorum Iherusalem expugnatium” *RHC Oc.*, 3: 538; Albert of Aachen, “Historia,” 585.

¹⁰⁵ OV, 6: 68-9.

the emperor of Constantinople was at that time strongly opposed to our people. By trickery or open violence he thwarted or tyrannized over the pilgrims going to Jerusalem by land or by sea. It was for this reason that Bohemond invaded Alexius' territory, trying to take over his cities and fortresses.¹⁰⁶

If Alexius was terrorizing pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem, as was commonly believed, it was obvious that something had to be done to correct this. The response for Bohemond and other Latin Christians was to eradicate the threat by conquering the empire, or at least enough of its strategic parts to ensure the safety of pilgrims on their way to the Holy Sepulchre.

This was to be the first full-fledged crusade where aiding the Holy Land meant attacking a target well outside the borders of Jerusalem and its environs. This is a point that the organizers, participants and observers seemed to have been aware of and to have embraced. Nevertheless, it is also true that though the crusaders hoped to gain Byzantium, the ultimate goal for those who took the cross in order to participate in this expedition was Jerusalem. Bohemond preached a war against the Byzantine emperor, and yet observers described it as the "way to the Holy Sepulchre."¹⁰⁷ So too did participants; Robert Dalmace of Collanges was "taking the road to Jerusalem" and Joscelin of Lèves was able to get a contribution towards his 'march' there from the monks of St. Peters in Chartres.¹⁰⁸ In fact, this focus on the holy city seems to have been an essential part of the vow made by those recruited by the prince of Antioch and the bishop of Segni in the spring and summer of 1107. Hugh II of Le Puiset "took up the cross for the journey to Jerusalem."¹⁰⁹

Both parties in this conflict were aware that final goal of the soldiers who had accompanied him on this campaign lay beyond Constantinople. Regardless of the outcome of this expedition against the Byzantine emperor, the crusaders who had joined Bohemond in this attack had promised to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Thus, it is without surprise that we see that one of the terms Bohemond negotiated

¹⁰⁶ FC, 521.

¹⁰⁷ "*sancti Sepulchri viam*" in Suger "Vita Ludovici," 18.

¹⁰⁸ *Le Cartulaire de Marcigny-sur-Loire*, ed. J. Richard (Dijon, 1957), 79-80.

¹⁰⁹ Ivo of Chartres, "Epistolae," 176.

with Alexius in the winter of 1108 was a guarantee that the emperor would allow those who wished to remain in Byzantine territory for the winter to do so.¹¹⁰ Alexius also promised the crusaders safe passage to Jerusalem in the spring.¹¹¹ After the treaty had been agreed upon, “Bohemond returned to Apulia leading back the smaller part of his army. The greater part proceeded by sea to Jerusalem where it had vowed to go.”¹¹² Included in this number was Hugh I of Le Puiset, who with Ralph of Pont-Echanfray and his brother Walchelin, traveled on to the holy city. Ralph’s wife, the daughter of Joscelin of Lèves, died in Constantinople and was buried there.¹¹³ Some of this party headed back to France after completing their devotions; others, like Hugh and his wife remained to make their fortune in the East.¹¹⁴

Hugh II of Le Puiset, the viscount of Chartres, is an interesting figure to consider for what he can tell us about the crusade vow in this particular setting. It is not known exactly when Hugh assumed the cross. A clue lies in the fact that we know his nephew through marriage and companion on the expedition, Ralph of Pont-Echanfray, took the cross at the wedding celebration for Bohemond and Constance held at Easter 1106.¹¹⁵ Like other crusaders, after he assumed the cross Hugh made extensive preparations for his absence, confirming grants he had made to St. Martin des Champs for the soul of his brother (who had died on the First Crusade) and his father. Hugh was concerned about his rights and was aware of the special privileges granted to him as a crusader. The former crusader Rotrou of Perche, count of

¹¹⁰ Anna Comnena suggests that this was one of the terms Alexius’s legates offered to Bohemond. Anna Comnena, *Alexiade (règne de l'empereur Alexis I Comnène, 1081-1118)*, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols. (Paris, 1937-76), 3: 118.

¹¹¹ WT, 337; Anna Comnena, *Alexiade*, 3: 118.

¹¹² FC, 524-5.

¹¹³ It is likely that Ralph’s daughter was herself a crusader. Though the idea of a woman crusader was inherently problematic – medieval women were not trained in the art of war, contemporary thought held that the vow was no less binding once taken. The appropriate way for a woman to complete a vow was to accompany a male relative and finance able-bodied males to fight on her behalf. That does not mean that every *crucesignata* did so; some were forced to or chose to take matters into their own hands. At the siege of Damietta in 1219 women saved the crusade host by killing the Muslims who secretly attacked the camp while the army was elsewhere. They were later commanded to take turns guarding the camp. *Quinti Belli Sacri Scriptores minores sumptibus Societatis illustrandis Orientis latini monumentis*, ed. R. Röhrich (Geneva, 1879), 110-11.

¹¹⁴ OV, 6: 104; Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 81-105.

¹¹⁵ OV, 6: 104,

Mortagne, began to raise a fortification on land that Hugh considered to be his. As this had occurred after he had assumed the cross the viscount of Chartres believed that it was a case that should be decided in the church court.¹¹⁶ He was also clear that his vow should be discharged with a visit to the Holy Sepulchre.¹¹⁷

The sources paint Hugh as a formidable warrior who acted as one of Bohemond's commanders.¹¹⁸ In fact, he may well have been the Hugh whom Anna Comnena reports as being present at the meeting between Bohemond and the emperor's legates in late summer 1108. This Hugh was said to have complained to Bohemond that none of the knights who had followed him against the emperor had had the opportunity for battle. Because of this, he asserted that it was time for the crusaders to make peace.¹¹⁹ This raises an interesting point about the military component of Hugh's vow. It was obvious that Hugh and the other crusaders had intended to engage in battle with Alexius and his troops. After a certain period of time had passed and this had not occurred, it would seem that they believed that even though they had not accomplished the military goal of the expedition, their martial obligation had, in some way, been fulfilled in a satisfactory manner. At least, it was commonly held that the time had come to complete the pilgrimage they had embarked upon as crusaders. This foreshadows a later development where the crusader's martial obligation would be fulfilled after serving with the crusade host for a set period of time

When peace was made between the crusaders and Alexius, some went home while others continued onwards. Some of this was no doubt financial, as the sources suggest. But one should also consider that some of these men had not taken vows or had made a different type of commitment to the endeavor. Included in their number would be the leader of the campaign himself. As a temporary obligation one could

¹¹⁶ "*postquam crucem acceperat.*" The canonist Bishop Ivo of Chartres was unsure what to do when Hugh II of Le Puiset invoked this right in his struggle with Count Rotrou II of Perche, who had built fortifications on his land after Hugh had assumed the cross in spring 1106. Ivo of Chartres, "Epistolae," 170-4, 176-7.

¹¹⁷ OV, 6: 104.

¹¹⁸ "Narratio Floriacenses," *RHC Oc.*, 5: 361.

¹¹⁹ Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, 3: 120; WT, 345; Yewdale, *Bohemond*, 126.

take the cross and complete the votive obligations as many times as one wished. A number of those who took the cross for the First Crusade consented to accompany Bohemond to the East as crusaders in 1107.¹²⁰ It was equally certain that in doing so they once again incurred an obligation to travel to Jerusalem.¹²¹ Bohemond was certainly familiar with the notion of votive obligation as can be observed from his behavior during and after the First Crusade. In light of the circumstantial evidence, it is likely that Bohemond vowed to go back to Jerusalem in 1106. Disheartened after his defeat at the hands of Alexius he might well have decided to postpone the completion of his vow until a time when he could fulfill it. His early death in 1111 makes it difficult to ascertain what effort he might have made to complete a vow of this nature at some later date. What can be stated with some assurance is that not everyone who participated in the military component of a crusade necessarily took the cross; however, those who did still felt it necessary to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem regardless of the outcome of the campaign or where it was fought. Only those who took the cross and fulfilled their obligation to reach Jerusalem were guaranteed to be the beneficiaries of the significant remission of sin associated with the crusade.

Crusading in the East, 1119-1139

One might expect the defeats suffered by crusaders in 1101 and 1107 to have dampened the enthusiasm for crusading.¹²² Indeed, between 1110 and 1144 a crusade on par with the scale of the expeditions of 1096, 1101 or 1107 was not to occur. Nevertheless, over this span of time small expeditions of crusaders frequently set out to aid the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. Many of these crusaders came from a circle of families from central and northern France whose dynastic strategies were often based upon a commitment to providing aid to their kindred who had settled in the Holy

¹²⁰ Among those we know to have taken the cross for both the First Crusade and Bohemond's expedition were Ralph the Red of Pont-Echanfray and Guy of Hauteville. Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 210, 219, 239-40.

¹²¹ Ralph the Red of Pont-Echanfray arrived in Jerusalem to "complete his devotions" with his uncle, Hugh II of Le Puiset and a number of other crusaders in the spring of 1109. OV, 6: 104.

¹²² For an analysis of contemporary opinions on the failure of the 1101 expedition see Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 132-4.

Land.¹²³ Furthermore, a pattern of disaster in the East, followed by pleas to the pope and rulers of the West for help, was established in the 1120s. The Venetian Crusade of 1122-24 was the first large-scale campaign undertaken as a result of a request for aid from the rulers of the Latin East. It was followed by smaller expeditions in 1128-29 and in 1138-39. As we shall see, those who went to the aid of the Holy Land in this period vowed that they would complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and fight on behalf of Christ and the Church.

A renewed interest in crusading characterized the pontificate of Calixtus II (1119-24). The pope took a prominent role in promoting the crusade, due in no small part to the state of affairs in the East. Pleas for aid came to Calixtus II and Domenico Michel, the doge of Venice, from the king of Jerusalem after Prince Roger of Antioch and a great many others died at the Battle of the Field of Blood in the autumn of 1119. The response of the pope was to urge the Venetians and others “to hasten, instructed by faith, to help the faithful of Christ.”¹²⁴

The crusade vow taken by the Venetians and other Europeans who took the cross at the same time seems to have remained remarkably similar in substance to that taken in 1095-6.¹²⁵ The crusader once again promised that he would complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. He also pledged to provide military aid for the defense of the Christian community living in the Holy Land and to aid in the ongoing struggle against the infidel. Upon his arrival in Jerusalem the doge of Venice announced that he would “devote himself for a time to the service of Christ and the

¹²³ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 169-88.

¹²⁴ Calixtus preached the crusade in the autumn of 1119. “Documents pour l’histoire de Saint Hilaire de Poitiers,” ed. L. Rédet in *Memoires de la société des antiquaires de l’Ouest* (1847), 122, 128; “Chronicon Altinate,” ed. A. Rossi in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 8 (Florence, 1845), 153; “Historia Ducem Veneticorum,” ed. H. Simonsfeld, *MGHS* 14: 73; J. Riley-Smith, “The Venetian Crusade of 1122-24,” *I Communi italiani nel regno latino di Gerusalemme*, ed. B. Z. Kedar and G. Airalidi, (Genoa, 1986), 339-50.

¹²⁵ Count Fulk V of Anjou led a group of crusaders to the East in 1120 (perhaps in response to pleas that had come to him from family members in the East, as it appears that he decided upon going on pilgrimage prior to any announcement made by Calixtus II). *OV*, 6: 310. Evidence that Fulk took the cross himself is lacking, though others in his domains certainly vowed themselves to the undertaking. Among their numbers were Rainald of Martigné, the bishop of Angers and the castellan, Hugh of Saint Maure-de-Touraine. Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 242-244. There is also some evidence to suggest that Conrad III took the cross for this expedition. Ekkehard of Aura, “Chronicon,” 262.

advancement of the kingdom.”¹²⁶ The doge’s pronouncement of his intention to remain and fight was important for observers in the East. In visiting the holy sites, Domenico Michel and his leading men had fulfilled their promise to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The impression one gets from the sources documenting the various expeditions from the West to arrive in the East is that once the crusader had prayed at the Holy Sepulchre the obligation to remain in the vicinity evaporated. Thus, it was important for the doge to reaffirm publicly his commitment to providing military assistance to the kingdom. Count Fulk V of Anjou would similarly confirm his intention to serve as a soldier of Christ by remaining in Jerusalem “for some time, attached to the knights of the Temple.”¹²⁷

The notion that the crusade vow and its resulting obligations were discharged once the crusader prayed at the Holy Sepulchre was still current in the second decade of crusading activity, reflecting the continued importance of the Jerusalem pilgrimage to the crusade. However, what constituted the correct amount of service was not entirely transparent in the 1120s. The Venetians had been “inspired to sail with a great fleet to Syria in order, with the help of God, to extend Jerusalem and the area adjacent, all for the advantage and glory of Christendom.”¹²⁸ Like the crusaders who accompanied Bohemond in 1107-1108, Venetian crusaders decided to fight on the way to the East, attacking the Byzantine emperor by besieging Corfu. They abandoned this siege when news of King Baldwin II’s capture by Muslims reached them. Once they had reached Jerusalem, they put their arms to use against the Muslim enemies of the Latin Kingdom, destroying an Egyptian fleet off Ascalon. Even then, it does not appear as though the crusaders considered their obligation to be fulfilled, which makes sense in light of the doge’s proclamation that the crusaders would “devote themselves” to this task “for a time.” The length of this “time” was not specified; but in the care of the Venetians, it appeared to have been a year. Arriving off the coast of Jerusalem in

¹²⁶ WT, 576.

¹²⁷ OV, 6: 310. In the earliest incarnation of the Order of the Temple, the brothers allowed laymen to join their number for a “fixed term.” *The Rule of the Templars*, ed. J. Upton-Ward (Woodbridge, 1992), no. 65-6.

¹²⁸ FC, 655-6.

May 1123, the Venetians also helped besiege Tyre, which fell to the combined Christian forces in July 1124, before returning home. This may have been a more general expectation. Those crusaders who traveled to the East from France in 1120 made provisions to be absent from their home for three years, the same amount of time crusaders had been gone on the First Crusade.¹²⁹ The “some time” Fulk of Anjou spent with the Templars seems also to have been in the vicinity of a year.¹³⁰

The first three decades of the twelfth century mark an important stage in the development of the crusade and the crusade vow. The goal of the crusade was no longer the liberation of a specific place, but the protection and extension of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. Crusaders were recruited as a relief force and were expected not only to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but also to join a pre-existing local army in an agreed-upon campaign once they had reached the Holy City. This would have serious implications for the substance of the crusade vow, the vagueness of which became more apparent over time. A vow to liberate the Holy Land was no longer necessary. Crusaders now vowed to aid the Holy Land. During the 1120s crusaders appear to have believed that they were supposed to fight on the way to Jerusalem; now, this was not so much the case, as most crusaders decided to stay in the East for a period of time and offer their services to the king and his nobles. In 1128, Hugh of Payns, the master of the Knights Templar,

summoned people out to Jerusalem; and then there went, with him and after him, as great a number of people as ever did before since the first expedition which was in Pope Urban’s day though little came of it. He said that a great battle was set between the Christians and the heathen; then when they came there it was nothing but lies; thus all the people became wretchedly afflicted.¹³¹

The chronicler does not explain why the people were afflicted, though one might make an educated guess that it was because the crusaders were disappointed not to have achieved a great military victory in aid of the Holy Land. The attack the crusaders and

¹²⁹ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 137.

¹³⁰ OV, 6: 308-09.

¹³¹ *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. M.J. Swanton (London, 1996), 259.

Baldwin II mounted on Damascus in 1129 was also unsuccessful.¹³² It was obvious that not to triumph over the enemy in battle was seriously troubling for crusaders. How could these crusaders be assured that they had fulfilled the terms vow? How much 'aid' was required for a crusader to be confident that his military duty had been done? As is obvious here, these were not questions that had an easy or widely accepted answer in this period.

New Frontiers: 'Crusading' outside the Holy Land, 1114-1134

A number of factors, not all of them known, are likely to have contributed to the failure to delineate the military obligations of the crusader. The first and by far the most convincing reason was that the cross continued to be linked almost exclusively with the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Though the military aspect of the crusader's duty was of consequence to crusaders and observers alike, it continued to be overshadowed by the importance of a completed pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre until well into the 1130s and beyond.

Crusading remained focused on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem between 1108 and 1122 even though this was not the only arena in which Christians waged wars against Muslims. In the Iberian theatre, Franks and Italians helped the Catalans, Aragonese and Castilians in battles aimed at acquiring Almoravid territory.¹³³ Similarities between these 'Spanish' campaigns and the expeditions against Saracens in the East exist. Nevertheless, there must be some hesitation in classifying the engagements as crusades. Peninsular wars against Muslim inhabitants in which participants were granted a remission of penance were unknown in Spain prior to the calling of the First Crusade.¹³⁴ It is by no means clear that the eleventh-century *reconquista* played any

¹³² WT, 620-2; Ibn al-Qalanisi, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb (London, 1932), 195-6; Ibn al-Athir, "Sum of World History," *RHC Or.* 1: 385-6; Henry of Huntington, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold, RS 74 (London, 1879), 251.

¹³³ Riley-Smith, *Crusades*, 89.

¹³⁴ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 70-114; R. A. Fletcher, "Reconquest and Spain c. 1050-1150." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 37 (1987), 31-47.

part in the development of crusading ideas. In 1096, the crusade was as novel an idea for Spaniards as it was for other Europeans. Only after some First Crusaders returned to Spain in 1100 was crusading introduced into Spain; and even then, the concept took root there very slowly.¹³⁵

Although Urban II had regarded the crusade to the East as part of a wider movement of Christian liberation it was not until 1113-14 that his successor, Paschal II conceded for the first time that an expedition against the Saracens on the western frontier could be fought as a crusade – in other words, that participants could take up the cross to cement their devotion to the proposed venture.¹³⁶ In this year the archbishop of Pisa asked the pope to bless a campaign upon which he and his flock were about to embark. The Pisans wished to free Christian prisoners held on the Balearic Islands from their Muslim captors. Led by the example of the archbishop, those Pisans who planned to participate had made a solemn vow, placing ‘the sign of God’s army’ on their shoulders *prior* to meeting with the pope. Though the expedition had not originated with the pope, Paschal II seems to have felt no compunction in granting his permission.

There are a number of aspects to the Balearic expedition that need to be considered before analyzing the form it took. First of all, the expedition fits squarely into an older “pre-Crusade tradition of Pisan campaigns in the western Mediterranean.”¹³⁷ Though it also corresponds to notions about Christian violence that grew out of the First Crusade, it is interesting to note that the author of the poem commemorating the Pisan victory, the *Liber Maiolichinus*, does not explicitly or implicitly compare the Balearic campaign to the expedition to liberate Jerusalem. The author of the *Liber Maiolichinus* remains unidentified, although it is agreed that he was an eyewitness who was well-acquainted with the aims of the Pisan leadership and

¹³⁵ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 70-114.

¹³⁶ *Papsturkunden in Spanien. I Katalonien*, 287-8.

¹³⁷ G. B. Doxey, *Christian Attempts to Conquer the Balearic Islands, 1015-1229*, PhD Dissertation (Cambridge, 1991), 95. In 1087 a sea borne force composed mainly of Pisans and Genoese, though supplemented by men from Amalfi and Rome, attacked and plundered the Muslim town of Mahdia (al-Mahdiya) located in what is now Tunisia. Consult, H. E. J. Cowdrey, “The Mahdia Campaign of 1087,” *English Historical Review* 92 (1977), 1-29.

biased in favor of the Pisan clergy. The poem can be dated to within a few years of 1115.¹³⁸ Although the author did highlight the notion of liberation, a crucial aspect of the message expounded by Urban II at Clermont in 1095, the fact that he did not make any comparison between this expedition and the pilgrimage to Jerusalem is significant especially considering the role Pisa played in the First Crusade.¹³⁹

All those reservations aside, the one feature of this expedition that cannot be refuted is that participants made a solemn vow before setting out on this campaign and that they placed some sort of symbol, most likely a cross, on their garments to signify their commitment. As the *Liber Maiolichinus* reports, the multitude assembled to hear Archbishop Peter Moriconi's speech saluted the "heavenly sign" and "took up the sign of God's army."¹⁴⁰ Was this indeed the cross? It is not entirely clear though in light of how the cross was described elsewhere it is more than likely that this is what was meant.¹⁴¹ Twelve men accompanied the archbishop to Rome in order to seek papal approval for this venture. Paschal II conferred the cross and the *signa Roma* (the keys of St. Peter) on the Pisans.¹⁴² So, even if this had not originally been conceived of as a crusade, the bestowal of a cross by the pope in conjunction with a vow immediately made it one. The pope also conferred upon the archbishop the authority to grant the remission of penance he had promised to the Pisans. "On account of so great an act," Paschal II granted that those who died on this expedition would be forgiven of all their sins.¹⁴³ The archbishop was to act as the spiritual and practical leader of the campaign. He was the one who negotiated with the Catalans when they wished to join the expedition and who fastened the sign of the cross to Raymond Berenguer III's

¹³⁸ Doxey, *Balearic Islands*, 71-2, 78-82.

¹³⁹ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 60-3; Bull, "Views of Muslims and Jerusalem," 23-4; M.-L. Farveau-Lilie, *Die Italiener im Heiligen Land* (Amsterdam, 1989).

¹⁴⁰ "Vicit, et humanas animas de morte resurgens Tartareu dominus traxit de fauce profundi, horatatis populos celestis signa salutis sumere; quique daret, qui sumeret ipse fuisti primus; te reliqui voto fervente sequuntur, suscupiuntque Dei multorum milita signum." *Liber Maiolichinus. De Gestis Pisanorum Illustribus*, ed. C. Calisse, *Fonti per la Storia d'Italia* 12 (Rome, 1904), lines 43-48.

¹⁴¹ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 117.

¹⁴² *Liber Maiolichinus*, 71-87.

¹⁴³ *Liber Maiolichinus* 39-48, 71-87, 2224-28. Also see Appendix 1 for the agreement between the Pisans and Ramon Berenguer III, 137-9.

shoulder. In the summer of 1114 the pope sent Cardinal Boso of Santa Anastasia to act as his legate on this crusade.¹⁴⁴

Although this expedition does have some anomalies in comparison to the expeditions to the East, there can be little doubt therefore that it was in fact, a crusade, and was regarded as such both by the papacy, its participants and by those who looked back upon it in retrospect. It would be the first crusade to be dissociated from the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The Pisan goal was to free Christian prisoners held on the Balearic Islands from their Muslim captors. The vow taken by the Pisan crusaders, and the Catalans who joined them along the way, reflected this goal.¹⁴⁵ Not until the army captured the major cities of the islands and freed the Christians living there from Muslim rule was the votive obligation discharged.¹⁴⁶

The author of this account may not reference the First Crusade, but he does not shy away from borrowing the language of crusading, even in circumstances when the terminology does not reflect the reality of the situation. Participants in the Balearic offensive are described as pilgrims, even though they did not make a pilgrimage in the way those travelling to and fighting in the East did. In fact, there does not appear to have been any specific pilgrimage site to which the Pisans and Catalans went to fulfil their vow. There was certainly no expectation that they would travel to Jerusalem. Pilgrimage here was clearly understood in a broader sense. Crusaders were engaged an armed penitential expedition that took them away from their homes for a period of time. As such they were in a manner befitting penitents. During the winter of 1114-1115 for example, the Majorcans managed to burn one of the siege engines because the crusaders assigned to guard them were overcome by sleep or wine. Their negligence caused the leadership of the crusade to rail against the troops. They were called cowards and accused of breaking their vow of holiness by being drunk.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ *Liber Maiolichinus*, 1151-53; *Documentos de Jaime I de Aragon*, ed. A. Huici Miranda and M.D. Cabanes Pecourt, 3 vols. (Valencia, 1976-8), 1: doc. 186.

¹⁴⁵ While wintering in Barcelona, the archbishop of Pisa bestowed the cross on Ramon Berenguer III., *Documentos de Jaime I de Aragon*, 1: doc. 186.

¹⁴⁶ *Liber Maiolichinus*, 907-16, 2724-29, 2751-53, 2761-64, 3520-26.

¹⁴⁷ *Liber Maiolichinus*, 2445-77.

Fortunately for these delinquent crusaders, the expedition to Majorca was ultimately a success. The subjugation of the island's main fortress and the release of Christian captives brought a close to this crusade. Soon after celebrating Easter in 1115, the Pisans and Catalans collected the spoil they had won and returned home.¹⁴⁸ Unlike the First Crusade, there was no attempt by crusaders to maintain a permanent Christian presence on the islands. That would not occur until the thirteenth century.¹⁴⁹

Despite the transitory nature of the crusaders' victory, the Balearic Crusade is significant for the history of the crusade because it set a precedent for the future. After 1114, the cross could be linked with campaigns not intended for the Holy Land as long as the aims and enemy were of comparable merit. It also demonstrates that the papacy remained at the helm of establishing the outlines of crusading. Archbishop Peter Moriconi of Pisa may have taken the initiative in proposing this campaign and associating a vow with it, but it was Paschal II who confirmed the character of the expedition by bestowing the cross on the archbishop and his men. Thus it is clear that ecclesiastical authorities had the capacity to divorce the crusade vow from the Jerusalem pilgrimage. In this case, the substance of the vow rested on the obligation to complete a defined task and on the comportment of the votary while undertaking its completion.

The role of the pope in extending crusading to new locations cannot be denied; similarly, the efforts of certain laymen to extend the meaning of crusading should not be underestimated. After returning from Majorca, the count of Barcelona set out for Italy, where he recruited the Genoese and Pisans for an expedition to secure the port of Tortosa. He also gained the pope's support for this venture. Cardinal Boso who had accompanied the Balearic Crusade, appears to have been given the authority to recruit for this expedition. Paschal II assigned him to a legatine commission in Spain in

¹⁴⁸ *Liber Maiolichinus*, 3520-26.

¹⁴⁹ James I of Aragon would embark on a campaign to subject the islands to his rule in 1229. "Chronica Latina regum Castellae," ed. L.C. Brea, in *Chronica Hispania Saeculi XII. Pars I*, ed. E. Falque, J. Gil and A. Maya, CCCM, 71 (Turnholt, 1990), 98-9. All translations taken from *The Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile*, translated with an introduction and notes by J. F. O'Callaghan, *Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies* 236 (Tempe, AZ, 2002).

1117.¹⁵⁰ The campaign, however, never took place. War broke out between Pisa and Genoa in 1118, the same year the pope died, depriving Ramon Berenguer of much needed naval assistance and, perhaps, of ecclesiastical backing also. Whether the expedition it would have been designated a crusade is not entirely clear, though considering Paschal II's history it might well have been.¹⁵¹ His successor, Gelasius II (1118-19) was not so quick to bestow the cross on his champions, though he was more than willing to grant a remission of penance to those who participated in battles against the Almoravids. When approached by Pedro, the bishop-elect of Saragossa, on behalf of Alfonso I of Aragón-Navarre (1104-34), Gelasius responded by absolving those already engaged in freeing the bishop's see from Almoravid occupation. He did not have the legate bestow the cross on participants. Instead, the pope offered "remission and indulgence of their sins" to those who labored in "the service of the Lord" and to those who contributed both physically and financially to the repair of the Church of Saragossa.¹⁵² If "anyone of you receives penance for his sins and is killed in this expedition, we by the merits of the saints and the prayers of the whole Catholic Church absolve you from your sins."¹⁵³ Unlike the crusade, the value of the remission of sins promised by the pope depended upon the quality and quantity of service

¹⁵⁰ R. Hüls, *Kardinäle, Klerus und Kirchen Roms 1049-1130*, Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom 48 (Tübingen, 1977), 147; L. Vone, *Die 'Historia Compostellana' und die Kirchenpolitik des nordwestspanischen Raumes, 1070-1130*, Kölner historische Abhandlungen 29 (Cologne, 1980), 348-9. Little is known of Boso's activity as legate while in Aragón-Navarre. P. Kehr, "El Papado y los reinos de Navarra y Aragón hasta mediados del siglo xii," *Estudios de Edad Media de la Corona de Aragón* 2 (1946), 151.

¹⁵¹ Ramon Berenguer III asked and received papal approval for his planned attack on Tortosa. Those who participated were granted a remission of penance. What is not entirely clear is if participants in this proposed expedition would have been required to take the cross. A crusade bull for this expedition does not remain. Furthermore, it is not known if the count himself took a vow, only that the pope placed him and his possessions under protection in return for an annual payment (not because he was a crusader). Only Paschal II's assignment of Cardinal Boso, who had accompanied the crusaders on the Balearic Crusade, as legate strengthens the argument that this was a crusade. Mansilla, *Documentación pontificia*, 69-70; *Liber Maiolichinus*, 144, no. 8; "Vita Sancti Olegarii," *España Sagrada* 29: 476-7, P. Kehr, *Das Papsttum und der Katalanische Prinzipat bis zur Vereinigung mit Aragón*, (Berlin, 1928), 56-7.

¹⁵² The novelty of this grant was remarked upon by J. Goñi Gaztambide in *Historia de la bula de la cruzada en España* (Vitoria, 1958), 76-77. See also, *Documentos para el estudio de la reconquista y repoblación del valle de Ebro*, ed. J. M. Lacarra, 2 vols. (Anubar, 1982) 1: 67-69. However, one should look back at a similar offer made by Urban II for those assisting in the restoration of the Church of Taragona in 1087.

¹⁵³ Gelasius II, "Epistolae et Privilegia," *PL* 163: 508.

provided. Gelasius II directed the participants to their local bishops who were to decide how much penance was to be forgiven.

In the past it has been suggested that Gelasius's grant was actually a confirmation of an indulgence granted by Paschal sometime between 1116 and his death on 21 January 1118, perhaps in connection with Ramon Berenguer's plans for Tortosa.¹⁵⁴ The strongest piece of evidence in favor of this interpretation is that despite the failure of the proposed expedition, Cardinal Boso's legatine commission to Spain continued. There is evidence to suggest that Boso had been given the order to recruit knights for a forthcoming expedition against the Almoravids in Spain and southern France during 1117-18. A document from Uzerche has him traveling through Aquitaine "in order to gather an army for Spain."¹⁵⁵ He seems to have had some success in the region: a charter from Vigeois records that four knights went to Spain.¹⁵⁶ When the goal of Tortosa fell through, the legate may well have held up Saragossa as an acceptable alternative. In future he would gain a reputation as the man responsible for the liberation of Majorca and Saragossa, though it is not entirely clear that the legate was present at the siege of the latter.¹⁵⁷

In any case, it was either Paschal's grant of a remission of penance for the "via Hispania" that was confirmed by a number of French and Spanish bishops at a council held in Toulouse in May 1118, or a new grant issued by his successor.¹⁵⁸ There is little to suggest, however, that the indulgence granted by Gelasius late in 1118 was a confirmation or reissue of an earlier order. In the letter itself, the pope

¹⁵⁴ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 108; Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, 68-70. See also, C. Stalls, *Possessing the Land. Aragon's Expansion into Islam's Ebro Frontier Under Alfonso the Battler, 1104-1134*, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures*, 400-1453 No. 7 (Leiden, 1995), 37-8.

¹⁵⁵ *Cartulaire de l'abbaye d'Uzerche*, ed. J.B. Champeval (Paris, 1901), 1038.

¹⁵⁶ *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Vigeois en Limousin (954-1167)*, ed. M. de Montégut (Limoges, 1907), 220.

¹⁵⁷ *La Chronique de Morigny (1095-1152)*, ed. L. Mirot, Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire 41 (Paris, 1909), 33.

¹⁵⁸ *La Chronique de Saint-Maxient 751-1140*, ed. J. Verdon (Paris, 1979), 186. The varying interpretations of this event rests upon whether or not one believes Gelasius II was actually present at the Council of Tours in April or May 1118, as some have suggested. D.W. Lomax, *The Reconquest of Spain* (London and New York, 1978), 83-4; O'Callaghan, *Reconquest*, 36-8; Riley-Smith, *Crusades*, 89. For an alternate interpretation of the relationship between the pope and the grant of penitential status to this campaign, see Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 109; Stiles, *Possessing*, 37.

makes no mention of previous grants associated with this undertaking, nor does he suggest that he is “confirming” that participants received a remission of penance. The grant itself is clearly addressed to those already engaged in the siege, as well as “to all the Christian faithful;” it was likely to have been intended as a local recruiting tool.¹⁵⁹ As such it worked, William Guiral of Arsac,

out of fear of God and also having been stuck by a grave infirmity, wishing to regain my health ,on account the souls of my mother and father, and for the remission of the sins I have confessed undertake the road to Saragossa.¹⁶⁰

It also may have been a last ditch attempt to induce those already involved to remain as the siege dragged on.¹⁶¹

Was the conquest of Saragossa a crusade? Did participants perceive it as such? The answer is probably not. Yes, participants in the conquest were granted a remission of sins, a benefit that soldiers fighting in expeditions against the Moors prior to 1095 had not been awarded.¹⁶² And it is also true that the army Alfonso assembled was ‘international’. Knights from France, some of whom had participated in the First Crusade, were the first to reach the walls of Saragossa in May 1117, even before the arrival of King Alfonso I.¹⁶³ Whether or not their arrival there can be attributed in some part to Cardinal Boso’s attempt the previous year to recruit soldiers from southern France for an expedition in Spain is not known for certain. Many of those who appear before the walls of Saragossa were linked with Aragon and its king by ties

¹⁵⁹ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 108-09. Gelasius II wrote “*exercitui Christianorum civitatem Caesaraugustanam obsidenti, et omnibus catholicae fidei cultoribus*” in “*Epistolae*,” 508.

¹⁶⁰ This charter is dated to the period 1110-43, though in light of Gelasius’s grant in makes sense to place the donation closer to 1118x1120. *Cartulaire de l’église collégiale Saint-Seurin de Bordeaux*, ed. J.- A. Brutails (Bordeaux, 1897), n .63.

¹⁶¹ Stalls, *Possessing*, 39-40.

¹⁶² Gelasius II, “*Epistolae*,” 508; Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 70-86.

¹⁶³ Amongst those who had participated in the First Crusade were two Gascon nobles, Gaston IV of Béarn and his brother-in-law, Centullo of Bigorre. According to the sole surviving narrative account of the conquest, dating from the sixteenth century, the French forces were in Aragon in mid-May. Alfonso I reached Saragossa in late May or June when the city was already under siege. J. Zurita, *Anales de la Corona de Aragón*, ed. A.C. López, vol. 1, 2nd edn. (Saragossa, 1976), Bk 1, c. 44.

of kinship or political alliance, which might also explain their participation.¹⁶⁴ Gaston IV of Béarn, for example, was Alfonso I's cousin by marriage; Bernard Ató of Carcassone was a vassal.¹⁶⁵

Perhaps it is best to see this particular undertaking as representing an intermediary stage in the process by which the *reconquista* takes on not only the appearance and rhetoric associated with the crusade, but the actual mechanisms of the crusade as well. In many ways, the conquest of Saragossa appears as little more than a penitential war of the sort Gregory VII envisioned the Christian faithful engaging in on behalf of the papacy.¹⁶⁶ Neither Alfonso I, nor the men who accompanied him, assumed the cross in advance of this expedition or while undertaking the siege at Saragossa; nor, so far as we can tell were they expected to do so by the pope or other senior churchmen.¹⁶⁷ The remission of sins granted by Gelasius II did not require a vow of its recipients. It was retrospective and applied equally to those who fought at Saragossa as well as those who contributed financially to the restoration of the city and Church – a feature not yet found in the crusading effort.¹⁶⁸ Finally, the wording of Gelasius's grant does not fit into the pattern normally associated with efforts to equate or at least compare conflicts in Spain with the efforts to liberate and protect the Holy Land; most noticeably, no mention of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem is made. While this was not a feature of the Balearic expedition as it was presented in the *Liber Maiolichinus*, it remained the case that when casting expeditions as crusades contemporaries normally referenced Jerusalem.¹⁶⁹

The absence of crusaders (or evidence that participants wore a cross) at the 1118 siege at Saragossa raises doubts as to its status as a crusade. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that a number of prominent participants understood it – perhaps

¹⁶⁴ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 93. J. De Jaurgain, *La Vasconie*, 2 vols. (Pau, 1898-1902), 2: 249, 546; Alfonso I turns his attention to Saragossa early in his reign. Stalls, *Possessing the Land*, 29-41.

¹⁶⁵ Stalls, *Possessing the Land*, 21, 38.

¹⁶⁶ O'Callaghan, *Reconquest*, 36-8.

¹⁶⁷ OV, 6: 396.

¹⁶⁸ In 1157 Pope Adrian IV was the first pope to grant an indulgence to those who provided material support for the "liberation of the Holy Land." Adrian IV, "Papae epistolae," *RHGF*, 15: 681-2.

¹⁶⁹ *Papsturkunden in Spanien. I Katalonien*, 287-8; Calixtus II, *Bullaire*, 2:454.

only in retrospect - as a crusade-like endeavor, if not actually a crusade.¹⁷⁰ Alfonso I of Aragón-Navarre was certainly one of those who came to appreciate that his conquests in the Ebro River valley were commensurate with the 1096 expedition to Jerusalem. His reasoning was simple. The goal of Alfonso I's campaigns against the Almoravids was the same as that which had driven the First Crusade - Jerusalem. In liberating the Church in Spain from Muslims, Alfonso fully intended to open up another route for pilgrims to travel to Jerusalem.¹⁷¹ The king's grasp of geography may have been shaky (it is uncertain if Alfonso intended to fight his way through North Africa to Egypt and then to Jerusalem, or if he expected his expansion to open up Mediterranean ports for use by Christian pilgrims), but it had the effect of placing his offensive against the Almoravids (for which the papacy was willing to grant a remission of sins) into a crusading context. Unlike Alfonso's thirteenth-century successors, who would be able to use the taxes raised for crusades to finance their expeditions, the benefit of characterizing a campaign as a crusade in the twelfth century was less tangible.¹⁷² For Alfonso I, the association of his campaigns with the events of 1095-99 and the actions of those like his brother Pedro I, who had taken the cross for the First Crusade but fought in Spain, gave it what would usually be construed as a program of conquest the patina of holiness.¹⁷³ If those who joined Alfonso were granted a remission of penance, the association with 'crusading' might also serve as a valuable recruiting tool.

Prior to 1118 Alfonso I had not conceived of his struggle against his Muslim neighbors as crusades. His brother, King Pedro I, had conducted a siege of Huesca in 1096 as a papal vassal, accompanied by a papal legate and various of his French

¹⁷⁰ In an 1136 confirmation of privileges extended to a confraternity in 1122, Alfonso I equated the spiritual benefits afforded to those who liberated Jerusalem with that granted to those who had rescued Majorca and Saragossa. Goñi Gaztambide *Historia*, 75-7 and P. Rassow, "La Confradia de Belchite," *Anuario de Historia Español*, 3 (Madrid, 1926), 225. According to the author of a charter at St. Seurin in Bordeaux dated to around 1120 Amalvin de Blanquefort was "exalting the Christian faith by going against the pagans" where he and Gaston of Béarn hoped "to seize Spain." *Cartulaire de l'église collégiale Saint-Seurin de Bordeaux*, 40.

¹⁷¹ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, 75-7.

¹⁷² O'Callaghan, *Reconquest*, 156-8.

¹⁷³ Stalls, *Possessing the Land*, 40-1.

vassals.¹⁷⁴ Not until 1100 did Pedro assume the cross, with the intention of accompanying his former brother-in-law, William IX of Aquitaine to the Holy Land.¹⁷⁵ In other words, the cross was associated with a very specific activity, distinct from papally approved engagements in Aragón. Only upon the advice of and approval of Paschal II, did Pedro I agree to commute his vow to pilgrimage to Jerusalem into an attack on Saragossa. He wore a cross into battle¹⁷⁶ Confident that his attempt to liberate Saragossa from Muslim rule, the king began construction on a castle called Jusibol (*Deus le vult* – God wills it) across from the city.¹⁷⁷ Nonetheless, although Alfonso must have been aware of the similarities between the expedition to the East and the wars being fought in Aragón, especially when standing in front of Saragossa, Alfonso does not directly identify his own campaigns as crusades until the 1120s.

It is not entirely clear where the idea of associating the conflicts in Aragón with the pilgrimage route to Jerusalem originated, or why Alfonso suddenly saw his efforts to expand Aragónese control over the Ebro Valley in a this way. It may well have been the influence of his cousin Gaston IV of Béarn, who had participated in the First Crusade and was part of the force that took Saragossa in 1118.¹⁷⁸ We know that Gaston was influential in helping Alfonso establish a Spanish military confraternity at Monreal del Campo in 1128.¹⁷⁹ Gaston had returned from the crusade interested in promoting pilgrimage.¹⁸⁰ He also was inclined, most notably in the later stages of his life, to portray his efforts in Aragón as similar to those he had undertaken in the Levant. In 1127 Gaston founded the abbey of Sauvelade, before journeying to Spain

¹⁷⁴ A. Ubieto Areta, *Historia de Aragón. La formación territorial* (Anubar Ediciones: Saragossa, 1981), 80-1; Mansilla, *La documentación*, 53-4.

¹⁷⁵ Ubieto Arteta, *Pedro*, 114-15.

¹⁷⁶ Paschal II, "Epistolae," 45; Ubieto Arteta, *Pedro*, 114-15.

¹⁷⁷ Ubieto Arteta, *Pedro*, 113.

¹⁷⁸ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 206. Alfonso I granted Gaston IV of Béarn the lordship of Saragossa. He would hold it until his death in 1130. *Documentos para el estudio de la Reconquista*, 1: 57, 59.

¹⁷⁹ "auxilio vice comitis Gastonis." *Colección diplomática de Alfonso I de Aragón y Pamplona (1104-1134)*, ed. J. Ángel and L. Pueyo (San Sebastián, 1990), no.173.

¹⁸⁰ Bull, *Knighly Piety*, 100-01.

“in order to subjugate the Saracens.”¹⁸¹ It is difficult to know who influenced whom. But as we shall see, Alfonso I and Gaston de Béarn were not alone in envisioning the *reconquista* as one part of the crusade movement.

Alfonso first enunciated his desire for opening the western route to Jerusalem in a document dating from 1122. In this year the king established the confraternity of Belchite, a religious brotherhood whose primary duty was to fight the Saracens on the borders of Aragón.¹⁸² As founder, the king linked the fighting done by the brothers directly with the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.¹⁸³ Participants received a remission of penance according to the amount of service they provided. A brother who undertook

to fight in defense of Christian people and the service of Christ for the rest of his life will, after having made confession, be absolved of all his sin as if he were entering upon the life of a monk or hermit.¹⁸⁴

Those individuals who wanted to form a more temporary attachment to the confraternity were also welcome. If he served for one year, a knight would receive the same remission of sins due to those unarmed pilgrims who “marched to Jerusalem.”¹⁸⁵ If anyone wished to make a pilgrimage elsewhere, but instead “serves God in battle” the reward usually granted for the pilgrimage “would be doubled.”¹⁸⁶ The link between going on pilgrimage and serving as a soldier fighting for God and the Church military was thus made explicit. Though members of the Belchite Order would not be crusaders, in the sense that they assumed a cross and traveled to Jerusalem, they were similar in that they dedicated themselves (often temporarily) to a religious life in which fighting Muslims played a prominent role. In return, the brothers of the Belchite Order were promised a spiritual reward commensurate with crusading.

The remission of sins was a crucial component of the equation. For,

¹⁸¹ P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn* (Paris, 1640), 421. A similar idea is expressed in a charter mentioning Gaston which is dated to 1120. See, *Cartulaire de l'église collégiale Saint-Seurin de Bordeaux*, n. 40.

¹⁸² Rassow, “La Confradia de Belchite,” 200-26.

¹⁸³ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, 75-7; Rassow, “La Confradia de Belchite,” 224-5.

¹⁸⁴ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, 75-7; Rassow, “La Confradia de Belchite,” 224.

¹⁸⁵ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, 75-7; Rassow, “La Confradia de Belchite,” 224.

¹⁸⁶ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, 75-7; Rassow, “La Confradia de Belchite,” 225.

with a similar indulgence the Lord's Sepulchre, Majorca, Saragossa, and other lands were rescued from captivity; likewise, with God's favor, the route from here to Jerusalem shall be opened and the Church of God that is still held in captivity shall be made free.¹⁸⁷

What Alfonso suggested was that the First Crusade, the Balearic Crusade and his own assault on Saragossa were cut from the same material. Not only were all of these places liberated from Muslims by Christian soldiers, but they also all were associated with a similar remission of penance. And yet, although he was convinced that all conflicts fought against Muslims for which a remission of sins was granted were essentially the same, Alfonso I still associated the cross uniquely with the armed pilgrimage to Jerusalem, both in 1122 when the order was founded, and in 1136 when the king confirmed the privileges granted to the confraternity. The knights who joined the Belchite Order appear to have worn palms rather than crosses.¹⁸⁸ The palm remained an evocative symbol – it was, after all, usually associated with the completion of a pilgrim's journey to Jerusalem.¹⁸⁹ Presumably the adoption of the palm was intended a way to both associate the brothers of the Belchite confraternity with the opening up the pilgrimage route via Spain to Jerusalem and yet differentiate them from other individuals involved in similar tasks. But strictly speaking, in the terms of the day, they were not crusaders. After all, the brothers were not promising to travel to Jerusalem. Instead they were vowing to serve Christ and protect Christians in Spain *instead* of going on pilgrimage.

Like those living in other parts of Latin Christendom, Iberian knights were concerned about the situation in the Latin Kingdom in Jerusalem.¹⁹⁰ The presence of Muslims on their own frontiers in no way diminished the special place Jerusalem and

¹⁸⁷ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, 75-7; Rassow, "La Confradia de Belchite," 225.

¹⁸⁸ OV, 6: 400; *Dictionnaire de droit canonique, contenant tous les termes du droit canonique, avec un sommaire de l'histoire et des institutions et de l'état actuel de la discipline*, ed. R. Naz, et al., 7 vols. (Paris, 1935-65), 4: 128-44.

¹⁸⁹ FC, 318, 322, 334; WT, 983-4.

¹⁹⁰ For example, on the 31 May 1120 Lord Lopé Garcés and his wife Maria, donated part of their inheritance to the Holy Sepulchre and to the Hospital of St. John. *Documentos Ebro*, no. 114. In 1134 Count Rodrigo González "took a far journey to Jerusalem where he joined in many battles with the Saracens." "Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris," ed. A. May Sánchez in *Chronica Hispana Saecul XII Pars I*, ed. E. Falque, J. Gil and A. Maya, CCCM 71 (Turholt, 1990), 82.

the crusade held in their imaginations. Patriarch Gormond of Jerusalem wrote to Diego Gelmírez, the archbishop of Compostella in 1120, informing him of the dire circumstances faced by the Christians living in Outremer and asked the bishop for aid, knowing that, “you will be moved in the depths of your heart by the unrivalled burden of the knights; they are, alas, so few!”¹⁹¹ In the aftermath of the Battle of the Field of Blood when Pope Calixtus II summoned the Venetians (and from, subsidiary evidence, those living in France) to take up the cross and aid their Eastern brothers, he also called for Spanish knights to take the cross.

Writing to Oleguer, Archbishop of Tarragona and papal legate for the crusade in Spain, as well as to the “bishops, kings, counts, princes and other faithful of God” Calixtus II granted an identical remission of sins as that promised to those crusading in the East to those who took up the cross in defense of the Spanish Church.¹⁹² In doing so, the pope did what no pope had done previously. He called for a crusade to be fought in Spain as well as in the Holy Land, fully extending the mechanisms of crusading into the Iberian Peninsula for the first time. The crusade must originally have been proclaimed in Spain prior to April 1123, perhaps at the same time (July 1121) the Venetians were encouraged to travel to the East.¹⁹³

Although Pope Calixtus II saw the efforts of Christians to reconquer Spain to be on par with the efforts to hold the Holy Land, it is not exactly clear whether his call to crusade was his idea or made at the request of a Spanish lay or ecclesiastical leader.

¹⁹¹ J. Richard, “Quelques texts sur les premiers temps de l’Eglise latine de Jerusalem,” *Recueil de travaux offerts à M. Clovis Brunel* (Paris, 1955), 2: 427-8.

¹⁹² This letter has been variously dated to April 1121-24. Most likely it was composed in 1123, for Calixtus makes the same proclamation about those who have taken the cross, but not completed their vow as is contained in the canons of the First Lateran Council, also held in April 1123. This letter reads like a “reminder,” emphasizing the need for crusaders to complete their vows. *Bullaire du Pape Calixte II, 1119-1124*, ed. U Robert, 2 vols. (Paris, 1891), 2: 454. More than likely, an earlier letter exists. Riley-Smith, “The Venetian Crusade,” 345-6. No doubt too, that Diego Gelmirez received a similar letter. On 6 March 1123 Calixtus II confirmed the archbishop’s legatine mission for the provinces of Mérida and Braga, an appointment he had originally made in summer 1120. *Historia Compostellana*, ed. E. Falque Rey, CCCM 70 (Turnholt, 1988), 339. For a discussion of the archbishop’s career see, R. A. Fletcher, *Saint James’s Catapult: The Life and Times of Diego Gelmírez of Santiago de Compostela* (Oxford, 1984).

¹⁹³ *Conciliorum*, 192. Crusaders from other parts of Western Europe were still departing for the East in spring 1123. Cosmos of Prague, “Chronica Boemorum,” ed. D. Köpke, *MGHS*, 9: 125.

It is also uncertain what form the pope intended the expedition to take.¹⁹⁴ All we do know is that on 2 April 1123 at the First Lateran Council in Rome he “graciously grant[ed] to those fighting firmly on this expedition the same remission of sins that we conceded to the defenders of the eastern Church.”¹⁹⁵ The council also decreed that,

Those, however, who with a view of going to Jerusalem or to Spain are known to have attached the cross to their garments and afterward removed it, we command in virtue of our Apostolic authority to replace it and begin the journey within a year from the coming Easter.¹⁹⁶

Those who took crosses for this campaign have left little or no trace in the written documents of the period. Nor did the efforts of those who preached the cross. It has been suggested that the defeat suffered by Christian troops near Llerida in 1124 may have ended a campaign led by the archbishop of Toledo, but even that is uncertain.¹⁹⁷

What were these Spanish crusaders vowing to do? There is some evidence that along with the cross, those who fought in Spain might also have assumed an obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. At a council held at Compostella in January 1125, Diego Gelmírez, summoned those present, upon the orders of the pope, to take up arms against the Muslims.¹⁹⁸ For,

just as the knights of Christ and the faithful sons of the Church opened the way to Jerusalem with much labor and spilling of blood, so we should become knights of Christ, and after defeating his wicked enemies, the Muslims, open the way to the same Sepulchre of the Lord through Spain which is shorter and much less laborious.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ For Calixtus II's vision of the crusade see Y. Katzir, “The Second Crusade and the Redefinition of *Ecclesia*, *Christianitas*, and Papal Coercive Power,” *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. M. Gervers (New York, 1992), 3-12.

¹⁹⁵ Calixtus II, *Bullaire*, 266-7; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 73.

¹⁹⁶ *Conciliarum*, 192.

¹⁹⁷ O'Callaghan, *Reconquest*, 38. This was the same archbishop of Toledo, Bernard de Sauvetot, who had his vow to crusade in the East absolved by Urban II in May 1099.

¹⁹⁸ Letters appointing Diego as papal legate for the provinces of Mérida and Braga reached Galicia in the summer of 1120. On St. James's Day, 25 July 1120, this privilege and the contents of three other papal bulls were read aloud to the clergy and people in the cathedral of Compostela. Calixtus II's successor was not to renew the legation. Fletcher, *Saint James's Catapult*, 200.

¹⁹⁹ *Historia Compostellana*, 379.

The archbishop announced that “anyone who wishes to take part in this expedition [should] examine his sins . . . [and] hasten to make a true confession and sincere penance, and then taking up arms, let him not delay in going to the camp of Christ in the service of God and for the remission of sins.”²⁰⁰ As in the case of those crusaders taking the eastern route, the property of those who served Christ would be protected in his or her absence.²⁰¹ Here it sounds as though Calixtus II had intended a crusade in aid of the Holy Land fought on two fronts. The notion of the crusade espoused by the archbishop of Compostella was almost identical to that adopted by the king of Aragon. Spanish crusaders were being encouraged to travel toward Jerusalem by an alternative route.

Unlike Calixtus II, the archbishop of Compostella did not expressly invoke the symbol of the cross nor highlight that those participating should make a solemn vow to solidify their good intention. Instead in a 1125 sermon he spoke only of the “camp of Christ and the service of God.”²⁰² It is an intriguing omission which might well speak to a continuing reluctance to associate a symbol so directly linked with the pilgrimage to Jerusalem with a military expedition to be fought in Spain. It is possible, however, to give this lapse too much emphasis, especially as the archbishop makes it clear that the ultimate goal of this expedition would be to “open the way to the same Sepulchre of the Lord.”²⁰³ In light of the process the archbishop recommends participants engage in before departure, which duplicates the process by which most crusaders prepared for the crusade, it would appear that Diego Gelmiréz is proposing the same sort of expedition as that embarked upon by the Venetians in 1121 and that participants would have assumed the cross as a sign of their commitment to this venture.

Diego Gelmiréz was distracted from promoting the crusade by the death of Queen Urraca (1109-26), whose tumultuous rule of León-Castile had turned attention away from external concerns, and also by the death of his patron, Calixtus II, on 13

²⁰⁰ *Historia Compostellana*, 379.

²⁰¹ *Historia Compostellana*, 379. This privilege is one normally associated with pilgrims and crusaders, it lends support to the idea that those who participated in this expedition were pilgrims/crusaders.

²⁰² *Historia Compostellana*, 379.

²⁰³ *Historia Compostellana*, 379.

December 1124. His relationship with Calixtus's successor, Honorius II (1124-30) was decidedly less warm.²⁰⁴ This pope's concern for the Spanish Church and overall interest in crusading was also less marked than his predecessor.²⁰⁵ This left Alfonso I to lead the only successful offensive against the Almoravids in the early 1120s.

As O'Callaghan remarks, if "anyone could be described as a crusader" it was Alfonso I.²⁰⁶ In the winter of 1125-1126 the king led a raid into southern Spain, in which he attempted to take Granada and Malaga. After winning a substantial victory over the Muslims at Lucena in March 1126, the king returned to Saragossa accompanied by thousands of Mozarabic Christians whom he settled in the Ebro Valley.²⁰⁷ No documentary evidence survives to confirm whether the Aragonese king took the cross before setting out on the campaign of 1125. It would seem that he might have, considering the target and trajectory of his journey. Bypassing the Almoravid-controlled Teruel, Valencia, and Murcia he marched straight for the coastal fortresses of Granada and Malaga. At the latter, Alfonso sailed out in a boat, perhaps to show that he had completed a vow to "open the way to the same Sepulchre of the Lord through Spain."²⁰⁸

Later events would demonstrate, however, that Alfonso I either did not believe he had fulfilled the obligation he had assumed in 1125, or else took the cross at some later date. In 1134, when the king led his army against the city of Fraga, Orderic Vitalis records that the inhabitants "feared both the anger and unconquerable determination of the magnificent prince [Alfonso I] and the armies of the Christians,

²⁰⁴ Fletcher, *St. James Catapult*, 212-14.

²⁰⁵ Fletcher, *St. James Catapult*, 215-17.

²⁰⁶ O'Callaghan, *Reconquest*, 181.

²⁰⁷ *Chronique de Saint-Maxient*, 188-90; OV, 6: 404-07; *Colección diplomática de Alfonso*, 138-40.

²⁰⁸ It is reported that the Christians of Granada had invited Alfonso to join them in overthrowing the Almoravids. The king set out on 2 September 1125 accompanied by 4,000 knights and 15,000 foot soldiers. Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-Qirtas*, trans. A.H. Miranda, 2 vols (Valencia, 1964), 1: 316-18; Ibn Kahldūn, *Historie des Berbères et des dynasties musulmanes de l'Afrique septentrionale*, trans. B. de Slane, 4 vols. (Paris, 1852-56), 2: 83; Al-Maqqarī, *The History of the Mohammedan Dynasties in Spain*, trans. P. de Gayangos, 2 vols. (London, 1840-43), 2: 303-04; Ibn `Idhār, *Al-Bayan al-Mugrib: Neuvis fragmentos almorávides y almohades*, trans. A. H. Miranda, 2 vols. (Valencia, 1963), 160-8; *Al-Hulal al-Mawshiyya: Crónica árabe de las dinastías almorávide, almohade, y benimerín*, trans. A. H. Miranda (Teután, 1951), 108-15; *Historia Compostellana*, 379.

who wore the cross of Christ.”²⁰⁹ That this cross denoted a larger obligation than just taking the city of Fraga is clear; but it is not completely evident when or where this obligation had been incurred. There is no evidence that the papacy had issued another call to crusade in Spain in this period. When Alfonso learned that reinforcements to aid the citizens of Fraga were on the way from North Africa, he

promptly ordered the holy relics to be brought to him from his chapel; when they had been fetched he swore before all that he would not abandon the siege unless the city surrendered to him or he himself were killed or routed in battle. He ordered twenty of his magnates to take the same oath.²¹⁰

Orderic made it clear that this is an oath, rather than a vow. It appears that the king has already taken the cross for some larger enterprise, but that he now needed to make a more definite commitment to see the conquest of this city through, much as the First Crusade army had done in 1197 at Antioch.²¹¹ Perhaps, like most contemporaries, Alfonso I believed his vow would only be complete when he reached Jerusalem. That he neither opened up the western route to Jerusalem nor traveled to the Holy Sepulchre must have weighed heavily on his conscience.

This supposition may go some way towards explaining the provisions of his unusual will. Left with no heirs, upon his death Alfonso I willed the rule of his kingdom to the military orders of the Temple and Hospital and to the canons of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.²¹² There are many theories as to why the king did this.²¹³ But among them it should be considered that perhaps Alfonso I's decision to grant a portion of Aragón and Navarre to the order of Holy Sepulchre was intended as

²⁰⁹ OV, 6: 410.

²¹⁰ OV, 6: 410.

²¹¹ In 1097 the crusade army swore an oath that they would invest Antioch until the city fell. Albert of Aachen, "Historia," 274. These solemn oaths were intended to bind the army together. Some crusaders may have seen the oath as a renewal of the commitment expressed in their original vows. Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 85.

²¹² *Colección diplomática de Alfonso I*, 356-8.

²¹³ A. J. Forey, "The Will of Alfonso I of Aragón and Navarre," *Durham University Journal* 73 (1980), 59-65; E. Lourie, "The Will of Alfonso I, el Batalldor, King of Aragón and Navarre: A Reassessment" and "The Will of Alfonso I of Aragón and Navarre: A Reply to Dr. Forey" in her *Crusade and Colonisation: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Medieval Aragón* (London, 1990) III and IV.

insurance in the case that he might not live to see his vow completed.²¹⁴ In any case, the provisions of his will were overturned after Alfonso's death.²¹⁵

After the pontificate of Calixtus II, there is little effort on the part of anyone other than Alfonso I to transform the ongoing struggles against Muslims into crusades. Contemporaries continued to see the battles fought by Christians in Iberia as acts of devotion comparable to the performance of penance undertaken by crusaders, but those who fought in these battles did not usually take the cross for them.²¹⁶ Although the premise behind the two conflicts was believed to be equal, Spaniards did not generally feel comfortable assuming the cross in connection with the battles they fought against their neighbors. There were no doubt a variety of reasons for their reluctance, including the fact that in Spain, Muslims were as often allies as they were enemies. But the chief reason for Spanish reluctance to assume the cross in their Iberian conflicts was the lingering equation of the cross with the obligation to travel to Jerusalem. The cross remained strongly linked to the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the efforts of Christians there to protect the Holy Sepulchre. Even the Templars, who had profited from the piety of Spaniards in the 1120s and 1130s (Alfonso I's will is only one example of this generosity), displayed a real reluctance to involve themselves in the struggle against the infidel in Spain.²¹⁷ As 'permanent crusaders' they believed their military duties to be restricted to the environs of the Holy Sepulchre. In 1134 the count of Barcelona and a group of Catalan nobles tried to involve the Templars in

²¹⁴ Alfonso I drew up his will at the siege of Bayonne in 1131. He was already planning for the conquest of the Ebro all the way to Tortosa. Stalls, *Possessing*, 55. For a similar understanding of how giving property in the West to orders based in the Holy Land, and especially those associated with the Holy Sepulchre, might serve as a way in which to fulfill a crusade vow see, N. Jaspert, "Capta est Dertosa, clavis Christianorum: Tortosa and the Crusades," *The Second Crusade: Scope and Consequences*, ed. J. Phillips and M. Hoch (Manchester, 2001), 90.

²¹⁵ The order of the Holy Sepulchre was not found in Aragón until the middle of the twelfth century. G. Tessier, "Les debuts de l'ordre du Saint-Sepulchre en Espagne. A propos de deux privileges d'Alexandre III," *Bibliothèque de l'école des Chartes* 116 (1958), 24-5.

²¹⁶ At the Council of Clermont in 1130, Pope Innocent II (1130-43) decreed that arsonists might atone for their sins by spending a year in the service of God – in either Spain or Jerusalem. F. Fita, "Actas del Concilio de Clermont (18 nov. 1130) Revisión crítica," *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 4 (1884), 360-6.

²¹⁷ A.J. Forey suggests that the Templars were reluctant to open up a second front. See *The Templars in the Corona de Aragón* (London, 1973), 2-16.

Iberian politics by promising to serve with the knights for a year and to provide equipment and land to support ten brother knights. Both the promised military service and the grant of land were in Catalonia.²¹⁸ Not until 1143 was the Temple successfully dragged into the struggle against the Moors.²¹⁹

The Second Crusade: Clarification and Continuity

Fought on three fronts, led by the kings of France and Germany and including crusaders from every part of Europe, the Second Crusade (1147-49) extended and clarified concepts present in the First Crusade and in the other crusades of the early twelfth century. Above all the Second Crusade would demonstrate how integral the notion of Jerusalem remained to those taking the cross fifty years after Urban II had launched the First Crusade. Nevertheless, the idea of crusading as a penitential activity that might be employed anywhere there were enemies of Christ was also moving into the mainstream of crusade discourse leading to a group of Saxon and Danish nobles taking the cross in 1147 for a campaign against the pagan Slavs. The experience and perceived failure of all these efforts, both in the Holy Land and in Europe, would in turn have a significant impact on the way in which crusades were organized in the future.

The origins of the Second Crusade lie in the events of November and December 1145.²²⁰ Bishop Hugh of Jabala, a supplicant at the papal court during this period, made clear to those present his anxiety about the well-being of the Latin Church in the East since the loss of Edessa to the Turks in the previous year. The bishop announced that he was considering crossing the Alps to ask the kings of France

²¹⁸ *Colección de documentos inéditos de Archivo General de la Corona de Aragón*, 4: 32-3; M. d'Albon, *Cartulaires general de l'Ordre du Temple* (Paris, 1913), 53-5.

²¹⁹ Raymond Berenguer IV, count of Barcelona, worked hard to get the Temple to agree to join in the Aragonese reconquest. In return for the castles of Monzón, Mongay, Barbará, Chalamera, Belchite, and Remolins; a tenth of royal revenues and a promise that they would receive a fifth of all lands conquered from the Moors; and exemption from certain taxes the Templars agreed in 1143 to send "their decree and counsel about the establishment of a militia of Christ in Spain against the Moors." Forey, *Templars*, 23-4; *Colección de documentos inéditos del Archivo general de la Corona de Aragón*, ed. P. de Bofarull y Mascaró *et al.*, 41 vols. (Barcelona, 1847-1910), 4: 417.

²²⁰ J.G. Rowe, "The Origins of the Second Crusade: Pope Eugenius III, Bernard of Clairvaux and Louis VII of France," *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. M. Gervers (New York, 1992), 79-90.

and Germany for military aid.²²¹ This seems to have spurred the pope into action. Around the first of December Eugenius III issued the bull *Quantum Praedecessores* calling for Christians to rush to the defense of the Eastern Church for the remission of sins.²²² Around the same time, but without any prior knowledge of the pope's actions, the king of France, Louis VII, also announced his intention to lead an expedition to the East at his Christmas court in Bourges.

Louis's reasons for taking the cross were controversial at the time, and have remained so. The king's chaplain, Odo of Deuil, suggested that Louis was responding to a sermon preached by the Bishop of Langres on the loss of Edessa and the resulting "oppression of the Christians and the arrogance of the heathen."²²³ He may already have been predisposed to react positively to such a message. Otto of Freising recorded that "Louis was impelled by a secret desire to go to Jerusalem because his brother Philip had bound himself by the same vow but had been prevented by death."²²⁴ Others seem to think that this pilgrimage would serve as penance for the church Louis had destroyed at Vitry three years previously.²²⁵ Later chroniclers assumed Louis had taken the cross to atone for an illicit oath made to Count Theobald II of Blois-Champagne.²²⁶

Whatever his motivation for entertaining the idea of a crusade, the immediate reaction of the French magnates was decidedly lukewarm. And so, Louis VII did not

²²¹ Otto of Freising, *Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus*, ed. A. Hofmeister, MGHS Scriptorum more rerum Germanicarum 45 (Hanover and Leipzig, 1912), 7:33. All quotes are taken from the English translation entitled *The two cities; a chronicle of universal history to the year 1146 A.D.*, trans. C. C. Mierow, A. P. Evans and C. Knapp (New York, 1928).

²²² *Regesta pontificum romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post Christum natum MCXCVIII*, ed. P. Jaffé et al. (Leipzig, 1885), no. 8796; Otto of Freising, *Gesta Friderici imperatoris Auctoribus Ottone et Rogewino*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH Scriptorum more rerum Germanicarum 6 (Hanover, 1867), 55-7. I have used C. C. Mierow's English translation *The Deeds of Frederick II* (New York, 1953).

²²³ Odo of Deuil, *De profectioe Ludovici VII in orientem*, ed. and trans. V. G. Berry (New York, 1948), 6.

²²⁴ Otto of Freising, *Gesta*, 54.

²²⁵ "Historia Francorum," *RHGF* 12: 116.

²²⁶ Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora* ed. H. R. Luard, RS 57, 7 vols. (London, 1872-83) 2:179. This translation is based upon *Matthew Paris's English History*, trans. J. A. Gies, 3 vols. (London, 1852-54). This interpretation is shared by at least one modern historian. A. Grabois, "The Crusade of King Louis VII: A Reconsideration," *Crusade and Settlement*, ed. P. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), 95-7. See also, J. Phillips, *Defenders of the Holy Land. Relations between the Latin East and the West 1119-1187* (Oxford, 1996), 79-81.

take the cross in December 1145, despite having “summoned certain of his princes and revealed what he was turning over in his mind.”²²⁷ Instead it was decided that the matter would be discussed in greater detail when they gathered again for the Easter court in Vézelay.²²⁸ In the meantime, it was agreed that the pope should be consulted on a matter of this gravity.²²⁹ Eugenius’s response was positive; *Quantum Praedecessores* was reissued at the beginning of March 1146 and Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux was placed in charge of preaching the crusade.²³⁰ With this, the resistance of the French nobility seems to have disappeared. On Easter Sunday 1146, “the king and many nobles with him, received the sign of the cross which had been sent by the pope.”²³¹ Conrad III and a number of German nobles soon followed the lead of their French counterparts and enrolled in the pilgrimage to Jerusalem at Bernard’s urging.²³²

The welter of reasons alleged for Louis’s vow and the procedural uncertainty that surrounded the early stages of the Second Crusade might suggest that a somewhat confused understanding of the crusade had developed in the half century following the First Crusade. Upon closer examination, however, one sees that this is not in fact the case. The reasons given for Louis VII’s decision reflect an awareness that a journey to Jerusalem, *especially* an armed journey in aid of the Church, would count as penance for a multitude of sins. In 1145 it was clear – if not to Louis VII, then to his magnates and advisors – that the pope was the only authority who could decide that the circumstances in the East warranted a new crusade. This explains their hesitance to take the cross at Bourges. They knew that the pope was also the only one who could issue a remission of this magnitude. Furthermore, there was no question that for Louis

²²⁷ Otto of Freising, *Gesta*, 54. When expounding on the principle of votive obligation in his *Decretum* (c. 1140) Gratian writes that while it is one thing to entertain a proposal mentally and even to pronounce it aloud, it is quite another to make a vow. In the former case, one was not bound to carry out the proposed activity. *Decretum Gratiani*, C.17. q. 1-2.

²²⁸ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, 6-8; William of St. Denis, *Sugerii Vita*, 3 in *Oeuvres complètes de Suger*, ed. A. Lecoy de la Marche, Société de l’histoire de France (Paris, 1867), 393.

²²⁹ Otto of Friesing, *Gesta*, 55.

²³⁰ P. Rassow, “Der Text der Kreuzzugsbulle Eugens III,” *Neues Archiv*, 45 (1924), 302-05; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 57-9.

²³¹ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, 8; Otto of Freising, *Gesta*, 58.

²³² Otto of Friesing, *Gesta*, 61; “Ex Vita et Rebus Gestis Sancti Bernardi, Abbatis Clarevallensis,” *RHGF* 14, 378:B-D.

to “fight for the King of all in order to succor the Christians” meant that he would take the cross.²³³ Eugenius III also assumed that those who “vigorously gird[ed] themselves to oppose the multitude of the infidel” would take the cross.²³⁴

The process by which one prepared for a crusade remained consistent throughout the first half of the twelfth century. When Louis VII made his crusade vow on Easter Sunday 1146 he was following a template that had been established in 1095 and would still be recognizable when his son took the cross at Gisors in 1188.²³⁵ Crusade vows continued to be spoken aloud and in the present tense in front of witnesses. Immediately after making the vow the cross was physically attached to the votary’s outer garments and was not to be removed until the terms of the vow were completed. One received the cross from the hands of a priest or bishop depending upon one’s rank and station. Louis VII and a number of the French nobles received the sign of the cross from the hands of Bernard of Clairvaux. A wooden platform was erected outside the town so that the entire assembly could be present. Here the abbot began to preach the crusade. Almost at once and

with a loud outcry people on every side began to demand crosses. And when he had sowed, rather than distributed, the parcel of crosses which had been prepared beforehand, he was forced to tear his own garments into crosses and to sow them abroad.²³⁶

A year would elapse between Louis VII’s assumption of the cross and the reception of the pilgrimage symbols associated with his journey. During the fair of St. Denis held during Lent 1147, the king, ‘in the sight of everyone, requested from St. Denis the oriflamme and permission to depart’. The oriflamme was the sacred banner of St. Denis, of red or orange-red silk, which kings of France received on setting out for war

²³³ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, 6.

²³⁴ In *Quantum Praedecessores* the only reference to the cross is in terms of protection offered to crusaders by the Church. No legal suits were “to be brought thereafter concerning all the possessions they hold peacefully when they take the cross until there is certain knowledge of their return or death.” Rassow, “Kreuzzugsbulle,” 304.

²³⁵ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 81-2; *Das Itinerarium peregrinorum*, ed. H.E. Mayer, *Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 18 (1962), 277; Ralph of Diceto, *Ymagines Historiarum*, ed. W. Stubbs RS 68 (London, 1876), 51, 73-4.

²³⁶ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, 8.

At Easter Louis went to the abbey itself, where he received the oriflamme, in place of the pilgrim's staff, from the abbot and the pilgrim's wallet and a blessing from the pope, again demonstrating that the crusader had two distinct obligations.²³⁷

In 1095, Urban II had linked the remission of sins offered to those who took the cross with the penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem.²³⁸ There was no distinction between the goal of the pilgrimage and the military aim of the expedition. In 1147, Eugenius III faced a different situation. Jerusalem itself remained in Christian hands, but the eastern Church was in danger and in need of military assistance from the West. And so, Eugenius proposed that pilgrims wage a penitential war against the Saracens who had defeated Christian forces at Edessa some two years previously. He promised to those who "take up and complete so holy and very necessary a work and labor that remission of sins which our aforesaid predecessor Pope Urban instituted."²³⁹

Quantum Praedecessores makes no explicit mention of Jerusalem. The pope mourned the loss of Edessa, recognizing "how great [is] the danger that threatens the Church of God and all Christianity" because of it.²⁴⁰ He asked that "those who are on God's side and especially the more powerful and the nobles" take up arms,

to oppose the multitude of infidels who are now rejoicing in the victory they have gained over us, to defend in this way the eastern Church . . . and to strive to deliver from their hands the many thousands of our captive brothers.²⁴¹

However, the labor of which the pope speaks is not entirely military in nature. He also refers to this work as a "holy journey" and promised to

grant remission and absolution from sins, as instituted by our aforesaid predecessor, in such a way that whosoever begins and completes so holy a journey or dies on it will obtain absolution from all sins of which he has made confession.²⁴²

²³⁷ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, 16.

²³⁸ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 52, 66.

²³⁹ Rassow, "Kreuzzugsbulle," 302.

²⁴⁰ Rassow, "Kreuzzugsbulle," 303.

²⁴¹ Rassow, "Kreuzzugsbulle," 303.

²⁴² Rassow, "Kreuzzugsbulle," 304-05.

Both the pope and his legate, Bernard of Clairvaux, associated the remission of sins with the labor involved in taking up arms against the infidel *and* the completion of a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre.²⁴³ Jerusalem still loomed large in the Church's conception of crusading despite its absence from *Quantum Praedecessores*.

It would also remain a feature of crusaders' ideas regarding the crusade. Those who took the cross in 1146-1147 vowed to aid the Holy Land. In addition to rendering military assistance to their brethren in the East, crusaders promised to undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre still loomed large for these crusaders. Knights who abandoned the host at Nicea and returned home were said to have "disregarded their vows" even though they had already participated in a number of battles against the Turks.²⁴⁴ Louis VII was reported to have turned down Roger of Antioch's plans to subdue Aleppo and Shayzar because "he ardently desired to go to Jerusalem to fulfill his vows, and his determination was irrevocable."²⁴⁵ Perhaps most telling was an episode in which the opponents of a proposed attack on Constantinople pointed out that this was not an action that fitted the terms of the vow they had made. They argued that Louis VII knew "and we know that we are to visit the Holy Sepulchre, and by command of the supreme pontiff to wipe out our sins with the blood or conversion of the infidels."²⁴⁶ An attack on the Byzantine capital did not fit in with either goal. .

Edessa was the intended target of the Second Crusade. However, the experience of the march from Constantinople convinced Louis and Conrad to abandon their original aim. The Germans had suffered huge losses from which they never recovered when ambushed by Turkish forces near Dorylaeum. The combined force was plagued by a chronic lack of supplies and constant harrying by the Turks on their march through Asia Minor. By the time Louis VII reached Antioch in March 1148 the king wanted nothing to do with a proposed expedition to subdue Aleppo and

²⁴³ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistolae* volume 8 in *S. Bernardi Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H. Rochais (Rome, 1977), nos. 398, 396, 405.

²⁴⁴ WT, 748.

²⁴⁵ WT, 755.

²⁴⁶ Odo of Deuil, *De Profectione*, 70.

Shayzar.²⁴⁷ He flatly refused to join Prince Raymond and his men, desiring only to “go to Jerusalem to fulfill his vows.”²⁴⁸ When the crusaders arrived at Jerusalem in June – though they had fought off Turks along the way – they had not yet engaged in a major battle for the benefit of the eastern Church. The pilgrimage was completed, but most crusaders agreed that the crusade was not. Consequently, when at last Louis VII’s

Prayers [at the Holy Sepulchre] had been accomplished according to custom, a general court was proclaimed at the city of Acre to consider the results of this great pilgrimage, the completion of such great labors and also the enlargement of the realm.²⁴⁹

At Acre it was decided that the crusaders should join the military orders and the princes of the Latin Kingdom in an attack on Damascus. All did not go well, and soon the besiegers found themselves without the necessary supplies to continue. The leaders of the crusading host, “convinced that their undertaking had no chance of success, determined to abandon it and return home.”²⁵⁰ The kings, on the other hand, were not ready to admit defeat. “They called an assembly and tried in vain to arrange for some other undertaking that would render their memory glorious in the eyes of posterity.”²⁵¹ Unable to come to an agreement, Conrad III decided to return to Germany in July 1148. Louis VII would remain through Easter 1149 in the hope of achieving something that would benefit Outremer.²⁵²

Beyond completing a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, what exactly did the crusaders in the armies accompanying Louis VII and Conrad III promise to do? An anonymous Bohemian monk explained that the aim of the crusaders was “to lay down their lives for their brethren and to free the Christian people from the sword of the pagans.”²⁵³ The pope had asked them to defend the eastern Church and to free Christian captives “so that the dignity of the name of Christ may be enhanced in our

²⁴⁷ Phillips, *Defenders*, 83-95.

²⁴⁸ WT, 755.

²⁴⁹ WT, 757.

²⁵⁰ WT, 767.

²⁵¹ WT, 769.

²⁵² Sugar, “Epistolae,” 502, 509.

²⁵³ “Monachi Sazavensis Continuatio,” *MGHS* 9: 159.

time.”²⁵⁴ Bernard of Clairvaux urged his audience to “defend the Lord.”²⁵⁵ Most charters record only that the donor was going to Jerusalem; those that do mention another purpose suggest it was to “fight the pagans.”²⁵⁶ It was clear to the majority of crusaders that at some point they must engage the “infidel” in battle.²⁵⁷

Everyone was aware that the infidel was not confined to the Levant. When Alfonso-Henriques I of Portugal asked Bernard of Clairvaux for assistance with his struggle against the neighboring Almoravids, the abbot was more than willing to accede to his request. As in the East, wrote the abbot, “mother church, as it were with her arms cut off and her face disfigured, appeals for help.”²⁵⁸ The papal legate arranged a twofold response: a fleet of crusaders from England and Flanders was sent to assist the king in the conquest of Lisbon and any Portuguese soldier who took part in the attack was granted a remission of penance. There is nothing to suggest that Alfonso-Henriques or the Portuguese knights who accompanied him took the cross before embarking on the siege of Lisbon.²⁵⁹ Moreover, the main source for this expedition, *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensis*, differentiates between crusaders and the Portuguese.²⁶⁰ On 21 October 1147 Lisbon fell to the combined Christian forces. After spending the winter there, the northern crusaders “sailed their separate ways, as they had vowed, and arrived at the Holy Sepulchre.”²⁶¹ Some of their number went on to

²⁵⁴ Rassow, “Kreuzzugsbulle,” 303.

²⁵⁵ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistolae*, 565-7.

²⁵⁶ “Cartulaire de l’abbaye de Vigeois,” ed. H. Bonnehomme de Montégut, *Bulletin de la Société archéologique et historique in Limousin* 39 (1890), 192, 214.

²⁵⁷ Odo of Deuil, *De Profectione*, 70.

²⁵⁸ *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensis: The Conquest of Lisbon*, ed. and trans. C.W. David (Columbia University Press: New York, 1948), 78.

²⁵⁹ J. Phillips, “St Bernard of Clairvaux, the Low Countries and the Lisbon Letter of the Second Crusade,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1997), 485-97. Also see, S.B. Edgington, “Albert of Aachen, St Bernard and the Second Crusade,” *The Second Crusade: Scope and Consequences*, ed. J. Phillips and M. Hoch (Manchester, 2001), 54-70. For another opinion see C.W. David’s introduction to his edition of *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi*; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistolae*, no 397.

²⁶⁰ The opposite would, in fact, appear to be true. The army accompanying Alfonso-Henriques was referred to as the royal army. In the speech in which Henry de Glanvill spoke of the unity which the cross brought to a diverse group of men – from Cologne, the English, Flemings, Scots and Normans – he makes no attempt to include the Portuguese. The king distinguishes between his men and the ‘Franks’ by which he appears to have meant the crusade host regardless of geographic origin. *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, 105-07, 113-15, 127.

²⁶¹ “Annales sancti Disibodi,” ed. G. Waitz, *MGHS*, 17: 28.

attack Faro and then to participate in the siege of Tortosa, which fell to the Christians on 30 December 1148.²⁶² The majority of the crusaders who had participated in this expedition seem to have left Iberia at this point, continuing on to Jerusalem.²⁶³ Among those who remained to settle in Tortosa one man, Osbert Anglicus, would finally complete his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1168.²⁶⁴ Finishing the pilgrimage weighed heavily on crusaders.

Like those who marched overland the English and Flemish crusaders vowed to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.²⁶⁵ This was in addition to the pilgrimage that the crusaders made to Compostella upon their arrival in Portugal.²⁶⁶ At Oporto the fleet was reminded that ‘the journey itself is not enough, “for the praiseworthy thing is not to have been to Jerusalem but to have lived a good life while on the way; for you cannot arrive there except for the performance of His works.”²⁶⁷ Thus they also participated in a military engagement on the way to aid the Holy Land – the only difference being that it was to be in Lisbon rather than Asia Minor.

For the French crusaders outside the walls of Constantinople the goal of their expedition was “to wipe out our sins with the blood or conversion of the infidel.”²⁶⁸ If the notion of military service was clear, the terms of that service were vague at best, especially once it became clear that an attack on Edessa would not be prudent. Crusaders accompanying the kings of France and Germany had intended to fulfill the military component of their vow prior to arriving in Jerusalem by restoring Edessa to Christian rule. When circumstances dictated otherwise, they found themselves completing their pilgrimage before they had brought any real ‘aid’ to the Holy Land.

²⁶² G. Constable, “A Note on the Route of Anglo-Norman Crusaders of 1147,” *Speculum* 28 (1953), 213-279; Jaspert, “*Capta est Dertosa*,” 90-110.

²⁶³ Jaspert, “*Capta est Dertosa*,” 96-8.

²⁶⁴ *Diplomatari de la catedral de Tortosa*, ed. A. Virgili (Barcelona, 1997), doc. 155 and 188.

²⁶⁵ *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, 72, 78, 102.

²⁶⁶ S. Edgington, “The Lisbon Letter of the Second Crusade,” *Historical Research* 69 (1996), 328-39.

²⁶⁷ *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, 78.

²⁶⁸ Odo of Deuil, *De Profectione*, 70. The notion that the crusade might lead to the conversion of non-believers (not just Jews, as had been the case in the First Crusade) was more prominent in this expedition than it had been previously. B.Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission. European Approaches toward Muslims* (Princeton, 1984), 42-96. It was not only limited to Muslims. See below for a discussion of the aims of crusaders fighting against the Wends in 1146.

Crusaders appreciated how different their experience was from those who had set out for Jerusalem in 1096.

We do not want to and cannot [diminish] out fathers' renown, but events went more easily for them than they have thus far for us. For when they had passed through Constantinople and crossed the Arm they encountered the Turks immediately and entered their lands just as they had wished.²⁶⁹

In these circumstances, it was unclear how to quantify the amount of military service needed to fulfill the vow. How much was enough? Was engaging in defensive skirmishes along the way sufficient? Some of the crusaders seem to have believed so. The count of Flanders, Thierry of Alsace, and Arnulf of Liseux were eager to return home after reaching Jerusalem, though in the end they stayed to participate in the attack on Damascus. Some crusaders, such as Welf VI of Bavaria, waited to hear the decision of the council of Acre before returning home.²⁷⁰ Conrad III seems to have believed that he should participate in at least one successful expedition against the pagans, as did Louis VII. Both seem to have felt that a victory would release them from their obligations, though in the end the French king was willing to wait longer for that to occur.²⁷¹

This confusion as to how much effort should be expended was compounded by the fact that the crusade vow and the resulting obligation were legally discharged when one went and offered prayers at the Holy Sepulchre. At this juncture there still seems to have been no formal or legal obligation to remain in the Holy Land to fight afterwards. The concern that some crusaders might travel to Jerusalem and then depart without providing military aid was, therefore, a real one. Otto of Freising reports that as knights arrived in Jerusalem, Conrad "induced all that he could by gifts of money to remain."²⁷² One strategy to deal with the procedural uncertainty surrounding the

²⁶⁹ Odo of Deuil, *De Profectione*, 132.

²⁷⁰ V. G. Berry, "The Second Crusade," *A History of the Crusades*, ed. K. Setton *et al.*, 6 vols., 2nd edn. (Madison WI, 1969-89), 1: 507; John of Salisbury, *Historia pontificalis*, ed. M. Chibnall (London, New York, 1956), 24; "Historia Welforum Weingartensis," *MGHS* 21: 27.

²⁷¹ Letters from Louis VII to the Abbot of St. Denis in Suger, "Epistolae," 495 502, 509; Letters from Conrad III to Wibald in "Epistolae Wibaldi," 533-5.

²⁷² Otto of Freising, *Gesta*, 102.

crusader's obligation to provide military service was to keep crusaders away from Jerusalem as long as possible in order to retain the integrity of the crusading host. In 1123 the Doge and greater men of Venice left the mass of crusaders who had accompanied them on the ships, while they toured the holy sites and completed their devotions.²⁷³ By ensuring that the majority of the crusading host did not visit the Holy Sepulchre before they engaged in battle, the leaders of this crusade were able to provide the military assistance that had been requested and promised.

At the same time the cross was linked to the idea of pilgrimage and the Holy Sepulchre, there was an alternate appreciation of the crusade that held that the soldiery of Christ could be deployed anywhere the Christian faith was under attack. This helps explain the efforts Bernard of Clairvaux made on Alfonso-Henriques behalf. It was an idea that had originated with reform popes such as Gregory VII, Urban II and Paschal II and would be established in church law by Calixtus II. At the Council of Pisa in 1135, Pope Innocent II even linked the war he was fighting against Roger of Sicily with crusading. Though he did not go so far as suggest that the cross should be taken, he did promise "to those who set out against him or Peter Leone by land or by sea to free the Church, and labor faithfully in that service, the same remission of sin as that which Pope Urban II decreed at the Council of Clermont for all those who set out to Jerusalem to free the Christians."²⁷⁴ It does not automatically follow that where there was a battle and a remission of penance granted to participants, there was a crusade.²⁷⁵ Nonetheless, it does point towards a willingness to identify a certain type of military service with the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for which participants assumed a cross. Not until the 1140s was this idea to come fully into its own.

That the crusade eventually came to be defined by what it did rather than where it was fought has much to do with the spokesman for the Second Crusade, St

²⁷³ FC, 655-6; WT, 573.

²⁷⁴ Innocent II "Concilium Pisanum" *MGH Capitula episcoporum*, ed. P. Brommer (Hanover, 1984 -) 1: 577-9, decree 6.

²⁷⁵ Housley, "Crusades against Christians," 23. Though Alfonso I might well have thought this was the case. See discussion above.

Bernard of Clairvaux.²⁷⁶ Bernard believed the crusade to be a test put by God to the laity to see if there were “any that understand and seek him and grieve over his plight.”²⁷⁷ The crusade was God’s “way of offering you a favorable opportunity, not of destruction but of salvation.”²⁷⁸ Bernard was able to detach from the crusading idea the concrete goal of liberating the city of Jerusalem.²⁷⁹ For Bernard the crusader’s pilgrimage was figurative; a spiritual journey that could be carried out anywhere that God “puts himself into a position of necessity or pretends to be in one” or where a crusader might “defend his Lord from the infamous accusation of treachery.”²⁸⁰ It comes as no surprise, therefore, that as legate he was willing to extend the arena in which the Second Crusade was fought. As one chronicler noted, “the initiators of the expedition deemed it advisable to designate one part of the army for the eastern regions, another for Spain, and a third against the Slavs.”²⁸¹

The abbot of Clairvaux did not act alone in extending the scale upon which the Second Crusade was fought. The Christian laity also played a significant role in adapting the crusade to new circumstances. In Germany, Bernard was confronted with a group of Saxon lords who were unenthusiastic about taking the cross for the expedition to the East. They told him they would rather attack the pagan Slavs on their own frontier.²⁸² Rather than trying to further entice them into taking the cross in aid of the Holy Land, Bernard referred the matter to the pope. Eugenius III responded with the bull *Divina dispensatione* (April 1147).²⁸³ This decree authorized the Christians of Northern Europe to crusade against their pagan neighbors. The privileges, merits, and insignia of the crusaders were to be the same as for those journeying to Jerusalem and Bishop Anselm of Havelberg was appointed legate.²⁸⁴ The Saxons “took the cross in a

²⁷⁶ Constable, “Second Crusade,” 247.

²⁷⁷ Bernard of Clairvaux, “Epistolae,” 566.

²⁷⁸ Bernard of Clairvaux, “Epistolae,” 565.

²⁷⁹ Katzir, “Second Crusade,” 9; N. Housley, “Jerusalem and the Development of the Crusade Idea 1099-1128,” *The Horns of Hattin*, ed. B. Z. Kedar (London, 1992), 27-40; *First Crusade*, 135-52.

²⁸⁰ Bernard of Clairvaux, “Epistolae,” 653.

²⁸¹ Helmold of Bosau, *The Chronicle of the Slavs*, trans. F.J. Taschen (New York, 1935), 172.

²⁸² Otto of Freising, *Gesta*, 76.

²⁸³ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistolae*, 8: 432-3; “Epistolae et Privilegia,” *PL* 180: 1204.

²⁸⁴ Eugenius III, “Epistolae,” 1204.

like manner in order to assail these races in war. Their crosses [were different] in this respect, because they were not simply sewed to their clothing but brandished aloft, surmounting a wheel."²⁸⁵ If the way in which these crusaders bore their crosses was unusual, the vow they took was equally irregular. The Danes may have "assumed the emblems of holy pilgrimage," but there was no pilgrimage site where the vow was to be discharged.²⁸⁶ Nor were any specific fortresses or cities offered up as targets. The crusaders were ordered to "fight the Wends until such a time as by God's help they shall either be converted or killed."²⁸⁷ This would also seem to be the substance of the vow taken by Saxon crusaders. The army assembled in June 1147, split in two and invested the fortresses of Dobin and Demmin.²⁸⁸ At Dobin, Henry the Lion and the Archbishop of Bremen stayed until the garrison agreed to accept baptism, then quickly withdrew without doing further damage. A similar series of events occurred at Demmin. It was agreed that the Slavs would be baptized, Danish captives handed over and peace made.²⁸⁹ Strictly speaking, the crusaders had completed the terms of their vows – although not to the extent that Bernard might have wished.

The extension of the crusade to the northern frontier was to affect the substance of the crusading vow; in these circumstances the cross no longer linked with Jerusalem, nor to the completion of a pilgrimage. Rather, the terms of the vow appear to be more exclusively focused on specific military targets; in the case of the Saxon crusaders, the terms of the vow were based on Bernard's conception about the purposes of the crusade and the circumstances in which it was to be fought.²⁹⁰ The

²⁸⁵ Otto of Freising, *Gesta*, 76. Undoubtedly, the adoption of a 'different' sort of cross was intentional. The difference in the style of cross carried by the crusaders would have alerted contemporaries that these crusaders had a different target from those traveling to the East.

²⁸⁶ Saxo Grammaticus, *Danorum Regum Iteroumque Historia, Books X-XVI*, ed. and trans. E. Christiansen, 2 vols. BAR International Series 84 (1980), 1: 364.

²⁸⁷ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistolae*, no. 394.

²⁸⁸ Helmold of Bosau, *Chronicle of the Slavs*, 180.

²⁸⁹ Helmold of Bosau, *Chronicle of the Slavs*, 180.

²⁹⁰ Note the focus on conversion as an aim of this pilgrimage; from Odo of Deuil's account there would seem to have been some idea that conversion was also a goal of the march East. Odo of Deuil, *De Professione*, 70.

same developments occurred in Spain. If Alfonso-Henriques and his soldiers took the cross in 1147, the substance of their vow consisted only of securing Lisbon.²⁹¹

Contemporaries believed the Second Crusade to have been a failure. "Almost nothing successful and nothing worthy of mention was done on that expedition."²⁹² Crusaders may have fulfilled their vows of pilgrimage, but they had not come close to "accomplishing their purpose," because the two grand armies that had left the West in the summer of 1147 had not been able to extend the Christian name nor reverse the loss of Edessa.²⁹³ They had barely managed to stay alive. In the North, what would usually have been considered a successful summer raid was not regarded as such in this case. The cross did not bring additional glory; if anything it paved the way for disappointment. Bernard of Clairvaux had made the permanent conversion of the Wends the goal of the campaign and so it too was perceived to be a failure.²⁹⁴ "That grand expedition broke up with slight gain. The Slavs immediately afterward became worse: they neither respected their baptism, nor kept their hands from ravaging the Danes."²⁹⁵ Of "all the works which the crusading army did," only the conquest of Lisbon "proved successful."²⁹⁶ Success meant victory, although some apologists tried to reassure themselves and others that even "if our expedition was not good for the extension of boundaries or the comfort of our bodies, it was good, however, for the salvation of many souls."²⁹⁷

Of course in light of the perceived failure of these campaigns, explanations for their downfall had to be found. Many blamed the treachery of the Greeks.²⁹⁸ Others

²⁹¹ *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, 110-15; M. Bennett, "Military Aspects of the Conquest of Lisbon," *The Second Crusade: Scope and Consequences*, ed. J. Phillips and M. Hoch (Manchester, 2001), 72-4.

²⁹² Roger of Torigni, *Chronicle in Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, RS 82, 4 vols. (London, 1889), 4: 154.

²⁹³ WT, 767.

²⁹⁴ E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: the Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100-1525*, 2nd edn. (London and New York, 1997), 55.

²⁹⁵ Helmold of Bosau, *Chronicle of the Slavs*, 181.

²⁹⁶ Helmold of Bosau, *Chronicle of the Slavs*, 175.

²⁹⁷ Otto of Freising, *Gesta*, 91. See also, "Vita Sancti Bernardi et res gestae," PL 185: 309. E. Siberry, *Criticism of the Crusades, 1095-1271* (Oxford, 1985), 77-81.

²⁹⁸ "Annales Magdeburgenses," *MGHS* 16: 188; "Annales Romoaldi Archiepiscopi Salemitani," *MGHS* 19: 425; "Annales Sancti Pauli Viridunensis," *MGHS* 16: 501; Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, 98, 112, 126.

thought it was due to the guile of the inhabitants of the Holy Land.²⁹⁹ Those who had a broader conception of the crusade looked beyond the politics of Byzantium and the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem for an explanation. Otto of Freising integrated the overall failure of the crusade into his ideas about human sinfulness.³⁰⁰ Bernard attributed it to the will of God. “For in all these things His fury has not turned from us.”³⁰¹ The point upon which everyone seemed to have agreed was that the presence of “the defenseless mob” – those who were either unsuited or unable to fight - on the pilgrimage to the East had not served the army of God well.³⁰² Odo of Deuil advised that in the case of any future crusade being undertaken a restriction should be placed on the type of individual who could personally participate. Eugenius III had restricted the sort of clothing and arms to be worn and carried by the knight while on pilgrimage. Louis’s chaplain wished

that he had instructed the infantry in the same way, and keeping the weak at home, had equipped all the strong with the sword instead of the wallet and the bow instead of the staff; for the weak and helpless are always a burden to their comrades and a source of prey to their enemies.³⁰³

What was needed was an army, not just composed of the willing, but also the able. Along the way both Conrad III and Louis VII tried to streamline their armies by separating those too weak or otherwise unsuited to fighting from the main host and sending them ahead to Jerusalem.³⁰⁴ Conrad was severely criticized for his efforts by the crusaders he intended to exile from the army. Most seem to have misinterpreted his motives in sending them away. They did not see that it might be to their benefit to

²⁹⁹ “Chronicon Coenobii Sancti Medardi Suessionensis, extr.,” *RHGF* 12: 278; “Chronicon Nicolai Ambianensis, extr.,” *RHGF* 14: 22; Robert of Torigni, *Chronicle in Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, vol.4, RS 82 (London, 1889), 155; WT, 767.

³⁰⁰ Otto of Freising, *Gesta*, 91-4.

³⁰¹ Bernard of Clairvaux, “De consideratione ad Eugenium papam,” *Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H. Rochais, 8 vols. (Rome, 1957-77), 3: 410-13; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 61-3.

³⁰² Odo of Deuil, *De profectioe*, 130; “Annales Herbipolenses,” *MGHS* 16: 5; Gerhoh of Reichersberg, “De investigatione Antichristi,” *MGH Libelli de lite*. 3: 374-6; William of St. Denis, “Dialogus,” ed. A. Wilmart, *Revue Mabillon* 32 (1942), 107-8.

³⁰³ Odo of Deuil, *De profectioe*, 94.

³⁰⁴ “Annales Palidenses,” *MGHS* 16: 83; Odo of Deuil, *De profectioe*, 130.

complete the pilgrimage as soon as possible. Instead, they complained that Conrad was “too proud to have us common people with him.”³⁰⁵

The crusade was, by definition, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Throughout the first half of the twelfth century, the crusade continued to be associated with the city of Jerusalem. (despite the best efforts of innovators like Bernard of Clairvaux). A pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre was the quintessential penitential activity. As such, the Church could not forbid anyone from taking advantage of the opportunity it offered to penitents of any station.³⁰⁶ Anyone who knows the story of the First Crusade also knows that many who would have been thought unsuited for this sort of activity took part.³⁰⁷ “Indeed” as Albert of Aachen noted “every class of the Christian profession, nay, also women and those influenced by the spirit of penance – all joyfully entered upon this journey.”³⁰⁸ The same was true of the expedition which left Europe in 1147, but the results, this time, were markedly different.

Those who took the cross had to complete the terms of the vow. This was true even of those who had accompanied the crusade host despite being unsuited or unequipped for battle.³⁰⁹ This might explain the reluctance of the crusaders in the armies of the Second Crusade to be sent away from the main army: the weak, as well as the strong, had undertaken the obligation to aid in the defense of the Holy Land. By 1150, however, it was becoming clear to those organizing the crusade, that while they could not control who took the cross, limitations might be placed on who it was that actually might fulfill the vow in person. Unsurprisingly, this was to have an effect on the substance of the crusading vow as well as the way crusaders came to understand the activity associated with the cross.

³⁰⁵ “Annales Palidenses,” 83.

³⁰⁶ Riley-Smith, *First Crusade*, 24.

³⁰⁷ W. Poges, “The Clergy, the Poor and the Non-Combatants on the First Crusade,” *Speculum* 21 (1946), 1-23; J. France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge, 1994), 126-7.

³⁰⁸ Albert of Aachen, “Historia,” 317.

³⁰⁹ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, 94.

Chapter Three: Crusading Obligations, 1150-1187

As was suggested in the previous chapter, the first steps taken towards the transformation of the crusade from a pilgrimage into the archetype of Christian holy war were taken in the first half of the twelfth century. In the 1120s Pope Calixtus applied the mechanisms of the crusade to the efforts to reconquer Spain from the Almoravids. Over twenty years later Pope Eugenius III authorized the Christians of Northern Europe to crusade against their pagan neighbors. Due to the efforts of influential thinkers such as Bernard of Clairvaux and the policies of various twelfth century popes, some members of contemporary society gradually began to accept that the crusade encompassed waging war against the enemies of Christ wherever they were found. As shall be argued here, and in the following chapter, the second step in this process was the reinterpretation of the crusader's responsibilities so as to better reflect the reality of crusading activity in the second half of the twelfth century. The experience of the Second Crusade had taught contemporaries that success in the battlefield hinged upon Christendom's ability to deploy a well-supplied and adequately trained army that was composed only of soldiers mindful of their status as penitents. Popes, kings and an ever-increasing majority of Christian society came to accept that participation in the crusade should be restricted to those who were suited to the task. The cross should signify that the individual was "well skilled in the use of arrows and lances, and versed in military matters; impatient to attack the enemies of the faith; profitably and happily engaged for the service of Christ."¹ It should also demonstrate their willingness to imitate the life of Christ. Previously, "arrogance and licentiousness, [had] rightly brought home only loss of wealth and person."² Though the crusade would continue to be classified as a pilgrimage, after 1150 those who set out to organize crusades placed an increased emphasis on the martial obligation of the crusader and the penitential nature of the crusader's military service.

¹ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, ed. J.F. Dimock, in volume 6 of the *Opera*, RS 21 (London, 1868), 147.

² Otto of Freising, *Gesta Friderici imperator Auctoribus Ottone et Rogewino*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum* 6 (Hanover, 1867), 91-4.

Crusaders appear to have accepted that they must fulfill the minimum requirements laid out by the pope as necessary for the reception of the spiritual benefits associated with the crusade to be assured of receiving their reward. 'Service' became the key component in the papacy's formulation of the crusading obligation in the second half of the twelfth century. In this chapter, I argue that the most significant alteration to the substance of the crusade vow made prior to 1187 was initiated by Pope Alexander III (1159-81). Up until the pontificate of Alexander III the remission of sins or spiritual benefits granted to those participating in a crusade were equated primarily with the completion of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, rather than with the armed conflict in which these pilgrims engaged. Even if it was allowed that fighting on behalf of the Church was spiritually beneficial, it had never been clear exactly how much service either God or the Church expected the crusader to contribute. However, in 1166, 1169 and again in 1181, Alexander III would insist that those who took up the cross in aid of the Holy Land not only commit to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but also promise to serve in the Levant for two years if they wished to have the penance for all the sins they had confessed remitted. The lesson of the Second Crusade, the needs of the Holy Land, as well as the pope's own interest in establishing legal norms in matters pertaining to the Church contributed to the decision to clarify the nature of the spiritual benefits accorded to the crusader and thus, the crusader's obligation.

Alexander III's vision of the crusade was conservative.³ Despite focusing on the military component of the crusader's vow, Alexander maintained that the cross denoted an obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. While believing that that a war undertaken on behalf of Christ and his Church was spiritually meritorious the remission of penance he granted to those who took up a cross was so substantial precisely because in going to the aid of the Holy Land one also was undertaking a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. The pope was not alone in perceiving the link

³ This is especially true when one compares his conception of the crusade with that of his legate in Spain, Cardinal Hyacinth (Celestine III) who worked tirelessly to see the mechanisms and privileges extended to the conflicts against the Almohads in Spain. O'Callaghan, *Reconquest*, 55-61.

between crusade and pilgrimage – the majority of those who took the cross in the period between the end of the Second Crusade and the fall of Jerusalem in 1187 completed a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. Thus, this period did not see a new conception of the crusading obligation emerge, only a growing appreciation that not everyone who wished to participate in this pilgrimage was suited for the kind of ‘service’ required of the pilgrim.

The Crusading Movement, 1148-1187: a Period of ‘Low Morale’?

Sorrow and disappointment at the inability to secure Damascus in the summer of 1148 was palpable both amongst the crusade host and with those who stayed at home. The unsatisfactory conclusion of the expedition was mourned by the troubadour Marcabru, who sang of “the public outcry relating to that other washing-place [the Holy Land which] pours down on the highest ranking leaders: broken failures, weary of valor, who love neither joy nor delight.”⁴ And while contemporary commentators may have diverged in their explanations as to why the three-pronged offensive against the enemies of Christ, collectively referred to today as the Second Crusade, had failed, they did not quibble over their evaluation of the effort as a whole. Like the historians who have examined the events of 1147-49 in more recent times, contemporaries cast the Second Crusade as an unqualified disaster. Contemporaries paid little attention to the successes crusaders had enjoyed at Lisbon and later, at Almería.⁵ The spokesman for the expedition, Bernard of Clairvaux reflected that “we have fallen upon grave times . . . for the Lord, provoked by our sins, gave the appearance of having judged the world prematurely, [1 Cor: 4:5] with justice, indeed, but forgetful of his mercy. He spared neither his people nor his name.”⁶ One of Bernard’s fiercest critics, an

⁴ Lines 59-61, “XXV. Pax in Domine Domini,” in *Marcabru: A Critical Edition*, ed. S. Gaunt, R. Harvey and L. Paterson (Cambridge, 2000). For a discussion of this poem see L.M. Paterson, “Syria, Poitou and the Reconquest (or: Tales of the undead): Who was the count in Marcabru’s *vers del Lavador*?” in *The Second Crusade*, ed. J. Phillips and M. Hoch (Manchester, 2001), 133-49.

⁵ Helmold of Bosau, *The Chronicle of the Slavs*, trans. F.J. Taschen (New York, 1935), 175.

⁶ Bernard of Clairvaux, “De consideratione ad Eugenium papam,” *Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H. Rochais, 8 vols. (Rome, 1957-77), 3: 410-13; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 61-3.

anonymous annalist from Würzburg, claimed that God had allowed “the Western Church, on account of its sins to be cast down.”⁷ Christians had been “seduced” with “empty words” and “vain preaching” to “set out against the Saracens.”⁸ The success Bernard and other “pseudo prophets” had in recruiting amongst all sections of society meant that a large number of Christians “joined in their error, throwing themselves headlong into it to the great peril of bodies and soul.”⁹

This sense of hopelessness in the face of God’s judgment felt by those who participated in or witnessed the Second Crusade from afar is generally accepted as the expedition’s most tangible legacy. Demoralization in the West led to apathy amongst the lay population to whom crusades were primarily pitched and is believed by historians to have been even more damaging to the Latin East than the military defeats and loss of life suffered during the course of the crusade.¹⁰ As the situation in Outremer grew ever more precarious, the majority of Christians in the West were, by and large, to disregard summons to crusade in the Holy Land. Only when Jerusalem fell to Saladin and his troops in October 1187 would widespread enthusiasm for crusading resurface. In between is a period unified by its only constant and definable feature, a “low level of crusading.”¹¹

It is difficult to argue against this characterization of the period separating the Second and Third Crusades. Even a cursory glance at the available data seems to support the contention that on the whole Western Christians once again lost interest in crusading in the second half of the twelfth century.¹² In the period between 1149 and 1187 the papacy issued no less than seven calls summoning Christians to crusade in

⁷ “Annales Herbipolenses,” *MGHS* 16: 3.

⁸ “Annales Herbipolenses,” 3.

⁹ “Annales Herbipolenses,” 3.

¹⁰ M. Hoch, “The price of failure: the Second Crusade as a turning-point in the history of the Latin East?” in *The Second Crusade*, ed. J. Phillips and M. Hoch (Manchester, 2001), 193; Phillips, *Defenders*, 269-70; E. Siberry, *Criticism of the Crusades, 1095-1271* (Oxford, 1980), 190-201.

¹¹ Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 104.

¹² Jonathan Riley-Smith argues that between 1122 and 1144 the crusading idea became dormant except amongst certain families and in certain localized areas. He believes that the idea of crusade was still too radical for most of the arms-bearing class. *First Crusaders*, 166-8.

the East.¹³ Not one of these calls inspired an expedition on the scale of the Second Crusade. After 1147 no Christian king vowed to aid the Holy Land again until 1188.¹⁴ In the North, the struggle to extend the boundaries of Christendom into the Baltic region continued unabated throughout this period. It did so, however, without reference to the papacy or to the apparatus of the crusade. Not until 1171 will Archbishop Eskil of Lund and a number of Cistercian abbots attempt to entice the pope into launching a crusade against the pagan people of the North. The pope's response was guarded. Without making reference to the cross, Alexander III granted that any Dane who joined his king in taking up arms against the Finns and Estonians would be eligible for a remission of one year's penance.¹⁵ The response to the pope's bull was muted. It took until 1184 for the Danes to respond to this proposal and make a large-scale raid on Estonia. Even then it is not clear that this outing was seen as a crusade by participants. There is no evidence that participants assumed the cross.¹⁶

'Crusading' in Spain during these years was also sporadic. The bulk of armed conflicts in which the Christians of Iberia engaged with Muslims in the second half of the twelfth century do not appear to have been classified as crusades by either organizers or participants. Popes authorized Spaniards to take up the cross against the

¹³ Eugenius III, Abbot Suger, and Bernard of Clairvaux tried to rouse the French to return to the East as early as 1150. See, G. Constable, "The Crusading Project of 1150," *Montjoie. Studies in Crusade History in Honour of Hans Eberhard Meyer*, ed. B.Z. Kedar, J. Riley-Smith, and R. Hiestand (Aldershor, 1997), 67-76; Phillips, *Defenders*, 106-18. Adrian IV would issue a crusade bull in 1157. His successor, Alexander III, would respond to ever more frequent pleas for help by calling the Christians of the West to aid their brothers in the East in 1165, 1166, 1169, probably in 1172 and in 1181. Another plea was made in 1184 by Lucius III. Specific references to these various encyclicals can be found below.

¹⁴ Louis VII of France and Henry II took the cross at Gisors in January 1188. See, H.E. Mayer, "Henry II and the Holy Land," *English Historical Review*, (1982), 721-39 and C. Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Chicago, 1988), 36-56. Frederick Barbarossa was to follow their lead and assume the cross two months later. *Historia expugnatione Frederici imperatoris* in *Quellen zur Geschichte des Kreuzzuges Kaiser Fredrichs I*, ed. A. Choust, MGH Scriptorum, n.s. (Berlin, 1928), 5: 6-7.

¹⁵ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, series I, iii, ed. C. A. Christensen, H. Nielsen and L. Weibull (Copenhagen, 1976), no. 27. For a full treatment of papal policy in regards to crusading see, Iben Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147-1257*, PhD, Cambridge University (January 2004). On pages 46-9 Schmidt points out that conversion was only one part or aim of Danish royal policy when it came to conquering pagan peoples. The crusade against the Wends, as it had been framed by Bernard of Clairvaux, demanded that all pagans be converted or killed. It was far less flexible a tool for interaction and negotiation, something contemporaries appear to have appreciated.

¹⁶ E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: the Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100-1525*, 2nd edn. (London and New York, 1997), 71.

Almohads only three times over the course of almost forty years: in 1153, 1157-58 and, perhaps, in 1175.¹⁷ By contrast, penitential warfare that did not require participants to take the cross persisted.

But is it in fact true that “after the Second Crusade Europe had had enough of crusades for a while?”¹⁸ The situation demands a more complex answer than either a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’ provides. There is another possible interpretation of this data, an explanation that takes into account the larger picture of what was going on in Europe during this period as well as evidence suggesting that on the whole contemporaries remained committed to supporting crusading activity both in the Holy Land and elsewhere. The arms-bearing classes of Europe retained a lively interest in crusading, especially at the highest levels of society. At various times throughout this period Henry II of England and Louis VII of France expressed interest in taking the cross for crusades in Spain as well as the Holy Land.¹⁹ As in the case of these two would-be crusaders, circumstances in the West kept many of those who wanted to crusade at home.²⁰ In 1185 Henry and his councilors told the Patriarch of Jerusalem that as king he needed to stay in his kingdom rather than travel to the East. According to his coronation oath the king’s duty lay in preserving peace and maintaining order and justice in his own domain.²¹ Moreover, these two kings were often at odds with each other over Henry II’s expansionist tendencies. The French king supported Henry’s

¹⁷ O’Callaghan, *Reconquest*, 50-60. O’Callaghan argues that this is not because the popes did not have the opportunity. Rather, the failure of the Second Crusade spawned a reluctance to “launch an international crusade in Spain.”

¹⁸ Mayer, *The Crusades*, 137.

¹⁹ Pope Adrian IV counseled against an expedition to Spain, suggesting that the French and English kings’ interference in what was essentially a local struggle might not actually be wanted by the Spanish. Roger of Hoveden, *Gesta regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti abbatis. The chronicle of the reigns of Henry II. and Richard I. A.D. 1169-1192*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 49, 2 vols. (London, 1867) 1:116; Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 73, 2 vols. (London 1879-1880), 1: 371-72; D. Mansilla, *La Documentacion Pontifica Hasta Inocencio III (965-1216)*, Monumenta Hispaniae Vaticana Seccion: Registros 1 (Rome, 1955), 122-3, no. 103 (18 February 1159); Roger of Torigni, *Chronicle in Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, RS 82, 4 vols. (London, 1889), 4: 504.

²⁰ For an examination of the possible motives Henry II might have had in delaying his departure to the East see, Mayer, “Henry II,” 725-6. Compare with Tyerman’s assessment in *England and the Crusades*, 39-42.

²¹ Ralph of Diceto, *Ymagines Historiarum*, ed. W. Stubbs RS 68 (London, 1876), 2:33-4.

sons in their various rebellions, and neither trusted the other not to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the absence a crusade would require. The only solution would be to agree to go on crusade together. Henry II finally took the cross in 1188, only when it was clear that Louis VII's successor, Philip II, was also promising to crusade.

The political situation in Europe in the third quarter of the twelfth century was no doubt a contributing factor in many individuals' decisions as to whether or not to take the cross.²² Most contemporaries believed that the cross implied a pilgrimage to the East, and thus an absence of at least a year. Like the kings of England and France many found it an inconvenient time to leave their lands. Instead of going on crusade in person, therefore, many provided alternate forms of aid to those battling the enemies of Christ, aid which in many cases reflected an appreciation of at least some of the needs of those on the front lines. This was especially true of Henry II who during his lifetime earned the epitaph "chief supporter of the Holy Land."²³ Walter Map tells of a meeting held at La Grange Saint-Arnould in 1182 where Henry II and Philip II of France were approached by ambassadors from the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The English king was reported to have told the bishop of Acre that he had,

resolved to visit the Sepulchre of Christ at a suitable opportunity. For the time being [he wished] to help according to [his] resources. For it [was] clear that only a desperate situation could have brought such high-ranking ambassadors here. For the present, [he would] transmit through the bishop 60,000 marks.²⁴

²² This was complicated by the fact that papacy was distracted by its ongoing struggle with the Hohenstaufen emperor. J. Laudage, *Alexander III. und Friedrich Barbarossa* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1997). In Spain, internal division amongst the kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula meant that presenting a united front against the Almohads proved impossible for most of the second half of the twelfth century. In several cases the animosity was so great that Christian kings fell free to employ Muslim troops in their struggles against other Christian rulers. D.W. Lomax, *The Reconquest of Spain* (London and New York, 1978), 121.

²³ "praecipuus terrae Palaestinae sustentator" in Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica* in *Opera*, ed. J.S. Brewer RS 21 (London, 1861-91), 5: 304.

²⁴ Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, ed. M.R. James, *Anecdota Oxoniensia Medieval and Modern Series 14* (Oxford, 1914), 240-1.

Both the French and English kings authorized taxes in aid of the Holy Land in 1166 and again in 1185.²⁵ The money raised from this tax would presumably be used to assist in the building of additional fortifications and the hiring of mercenaries, both of which were of critical importance as the Muslim threat grew in strength in this period.²⁶ The funds Henry II had saved for thirteen years was used in 1187 to acquire more soldiers with which to face Saladin.²⁷ Unfortunately, as the Patriarch had lamented after failing in his recruitment mission of 1185, what the Holy Land needed was a strong leader to come to its rescue. "We want a prince, not money. From everywhere we receive money but no prince. We want a prince that needs money, not money which needs a prince."²⁸

There is another development that might well account for the lack of large-scale crusading in this period: the growth of the military orders. The first military order, the Order of the Temple, had been founded in Jerusalem around 1120 by a small group of French knights who had decided to remain in the Holy Land and devote their lives to the defense of its people and places as professed members of a religious order.²⁹ The Hospital of Saint John, founded in Jerusalem prior to the First Crusade, began to assume military duties in the Holy Land by the mid-1120s.³⁰ By the 1170s a spate of local crusading orders were founded in Spain, although after 1143 both the Templars and Hospitallars also began to assist the Christian kings in their attacks on the Moors.³¹ Writing in the 1170s William of Tyre observed that the Templars

²⁵ Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 40-2; Ralph Diceto, "Ymagines Historiarum" in *Opera*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 68, 2 vols. (London, 1876), 2: 33-4; Gervase of Canterbury, *Works*, 198-9; Robert of Torigni, *Chronicle*, 515. The 1166 tax is analyzed by B. Kedar in "The General Tax of 1183 in the Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem: Innovation or Adaptation?" in *English Historical Review* 89 (1974), 341-3. For the 1185 tax see F.A. Cazel Jr., "The Tax of 1185 in Aid of the Holy Land," *Speculum* 30 (1955), 385-92.

²⁶ Phillips, *Defenders*, 9-10.

²⁷ Mayer, "Henry II and the Holy Land," 721-39.

²⁸ Gerald of Wales, *Hibernica*, 5: 362-3; Mayer, "Henry II and the Holy Land," 732-4.

²⁹ M. Barber, *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple* (Cambridge, 1994).

³⁰ J. Riley-Smith, *The Knights of Saint John in Jerusalem and Cyprus, c. 1050-1310* (London, 1967); J. Phillips, "Archbishop Henry of Reims and the militarization of the Hospitallers," *The Military Orders, 2: Welfare and Warfare*, ed. H. Nicholson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 83-8.

³¹ J. O'Callaghan, *The Spanish Military Order of Calatrava and its Affiliates* (London, 1975); D.W. Lomax, *La orden de Santiago (1170-1275)*, (Madrid, 1965); A. J. Forey, *The Templars in the Corona de Aragón* (London, 1973).

have now grown so great that there are in this Order today about 300 knights who wear white mantles, in addition to the brothers, who are almost countless. They are said to have immense possessions both here and overseas, so that there is now not a province in the Christian world which has not bestowed upon the aforesaid brothers a portion of its goods.³²

It is clear from the rapid growth of the order of the Temple (in terms of recruitment, legacies and donations) and the speed with which its model was imitated by established orders, that the ethos of a religious order composed of fighting men appealed to the arms-bearing classes of the twelfth century.³³ In the same way the military orders appropriated the “idea and practice of penitential war usually applied to laymen,” the orders may also have drawn off some individuals who would have made a more temporary commitment had this option not existed.³⁴ Either way, as Adrian IV emphasized in 1157, the continued support of these orders was integral to the continued safety of the Holy Land and the Iberian Peninsula. The military orders served as a permanent and professional army upon which those living in frontier regions could depend.³⁵

Rather than seeing this period as devoid of crusading ardor one should instead realize that crusading activity continued to occur, only not on the scale one might expect. The tradition of numbering the expeditions that became standard in the seventeenth century obscures the truth of the matter: Christians were engaged in fighting a perpetual crusade over the course of the twelfth century.³⁶ After the Second Crusade, crusading returned to the pattern established between 1110 and 1145, in

³² WT, 12:7.

³³ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 160-5.

³⁴ Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 162.

³⁵ Adrian IV, “Epistolae et Privilegia,” *PL* 182: 538. (13 November 1157); *Papsturkunden in Spanien : vorarbeiten zur Hispania Pontificia: I. Kalalanien*, ed. P. Kehr (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1926), 362. (17 November 1157).

³⁶ The numbering offered by German historian Georg Christoph Müller in 1709 was based on a definition of the crusade as a military expedition authorized by the pope for the purpose of recovering the Holy Land and on which soldiers wore a cross and received a plenary indulgence. By this reckoning he identified five crusades – the expeditions leaving the West in 1095, 1147, 1190, and in 1217-29. Tyerman, *Invention*, 110-11; G.C. Müller, *De Expeditione Cruciatu Vulgo Von Kreutz Fahrten* (Nuremberg, 1709), 3-6, 11, 20, 25-7, 33.

which small bands of knights, often of a certain kin group, responded to pleas for aid made by the pope on behalf of the secular and religious leaders of the frontier regions by going on crusade. For example, Thierry, the count of Flanders, went on crusade twice in the two decades following the Second Crusade. In 1157 Thierry arrived in Beirut with his wife Sybil and a notable number of men trained in the art of war.³⁷ He returned in 1164 with a “goodly number of knights” and was, according to William of Tyre, a “very present help.”³⁸ This return to the small scale and sporadic pattern of crusading was not to the taste of those living in the frontier areas. They sought short-term military assistance, but on as large a scale as possible.³⁹ It is perhaps their disappointment at the failure of certain key figures to come to the rescue of the Holy Land which now colors modern estimations of this period.

Learning from Experience: Reconsidering the Impact of the Second Crusade

Obviously, one should not discount the impact of demoralization suffered as a result of the events of 1147-1148 entirely. Nevertheless, it has often been overstated and as a result historians have lost sight of the substantial impact the experience of the Second Crusade had on the mechanisms of crusade, in particular the crusade vow. The desire to avoid the errors of the past would lead to significant changes in the way crusades were imagined, organized and fought in the second half of the twelfth century.

As argued in chapter two, one of the points contemporaries seem to have agreed upon in relation to the outcome of the Second Crusade was that some responsibility for the failure of the expedition must be placed upon the ‘defenseless mob’ who slowed down the progress of the host, consumed valuable resources and yet refused to be separated from the main army even when it became clear that this

³⁷ WT, 833-4, 837.

³⁸ WT, 877

³⁹ Philips, *Defenders*, 11-12.

parasitic relationship was doing the venture little good.⁴⁰ In assessing the shortcomings of the expedition to the Holy Land led by Louis VII, Odo of Deuil advised that in future anyone who wished to organize an expedition in aid of the Holy Land restrict who it was who accompanied the crusade host. He suggested that the poor and weak be left behind and those who were wealthy be well armed.⁴¹

This was a lesson taken immediately to heart by Odo's superior Abbot Suger of Saint Denis, who had acted as regent in Louis's absence and was well acquainted with the details of the expedition thanks to this account and the letters he received from the king. After Louis VII sailed for home on Easter 1149, "the conditions of the Latins in the East clearly deteriorated."⁴² Muslim forces led by Nur al-Din killed Prince Raymond of Antioch on 29 June 1149 at Inab and then went on to devastate the principality and capture the fortress of Harim.⁴³ One of the men who had served the prince explained that "emboldened by the recent disasters of the Christians [Muslim forces] invaded the region of Antioch more aggressively than usual."⁴⁴ As was now customary, letters announcing the death of the ruler of Antioch were dispatched to the West.⁴⁵ Pope Eugenius III, Bernard Clairvaux and Abbot Suger then set about organizing a new expedition to aid the Holy Land.⁴⁶ The abbot was so committed to the endeavor that he assumed the cross.

The king and his barons were present at a council held at Chartres where the abbot first proposed a crusade.⁴⁷ Eugenius III told the abbot to gauge the mood of the king, barons and other men of France, "and if you should find them ready for so hard a

⁴⁰ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, ed. and trans. V.G. Berry (New York, 1948), 130; *Annales Herbipolenses*, 5; Gerhoh of Reichersberg, "De investigatione Antichristi," *MGH Libelli de lite*, 3: 374-6; William of St. Denis, "Dialogus," ed. A. Wilmart, *Revue Mabillion* 32 (1942), 107-8.

⁴¹ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, 94.

⁴² WT, 770; Phillips, *Defenders*, 102-6.

⁴³ WT, 764-70.

⁴⁴ William of Newburgh, *Historia Rerum Anglicarum, Chronicles and Memorials of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, RS 82, 4 vols. (London, 1884-9), 1: 67-8.

⁴⁵ "Epistola A. Dapiferi Militiae Templi," *RHGF* 15: 540-1; William of St. Denis, *Sugerii Vita*, 3 in *Oeuvres complètes de Suger*, ed. A. Lecoy de la Marche, Société de l'histoire de France (Paris, 1867), 399.

⁴⁶ Constable, "Crusading Project of 1150," 67-76; Phillips, *Defenders*, 106-18.

⁴⁷ *Historiae Francorum scriptores*, ed. A. Duchesne, 5 vols. (Paris, 1636-49), 4: 537, no.139; A. Luchaire, *Études sur les actes de Louis VII* (Paris, 1885), 178-9.

task you should with confidence promise them my advice and help, as much as I can, and remission of sin.”⁴⁸ According to his biographer, because Suger judged

that the king of the Franks and the recently-returned army should be spared, since they had scarcely drawn a little breath, he assembled the bishops of the kingdom, summoned for this business, and exhorted and urged them to seek with him the glory of a victory that had been denied to the most powerful kings.⁴⁹

After trying twice more to gain support for this venture among the clergy of France, Suger abandoned the project.⁵⁰ “Realizing the sense of fear and cowardice of these men, [Suger] nonetheless undertook, when others had given up, to fulfill the vow in a praiseworthy manner by himself.”⁵¹

The abbot’s reluctance to wait to a more auspicious moment to promote a crusade was probably due to his own ill health. As 1150 drew to a close Suger came to the conclusion that he would not be able to complete the terms of his vow in person before his death. He therefore arranged to have his vow commuted, sending a noble experienced in military matters and accompanied by a contingent of soldiers to the Holy Land in his place “to fight the infidel and to avenge the celestial injuries.”⁵² Even if Suger had lived to fulfill his vow in person an armed contingent, supplied and paid from the abbot’s coffers, would have accompanied him on his pilgrimage. As a monk Suger was forbidden to engage in anything other than spiritual battle and yet, he was certain that “the holy places would be crushed and surrendered to the infidels” if the West did not send a military force to the East.⁵³

Abbot Suger was not the only churchman to appreciate what sort of relief force the situation of the Holy Land demanded. It was also clear to Eugenius III’s successor, Pope Adrian IV (1154-59) that the Kingdom of Jerusalem needed trained soldiers,

⁴⁸ Eugenius III, “Epistolae et Privilegia,” *PL* 180: 1414-15.

⁴⁹ William of St. Denis, *Sugerii Vita*, 399.

⁵⁰ Constable, “Crusading Project of 1150,” 74-5; Phillips, *Defenders*, 108-13.

⁵¹ William of St. Denis, *Sugerii Vita*, 401.

⁵² William of St. Denis, *Sugerii Vita*, 401.

⁵³ J.A. Brundage, “A transformed angel (X 3.31.18): the problem of the crusading monk,” *Studies in Medieval Cistercian History. Presented to Jeremiah F. O’Sullivan*. (Shannon, 1971) 55-62; William of St. Denis, *Sugerii Vita*, 401.

“horses, arms and other things necessary for war.”⁵⁴ In a letter sent to the Archbishop of Rheims November in 1157, the pope asked that the archbishop and his followers urge their flocks to support the knights of the Temple who struggled for the liberation and defense of the Holy Places. Support could come in several forms. In lieu of a large-scale expedition, the pope asked that able-bodied knights to serve alongside the Templars for a time.⁵⁵ To those who could not assist the knights in person, but who instead sent aid in the form of the aforementioned items, the pope offered a remission of penance.⁵⁶ The pope clearly recognized that not every Christian was willing or able, nor in some cases suited, to rush to the aid of the Holy Land in person. However, by offering a spiritual reward for a measure of ‘aid,’ the pope suggested that ‘participating’ in crusades might take on a new meaning. This will prove to be an important modification in light of future developments.

Crusade Vows, 1150-1159

Despite efforts to recruit enough crusaders for a large expedition in aid of the Holy Land, crusading returned to the smaller scale in the period directly following the Second Crusade. While some contemporaries evidently decided to join one of the ever-growing number of military orders either permanently or temporarily, others chose to take up the cross and proceed to the East with a small group of followers. Thierry of Alsace, the count of Flanders, was one of these crusaders. Along with his wife and a coterie of nobles and knights, the count arrived in Beirut in late summer 1157.⁵⁷ This was not the first time Thierry had traveled to the Holy Land in order to provide his service and military expertise to the king of Jerusalem. After giving his

⁵⁴ Adrian IV, “Epistolae,” 1538.

⁵⁵ Up until the middle of the twelfth century it was common to see knights commit to serve with a military order for year. In 1120, Fulk of Anjou served with the Templars and in 1134 the count of Barcelona and a number of other Catalan nobles promised to serve a year with the Templars in Spain. In 1148 one Catalan knight, Garcia Ortiz, made a similar agreement. A. Forey, *The Military Orders. From the Twelfth to the early Fourteenth Centuries* (Toronto, 1992), 55-6; OV, 6: 310; M. d’Albon, *Cartulaires general de l’Ordre du Temple* (Paris, 1913), 308.

⁵⁶ Adrian IV, “Epistolae,” 1538.

⁵⁷ WT, 833-4.

daughter in marriage to Eustace, the heir to the English throne, in 1138 the count had taken the cross and traveled to Jerusalem.⁵⁸ He also had accompanied Louis VII on the Second Crusade, where he was given charge of leading foot soldiers down the southern coast from Anatolia to Antioch.⁵⁹ Strong familial links to the Holy Land may have contributed to his frequent trips to the Levant. His second wife, Sibylla, was the daughter of Count Fulk V of Anjou, who had married Melisande of Jerusalem and become king upon her father's death in 1131. In 1148 and 1157 his wife's half brother Baldwin III was on the throne of Jerusalem. While Thierry returned to Flanders in 1158, his wife chose to remain in Jerusalem.⁶⁰

Thierry's expedition East in 1157, although lauded by the pope in a subsequent crusade bull, appears to have been undertaken without reference to the papacy and was unexpected by many of the inhabitants of the East.⁶¹ It is not even certain that the count and his followers took the cross previous to their departure for the Holy Land, since little documentation regarding this expedition remains. However, considering that the previous two times Thierry had gone to the Holy Land he had done so as a crusader, it is likely that he also took the cross for this expedition. Further evidence in support of this interpretation is the knowledge that on the way to the Holy Land in 1157 the Flemings helped Alfonso I of Portugal mount an attack on Alcácer before continuing on their way to the East.⁶²

If indeed Thierry and his followers took the cross, the form and substance of their votive obligation would have been entirely in keeping with vows taken for the Second Crusade. Like the Flemish and English crusaders who had helped in the siege of Lisbon, the count of Flanders promised to travel to Jerusalem with the intent of succoring the Christian kingdom in its ongoing struggle against their Muslim

⁵⁸ OV, 6: 514.

⁵⁹ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, 136-9.

⁶⁰ WT, 846.

⁶¹ Adrian IV, "Epistolae," 1538; WT, 833-4.

⁶² Alfonso-Henriques I's daughter, Teresa, would marry Thierry's son and heir, Philip. H. Livermore, *A New History of Portugal*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1976), 62.

neighbors.⁶³ Stopping along the way to battle the Almohads would have seemed natural, especially if one considers the many efforts to recruit the French and English for Iberian campaigns throughout the 1150s.⁶⁴ Not knowing of the outcome of the Battle of Jacob's Ford, where many of Baldwin's knights were killed or captured by Nur al-Din, the detour to Portugal would not have appeared detrimental to the East.⁶⁵

Neither Thierry, nor the men who accompanied him, intended to remain in the Holy Land. This was a temporary relief force. The count of Flanders was immune to the king's efforts to entice him to remain in the East as the lord of Shayzar, returning to Flanders less a year later after raising a Muslim siege at Banyas and engaging in a few raids on Muslim-held territory in northern Syria. His two-month siege of Harim ended in success.⁶⁶ One of the count's men, Reynald of St. Valery was given custodianship of Harim and remained as its lord for at least three years. Nevertheless, his stay in the East would also be temporary; Reynald was back in Europe by 1162.⁶⁷

News of the defeat suffered at the Battle of Jacob's Ford reached Pope Adrian IV in the autumn of 1157.⁶⁸ In November he wrote to the bishops, as well as the "kings and other princes of the world," urging them to follow Thierry of Flanders's example (he had also received news of the count's success at Banyas) and travel to the East "for the liberation and the defense of the Holy Places."⁶⁹ Those who could not travel to the Holy Land in person were to be encouraged to send instead "horses, arms and other things necessary for war."⁷⁰ In return both those who went to the aid of the Holy Land in person and those who sent supplies could be assured that this would be

⁶³ The final destination of the count and his men was Jerusalem. "Annales Laubienses Continuatio a. 1056-1505," *MGHS*, 4: 23.

⁶⁴ O'Callaghan, *Reconquest*, 47, 50-1.

⁶⁵ Phillips, *Defenders*, 129.

⁶⁶ WT, 833-7.

⁶⁷ *Regesta regni Hierosolymitani, 1097-1291*, ed. R. Röhricht (Innsbruck, 1893), 88, 94-5, nos. 339, 360; *Recueil des actes de Henri II concernant les provinces françaises et les affaires de France*, ed. E. Delisle and E. Berger, 3 vols. and introduction (Paris 1909-27), 1, 359, 361.

⁶⁸ Phillips, *Defenders*, 129-30.

⁶⁹ Adrian IV, "Epistolae," 1538.

⁷⁰ Adrian IV, "Epistolae," 1538.

“good for the health of their souls” as both participation and donation would result in a “remission of sin.”⁷¹

This plea for manpower went unheeded.⁷² It is important nevertheless because it suggests something about how crusading and the needs of the Holy Land were perceived in this period. First of all, the letter praises the efforts of the Templars in protecting the Holy Land – showing that much of the ‘crusading’ effort in this period was done by those men who had made a lifelong commitment to fighting the enemies of Christ. In recognition of the fact that they were, as Bernard of Clairvaux noted, “repel[ing] the foes of the cross of Christ with a stalwart heart” Pope Eugenius granted the Templars the right to wear a red cross on their habits.⁷³ More importantly, however, it suggests an awareness that not everyone in Europe might be able to go to the aid of the Holy Land at this moment in time, nor even that they should. Pope Adrian evidently believed so strongly that financial assistance was of equal importance to military service for the maintenance of the Christian presence in the Holy Land that he would offer a spiritual reward to those who donated arms, horses and other things useful for combat to the cause. Whether one had to take the cross in order to receive these benefits is not entirely clear, but relatively unlikely.⁷⁴ From this point on there was a sense that supporting the crusade with material goods from afar, rather than in person, was not only practical and necessary, but also had spiritual value in and of itself. Adrian IV’s policy had the benefit of guaranteeing that even if circumstances did not allow individuals to crusade in person, that Christian efforts to fight the infidel were not abandoned entirely. It also suggests that the pope was aware

⁷¹ Adrian IV, “Epistolae,” 1538.

⁷² It has traditionally been believed that the Mayenne Crusade (the details of which are now thought to be a 17th century invention) was the only identifiable response to Adrian’s appeal. “Ex gentis pontificum Cenomannensium,” *RHGF*, 12: 556-7; A. de Goué, *La croisade Mayennaise de 1158* (Mayenne, 1911).

⁷³ Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise of the New Knighthood,” *Bernard of Clairvaux: Treatises*, trans. Conrad Greenia, vol. 3 (Kalamazoo, MI, 1977), 127-45; Eugenius III, “Epistolae,”

⁷⁴ It is possible that Adrian might have expected individuals to do something similar to what Abbot Suger had done in 1150 – to take the cross and then fulfill it by sending a well-armed substitute in one’s place or, even to send supplies or money as a substitute, rather than a group of soldiers. But since notions of what constituted the obligation of the cross did not shift dramatically in the aftermath of the Second Crusade it is unlikely that almsgiving alone would have been seen as an adequate commutation of the vow.

that circumstances in this period did not look promising for the levying of large force to send to the aid of the Holy Land. It was a dual challenge with which his successor would also have to contend.

Spain and the Cross, 1150-59

While Eugenius III was alive, the papacy valiantly tried to rouse the Spanish to crusade against the Almohads. The pope granted a full remission of penance and the standard temporal privileges awarded to crusaders to anyone who took up the cross and assisted the count of Barcelona, Ramon Berenguer IV, in his attempt to recover the east coast of Spain in 1152.⁷⁵ The lack of response this request received spurred his successor, Adrian IV, to reissue the call to crusade the following year. The response he got was correspondingly lackluster. A few Catalan nobles joined the count in an expedition intended to consolidate his position in the Ebro valley.⁷⁶ How little success the popes had in rallying large numbers of Spaniards to the cross in 1152-53 may have been due only to the complexities of local politics. It does, however, also suggest that there may have been some lingering hesitation regarding the cross and the responsibilities it brought with it.

That one could take the cross for a campaign in Spain without incurring the obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem was made clear early in 1155 when Cardinal Hyacinth took the cross for an expedition led by Alfonso VII of León-Castile.⁷⁷ The vow Cardinal Hyacinth made as he placed the sign of the cross on his breast consisted only of a promise to participate in an armed expedition against the “enemies of the cross of Christ” – the Almohads.⁷⁸ The vow was presumably fulfilled at the end of a successful summer campaign. Hyacinth accompanied Alfonso VII and

⁷⁵ *Colección de documentos inéditos de la Corona de Aragón*, ed. P. Bofarull *et al.*, 41 vols. (Barcelona: Imprenta del Archivo, 1847-1910), 4: 314-15, no. 128 (22 June 1152).

⁷⁶ *Colección de documentos inéditos de la Corona de Aragón*, 4: 320-1, no. 133 (24 September 1153).

⁷⁷ C. Erdmann, *Das Papsttum und Portugal im Ersten Jahrhundert der Portugiesischen Geschichte*, *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 5 (Berlin, 1928), 55-8, no. 5.

⁷⁸ Erdmann, *Papsttum und Portuga*, 55-8.

his army as they captured Andújar and a number of nearby towns that same summer.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, this sort of expedition was not to be repeated too often in the years ahead. Rather than transform conflicts against the Almohads into crusades, contemporaries reverted to an earlier pattern of in which participants in certain expeditions were rewarded for their service with a remission of a specified amount of penance. In 1166, for example, a synod of bishops gathered at Segovia granted a remission of penance, equal to that granted to those who completed a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to anyone who would join Alfonso VIII in defending Castile from any and all outside threats, either Christian or Muslim.⁸⁰ Participants were not asked to make a vow or to assume a cross, nor should they have been. They were not being rewarded with the same privileges usually granted to those who participated in an armed pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Contemporaries remained uncertain as to the whether or not they might truly distinguish the cross from the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Service as Penance: Alexander III, the Crusade Vow and the Holy Land

Between 1163 and 1169 efforts to induce the West to come to the rescue of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem intensified. Prominent ecclesiastical and secular officials were prompted to write letters and envoys with high status within the kingdom were dispatched to a variety of high ranking clergymen, former crusaders and those individuals of power and means whose families had a history of crusading.⁸¹ Writing to Louis VII in 1164, the patriarch of Antioch expressed his fear that if the king did not come to the aid of the Christian inhabitants of the Latin East, their inability to defend themselves or their territory from the encroachment of the infidel would bring the end of Christian custodianship of the Holy Places. "The causes for tears, forsooth, are constant, the grief and the groaning are continuous, and we are unable to speak

⁷⁹ D. Mansilla, *La Documentacion Pontifica Hasta Inocencio III (965-1216)*, Monumenta Hispaniae Vaticana Seccion: Registros, 1 (Rome, 1955), 116-17, no. 98.

⁸⁰ P. Linehan, "The Synod of Segovia (1166)," *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law*, n.s. 10 (1980), 31-44.

⁸¹ Phillips, *Defenders*, 186.

except of what concerns us.’⁸² The desire to convey exactly how dire the situation of the Levant was and to foretell what might happen should the West continue to ignore these pleas for help dominated the communications from the East to the major lay and ecclesiastical figures of the West in the second half of the twelfth century. Pope Alexander III responded to these pleas for aid by issuing calls to crusade in aid of the Latin East in 1165, 1166, 1169 and 1181.⁸³

That each of Alexander III’s calls to crusade came solely as responses to requests for aid was significant, if not unusual.⁸⁴ Although willing to use his authority to launch crusades if he believed it necessary, Alexander was not consumed by a need to promote or expand the crusading movement as were some of his predecessors, like Urban II and Calixtus II, or his successors – namely, Celestine III and Innocent III – would be.⁸⁵ This, of course, was to have implications for the crusading movement. It meant that many of the alterations Alexander made in relation to the crusade were *ad-hoc* and do not necessarily reflect a coherent attempt to promote a particular policy in relation to the crusade. Because they are responses to particular requests or needs these changes do offer the benefit of allowing insight into contemporary understandings of the crusade obligation and, thus, the crusade itself. From at least 1150 on, there had been an increasing tendency to focus on the military aspects of the crusade – to see it as a way in which to raise a relief force able to assist in the protection of the Kingdom

⁸² Letter from Aymeric, patriarch of Antioch, to Louis VII of France, 1164, in Dana C. Munro, "Letters of the Crusaders," *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, Vol 1:4, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1896), 14-17.

⁸³ While exiled from Rome in 1165, Alexander III had reissued *Quantum Praedecessores* making no effort to update its content to reflect the current situation in the East. His 1166 bull still integrated parts of *Quantum Praedecessores*, but was more up to date. Alexander reported the capture of the prince of Antioch (1160), the defeat at Harim (1164) and the loss of Banyas (1164). In 1169, Alexander wrote that "the most extreme dangers threaten [the Frankish territories in the East] if the aid of brotherly love is taken away" and urged those in Europe to "do your best to put yourselves at risk for the salvation of your brothers." Twelve years later the Holy Land found itself "trodden down under the incursions of the infidels." Alexander III "Epistolae et Privilegia," *PL* 200: 384-6, 599-601, 1296-7; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 93-5, 100-01. *Papsturkunden für Templar und Johanniter: Archivberichte und Texte*, ed. R. Hiestand (Göttingen, 1972), No. 53, 251-3.

⁸⁴ C. Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050-1250* (Oxford, 1994), 180, 212, 218.

⁸⁵ This was the general pattern established by Alexander III in regards to most of his pronouncements as pope.

of Jerusalem.⁸⁶ Alexander III's pronouncements on crusading reflect this development. They also demonstrate an on-going reluctance on the part of many contemporaries to fully accept that 'crusades' could be fought outside the Holy Land or that other penitential wars were of equal merit or even to be understood as the same thing.

Alexander III's first crusading encyclical could not have been more aligned with the policies of his predecessors. In 1165 he did little more than re-issue *Quantum Praedecessores*, the encyclical with which Eugenius III had launched the Second Crusade – retaining the section in which the pope had lamented the fall of Edessa twenty years earlier, but now also included a statement about the current threats to Antioch and Jerusalem.⁸⁷ Eugenius, and now Alexander, promised

remission of sins and absolution according to the ordinance of [Urban II]. So that whoever begins and completes such a holy journey in a spirit of devotion, or dies during the journey, may obtain absolution from all the sins of which he has made confession with a contrite and humble heart, and may receive the fruit of eternal recompense from him who rewards with all goodness.⁸⁸

Crusaders, therefore, were expected to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. However, as they also granted the “remission of sins which our aforesaid predecessor pope Urban did institute to those who by the promptings of devotion do undertake and carry through so holy and so necessary a work and labor,” suggests that both Eugenius and Alexander appreciated that this was a unique form of pilgrimage - that

⁸⁶ Phillips, *Defenders*, 180-6.

⁸⁷ Compare Alexander III, “Epistolae,” 384-6 with P. Rassow, “Der Text der Kreuzzugsbulle Eugens III,” *Neues Archiv* 45 (1924): 302-05. All translations of this letter are taken from *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 57-9. For a discussion of this bull see Phillips, *Defenders*, 150 and J. G. Rowe, “Pope Alexander III and the Jerusalem Crusade: An Overview of Problems and Failures,” *Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth-Century Syria*, ed. M. Shatzmiller, (Leiden, 1993), 118-21.

⁸⁸ Rassow, “Kreuzzugsbulle,” 304-05. It is generally agreed that Eugenius III's conception of “*remissio peccatorum*” was not related to the penitential discipline of the Church, but instead was intended to mean the full remission of all the temporal penalties for sin imposed by God. Robinson, *Papacy*, 346; A. Gottlob, *Kreuzablass und Almosenablass: eine studie über die Frühzeit des Ablasswesens* (Amsterdam, 1965), 105; N. Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses im Mittelalter, vom Ursprung bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Paderborn, 1922), 1: 199; B. Poschmann, *Die abendländische Kirchenbusse in frühen Mittelalter* (Breslau, 1930), 225-7; Riley-Smith, *What were the crusades?*, 63.

God rewarded crusaders for the fighting they engaged in while on pilgrimage.⁸⁹

One possible explanation for Alexander's decision to revert to a twenty year old model, rather than to the more recent example offered by Adrian IV in 1157, is that the lackluster response to his immediate predecessor's letter had suggested to the pope that the earlier exemplar would be more effective. However, as Alexander III made little or no effort to publicize or recruit for the crusade in 1165 this seems unlikely.⁹⁰ Instead, it is likely that *Quantum Praedecessores* was an example closer to hand in a moment when the pope did not necessarily have access to his predecessor's register of letters: at this point in time he had been exiled from Rome and so was residing in France as a guest of Louis VII. The French king was known to have received two copies of Eugenius's call to crusade, one composed in December 1145 and the other in response to news that Louis VII had taken the cross in March 1146. In any case, Alexander III's first effort to launch a crusade to the East roused no more than a lukewarm response.⁹¹

The failure to enlist a sizeable number of recruits for an expedition in aid of the Holy Land, combined with further pleas for military assistance from the East, prompted the pope to issue another crusade bull on 29 June 1166.⁹² Using the letter sent to the West by Amalric of Nesle, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, as a basis, Alexander included information about the current state of affairs in the Kingdom of Jerusalem.⁹³ The pope also incorporated substantial sections of text lifted from *Quantum Praedecessores*, including those decrees relating to the legal rights conceded to the

⁸⁹ Rassow, "Kreuzzugsbulle," 303.

⁹⁰ Philips, *Defenders*, 150.

⁹¹ Philips, *Defenders*, 150-51. The lack of military response to Alexander III's call cannot be explained away by a lack of concern for the state of the Holy Land amongst the leaders of the West. Envoys of the Eastern Church, sent to the West to raise alms, were received warmly by the pope. In January 1166 Alexander wrote to the archbishop of Rheims, asking him to give these men assistance. It also appears that the taxes raised by Henry II and Louis VII later that year were a response to this fund-raising mission. Alexander III, "Epistolae," 328; Gervase of Canterbury, *Works*, 1: 198. The 1166 tax is detailed in B.Z. Kedar, "General Tax of 1183," 341-3.

⁹² *Papsturkunden für Templer und Johanniter*, 251-3. This letter seems to have been the pope's response to a missive from the patriarch of Jerusalem brought to the West by Gilbert d'Assailly, master of the Hospitallars. *Archives de l'Orient Latin*, ed. C. Riant, 2 vols. (Paris, 1881-84), 1. 386-7.

⁹³ *Archives de l'Orient Latin*, 1. 386-7.

crusader and passages which sought to regulate the crusade's outward appearance.⁹⁴ Borrowing aside, this encyclical is clearly the work of Alexander III. When it comes time to enumerate the spiritual benefits granted to those who take part in the crusade, Alexander sets out to clarify the terms of the crusader's obligation in detail never seen before. "Trusting in the mercy of God" and the blessed apostles, Alexander III, gave

to whoever of the military men, who with the fervor of devotion, go to defend the place sanctified by the bodily presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, *and fight for two years against the Saracens in defense of the Christian name*, absolution from all their sins of which they make confession with contrite and humble hearts, unless perhaps they have stolen the goods of others or exorted interest or committed thefts, in which cases they ought to restore all goods to their former owners; even if it is not in their power to correct their offenses, they will still get their remission as we have said, for the sins they have committed. Those who stay there [the East] for a year may obtain, as we have said, indulgence of half the penance enjoined on them and remission of their sins.⁹⁵

Alexander also noted that those who were willing to visit the Holy Sepulchre with the intent of "answering to the present need, whether they die on this journey or reach that place" had the right to count the "toil of this journey as a penance and as an act of obedience for the remission of all sins."⁹⁶

Alexander's formulation meant that the completion of a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre alone was not be enough to secure the remission of sins associated with the crusade. One also had to serve as a soldier for two years in order to receive the full benefit traditionally accorded to those who took up the cross. Alexander understood Urban II's declaration at Clermont to mean that those who took up the cross would be granted release from *all* penance and the forgiveness or remittance of all sins.⁹⁷ At Clermont the remission of sins promised to crusaders with the journey to the Holy Land rather than with the fighting that was bound to happen along the way. The

⁹⁴ Rassow, "Kreuzzugsbulle," 302-05; *Papsturkunden für Templer und Johanniter*, 252-3. In the later, Hiestand has marked those sections Alexander borrowed from Eugenius with a "I." For editorial notes see page 251.

⁹⁵ *Papsturkunden für Templer und Johanniter*, 253.

⁹⁶ *Papsturkunden für Templer und Johanniter*, 253.

⁹⁷ Riley-Smith, *What were the Crusades?*, 60.

council decreed that, “whoever for devotion alone, not to gain honor or money, [went] to Jerusalem to liberate the Church of God [could] substitute this journey for all penance.”⁹⁸ Undoubtedly this was meant to suggest that this particular “journey” entailed exertions above and beyond what the typical pilgrim would have been accustomed. Those who took up the cross to “struggle for Jerusalem in Christian battle line” would be rewarded for their efforts.⁹⁹ Alexander’s achievement was to clarify exactly *how* the crusade differed from the typical penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The crusade was so arduous a penance that crusaders would have all the sins they had confessed remitted because of the specific task they undertook as soldiers.

In 1169 and again in 1181, Alexander III insisted that those who took up the cross in aid of the Holy Land commit to serving there for two years if they wished to see the penance for all their sins remitted, thus clarifying the terms under which the crusader took the cross and establishing that military service was an essential part of the crusader’s penance.¹⁰⁰ The insistence that the crusader owed a specific amount of service was something quite new. Alexander III was not the first to specify that a minimum period of military service might serve as a tariffed penance. At the Second Lateran Council, summoned by Innocent II in 1139, arsonists were “given the penance of remaining a whole year in Jerusalem or Spain in the service of God.”¹⁰¹ It was not unusual to see some crusaders themselves promise to serve in the Holy Land for the duration of a year or more.¹⁰² Alexander was unique, however, in his demand that *all* crusaders were required to serve as soldiers in the Holy Land for a fixed length of time if they wanted to treat the exercise as a penance.

Alexander III did not explain why he introduced a minimum service requirement for crusaders. It is, however, possible to speculate on the reasons for his decision. First of all, there were practical reasons for requiring that crusaders fight for a set period of time. The leaders of the Kingdom of Jerusalem were actively seeking

⁹⁸ R. Somerville, *The Councils of Urban II: Volume I Decreta claromantensia* (Amsterdam, 1972), 74.

⁹⁹ Baldric of Bourgueil, “Historia Jerosolimitana,” *RHC Oc.* 4: 14-15.

¹⁰⁰ Alexander III, “Epistolae,” 599-601, 1296-7.

¹⁰¹ *Concilium Oecumenicum Decreta*,

¹⁰² Riley-Smith refers to these men as “para-crusaders” or *miles ad terminum*. *First Crusaders*, 158-9.

short-term military assistance that would allow them to defend their territories against the increasingly dangerous threat posed by Nur al-Din and Saladin.¹⁰³ The year or two of service the pope required of crusaders ensured that these soldiers would stay long enough to see an expedition through to its completion or to participate in more than one campaign.¹⁰⁴ It also solved a problem that had existed from the time Jerusalem came into Christian hands in July 1099. No longer was the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre the objective towards which the *miles Christi* strove. The obligation of crusaders' to provide military service was clear, but after 1099 the terms of that service were vague at best. It was not always clear how much effort one had to expend in order to aid the Holy Land. Alexander III clarified that when associated with the cross, aid meant serving for a specified and regularized period of time.

One side effect of the introduction of a minimum service requirement was to restrict participation in the crusade to a certain sector of Christian society. After 1166 only those Christians who could afford to spend year or two fighting on Christ's behalf, or those employed by others to do so, would be eligible to receive the spiritual benefits associated with the crusade. The residents of the Holy Land requested that trained soldiers be sent to the East, not poor pilgrims unsuited to joining the ranks of their armies.¹⁰⁵ It was probably no coincidence, then, that the papal letter, *Cum orientalis terra*, which accompanied his 1181 call to arms asked the clergy to ensure that the "right sort" of Christian layman - especially the princes and counts of their diocese - offered themselves for service in the Latin East.¹⁰⁶

The pope's clarification of the obligations of the crusader had an immediate, though short-lived impact, as can be observed by examining one crusader who journeyed to the Holy Land in the two decades after Alexander's 1166 pronouncement. When King Amalric and the leading men of the kingdom of Jerusalem sent envoys to the West in 1169 asking for aid they approached not only the kings of Europe but also the 'noble and illustrious counts, Philip of Flanders, Henry of

¹⁰³ Phillips, *Defenders*, 8-9.

¹⁰⁴ Example of when the desire to leave had crippled a campaign. Damascus perhaps?

¹⁰⁵ Phillips, *Defenders*, 149-51.

¹⁰⁶ Alexander III, "Epistolae," 1294-7; Rowe, "Alexander III and the Jerusalem Crusade," 130-1.

Troyes and Theobald II of Chartres.”¹⁰⁷ Philip was once again a target for those looking for prospective crusaders some six years later when King Baldwin IV's envoys came to recruit.¹⁰⁸ Philip was an obvious candidate for the crusade. His father, Thierry, had crusaded no less than four times, and his mother Sybilla of Anjou, the half-sister of kings Almaric and Baldwin, had retired there in 1157. There are many reasons why he would have found it attractive to crusade, not the least of those being a sincere desire to do penance.¹⁰⁹ The count took the cross on Good Friday (11 April) 1175, departed for the East in June 1177 and returned to Flanders in the fall of 1178. The delay between the count's assumption of the cross and his departure can be explained by his expectation that Henry II would do as he promised Philip he would and accompany him to the Holy Land in the summer of 1176. To no one's surprise, the king would renege on his word.¹¹⁰ Arriving in Acre in August 1177, Philip of Flanders remained in the East through Easter of the following year. Upon his arrival, the king offered the kingdom to the count – a gift which Philip declined, saying that he had not come to the East for ‘the purpose of receiving any power, but to devote himself to the divine service which was the object of his visit.’¹¹¹

Philip of Flanders was obviously aware of Alexander's 1169 call to crusade in which crusaders were promised the remission of half of all confessed penance if they served the Holy Land for a year as it was incorporated into Flemish criminal law.¹¹² The count was absent from Flanders in the service of the Lord for just over a year. After arriving in Acre Phillip traveled to Jerusalem, where over a period of two weeks, he completed his devotions and ‘assumed the palm, which is with us the sign of a completed pilgrimage.’¹¹³ Only afterwards did he negotiate with local leaders over

¹⁰⁷ WT, 926.

¹⁰⁸ WT, 964-5.

¹⁰⁹ Letter of Philip of Flanders to Hildegard of Bingen published in M.R. Tessera, “Philip of Flanders and Hildegard of Bingen: Crusading against the Saracens or Crusading Against Deadly Sin.” *Gendering the Crusades*, (Cardiff, 2001), 85. Also see Tessera's discussion of possible motives on p. 80.

¹¹⁰ Mayer, “Henry II and the Holy Land,” 725-6.

¹¹¹ WT, 979-80, 994-5.

¹¹² C. Vogel, “Le pèlerinage pénitential” in *En remission de pechés: Recherches sur les systèmes pénitentiels dans l'église latine*, ed. A. Faivre (Aldershot, 1994), 145-8.

¹¹³ WT, 983-4.

“what project” he might “undertake with the aid of the kingdom, that he might not seem utterly idle.”¹¹⁴ It was eventually decided that the count with the help of the prince of Antioch would besiege the fortress of Harim. The siege was unsuccessful. The archbishop of Tyre blamed the failure on the behavior of the Flemish troops who he claimed were ‘given over to frivolity and paid more attention to games of chance and other evil pleasures than military discipline.’¹¹⁵ He also doubted the count’s dedication. Almost daily, the archbishop reported, Philip would remark that he must soon return home and that he was detained at Harim against his will.¹¹⁶ The desire to return home finally overcame the soldiers and the siege was abandoned. Philip and his men had remained in the Holy Land for ten months. One supposes that they counted the time spent journeying home through Constantinople towards their service and thus, received “an indulgence of half the penance enjoined on them and remission of their sins.”¹¹⁷

The logistics of military aid was not the only reason for the clarification of the obligations arising from the cross. It also must have been a response, in part, to some of the legal ambiguity surrounding the obligations of the crusader and the benefits accorded to him. Alexander’s biographer, Boso, was the nephew of Adrian IV and a cardinal himself.¹¹⁸ In what is more properly understood as a history of the schism in the church, documenting the struggle between Alexander III and Frederick I that began with a contested election in 1155 and ended in 1177 with the Peace of Venice, Boso described Alexander as,

a man of great eloquence, well enough learned in the writings of both human and divine authors and skilled by careful practice in the understanding of them; moreover he [was] a man of the Schools, ready in the ways of polite speaking, at once thoughtful, kind, patient, merciful, gentle, sober, chaste,

¹¹⁴ WT, 984-5.

¹¹⁵ WT, 994-5.

¹¹⁶ It is not known if it was Harim he had trouble with, or perhaps with Alexander’s demand that he remain in the Holy Land for at least a year.

¹¹⁷ *Papsturkunden für Templer und Johanniter*, 253.

¹¹⁸ An assessment of this section of the *Liber Pontificalis* is presented by Peter Munz in the introduction to *Boso’s Life of Alexander III*, trans. G.M. Ellis (Totowa NJ, 1973), 1-39. The authoritative study of Alexander’s pontificate is M.Pacaut, *Alexandre III* (Paris, 1956).

assiduous in the bestowing of alms, and ever intent on performing all the other good works that please God.¹¹⁹

This portrayal of Alexander III as an intelligent and educated man is corroborated by a description offered by Robert of Torigni, who met the pope at the Council of Tours (1163).¹²⁰ He declared that Alexander exceeded his predecessors in learning and knowledge of canon and Roman law.¹²¹ Though no longer identified with Magister Roland, a Bologna canonist, it can still be asserted that Alexander III's studies at Bologna and his experience as cardinal, legate and papal chancellor contributed immeasurably to the way in which he approached his office.¹²² For a start, the pontificate of Alexander III ushered in a new era of increased legislation and authoritative canonistic interpretation.¹²³ This is not to suggest that the claims Alexander made about the papacy or other matters pertaining to the Church and Christian life were radical; they patently were not. Alexander did not venture away from the basic tenets of the Gregorian Reform movement, but consistently promoted the views espoused by his predecessors.¹²⁴

An outgrowth of the reform movement, the crusade had been envisioned as a spiritual exercise that would provide the laity with an opportunity to take a more active role in their own salvation. During the course of his pontificate, Alexander clarified aspects of the crusade which a theologian and legal expert like himself found troublesome or vague. In particular, Alexander outlined in authoritative terms what amount of service was required of the crusader who wished to receive the full remission of penance traditionally granted to those who took the cross. He explained how and why the crusader was eligible to receive such great reward – the pilgrimage to Jerusalem combined with a penance of two years fighting would be strenuous

¹¹⁹ *Boso's Life of Alexander III*, 43.

¹²⁰ R. Somerville, *Pope Alexander III and the Council of Tours (1163): a Study of Ecclesiastical Politics and Institutions in the Twelfth Century*, (Berkeley, 1977), 3-4; Robert of Torigni, *Chronicle*, 215-16.

¹²¹ Robert of Torigni, *Chronicle*, 298.

¹²² Munz, "Introduction,"

¹²³ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 66.

¹²⁴ C. Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050-1250* (Oxford, 1989), 194; *Boso's Life of Alexander III*, 8-9.

enough an activity to allow the penitent to be released from all other penance he had accrued. 'Aid to the Holy Land' was both regularized as a penance and defined in canon law as consisting of two years service.

In clarifying the penitential nature of the crusade, Alexander III, perhaps unintentionally, also established a hierarchy of penitential warfare at which the crusade stood at the apex. Alexander responded positively to pleas which asked him to offer spiritual benefits to those engaged in defending Christendom from the incursions of the Almohads and from pagans on the northern frontier.¹²⁵ He did not, however, regard these expeditions as crusades. For Alexander, the cross remained linked to pilgrimage. Crusaders had an obligation to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre and, once there, to serve as a soldier for at least a year, if not two. This was a view of the crusade very much in line with what many contemporaries had held in the first half of the century.¹²⁶ When, for example, the Henry II submitted himself to the punishment of the Church at Avranches in the spring of 1172 for his part in the murder of Thomas Beckett, it was agreed that Henry should leave for the East by the following summer, unless the king's services were needed in Spain to resist the increasing threat of the Almohad advance. In case of this occurring, Alexander allowed that Henry's obligation to crusade in the East might be postponed for the duration of an expedition to Spain.¹²⁷ Alexander did not regard participation in an expedition to Spain as an adequate substitution of penance for the service – three years - Henry agreed to complete in the East. In doing thus, Alexander overturned the traditional equality with which campaigns in the East and in Spain had been viewed.

This would become clearer still three years later in the letter he issued in response to a plea by Cardinal Hyacinth, the legate he assigned to act for him in the

¹²⁵ Cardinal Hyacinth, later Celestine III, who was the legate assigned to Spain seems to have convinced the pope that the threat was significantly urgent to warrant a proclamation of 'crusade'. O'Callahan, *Reconquest*, 56-7. As seen above, Hyacinth identified wars in the Iberian peninsula as 'crusades' and had himself crusaded in the past. It would be interesting to know what he made of the pope's response. See, Schmidt for analysis of Alexander's relations with the Scandinavian clergy. *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147-1257*, PhD, Cambridge University (January 2004), 45-50.

¹²⁶ See above, Chapter Two.

¹²⁷ *Councils and Synods*, 953-54.

kingdoms of Spain. Writing to “all the sons of the universal church in Spain” in March of 1175, Alexander decreed that all those who fought against the Almohads would be granted an unspecified “remission of penance,” presumably less than a year’s penance, however, as those who fought for a year at their own expense were allowed “that remission of sins, to which they have confessed, as was granted to those who reach the Holy Sepulchre of the Lord.”¹²⁸ In effect, Alexander wrote that the Spanish effort to repel the Almohads was, in fact, of comparable value - in penitential terms - as a *pilgrimage* to the Holy Sepulchre. According to an earlier decretal, Alexander III had established that those undertaking a pilgrimage to Jerusalem would have a year’s penance forgiven.¹²⁹ Only those who died on the expedition would be forgiven of all the penance for sins they had confessed. Alexander did not offer the temporal benefits of protection usually associated with the crusade. He made no effort was made to place the family and property of the participants under the Church’s protection.¹³⁰ All this suggests that while he saw the struggle in Spain as spiritually beneficial Alexander did not believe it to be essentially the same as the crusade to the Holy Land in which a pilgrimage to the holiest of Christian sites continued to play an integral part.

Alexander understood battles fought against the pagans on the northern frontiers of Christendom in essentially the same manner as he did the efforts to drive off the Almohads in Spain. Fighting pagans was a labor worthy of reward, and thus the pope would eventually respond to pleas for aid made by the clergy of Denmark and Norway with a promise to reward those who helped them protect the newly established Church. In 1172 he allowed that those who fought “with might and courage against the pagans” might receive “one year’s remission for the sins which they confess and for which they receive penance . . . just as we concede to those who

¹²⁸F. Fita, “Tres Bulas Ineditas de Alejandro III,” *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 12 (1888), 163-4. Count Henry of Bar responded to this call; Roger of Howden records that he went to fight the enemies of Christ in Spain for the remission of sin. Henry II offers his help to the Count of Bar for this venture, or if he should want to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This passage is recorded right after a copy of Alexander III’s 1181 call to crusade in the East, *Cor nosterorum*. Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, 276

¹²⁹Alexander III, “Epistolae,” 250 (18 July 1163).

¹³⁰“Tres Bulas Ineditas de Alejandro III,” 163-4.

visit the Lord's Sepulchre."¹³¹ Once again, no mention was made of the temporal benefits associated with the crusade. While demonstrating that military service was itself a penance, Alexander also confirmed that the pilgrimage to Jerusalem was, as contemporaries held, a defining feature of the crusade to the Holy Land.

Perhaps because of the haphazard nature of his efforts in relation to the crusade the long term impact of Alexander III's formulation of the obligations of the crusaders and the spiritual benefits they incurred as a result of their service was relatively short lived. In 1187 Jerusalem would fall to Saladin and his forces, sparking the Third Crusade: nowhere in any of the papal missives regarding the expedition to recover Jerusalem will reference be made to the amount of service knights are expected to complete in order to receive the remission of penance, although the formulation of the crusade as a commutation of penance will be echoed.¹³² In 1198 Innocent III laid out that crusaders were to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and, in accordance with the precedent set by Alexander III, "stay [there] at least two years" in order to receive the indulgence.¹³³ However, in his desire to see the crusade come to fruition, Innocent III altered the terms of the vow for all crusaders in the hope that the promise of a shorter period of service would entice a greater number of Christians to take the cross. From December 1199 the pope granted the full indulgence to those crusaders who "remained there for at least one year" or paid for someone else to stay longer than twelve months.¹³⁴

It is doubtful that Alexander intended to radically alter the notion of what it meant to crusade. It is likely that he sought only to confirm the established position that the cross signaled that one was both pilgrim and soldier. The establishment of a time limit – service as penance – was to have consequences, however. Not the least among these was that it wrought a change in the composition of the crusade host. The

¹³¹ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, series I, vol. 3, ed. C.A. Christensen, H. Nielsen and L. Weibull (Copenhagen, 1976), 37-8.

¹³² *Historia de expugnatione Frederici imperatoris* in *Quellen zur Geschichte des Kreuzzuges Kaiser Friedrichs I*, ed. A. Choust, *MGH Scriptores*, n.s. (Berlin, 1928), 5: 6-10

¹³³ *Register Innocenz' III*, 1:498-505.

¹³⁴ *Register Innocenz' III*, 2: 258

Third Crusade was organized on the principle that crusaders should be able to serve as soldiers for at least a year. Crusaders too poor or otherwise unsuited to serve as soldiers remained at home instead of accompanying their kings to the Levant. This shift in practice can be traced directly to Alexander III, even if the resulting conception of the crusade was not. For the organizers of the Third Crusade the central component of the crusader's obligation - what singled the crusader out - would come to be his promise to battle the enemies of Christ, not his status as a pilgrim. Especially after 1187 the opportunity to gain salvation as a crusader was available only to a small sector of the Christian population. Pilgrimage was an activity open to everyone in the late twelfth century, but the crusade was not.

Chapter Four: The Crusade Vow and the Recovery of Jerusalem, 1187-1198 CE

News of the disastrous outcome of the Battle of Hattín, at which Saladin and his troops “carried away and extinguished all the glory of the kingdom” of Jerusalem, reached Europe in October 1187.¹ In a single day the entire army of Jerusalem had been destroyed – those who had not been killed were taken captive, including King Guy – and the relic of the True Cross was lost to the ‘infidel.’ Pope Urban III (1185-87) reportedly died from the shock.² A week after his election on 21 October, Pope Gregory VIII issued *Audita Tremendi*, a letter urging Christians in every province of Christendom to take up arms “for the recovery” of the Holy Land.³ Even before this missive had been received by the leaders to whom it was sent, news of events in the East had spread throughout Christendom, inspiring a few individuals to spontaneously assume the cross. In early November 1187, for example, Richard, count of Poitou, took the cross at Tours.⁴ Two months later at a council held at Gisors, a fortress on the borders of France and Normandy, his father, King Henry II of England and the king of France, Philip II Augustus, followed Richard’s lead. “Princes of both kingdoms and an

¹ This description of the battle comes from the anonymous account of the expedition that was raised to counter this loss, the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum. Eine zeitgenössische englische Chronik zum dritten Kreuzzug in ursprünglicher Gestalt*, ed. H. Mayer (Stuttgart, 1962). Helen Nicholson has translated this edition as *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade. A Translation of the ‘Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, (Woodbridge, 1997). Modern assessments of the Battle of Hattin are to be found in B.Z. Kedar, “The Battle of Hattin Revisited,” *The Horns of Hattin. Proceedings of the Second Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, ed. B.Z. Kedar (London, 1992), 208-12; J. Prawer, *Crusader Institutions* (Oxford, 1980), 484-500; M. C. Lyons and D. E. P. Jackson, *Saladin: The Politics of Holy War* (Cambridge, 1982), 255-6.

² *La Continuation de Guillaume de Tyr (1184-1197)*, ed. M.R. Morgan, Documents relatifs à l’histoire des croisades publiés par l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres 14 (Paris, 1982), sec. 74.

³ Three versions of this letter exist. One is dated 29 October. Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs, 4 vols. RS 51 (London, 1868-71), 2: 326-9. The other two letters were issued on 3 November. The version cited here was sent to Germany in November 1187. *Historia de expugnatione Frederici imperatoris in Quellen zur Geschichte des Kreuzzuges Kaiser Friedrichs I*, ed. A. Choust, MGH Scriptores, n.s. 5 (Berlin, 1928), 6-10. Translated in Bernard of Clairvaux, “De consideratione ad Eugenium papam,” *Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H. Rochais, 8 vols. (Rome, 1957-77), 3: 410-13; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 63-7.

⁴ Richard I could not have known of the pope’s call to crusade, though considering what the papacy’s usual reaction to news of this sort was and previous pleas made to his father by the inhabitants of the Latin East the most recent in 1185, he probably anticipated that a crusade indulgence would soon be issued. Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines Historiarum, Opera Historia*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 68, 2 vols. (London, 1876), 2: 50; Roger of Hoveden, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 49 (London, 1867) 2: 29; *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 47.

innumerable number of men from the ecclesiastical and secular militias followed them in vow and act”⁵

Had he been present at Gisors in January 1188, Urban II would have recognized that the forthcoming expedition to recapture Jerusalem from Saladin was cut from the same cloth as the pilgrimage he had proposed at Clermont almost a hundred years earlier. On the surface, the passage of nearly a century seems to have wrought little change in the activity known as crusading. Similarities between the First Crusade and the Third Crusade (1189-1192) are easy to discern. Both armed pilgrimages were proclaimed by the papacy, who granted spiritual rewards to those who answered their pleas to serve the Church and Christ as soldiers. The goal of both crusades was the liberation of Jerusalem from Muslim occupation. Contemporaries also identified both campaigns as penitential pilgrimages, and in each case those who wished to participate and receive “the great remission” of sin offered by the papacy made a solemn vow to God.⁶ Those who gave “that solemn word” to God “took the cross upon their shoulder.”⁷

Yet, had he looked closer, the pope would also have detected a subtle difference in the framing and organization of the crusade. Rather than an army of pilgrims from various localities bound together under the leadership of a papal legate, aided by a council of laymen and bishops, Urban II would have observed the comital army of Flanders and the royal armies of France, England and Germany making their way to Jerusalem by land or by sea.⁸ Gregory VIII established the perimeters of the

⁵ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 47. In March of the same year, Frederick Barbarossa would take the cross at an imperial diet held in Nuremberg. *Historia de Expeditione Friderici Imperatoris*, 15.

⁶ Amboise, *The Crusade of Richard the Lion-heart*, trans. M.J. Hubert with notes and introduction by J. L. LaMonte (New York, 1941), line 160. For the spiritual benefits promised to the crusader see the text of Gregory VII’s “*Audita tremendi*” in *Historia de expugnatione Friderici imperatoris*, 6-10 and Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 326-9.

⁷ Amboise, *Crusade*, 173; Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se Gestis*, in volume 1 of the *Opera*, ed. J.S. Brewer, 8 vols., RS 21 (London, 1861), 73.

⁸ Assessments of each leader’s contribution are treated individually in the secondary literature. Frederick Barbarossa’s expedition is analyzed by E. Eickhoff in *Frederich Barbarossa im Orient. Kreuzzug und Tod Friedrich I* (Tübingen, 1977). For the king of France, see A. Cartellieri, *Philipp II. August, König von Frankreich*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1899-1906) and J. Richard, “Philippe Auguste, la Croisade et le royaume,” *La France de Philippe Auguste*, ed. R. H. Bautier (Paris, 1982) 411ff. For Flanders one should consult. H. van Werveke, “La contribution de la Flandre et du Hainaut à la

crusade with the declaration that he would grant to those who undertook the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and “work[ed] for the recovery of that land . . . relaxation of the satisfaction imposed for all their sins of which they have made proper confession.”⁹ The pope was blatant in his desire to raise an army for a military expedition to aid the Holy Land. With this in mind, he was happy to leave the execution of the crusade to the lay leaders who responded to his call. Through a series of decrees and ordinances the kings of England - Henry II and, after his death in 1189, Richard I - Philip Augustus, and Frederick I Barbarossa tried and, for the most part succeed, in altering the composition of the crusade host. The royal hosts were going to war and it would be inexpedient for anyone not suited to such a venture to accompany it for such a distance. Only those who were “well able and cheerfully willing to bear arms” were allowed to accompany the host to the Holy Land.¹⁰ In this case kings, not popes, determined the specific nature of the crusade obligation. The outcome was essentially the same, however. Increasingly recognition came to be paid to the crusader’s military responsibilities. The cross signified one’s status, not so much as a pilgrim, but as a soldier of Christ. “In these boldest of combatants there burned the glorious passion for fighting against those who had invaded the Holy City and the Holy Sepulchre of our Lord.”¹¹ The cross also served as a military standard. “It is the wood of the Cross, the sign of the Lord, that the soldiers follow.”¹² Peter of Blois commented that the very “sight of the Holy Cross and the remembrance of the Lord’s Passion” had the effect of rousing “Christian knights.”¹³

The reinterpretation of the primary responsibilities of the crusader to reflect the reality of the crusading experience in the second half of the twelfth century was to leave an imprint on the crusade vow. The idea that the crusader, a knight, owed his

troisième croisade,” *Moyen Age* 78 (1972), 55-90. For Richard the Lionheart see J. Gillingham, *Richard I* (New Haven and London, 1999); C. Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Chicago, 1988), 57-85.

⁹ *Historia de expugnatione Frederici imperatoris*, 10.

¹⁰ *The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, ed. J.T. Appleby (London, 1963), 28.

¹¹ *Historia de expugnatione Frederici imperatoris*,

¹² Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 330-1.

¹³ Peter of Blois, “Passio Reginaldi principis olim Antiocheni,” *PL*, 207: 974.

Lord (Christ) a specific amount of military service inevitably crept into the vows made by crusaders, who would have been accustomed to making a similar sort of promise to their temporal lords in ceremonies of commendation.¹⁴ With the pope's approval, those crusaders thought ill-equipped to make the journey to Jerusalem in person had the crusade vow commuted to a vow to complete another pious act, culling from the "glorious army of the life-giving cross" those unsuited to the waging of war.¹⁵ The number of crusaders allowed to commute the vow they had taken for the expedition setting out in response to the loss of Jerusalem was unprecedented up to this point in time. Participation in the crusade was to become increasingly limited to certain sectors of Christian society, a trend that would serve to highlight its distinct character. It would grow increasingly difficult to appreciate the crusade primarily as a pilgrimage as it became obvious that it was to be organized and undertaken as a war.

Cruce signatus: A Twelfth-Century Institution

The scale of the expedition that set out to recover Jerusalem in 1191 was immense, even in comparison to the First Crusade. The efforts of Richard, Philip Augustus and Frederick Barbarossa to raise, organize and supply an army that would be suited to its task meant that crusading touched the lives of many Europeans who never intended to set out for the East. The Third Crusade was, as Christopher Tyerman has observed, not just a "political priority" but "one of the most remarkable governmental achievements of the twelfth century."¹⁶ The historian reaps the benefits of the level of organization required to complete such an undertaking and the attention such preparations attracted from contemporaries. A great deal more documentation relating to the crusade, much of it written from first-hand experience, remains from the

¹⁴ S. Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals. The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford, 1994), 19.

¹⁵ *Historia de expugnatione Frederici imperatoris*,

¹⁶ Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 59, 83. A discussion of how preparations for the crusade were felt by those who did not join the royal army in England can be found on pages 75-85.

Third Crusade than from any other twelfth century crusade.¹⁷ The availability of a diverse range of primary material in which the crusade is discussed provides the historian with a rare opportunity to examine the form and substance of the crusade vow and to observe how those who took the cross understood the crusade.

Nearly a century after Pope Urban II called for the knights of Western Europe to rush to the aid of the Eastern Church as soldier-pilgrims, the assumption of the cross continued to symbolize the votary's solemn commitment to defend Christ and the Christian community from their enemies and to highlight his status as a penitential pilgrim. Gerald of Wales recounted how King Henry II sent Baldwin, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to Wales to recruit as many men as he could. At Radnor, Gerald himself assumed the cross after the Archbishop had delivered his sermon. Standing up, Gerald threw himself at the archbishop's feet and "devoutly took the sign of the cross."¹⁸ Peter, the Bishop of Mynyw, "at once followed [Gerald]'s example, and many others were [also] bound to the service of Christ crucified, the cross being taken and sewn upon their shoulders."¹⁹ The similarity between this description and those which depict men and women taking the cross for the First and Second Crusades is striking. The form of the crusade vow did not suffer a transformation during the course of the twelfth century, instead retaining uniformity over time and place.²⁰ Clearly the consistency of this form deserves documentation and well as an attempt at an explanation of why this should be the case.

To appreciate the extent to which the process by which one vowed oneself to the crusade retained its form throughout the twelfth century one only has to observe the actions of Richard, who was still count of Poitou when he took the cross in 1187.²¹ By all accounts his reaction to the news of the losses at Hattín was spontaneous and

¹⁷ For the varied sources available to the historian of the Third Crusade see, S. Painter, "The Third Crusade: Richard the Lionhearted and Philip Augustus," *History of the Crusades*, ed. K. Setton (Madison WI, 1978), 2: 45, n. 1.

¹⁸ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, ed. J.F. Dimock, in volume 6 of the *Opera*, RS 21 (London, 1868), 14.

¹⁹ Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se Gestis*, 74.

²⁰ Tyerman would not agree with this interpretation. See, Tyerman, *Invention*, 22-3.

²¹ Roger of Hoveden, *Gesta*, 2: 29.

immediate. His passion for the enterprise has been offered up as an explanation for the failure to ask his father's permission prior to making the vow that would bind him to the crusade.²² In any case, the king was not pleased – though Henry must have been well aware that he could do nothing to prevent Richard from departing now that the vow had been made. He could, however, prevent his younger son John from following his brother's lead. The king, his temporal lord, refused to grant him permission to take the cross.²³ Richard was the first prince north of the Alps “to receive the sign of the cross to avenge the Cross's injury” and was widely praised for inspiring a great many others by his example.²⁴ In January 1188 Henry II and Philip II of France took the cross at Gisors. Many others present at this council “from the ecclesiastical and secular militias followed them in vow and act,” including one-time crusader Philip of Flanders.²⁵ Though it had been agreed that the host would leave on Easter 1189, political realities saw to it that the French, English and Flemings would not depart from Vézelay until 4 July 1190. In June 1190, Richard, now king, received the staff and purse of pilgrimage from the archbishop of Tours in the metropolitan's new cathedral.²⁶ Some sixty years previously his great-grandfather, Fulk V of Anjou, had lain prostrate in front of the high altar of the old building and had been signed with the cross before setting off on crusade.²⁷ Philip Augustus would participate in a similar ceremony with the archbishop of Rheims officiating. Like his father, the French king was given the oriflamme in place of the traditional staff.²⁸ Frederick Barbarossa took

²² Gillingham, *Richard I*, 87; Mayer, *The Crusades*, 139.

²³ Ralph of Diceto, *Ymagines Historiarum*, 50; William of Newburgh, *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, 271-2.

²⁴ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 47.

²⁵ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 47. While at Gisors, the kings had agreed that the crosses worn by crusaders would vary according to the nation to which they belonged. The French would wear red, the English white and the Flemings green. Roger of Hoveden, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, 30.

²⁶ Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti*, ed. H.F. Delaborde, *Oeuvres de Rigord et Guillaume le Breton*, Société de l'histoire de France (Paris, 1885), 99; Roger of Hoveden, *Gesta*, 2: 110-11, 115-20; Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 51, 4 vols. (London, 1868-71), 3: 33-7, 42-6; *The Itinerary of King Richard*, ed. L. Landon, Pipe Roll Society (London, 1935), 33-4, 36.

²⁷ *Chroniques des Comtes d'Anjou et des seigneurs d'Amboise*, ed. L. Halphen and G. Poupardin (Paris, 1913), 161; *Cartulaire general de l'Ordre du Temple*, ed. M. d'Albon (Paris, 1913), 1: 9, no.12.

²⁸ Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti*, 99; Roger of Hoveden, *Gesta*, 2: 110-11, 115-20; Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 3: 33-7, 42-6; *Itinerary of King Richard*, 33-4, 36.

the cross at a diet in Mainz held on 27 March 1188 – the *curia Jesu Christi* – called specifically for that purpose; in April 1189 he received the pilgrim’s staff and scrip at Hagenau before the army began its march East on 11 May 1189.²⁹ Except for a variance in the lapse between the assumption of the cross and the reception of the symbols of pilgrimage, the steps Richard, Philip Augustus and Frederick I took to turn themselves into crusaders were exactly the same as those Louis VII went through some 40 years previously and that Christians throughout Europe various had taken in 1095-96.

Similarities in the recruitment process are also easily observable. In 1188 as in 1095, the majority of people who took the cross did so at large gatherings called specifically for the purpose of promoting the crusade. As noted above, Frederick I convened the nobles of his realm and the “cream of knights able to fight” at Mainz in March 1188. After the emperor announced that he would lead an expedition to recover the Holy Sepulchre, the “most noble princes, bishops, dukes, margraves, counts, nobles and brave knights . . . signed themselves with the mark of the Holy Cross.”³⁰ Gerald of Wales provided a detailed narrative of Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury’s recruitment tour in Wales undertaken during Lent 1188. It is fairly certain that many of the stops on this journey had been prearranged; at each stopover Baldwin and his entourage were greeted by the local magnate, churchmen, and the community at large.³¹ One day, the group

crossed over a small arm of the sea to the island of Mona . . . where Roderic, the younger son of Owen, attended by nearly all the inhabitants of the island, and many others from adjacent countries, came in a devout manner to meet us. Confession having been made in a place near the shore, where the surrounding rocks seemed to form a natural theatre, many persons were induced to take the cross, by the persuasive discourses of the archbishop³²

²⁹ *Historia de expugnatione Frederici imperatoris*, 17.

³⁰ *Historia de expugnatione Frederici imperatoris*, 14-15.

³¹ Furthermore, there is evidence that locals were well aware of the Archbishop’s itinerary. Some would-be crusaders who had missed Baldwin at an earlier stop were able to catch up with him at another as was the case with the nobleman Arthenius. Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, 48-9. For an analysis of the political implications of this recruitment campaign see Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 156-9.

³² Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, 126.

Sermons devoted to the crusade were preached, though it was not always clear that members of the audience understood their precise content. At Haverford Gerald addressed an audience of soldiers and peasants, “both in the Latin and French tongues, those persons who understood neither of those languages were equally affected and flocked in great numbers to the cross.”³³ Occasionally, as at Bangor, a member of the local clergy would serve as an interpreter.³⁴ The delivery of these sermons was believed to be influential in the raising of recruits, whether the content was understood or just as a reaction to and an appreciation of the theatrics employed. On several occasions the audience was so excited that the Archbishop “could hardly be protected from the crowd of those who pressed upon him” in their rush to “seize” a cross from his hand.³⁵

Nevertheless, many individuals would already have mulled the decision of whether or not to take the cross over, prior to such a dramatic occasion. Admitting that his reaction to the archbishop’s sermon was dramatic and sudden, Gerald assured his readers that he “acted of my own free will, after anxiously talking the matter over time and time again, in view of the insult and injury being done at this moment to the Cross of Christ.”³⁶ Gerald wanted to convey that his choice to assume the cross was voluntary, but that he had chosen to wait until the best possible moment (at the opening sermon of the tour at Radnor) to cement his intention by assuming the cross. Contemporaries drew a distinction between the contemplation of the vow and the actual assumption of the cross. The latter resulted in a solemn and binding obligation to complete a specific task.³⁷ Whether inspired by the sermons or having made the decision in advance, almost all those who took the cross did so at gatherings of the sort described by Gerald of Wales, in the presence of their family, friends and neighbors.

³³ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, 83. Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus*, 75-6.

³⁴ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, 55, 127.

³⁵ Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus*, 75.

³⁶ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, 48-9

³⁷ The distinction was one recognized by contemporary canon law. When expounding on the principles of votive obligation in his *Decretum* (c. 1140) Gratian writes that while it is one thing to entertain a proposal mentally and even to pronounce it aloud, it is quite another to make a vow. In the former case, one was not bound to carry out the proposed activity. *Decretum Gratiani* C. 17 q. 1 - 2

Without exception, those who were persuaded to take the cross, though not all were, received a cross from a member of the clergy.³⁸

Accounts chronicling the recruitment of crusaders for the Third Crusade would support the idea that the physical reception of the cross from a member of the clergy and the placement of a cross on one's outer garments was more important than a verbal statement of what the individual promised to do.³⁹ Time and again one reads that when responding to the exhortations of the preachers participants were "adorned with the sign of the Cross."⁴⁰ The reception of the cross continued to be the action that solemnly bound the individual to the crusade. In 1167 Louis VII said that he would not believe Henry II's enthusiasm for the crusade was real "until he saw Henry's shoulders marked with the sign of the cross."⁴¹ Trying to prevent her husband from going on the Third Crusade a woman called Aberteifi "firmly held [him] by his cloak and girdle so that he might not go to the Archbishop and take the cross."⁴² By physically preventing her husband from receiving the cross she was able to frustrate his desire to become a crusader. The implication is that he would not be able to make this sort of vow without actually receiving a cross from the hands of a clergyman. When the couple's child died, the husband went to the local bishop to confirm his suspicion that this was God's judgment for his failure to take the cross. He "took the cross, his wife approving and of her own free will sewing it upon her man's shoulder."⁴³

A poem by Berter of Orleans, however, lends support to the idea that the verbal pronouncement of the vow remained an integral part of the process of taking the cross. He instructed his audience, "as you listen to what I offer, [to] take up your cross and make this pledge: "I give up myself to him, who as a victim surrendered his body and

³⁸ "Not one" of a group of youths who physically removed themselves from the crowd at Mona "could be prevailed upon to take the cross, although the archbishop and others most earnestly exhorted them, but in vain, by an address particularly addressed to them." Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, 126-7.

³⁹ At least one historian has asserted that there was "no public emission of vows." M. Purcell, *Papal Crusading Policy, 1244-1291* (Leiden, 1975), 200.

⁴⁰ Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus*, 75.

⁴¹ *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, ed. W.J. Millor and H.E. Butler, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1986), 2: 569.

⁴² Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus*, 78.

⁴³ Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus*, 78.

soul, by dying for my sake.”⁴⁴ The spoken promise and the assumption of the cross took place simultaneously and as such, both components are collapsed in the description of the act as ‘taking the cross’. Eineon, the son of a prince of Elvenia, received the cross from Archbishop Baldwin on Ash Wednesday. Rising up, he announced to his father-in-law and lord that he now “hasten[ed] to revenge the injury offered to the great father of all.”⁴⁵ The collapse of these two components of the vow into one had been happening since the Council of Clermont. The lack of attention paid to the actual words spoken by the crusader as he or she accepted the cross and attached it to his or her clothing means that even after almost a century of crusading activity has taken place, it is still not always certain exactly what the exact wording of the crusade vow was. As we see in these two examples, the promises themselves could vary from individual to individual. However, in both cases, a subtext of service and sacrifice on behalf of Christ can be elicited. This is a topic to which I will return momentarily.

The first century of crusading witnessed the development of rites and rituals associated with the assumption of the cross. As described above, formal ceremonies for bestowing the cross were evident in 1095 and readily recognizable by 1146. In 1187 the process by which one became a crusader was established, if not institutionalized within the Latin Church. Would-be crusaders attended gatherings called for the purpose of propagating the crusade, made confession, were absolved, listened to a sermon describing what the crusade was and what it required of Christian, spoke a promise aloud at the same time receiving a cloth cross from the hands of a clergyman at which point the cross would be attached to the outer garments. Nearer the appointed time for departure, the crusader would go to his local priest to receive a blessing. By the second half of the twelfth century rites for the blessing of the crusader appear in pontificals.⁴⁶ The liturgy for the blessing of the cross and the bestowal of the signs of pilgrimage derived from the service for blessing pilgrims. The outward appearance of the crusader continued to reflect the crusader’s status as a specific category of

⁴⁴ Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 2: 332.

⁴⁵ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, 14-5.

⁴⁶ J. A. Brundage, “*Cruce signari*: the rite for taking the Cross in England,” *Traditio* 22 (1966), 289-310; K. Pennington, “The Rite for taking the Cross in the Twelfth Century,” *Traditio* 30 (1974), 429-35.

penitential pilgrim even as increasing attention was paid to his martial duties. Priests blessing the cross before the crusader's departure prayed that God would "bless this cross, which is humbly dedicated to thee; that the banner of the venerated cross, the figure whereof hath been depicted upon it, may be a most invincible strength to thy service."⁴⁷ Whereas the purse ("the habit of thy pilgrimage") and staff ("the support of thy journey") symbolized the journey to come, the blessing of the cross incorporated evocative language like, "armor," "invincible strength," "defense," and "guard" calling to the pilgrim's attention to his duties as a soldier. Although variations did exist, it is remarkable the extent to which the ceremony and ritual associated with the crusade vow remained coherent despite the passing of time.⁴⁸

If it were necessary to summarize the crusade in the period up to 1187, any description would have to include some acknowledgment that, as Christopher Tyerman has argued, crusading was not "a coherent or cohesive movement," but was instead "fashioned to suit changing religious, ecclesiastical and political objectives."⁴⁹ This dissertation does not dispute that assessment; in fact, I have gone to some pains to try and document the variety of opinions towards and variants of the crusade in the twelfth century. However, one also must take into consideration the evidence suggesting that 'taking the cross,' at least for expeditions directed towards the Holy Land, involved the same series of actions in 1187 as it did in 1095. Among a certain section of European society the crusade was added to the usual repertoire of pious behavior, becoming, like pilgrimage had in the tenth century, "a habitual and commonplace activity."⁵⁰ Chances are that a knight – and more importantly the bishops and abbots of Western Europe – knew someone who had taken the cross, taken the cross themselves, or blessed someone setting out to fight the infidels. A

⁴⁷ *The Saurum Missal in English*, trans. F.E. Warren (London: De La More Press, 1911), 166-73.

⁴⁸ Some historians have focused on the variant forms of the liturgies associated with the *blessing* [emphasis my own] of the cross. Tyerman, *Invention*, 22-3; Pennington, "The Rite for taking the Cross in the Twelfth Century," 431. That they these liturgies should differ from place to place and over time is unsurprising. Medieval liturgy was notoriously heterogenous. C. Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy. An Introduction to the Sources* (Washington D.C., 1986), 4. It is also important to remember that the blessing was only one part of the process by which one became a crusader.

⁴⁹ Tyerman, *Invention*, 30.

⁵⁰ Bull, *Knightly Piety*, 249.

number of families were quick to establish a tradition of crusading – by which I mean assuming a cross before setting out to fight in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.⁵¹ By the 1140s that “the crusading experiences of previous generations and pride in them, had been locked into the collective memory of some cousinhoods.”⁵² So too, had the memory of how one went about assuming status as a *cruce signatus*. The lack of variation in the form of the crusade vow is telling. It further demonstrates that contemporaries perceived the activity associated with the wearing of a cross as distinct. The form of the crusade vow continued to be governed by the customs established by Urban II at Clermont in 1095. Consequently, the crusade continued to be identified with pilgrimage.

The Crusader’s Votive Obligation, 1187-1198

The substance of the vows taken by crusaders accompanying the kings of England, France and Germany to the Holy Land in 1190-91 was not substantially different from those taken for the First Crusade. Between 1099 and 1187 the belief that the crusader incurred an obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem was challenged, but not overthrown. Vows were usually predicated on the idea that one would travel to the Holy Land, visit Jerusalem in order to pray at the Holy Sepulchre, and provide military aid and counsel to the Christians of Outremer. Until the pontificate of Alexander III, however, the substance of the crusader’s military obligation was subject to variation and negotiation. A promise to aid the Holy Land could and often did mean a variety of things to different people. The loss of Jerusalem to Saladin in October 1187 was to destroy any uncertainty as to what the terms of the crusade vow were to consist. For the first time since 1099 both the military objective of the crusade (the recovery of Jerusalem) and the goal of the pilgrimage (the Holy

⁵¹ It also occurs to me that this pattern was established in Catalonia. Throughout the twelfth century the counts of Barcelona were actively engaged in promoting the idea that the cross might be taken for the expeditions they launched against their Muslim neighbors. See discussions of their activity in chapters two and three.

⁵² Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, 102.

Sepulchre) were one and the same. Vows taken for the Third Crusade reflect this shift. Those who took the cross in the period between 1187-1191 promised to assist the Christians of the Latin Kingdom in their efforts to recover Jerusalem from Saladin and to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre.

When Pope Gregory VIII summoned Christians to “work for the recovery of that land in which the Truth was born from the earth for our salvation,” he did not follow the guidelines established by Alexander III and declare that remission of all penance would only be granted to those who served in the Holy Land for two years. In light of the losses incurred at Hattín, he simply called for Western Christians to “amend their sins” and “give themselves to the service” of Christ. Those who undertook the “the labor of this journey” were promised “the relaxation of the satisfaction imposed for all their sins of which they have made proper confession.”⁵³ This was a return to the formulation of the spiritual privileges awarded to crusaders in the First and Second Crusades. In both cases the remission of penance was equated with the completion of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Peter of Blois explained that Gregory VIII intended that “the assumption of the commitment to journey to Jerusalem should be the highest form of penance and sufficient satisfaction for sins committed.”⁵⁴ Although it went unstated by the pope, the majority of contemporaries understood that just as those who embarked upon this journey had the duty to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, with cross they also incurred an obligation to serve Christ as a soldier. As the Welsh crusader Eineon announced to his lord, he intended to avenge “the injury offered to the great father of all” by recovering the holy places and the True Cross.⁵⁵ Like many others who learned of the loss of Jerusalem, Eineon believed the crusade host’s primary objective was to return the city to Christian rule. After the successful capture of Acre in July 1191, “the whole army was extremely joyful because they hoped that they would soon reach the long desired Lord’s Sepulchre. They polished their mail shirts to prevent them from getting

⁵³ *Historia de expugnatione Friderici imperatoris*, 6-10; Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 2: 326-9.

⁵⁴ Peter of Blois, “De Hierosolymitana peregrinatione acceleranda,” *PL* 207: 1061.

⁵⁵ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, 14-5.

rusty.”⁵⁶ Presumably, once the Holy Sepulchre had been freed the service one had promised would have been completed.

The capture of Acre was only the first step towards attaining the crusader's goal. Most crusaders were willing to stay in the Holy Land until the recovery of Jerusalem was attempted, if not accomplished. There were the occasional exceptions. Many of the Germans who had arrived in the autumn of 1189 departed in spring and summer of 1191 after two years spent besieging Acre.⁵⁷ Philip Augustus also announced that he was returning home only weeks after Acre had surrendered to the crusaders.⁵⁸ He sailed for France on 31 July 1191. Little attention had been paid to the gradual defection of the German crusaders. Contemporaries, however, were open in their condemnation of the king's departure.⁵⁹ The English chronicler Roger of Howden reported that the French crusaders begged Philip to remain in the Holy Land for the dignity of the French crown.⁶⁰ Though this account is biased in favor of the English, the fact that of all the French barons only Count Peter of Nevers chose to accompany the king on his journey home speaks volumes.⁶¹ According to the author of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum*, an Angevin crusader accompanying Richard I, Philip Augustus had not fulfilled his duty as king, nor the obligation he had as a crusader.⁶²

How shameful, how outrageous, wanting to leave when there was still so much to be done! It was his duty to guide this great crowd of people, to encourage the Christian people in such pious and necessary work and to ensure the

⁵⁶ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 279-80.

⁵⁷ Otto of St. Blaise, *Chronica*, ed. A. Hofmeister, *MGHS rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* 25 (Hanover and Leipzig, 1912), 56-8; E.N. Johnson, "The Crusades of Frederick Barbarossa and Henry VI," *A History of the Crusades*, ed. K. Setton, 6 vols. (Madison WI, 1962), 2: 116.

⁵⁸ Contemporaries vary in their explanation for Philip's departure. News that his infant heir was ill had reached the king at Acre. The death of the Count of Flanders at Acre raised the issue of succession to the county, a matter which may have requires his immediate and personal attention. The king himself was reported to have been unwell. Historians also see the "frustrating rivalry" between Richard and Philip contributing to the king's decision. J.W. Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus. Foundations of French Royal Power in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1986), 79.

⁵⁹ Sicard of Cremona, "Cronica," ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGHS* 21: 123.

⁶⁰ Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 3: 123-4.

⁶¹ Gillingham, *Richard I*, 164-5.

⁶² H. Nicolson, "Introduction," *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade. A Translation of the 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gestis Regis Ricardi*, (Woodbridge, 1997), 2-3.

progress of such an undertaking! What was the use of his eager intention to complete that long journey when he was going to return so quickly? What an extraordinary way of discharging a vow, when he had hardly entered the country and had such brief triumph against the Turks?⁶³

Though the author goes on to note that the French king's reputation should not be completely darkened by this incident – Philip had expended a great deal of effort and expense in aid of the Holy Land – the implication is that his vow had not been fulfilled.⁶⁴ This author wrote that Philip tried to counter criticism by declaring that his vow differed from those taken by the rest of the crusade host. The king claimed to have “decided to come on pilgrimage because of illness, and his vow was now discharged as far as it had been given.”⁶⁵ Contemporary observers did not buy this explanation. Philip had “appeared fit and well when he took the cross with King Henry between Trie and Gisors.”⁶⁶

This incident sheds additional light on contemporary understandings of the crusade vow. First, it suggests that the crusade vow might differ from one person to another. However, it also suggests that if a vow was ‘irregular’ it was something that needed to be publicized at the time the cross was taken. Philip Augustus had not made it clear at Gisors that his vow was significantly different from those of his barons.⁶⁷ The author of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum* believed that Philip Augustus had made the same vow as other crusaders. The French barons did not return to France when their king did. They had vowed to aid the Holy Land, by which they understood to mean fighting for the recovery of the Kingdom of Jerusalem's symbolic center, Jerusalem. They also had vowed to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre.

In addition to a promise to assist in the recovery of Jerusalem, those who answered Gregory VIII's summons promised God that they would complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and once there, offer their prayers at the Holy Sepulchre as

⁶³ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 223.

⁶⁴ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 223-4.

⁶⁵ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 223

⁶⁶ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 223.

⁶⁷ Aside from the bishops of Langres and Chartres, and the count of Nevers the rest of the French barons remained in the Holy Land under the leadership of the Duke of Burgundy.

had the multitude of crusaders who had taken the cross between 1095 and 1187. Henry II, for example, “made plans for visiting the Holy Tomb at God’s Hand.”⁶⁸ Crusaders did not consider their vow completely discharged until they had prayed at the Sepulchre. After the crusader’s captured Acre in July 1191 there was some discussion as to where the army should target next. The majority of the army assumed that the next stop would be Jerusalem. “Everybody . . . looked forward to completing their pilgrimage as they had previously vowed.”⁶⁹ They were to be disappointed. Upon the advice of the leaders of the military orders and the native residents, Richard I decided to concentrate attention on restoring the strategic strongholds of Ascalon and Jaffa before attempting an attack on Jerusalem.⁷⁰ Offering prayers at the Holy Sepulchre rendered the crusader’s votive obligation complete. Therefore, Richard deliberately postponed the march on Jerusalem until the spring of 1192 “in order to retain the [host’s] military strength and the common people’s forces.”⁷¹ Eventually it became clear that even if the city could be taken, there would not be enough Christians to hold and defend it; once gaining Jerusalem most crusaders would return “home without delay”⁷²

A truce between Richard I and Saladin in September 1192 brought an end to the Third Crusade. The terms of this agreement support the assertion that the crusade vow consisted of a promise to aid in the recovery of Jerusalem and to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. According to the treaty, Ascalon was to be destroyed (and after three years ceded to whoever held it), Jaffa was to be held by Christians, and both Christians and Muslims “should have safe and free passage everywhere [in the Kingdom of Jerusalem], and access to the Lord’s Holy Sepulchre without any exactions.”⁷³ Although the crusaders had not reasserted Christian lordship over Jerusalem, this treaty did allow that Christians should have access to the Church

⁶⁸ Amboise, *Crusade of Richard the Lion-Heart*, lines 167-9.

⁶⁹ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 279-80; Amboise, *Crusade of Richard the Lion-Heart*, 7619-88.

⁷⁰ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 279-85.

⁷¹ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 280.

⁷² *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 279-80; Amboise, *Crusade of Richard the Lion-Heart*, 7619-88.

⁷³ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 371-2.

of the Holy Sepulchre. Richard and Saladin's agreement included a provision that allowed unarmed crusaders to visit Jerusalem so that they might discharge their vows before returning to the West.⁷⁴

Both Saladin and Richard were aware of the significance of the Holy Sepulchre to those who bore the sign of the cross upon their shoulder.⁷⁵ Once the vow was discharged by praying at the Holy Sepulchre there would seem to no longer be anything tying the crusaders to the Holy Land. They felt free to return home at once, diminishing the forces upon which the Christian residents of the Levant could draw. Richard asked that Saladin only allow those with letters of safe conduct from him or Count Henry of Champagne to visit the Holy Sepulchre;⁷⁶ as Saladin's advisors appreciated that this last provision was intended to limit who amongst the crusaders could discharge their vow and so return home with a clear conscience. They noted that crusaders who fulfilled their vows would be less likely to take the cross again. This was why Saladin refused to honor this request; he did not want to see the crusaders try to retake Ascalon or other of his possessions in the near future.⁷⁷ The French crusaders who remained in the East under the leadership of the Count of Burgundy after the departure of Philip Augustus in July 1191 found themselves among those whom Richard the Lionheart wished to prevent from visiting Jerusalem in the autumn of 1192. They had angered the king by remaining at Acre during the siege of Jaffa. They also had been vocal in their criticism of the truce made with Saladin. Nevertheless, they were more than willing to make use of the opportunity Richard's peace provided. The visit to the Holy Sepulchre was denied them, however. "With fury and dismay . . . [they] packed their gear and in petulance took ship and started back to France."⁷⁸ They

⁷⁴ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 371-9.

⁷⁵ A contemporary illustration of Richard the Lionheart depicts the king with a small red cross on his shoulder. *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. J. Riley-Smith (Oxford, 1995), 109.

⁷⁶ Amboise, *Crusade of Richard the Lion-Heart*, lines 11,850- 11, 857; *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 374-9.

⁷⁷ Bah' a' al-D' in Ibn Shaddad, *The rare and excellent history of Saladin, or, al-Naw' adir al-Sult' aniyya wa'l-Mah' asin al-Y' usufiyya*, trans. D.S. Richards (Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2001), 186, 229-32; *Conquête de la Syrie et de la Palestine par Saladin (al-Fath al-qussî fi l-fath al-qudsî) [par] 'Imâd ad-Dîn al Isfahânî*, trans. H. Massé (Paris, Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1972), 394-5.

⁷⁸ Amboise, *Crusade of Richard the Lion-Heart*, lines 11, 858-62.

were not alone. Richard set sail from the Holy Land without visiting Jerusalem. “The proud swelling of his great heart would not allow him to enjoy as a privilege from the pagans what he could not have as a gift to God.”⁷⁹ Those who observed this from Saladin’s court believed it was because Richard hoped to return to the East and try again once more to take Jerusalem.⁸⁰

Neither the French barons, nor Richard I, were criticized by contemporaries for not completing the terms of their vows. Why? Upon hearing news of the truce the French “agreed to complete their pilgrimage *more fully* before returning home by going to the Lord’s Sepulchre.”⁸¹ This assumes that these crusaders had already fulfilled a significant portion the crusade obligation by traveling to the East, helping to secure Acre and remaining in the Holy Land for a total of eighteen months.⁸² Writing about the events of August 1192 Richard of Devizes remarked that “Richard, king of the English, had already spent two years in conquering the region around Jerusalem.”⁸³ Perhaps it was because the duration of these crusaders’ stay and the service they had provided whilst in the East was deemed to have satisfactorily fulfilled the service component of the crusade vow as laid out by Alexander III in 1169.

The majority of crusaders, they returned home secure in the knowledge that even though they had failed to liberate Jerusalem, they had done as they had promised. They had provided aid to the Holy Land and offered their prayers at the Holy Sepulchre. Whether or not they were aware of it, these crusaders had also completed the minimum amount of service that constituted the official requirement necessary to receive the plenary remission of sins in the precious two decades.

⁷⁹ *The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 84-5.

⁸⁰ Bah’ a’ al-D’ in Ibn Shaddad, *Saladin*, 231-2.

⁸¹ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 371-4; Amboise, *Crusade of Richard the Lion-Heart*, lines 11, 857-62.

⁸² The crusaders accompanying Philip Augustus arrived at Acre on 20 April 1191. After being refused permission to visit Jerusalem, they sailed for home in September 1192.

⁸³ *The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 72-3.

The Army of the Lord, 1190-92

The Third Crusade marked the culmination of years of effort put forth by the Frankish settlers of the Latin Kingdom to entice members of the royal houses of Europe to take a more active role in the defense of the Holy Land.⁸⁴ Gregory VIII called for a crusade in response to the news of the Battle of Hattín, but it was the kings of England, France and Germany who led the 'pilgrimage' of 1190-1192. Provided with the most basic of instructions, as laid out by the pope in *Audita Tremendi*, the kings organized the expedition in a manner that they believed would lead them to find success on the battlefield. They used their expertise as military commanders to formulate a plan for a successful outcome for this expedition. Towards this end, they had three inter-related objectives. Their first goal was to recruit an army comprised of crusaders physically and financially suited to participate in battle. Secondly, aware of the difficulties which had plagued previous large-scale expeditions, each king sought to ensure that his host be well-supplied. Finally, even though the army that would accompany the kings to the Levant intentionally resembled the royal armies of the late twelfth century, these kings chose to highlight the unique aspects of the crusade. They reminded those who followed them that this war was intended as a penitential exercise and that the soldiers who accompanied them should remember their status as pilgrims. All of these goals were intended to be met through the medium of secular legislation.

The lessons of the Second Crusade had not been forgotten by the organizers of the Third Crusade. Their first goal, therefore, was to assemble an army that would be able to withstand the arduous journey to the East and upon arrival be able to engage in battle with Saladin and his troops. Contemporary wisdom held that the participation of the lower classes hindered the crusade effort. In a treatise written c. 1188 Ralph Niger advised the king of France to only allow certain classes of people to accompany him

⁸⁴ Phillips, *Defenders*, 141-9, 188-93.

on crusade to the Holy Land.⁸⁵ In this author's opinion, all women, the poor, the unarmed and elderly men should stay at home. The one exception to the general rule that the poorer classes remain behind, according to Ralph Niger, were healthy young men who were "lightly armed."⁸⁶ In spite of their poverty, these men would prove valuable to the host because "being lightly laden, quick moving and daring" they might carry loads, fetch supplies and run errands, perform watch duties and other things essential to the upkeep of a twelfth-century army on the march.⁸⁷ In return for their service, Ralph suggested the wealthy could "relieve them with their charity."⁸⁸ There is significant evidence to suggest that not only Philip, but also the kings of England and Frederick Barbarossa followed this or similar advice in 1188-91, implementing laws that while ostensibly concerned with financing the expedition, had the effect of placing limits on who could accompany the crusade host: in particular, they would make it difficult for those of limited means to join the expedition.

One of the first things the kings did upon taking the cross was to set about raising funds to support themselves and their men for the duration of the expedition. Those crusaders who were not able to finance themselves were to be discouraged from accompanying the crusade host. In consultation with his lords Frederick I immediately "decreed that no one should set out on this journey who did not have sufficient means for a year of travel."⁸⁹ At a council held in Le Mans shortly after Henry II and Philip took the cross in January 1188, a general income tax – known as the Saladin Tithe – to finance the cost of the impending crusade was promulgated by both kings. Those who paid the tax would receive a partial remission of penance.⁹⁰ "Clerics and knights [who took the cross] were exempted from this tax. Instead, "the revenues from their property

⁸⁵ G.B. Flahiff, "Ralph Niger: An Introduction to his Life and Works," *Medieval Studies*, 9 (1947), 104-26; Ralph Niger, *De re militari et triplicari peregrinationis Jerosolimitane*, ed. L. Schmutge (Berlin, 1977), 3-11.

⁸⁶ Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 224, 227.

⁸⁷ Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 227.

⁸⁸ Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 227.

⁸⁹ *Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 55.

⁹⁰ Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 2: 17; Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti* 88-90.

and whatever is their due from their dependents” was to be returned to them.⁹¹ Although they do not explicitly exclude anyone from taking the cross, the king’s decree was aimed at enticing those of a certain background to join the forthcoming expedition. Gerald of Wales was thrilled to report that together he and the archbishop of Canterbury had signed three thousand men over the course of their journey through Wales. Those “signed with the cross [were] well skilled in the use of arrows and lances and versed in military matters.”⁹² At a council held at Geddington on 11 February 1188 Henry II reissued the provisions agreed upon at Le Mans, clarifying that the tax exemption was not to be granted to those men from “town or country” who had taken the cross without gaining the permission of their lord or the blessing of their priest.⁹³ The king wished to prevent those commoners who might have been tempted to take the cross in order to evade the tax from accompanying the army to the East. Only those crusaders who received the support of their lord or were generally believed to be fit by their lord or priest to undergo a pilgrimage of this sort were allowed to fulfill their vows in person.

At the same meeting at which Henry II and Philip Augustus announced the terms of the Saladin Tithe, a series of ordinances regulating the behavior expected of crusaders while on crusade were issued. Anyone who accompanied the kings was not to use profanity, gamble, wear expensive clothing, or conversely, clothing that was too tatty, or to bring “any woman with him on the pilgrimage, except perhaps a washerwoman on foot, to be above suspicion.”⁹⁴ Most of these ordinances were modeled on the pope’s declaration that crusaders travel without,

rich clothes and with dogs or birds or other things which might seem to serve rather for delight and luxury than for necessary use; but they should go with modest provision and dress, in which they may appear rather to do penance than to affect empty pomp.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 2: 336.

⁹² Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, 147.

⁹³ *Councils and Synods* 1, pt. 2, 1025-29; Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 2: 338.

⁹⁴ Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 2: 336-7.

⁹⁵ *Historia de Expeditione Friderici Imperatoris*, 6-10; Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 2: 326-9.

Any effort to succor the Holy Land must be undertaken in a spirit of repentance by crusaders as well as the rest of Christian society.⁹⁶ Even kings understood that they must reject “the trappings of this world, scorning all its pleasures, put aside everything which is of the world” in order to “provide help and advice with all might” to the “land redeemed by [the Lord’s] blood.”⁹⁷ There are, however, some interesting differences between the ordinances issued at Le Mans and the provisions laid out in *Audita tremendi*. These variations can be attributed to the specific concern of the lay organizers to raise an army capable of recovering Jerusalem.

At Le Mans the kings of England and France reiterated the pope’s command that crusaders should not wear rich or ostentatious clothing while engaged in the service of Christ, as had the pope. However, they also decreed that “clothing that was too tatty” was not to be worn while joined with the crusade host.⁹⁸ In doing so, the kings once again stressed that those of limited means should remain at home. Unless, that was, they had hopes of being supported by someone of wealth, as would the “fine young man” who caught his lord’s attention when he stepped forward to take the cross. The lord “observing that the cloak upon which the cross was to be sewed, appeared of too thin and of too common a texture, with a flood of tears, threw him his own.”⁹⁹

The French and English monarchs also wished to prohibit, or at least discourage, women from accompanying the crusade army unless they were to be employed as washerwomen. Whether this was intended to apply to all women, or only those of ‘ill-repute’ is unclear.¹⁰⁰ Women were inherently problematic for those in

⁹⁶ Gregory VIII decreed that it was necessary for all Christians to “consider and to choose to amend our sins by voluntary chastisement and to turn to the Lord our God with penance and works of piety.” He decreed that for the next five years that every Christian, without distinction, was to observe the fast of Lent each Friday. Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 2: 329-30.

⁹⁷ Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 2: 343.

⁹⁸ Roger of Hoveden, *Gesta*, 2: 32-3

⁹⁹ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, 123.

¹⁰⁰ While historians have usually interpreted the ordinance against allowing women to accompany the crusade host to mean that no woman except a washerwoman might travel with the crusaders, it is may be likely – considering the context – to have meant that no “camp followers” were to be brought along. See Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 62-3. Women who traveled with their husbands would appear to have been exempt from this decree. Richard I brought his sister and future wife with him to Acre.

charge of organizing crusades. According to the mores of the day women were classified as non-combatants and thus, an unnecessary drain on the resources of an army. Urban II had advised women against taking crusade vows, as well as the elderly, the infirm, clerics, and monks.¹⁰¹ This is despite evidence suggesting that women could and did assist in military endeavors while on crusade. Among those crusaders who “were carrying earth to make a mound in the ditch for assaulting” Acre in 1191 was a woman,

who labored with great diligence and earnestness, and went to and fro unceasingly, and encouraged others unremittingly, in order that the work might be accomplished; but her zeal put an end to her life and labors; for while a crowd of all sexes and ages were constantly coming and going to complete the work in question, and while the aforesaid woman was occupied in depositing what she brought, a Turk who had been lying in wait for her, struck her a mortal blow with a dart.¹⁰²

The praise accorded to this woman crusader was unusual. Most commentators were quick to pin the blame for a variety of shortfalls on the women who accompanied the crusade host. Women were believed to threaten to the spiritual purity of the crusade army.¹⁰³ Interacting with woman would inevitably lead to ensnarement by the devil. Thus, Ralph Niger, did not “agree with female participation in a major campaign to be carried out by men.”¹⁰⁴ Within this particular context, it appears as though the kings were trying to discourage crusaders from bringing any women with them so as to preserve the purity of the army. Writing before 1155, the English chronicler Henry of Huntingdon had argued that God had spurned the efforts of the crusaders in the Holy

Chronicle of Richard of Devizes, 28; Amboise, , *Crusade of Richard the Lion Heart*, lines. 3625-60. This prohibition was obviously not followed for the entire campaign. A number of female camp followers were sent home to Europe from the Levant. Amboise, *Crusade of Richard the Lion Heart*, lines. 5681-700.

¹⁰¹ Robert of Rheims, “Historia Hiersolymitana,” *RHC Oc.* 3: 729.

¹⁰² This woman was married and was accompanied by her husband. Amboise, *Crusade of Richard the Lion Heart*, lines. 3625-60.

¹⁰³ E. Siberry, *Criticism of the Crusades, 1095-1271* (Oxford, 1985), 45-6.

¹⁰⁴ Ralph Niger, *De re militari*, 227.

Land on account of “their fornication, adultery and other wickedness.”¹⁰⁵ This policy would have the added benefit of ensuring that at least one group of non-combatants would be underrepresented.

As evidenced by the presence of women crusaders at the siege of Acre, not all of the legislation promulgated at Le Mans and Geddington was entirely successful in preventing those unsuited to the military service they had promised from setting out on crusade. In the spring of 1191 Richard I had to take additional steps to ensure that the crusade army passed muster. At Messina he purged the English army of non-combatants. Only those who were “well able and cheerfully willing to bear arms” were allowed to sail with the English kings. Those who could not were ordered to return home, leaving their wealth and armor behind for the benefit of the army.¹⁰⁶

Afterwards the king was able to set sail with a fleet “more excellent than numerous” and his army “chosen and strong.”¹⁰⁷ The failure to take Jerusalem in 1192 could not, this time be blamed on a surplus of crusaders ill-suited to the task set in front of them.

Superficially, the Third Crusade had much in common with the First Crusade. In 1095 and again in 1187, the papacy encouraged the Christians of Western Europe to undertake a penitential pilgrimage to liberate Jerusalem from Muslim rule. Those who responded to this plea took up the cross, cementing their intention to complete an armed pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. Appearances can be deceiving, however. One only has to look at the composition of the armies that traveled to the East to observe that some crusaders, especially the organizers of the crusade, while appreciating that the goal of their expedition was Jerusalem no longer saw the crusade primarily as a penitential pilgrimage. Instead, men like Frederick II, Philip Augustus and Richard I treated the crusade as a war, a holy war to be sure, but a war nonetheless. Twenty years earlier Alexander III altered the substance of the vow, perhaps with the intention

¹⁰⁵ Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold, RS 81 (London, 1879), ; P.W. Edbury, “Looking Back on the Second Crusade: Some Late Twelfth-Century English Perspectives,” *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. M. Gervers (New York, 1992), 163-72.

¹⁰⁶ *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 28.

¹⁰⁷ *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 28.

of recruiting a professional army to fight Christ's battles. The organizers of the Third Crusade would try a different approach, hoping for a similar outcome.¹⁰⁸

Henry II and Richard I, Frederick Barbarossa and Philip Augustus demanded that only those suited to life on campaign accompany them to the East. Together the kings introduced legislation that ensured that this would be the case. These laws defined the crusader as a soldier whose primary duty was to provide the army (led by the king) with military service. This shift in definition did not immediately alter the substance of the crusading vow – those who took the cross continued to promise that they would complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and assist in the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre. It did, however, limit who was able to 'crusade' in person, which will – as shall be shown in the following section – push the Church to find alternate ways in which to have some crusaders 'fulfill' their vows.

“Saluting Jerusalem from Afar”: Vow Commutation during the Third Crusade

The increased efforts to restrict who accompanied the crusade host on campaign would have important ramifications for the way in which crusade vows were fulfilled in the period 1188-1198. After 1188, those crusaders who were too poor, too weak or ill, as well as women and those individuals perceived to be important to the governance of the kingdom, were prohibited by their secular lords from accompanying Christ's army to the East. The Church's response to the increasing number of crusaders who were unable to fulfill the terms of their vows in person was inspired. In addition to the traditional means of securing release from a vow – absolution, commutation, and substitution – crusaders now were allowed to redeem their vows for a monetary payment which would then be used to support the crusade effort.

The introduction of vow redemption was intended to solve the peculiar dilemma the crusading movement found itself in at the end of the twelfth century. It

¹⁰⁸ The English and French kings co-operated in the planning of the expedition and were in touch with Frederick I. However, the resources upon which Richard could draw meant that he had the upper hand from the very beginning. The emperor's death and Philip Augustus's abandonment of the project in July 1191 assured Richard I's place as leader of the combined crusade forces. Gillingham, *Richard I*, 4-7.

was obvious to both clerical and lay leaders that the recovery of the Holy Land depended upon the ability of Western Christendom to field a well-supplied army. Complicating matters, however, was the fact that neither the clerical nor the secular authorities could prohibit anyone from taking the cross (save for the vowed religious) even if they had desired to do so. However, it was not certain that the Church wanted to discourage crusading. The crusade was perceived to be of great spiritual value for Christian society, offering the laity a way in which to secure their own salvation should they be willing. It was also a means by which society as a whole might reform itself. By allowing crusaders to redeem their vows or send a substitute in their place, the Church and the lay leaders organizing the crusade ensured that only those suited to crusade did so in person. Those who did not meet the criteria would be allowed to fulfill their vows in a way that would allow them to contribute to the support and maintenance of the Holy Land all the while contributing to their own salvation. The introduction of vow redemption will be one of the most important developments for the future of crusading, as it will eventually permit more members of Latin Christian society to gain access to the benefits of the crusade.

The cross was not an obligation one assumed lightly.¹⁰⁹ Prior to the Third Crusade, it was unusual to see crusaders being released from the obligation incurred with the cross. Only the pope could dispense, or completely release and absolve, a crusader from his or her vow, and examples prior to 1188 are few and far between.¹¹⁰ When one does observe the pope releasing crusaders from their vow it is usually because of some extraordinary reason, usually in cases where the pope refused to grant a cleric or monk permission to crusade. When Archbishop Bernard of Toledo arrived in Rome on his way to Jerusalem in May 1099, Urban II absolved or released him from the obligation of journeying to the East to join the crusade host. Instead, the pope

¹⁰⁹ Though the kings of France and England often discussed going on crusade prior to 1188, and in several instances, declared that they *would* take the cross in the near future, neither Henry II nor Louis VII and later, Philip Augustus, would actually assume the vow until news of the fall of Jerusalem reached Europe.

¹¹⁰ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 131-8.

sent him home to his diocese to continue his ministry there.¹¹¹ There were three other options open to crusaders who found themselves in circumstances which prevented them from completing their vows prior to 1188 – delay, commutation and substitution. Crusaders often chose to or were granted leave to delay fulfilling their vow. Helias of La Flèche was one such crusader. In front of witnesses he promised “to wait for a better time when I may fulfill my vow.”¹¹² Unfortunately, the opportune moment never came. It is not known whether or not Helias was allowed to commute or change his vow to crusade into a promise to complete another pious act, only that the vow was never fulfilled.¹¹³

The idea that an obligation might be substituted in place of the obligation originally assumed was a longstanding precept of canon law. The church had adopted commutation as a feature of its penitential system. In the late eleventh century it entirely possible for one penance might be replaced with another. It was generally accepted that the new obligation or penance was to be commensurate with the original. Commutation was an especially useful way of releasing from their obligations those crusaders who were unsuited to the labor required by the cross.¹¹⁴ A few crusaders at the time of the First and Second Crusades were allowed to commute their vows. Urban II, for example, urged Spaniards to commute their crusade vow into a vow to fight the Moors.¹¹⁵ Other crusaders changed their vow to crusade into a promise to build a monastic foundation wherein monks would fight spiritual battles against a host of enemies.¹¹⁶ William Le Gros, earl of Ablemarle and lord of Holderness had vowed to go on the Second Crusade but was unable to fulfill his promise because of his obesity and advanced age. As grew older still the earl began to feel uneasy about the idea of an unfulfilled commitment of this gravity hanging over his head. A Cistercian monk

¹¹¹ Rodrigo Juménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie sive Historia Gothica*, Ed. J. Fernández Valverde, CCCM 72 (Turnholt, 1987), 209-10; Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta*, 107.

¹¹² OV, 5: 230.

¹¹³ OV, 5, 230, n.1

¹¹⁴ C. Vogel, “Composition légale et commutations dans le système de la pénitence tarifée,” *Revue de droit canonique*, ed. A. Villien et al., 7 vols. (Paris, 1924ff), 3: 1183.

¹¹⁵ Urban II to the counts of Besalú, Empurias, Roussillon and Cerdaña and their knights, c. January 1096-29 July 1099 in *Papsturkunden in Spanien. I Katalonien*, ed. P. Kehr (Berlin, 1926), 287-8.

¹¹⁶ HGL, 5: 757.

called Adam saw an opportunity in the earl's discomfort and suggested that he promise to found a monastery as a means of obtaining the pope's absolution for his crusade vow. The earl pledged to do so, and received what he desired. Adam procured the absolution through his superior, Bernard of Clairvaux, who presented William Le Gros's case to Eugenius III. The result of this commutation was the foundation of Meaux Abbey in 1150.¹¹⁷ The other option open to those crusaders who, like William Le Gros, would forever be unable to complete the pilgrimage in person due to old age and ill health was to pay for a suitable substitute to complete the terms of the vow on the votary's behalf. This is what Abbot Suger arranged to do in 1150.¹¹⁸

All of these methods were employed by agents of the church in the period 1187-98. A few crusaders, who found themselves in unusual circumstances, had their vows dispensed by the pope. The bishop of Norwich who had set out for Jerusalem well prepared for the journey was robbed of all his wealth in Burgundy. "The pope released him from his vow by the clemency of the holy see and sent him back to his own affairs."¹¹⁹ In 1190 Clement III (1187-91) granted to Richard I the authority to release from their vows any crusaders whose absence from England would seriously impede the king's ability to participate in the crusade.¹²⁰ Clement's decision was quite remarkable considering that this right had always been reserved for the papacy, but understandable considering the central role the kings of Europe played in organizing and executing the recovery effort. At Richard's command, Geoffrey FitzPeter, William Brewer and Hugh Bardolf, "laid aside the Cross and were permitted to remain at home."¹²¹ The English king also made use of the power he had been granted by the pope while at Messina in 1191. He sent home everyone who would hinder the forthcoming attack on Acre. One assumes that these crusaders were either released

¹¹⁷ *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa ab anno 1150 ab usque ad annum 1506*, ed. E. A. Bond, RS 43, 3 vols. (London, 1866-68), 1: 76.

¹¹⁸ William of St. Denis, *Sugerii Vita*, 401.

¹¹⁹ *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 10-11.

¹²⁰ *The Letters of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) Concerning England and Wales: A Calendar with an Appendix of Texts*, ed. C.R. and M.G. Cheney (Oxford, 1967), no.364; *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 5-6; Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 3: 17.

¹²¹ *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 5.

from their vows or, as in the case of the Archbishop of Rouen, who Richard ordered to return to England so as to assist the king's chancellor, found substitutes to complete the vow on their behalves.¹²² "Having saluted Jerusalem from afar," the archbishop arranged that the king himself would act as a substitute and complete the vow on his behalf. The archbishop "gave the king, who was going to fight in his stead, everything he had brought with him for the expedition."¹²³ The other crusaders sent home from Messina in spring 1191 were also required, by royal decree, to leave behind "the money [and] the arms they had brought with them."¹²⁴

The official policy of the Church in regards to those who had taken the cross for the Third Crusade but because of poverty or old age "are wholly unable to perform the vow" was set forth in a letter written by Cardinal John of Anagni, the legate in charge of the crusade effort in England. He told Baldwin, the Archbishop of Canterbury, that he had absolved the Archdeacon Gerald of St. David's and Peter, the bishop of Mynyw, from their crusade vows because "they are wholly unable to perform the vow, which they had made, since they have not had the wherewithal to meet the expenses."¹²⁵ Since they could not go in person, they were instead to make a contribution "to those going to Jerusalem out of the possessions that God has given them and should bestow their labor and their aid upon the Church of Mynyw."¹²⁶ Other Welshmen troubled by poverty or the "weakness of age" were to be excused from their vows on the condition that they also commute their vow to a monetary payment and provide both financial and physical aid to their local cathedral Church.¹²⁷ In short, the papal legate instructed the English clergy that the numerous crusaders deemed unsuited to crusade in person by the king might be allowed to redeem their vow.

¹²² *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 27.

¹²³ *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 5-6.

¹²³ *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 27.

¹²⁴ *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 27.

¹²⁵ Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se Gestis*, 84-5.

¹²⁶ Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se Gestis*, 84-5.

¹²⁷ Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se Gestis* 84-5.

Vow redemption was a form of commutation. The votary secured release from the obligation of the vow by replacing their promise to travel to Jerusalem and work for its recovery with a commitment to donate a sum of money to the crusade effort. Redeeming a vow did not require of the votary the same expenditure of labor previously required of those who commuted the vow associated with the cross. Notably, this form of commutation was first observed in connection with the crusade prior to 1187 and can only be explained as the result of the new requirements associated with crusading in the later twelfth century.¹²⁸ Vow redemption served a dual purpose. It allowed crusaders unsuited to fulfill their vow in person to contribute to the cause that they had committed themselves to undertake. In theory it would allow the Church to funnel money and goods to those crusaders who could make use of it. Vow redemption followed the precept set forth thirty years earlier by Adrian IV that almsgiving in aid of the crusade would be rewarded by a remission of penance. It also followed the current papal policy which encouraged those who did not take the cross to donate what they could to the crusading effort instead. According to a letter sent by Clement III to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1188, “those who send a worthy subsidy from their property [for the aid of the Holy Land] . . . we commit to your judgment concerning the remission of sins to be granted if they are truly penitent, both the quality and the quantity having been considered.”¹²⁹

Crusaders who redeemed their vows received the full remission of sins granted to those who took up the cross. This development will have important ramifications for the way in which crusaders understood the crusade in the future. Taking the cross no longer required the votary to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; instead he or she might expect to be released from this obligation in return for a promise to support the crusade by giving alms in aid the Holy Land. Thus, after 1187 crusading would encompass two very distinct and disparate activities – serving Christ as a soldier and providing materially for the aid of the Holy Land.

¹²⁸ Redemption was also an accepted aspect of the eleventh-century penitential system. The general policy with redemption was that, as in the case of Gerald and Peter, levied according to means. S. Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance, 900-1050* (Woodbridge, 2001), 41-3.

¹²⁹ Gerald of Wales, *De principis instructione liber*, 238.

Conclusion

In 1195, Baldwin's successor as Archbishop of Canterbury, Hubert Walter, asked Pope Celestine III what he should do with those crusaders who were too sick or poor to be coerced into fulfilling their votive obligation. Many of those who had been deemed unsuited to accompany the king on crusade in 1190 had not yet been released from their vows.¹³⁰ Included among their number were a tanner, a potter, a butcher, a blacksmith, a vintner and a ditch cutter. Most listed poverty as the cause for their failure to fulfill their vows.¹³¹ Celestine III directed Hubert to order the immediate performance of the vow on those who had the means to go on crusade unless they provided a reasonable excuse, in which case, a delay could be granted. Otherwise, they should be excommunicated. Those who were sick should send substitutes, whilst those who were lacking in funds were to have a suitable amount of penance enjoined upon them.

What the archbishop's letter showed was the ultimate success of the kings' strategy to limit participation on the crusade to those who were able to provide military service. The armies of Frederick I, Philip Augustus, and Richard I were not dogged by large numbers of crusaders unable to feed themselves or ill-equipped for battles. Crusaders too poor or otherwise unsuited to serve as soldiers remained at home instead of accompanying their kings to the Levant. Like Alexander III and many others before them, the lay leaders of the Third Crusade stressed that the crusader had an obligation to take up arms against the enemies of Christ. The crusader should be fit and able to fulfill this promise. Rather than alter the substance of the crusading vow to reflect their perception that crusaders should be trained soldiers, the lay leaders of the crusade used the tools at their disposal - in particular, royal legislation - to see that Christ had an army capable of 'crusading.' While they did not meddle with the form and substance of the vow, the organizers of the Third Crusade would nonetheless leave

¹³⁰ Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 3: 317-19; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Reports on Manuscripts in Various Collections*, vol. 1, 235-6; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Fifth Report*, appendix (London, 1872), 462.

¹³¹ Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Reports on Manuscripts in Various Collections*, vol. 1, 235-6.

their mark on the crusade. Faced with a large number of crusaders who would not be allowed to fulfill the crusade vow, the pope (or at least his representative) would search for new ways in which to release crusaders from the responsibility of accompanying the royal army on pilgrimage to Jerusalem while still allowing them to honor their desire to aid the Holy Land. The pope's solution was to induce crusaders who would never be suited to an activity of this sort to redeem their vows.

Chapter Five: Pope Innocent III and the Recruitment and Enforcement of the Crusade Vow for the Recovery of the Holy Land

As one contemporary observed, Pope Urban II had found a “new” way for “the order of knights and the crowd running behind them” to serve God in a manner suited to their profession.¹ The changes in the recruitment and deployment of crusaders in the second half of the twelfth century did not significantly alter contemporaries’ assessment of the crusade and its purpose. If anything, the actions of the papacy and the European royalty, as well as the rhetoric of clerical observers, confirmed that the crusade was a “knightly” enterprise. These same groups also worked hard to promote crusading as the supreme expression of lay piety. Herein lay a contradiction. Not every lay person was, or could have made reasonable claim to be, a knight. Especially after 1187 the opportunity to gain salvation as a crusader was available only to a small sector of the Christian population. This inconsistency was not to last. By 1216 every member of Christian society, regardless of social status or profession, was not only allowed, but expected to participate in the crusade aimed at reestablishing Christian control of Jerusalem - a shift attributable to the policy advanced by Pope Innocent III (1198-1216). In turn, the pope’s policies would help shape crusaders’ understanding of what it meant to crusade. The thirteenth century saw ‘crusading’ encompass a variety of different activities including almsgiving, praying, and fighting. Crusaders were to be found anywhere the papacy deemed it expedient to use force against those believed to threaten the well-being of Christians and the Church. To put it plainly, after 1216 the crusade was no longer exclusively linked with the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

In the encyclical *Vineam domini*, issued in 1213 to summon the Fourth Lateran Council, Pope Innocent III wrote that “among all the good things which our heart can desire there are two in this world which we value above all; that is, to promote the recovery of the Holy Land and the reform of the universal Church.”² No one who had

¹ Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta per Francos et cing autres texts*, ed. R. B. C. Huguens, CCCM 127A (Turnholt, 1996), 86.

² G. Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz’ III* (Weimar, 1929), 84

observed the pope in the preceding fifteen years would have been surprised to hear this. Although there is some disagreement among historians as to whether he “immediately set about formulating a crusade policy and devising the means for its implementation” after his election in January 1198 or instead waited to display his enthusiasm for a new crusade until that summer, there can be little doubt that Innocent III’s commitment to bringing a crusade project to fruition was present from the early days of his pontificate.³ Organizing a crusade which would succeed in recovering Jerusalem was Innocent’s top priority in 1198 and would continue to occupy the central role in his crusade policy for the duration of his pontificate. Anxious to protect and reform Christendom, however, Innocent III also demanded that Christians take up the cross for campaigns against heretics in Languedoc, pagans and apostates in the Baltic and against the Muslims occupying the southern reaches of the Iberian peninsula. These crusades were presented as being in every way equal to and as necessary for the well-being of Christendom as the Holy Land crusade. Regardless of where they fought, Innocent III believed bearing the cross allowed Christians to reaffirm their devotion to God, to amend their behavior, and to gain salvation.

According to Innocent III, the physical warfare of the crusade was an integral part of man’s struggle against the power of evil and a means by which man could hope to prepare himself for the heavenly city of God. Innocent held firm to his belief that the world was a transitory place where man suffered in preparation for the time when he would seek entrance into the heavenly kingdom. Life itself could be understood as a pilgrimage or perhaps as a crusade. In the treatise *De miseria humane conditionis* (c.1195) composed during his career as cardinal deacon of the church of Saints Sergio and Bacco, Innocent wrote that man “does not have in this life a lasting city of this world but seeks the future city of God.”⁴ He was convinced also that “the life of man upon earth is warfare. Indeed, is it not warfare when many enemies lie in wait on all sides? . . . Yet, our wrestling is not so much against flesh and blood but against the

³ P. J. Cole, *The Preaching of the Crusades to the Holy Land, 1095-1270* (Cambridge MA, 1991), 80; H. Roscher, *Papst Innocenz III und die Kreuzzuge* (Göttingen, 1969), 51-4.

⁴ Lotario dei Conti of Segni (Innocent III), *De Miseria Humane Conditionis*, ed. M. Maccarrone (Lugano, 1955), 26-27.

spirits of wickedness in high places, against the rulers of these darkneses.”⁵ In Innocent’s opinion perpetual conflict between good and evil was an essential part of life.⁶ Wickedness, in the form of sin, had triumphed when Jerusalem fell into the hands of non-Christians.⁷ However, Christians had an opportunity to wage war against these dark forces, by reforming their behavior, by actively taking up arms against those who would profane Christ and the Church, and by participating in a penitential pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. Participation in the crusade meant exposing oneself “to great and hard experiences in the hopes of eternal reward” although “sufferings of this kind are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that shall be revealed to you.”⁸ The earthly goal for the crusade may have been the recovery of the city of Jerusalem, but the ultimate goal, according to Innocent, was the “encounter with Christ in the heavenly Jerusalem.”⁹ Like Bernard of Clairvaux before him, Innocent III presented the crusade as the vehicle which allowed man to pay Christ back for his suffering on the cross and as an opportunity to gain salvation, promising that “those who fight faithfully for [Christ] will be crowned in happiness by him.”¹⁰ The cross signified the crusader’s willingness to endure suffering on the way to both the celestial and temporal Jerusalem. By “taking the cross” [crusaders] repaid Christ, who on it bore [their] infirmities and carried their sorrows.”¹¹

With the struggle being so great, the enemy so daunting and the rewards so valuable the pope believed it was imperative for every Christian to take part in a war that would affect each of them individually. According to Innocent III, a crusade was not something to be embarked upon reluctantly, but was to be taken up joyfully as the

⁵ Lotario dei Conti of Segni (Innocent III), *De Miseria Humane Conditionis*, 26-7.

⁶ J. Gilchrist, “The Lord’s War as the Proving Ground of Faith: Pope Innocent III and the Propagation of Violence (1198-1216),” *Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth-Century Syria*, ed. M. Shatzmiller (Leiden, 1993), 71.

⁷ Like Gregory VIII, Innocent III believed that the loss of Jerusalem in 1188, as well as the subsequent failure to recover the Holy Land, was directly attributable to the sinful behavior of Christians throughout Christendom. *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1:498-505.

⁸ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” *PL* 215: 1339.

⁹ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 215: 384-5.

¹⁰ Bernard of Clairvaux, “Epistolae,” *PL*, 182: 565-7; *Register Innocenz’ III*, 2: 499; Peter of Les-Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, ed. P. Guébin and E. Lyon, 3 vols. (Paris, 1926), 1: 64; Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz’ III*, 89.

¹¹ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” *PL* 215: 1339-40.

embodiment of the Christian following Christ to the cross. And “to those who would refuse [this call], if there chance be any so ungrateful to the Lord our God . . . let them know they will be answerable to the awful judge at the last day of strict judgment.”¹² In light of these beliefs it comes as little surprise to learn that Innocent III, more than any of his predecessors, preached the crusade as something open to all Christians. As pope, Innocent believed himself responsible for seeing that each and every Christian understood how important their duty to battle against the enemies of Christ was and for ensuring that they were allowed the opportunity to fulfill this obligation.

Like the Gregorian reformers who had set out to reorder Christendom a century earlier, Innocent III held that the pope was the head of Christian society.¹³ In a letter written to Kalojan, king of the Bulgarians, in 1204 Innocent explained that God had

established over nations and kingdoms the supreme pontiff of the Apostolic See and Roman church. Through Blessed Peter, he ordained the pontiff as his vicar, conferring upon him the power to root up, to break down, to destroy, and to overthrow, to build and to plant [Jer. 1:10].¹⁴

As the Vicar of Christ, the pontiff was the ultimate authority on earth. He alone was responsible for the entire human race. It was his duty to correct, protect and lead those under his care towards salvation. Innocent took his role as leader of and pastor to all Christians very seriously.¹⁵ He “was not reluctant to use force” in order to bring about the world he envisioned.¹⁶ When it came to crusading, this meant that the pope had the duty to assemble the army of Christ for a crusade whenever it seemed necessary for the good of Christendom.

¹² *Conciliarum*, 268.

¹³ For assessments of the reform movement of the eleventh and twelfth century see, G. Tellenbach, *The Church of the reform in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century* (Cambridge and New York, 1993) and H.E.J. Cowdrey, *The Cluniacs and the Gregorian reform* (Oxford 1970).

¹⁴ *Register Innocenz' III*, 7: 1. For a discussion of Innocent's conception of his office see J.M. Powell, *Pope Innocent III (1160/61-1216). To Root up and to Plant, The Medieval Mediterranean 47* (Leiden and Boston, 2003), 255-6.

¹⁵ Innocent III's first sermon as pope lays out what he believes his rights and duties are as pope. He prays that he will be “faithful and prudent” to the demands of his office. Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” *PL* 217: 653-660.

¹⁶ Powell, *Innocent III*, 263.

Theoretically, enlistment in “the army of the Lord” was to have been an option open to anyone save those who had devoted their lives to serving God as monks or nuns. The crusade was a pilgrimage and pilgrimage was open to one and all.¹⁷ As has been shown, however, the reality of crusading was somewhat different - at least through the second half of the twelfth century. After 1150 only those individuals who could reasonably be expected to provide their Lord with military service were encouraged to join the ranks of God’s army. Those who had assumed the cross but were unsuited to the task were excused from their duties. Taking into consideration his conception of the crusade as an agent of reform and his desire to secure both the temporal and heavenly Jerusalem for the benefit of all Christians, it comes as little surprise that over the course of his pontificate Innocent III worked to reach a point where the theory of the crusade as a penitential pilgrimage uniquely suited for the laity was reflected in its practice. Asserting that as pope he, not the crusader, had the right to determine the substance of the crusade vow, to decide upon recruitment policies, and the authority to establish who had an obligation to fulfill the votive obligation in person, Innocent III finally announced that anyone who wished, with the sole exception of persons bound by the religious profession, could take the cross whether or not he or she was personally fit or able to participate in a military campaign. Those who were unsuited to engage in warfare were afterwards to redeem their vows.¹⁸ As one might imagine, this policy was to have serious repercussions for the future of crusading, especially for the substance of the crusade vow. After 1213 one could vow to crusade secure in the knowledge that the promise one made to go to Jerusalem and fight for its recovery did not necessarily have to be kept. Instead the obligation to crusade could be exchanged for a less onerous task which upon completion would be rewarded as if one had gone to serve in the Holy Land.

¹⁷ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1: 498-505.

¹⁸ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz’ III*, 93-4.

The impression Innocent left on the crusading movement proved to be indelible, for this reason in addition to others.¹⁹ By 1216 the crusade had taken on the veneer of an “all-purpose holy war” to be proclaimed by the pope whenever it became necessary to protect Christendom from external or internal threats. This was due in no small part to the efforts of Innocent III.²⁰ The pope obviously granted plenary indulgences to those who took up the cross to travel to and liberate Jerusalem.²¹ He was also to extend the same spiritual benefit to crusaders who vowed to spend forty days eradicating heresy in the environs of Toulouse, joined one of the Spanish kings on a campaign against the Almohads, or spent a year defending the church in Livonia. As the crusade was deployed against a variety of enemies, the terms of the vow were altered by the pope or his representatives to suit the distinctive nature of each different enterprise. Innocent III assured contemporaries that in certain circumstances (established by the pope) one might vow to crusade without incurring an obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. What each *cruce signatus* had in common with other crusaders, no matter where he was deployed, was a firm belief that the cross marked him out as a pilgrim (either traveling to the Holy Sepulchre or more abstractly to the ‘heavenly’ Jerusalem) and that he had the duty to serve as a soldier of Christ – to carry out a specific task, as outlined by the pope, on behalf of Christ and his Church. The shifting definition of the crusade to encompass a variety of activities was of course reflected in the way both crusaders and the pope chose to deal with the votive obligation assumed with the cross. This chapter examines exactly how Innocent’s vision of the crusade and the strategies he employed as result of his

¹⁹ Innocent III “contributed more to the movement than any other individual except Urban II.” Riley-Smith, *Crusades*, 120. In contrast, Christopher Tyerman has argued that Innocent III was less an innovator, than someone who consolidated existing practice. *Invention*, 35. Though he undoubtedly did build on trends and views that were present in earlier periods, it is clear that his unique and comprehensive vision as the vehicle in which to reform Christian society led to the creation of new practices which would forever alter the way in which crusades were fought. J.M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221*, (Philadelphia, 1986), 57-8; Roscher, *Papst Innocenz III*, 142

²⁰ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 192-3.

²¹ Innocent III was the first pope to issue a full indulgence, rather than a plenary remission of sin. Riley-Smith, *What were the crusades?*, 59-64.

understanding were to alter the substance of the vow taken for the crusade to recover Jerusalem.

The Fourth Crusade: Papal Authority and the Substance of the Crusade Vow

His anonymous biographer observed that Innocent “fervently longed for the relief and recovery of the Holy Land and anxiously mulled over how he could achieve this more effectively.”²² Innocent’s desire to see a large-scale crusade set out for the Holy Land was evident from the earliest days of his pontificate. In February 1198 he wrote to Aimery, the patriarch of Jerusalem, to assure him of the papacy’s interest in freeing Jerusalem from its Muslim oppressors.²³ Six months later he acted upon those words, calling for a new crusade to the Holy Land in the encyclical *Post miserabile*.²⁴ This plea was addressed to the entire Christian community and would set the tone for the crusading bulls that Innocent III would issue over the next eighteen years.²⁵ In this letter the pope expressed his belief that it was the moral obligation of every Christian to participate in the crusade:

The Apostolic See cries out, like a trumpet it raises its voice, eager to arouse the Christian peoples to fight Christ’s battle and to avenge the injury done to the Crucified One If God submitted to death for humanity, will a human hesitate to submit to death for God, inasmuch as the sufferings of the moment are not comparable to the future glory that shall be revealed in us?²⁶

²² “Gesta Innocentii III,” *PL* 214: 99. This biography has been translated by J.M. Powell as *The Deeds of Pope Innocent III by an Anonymous Author* (Washington DC, 2004), 133.

²³ *Die Register Innocenz’ III*, ed. O. Hageneder and A. Haidacher, 8 vols. (Graz, Rome Vienna, 1964-) 1: 18-20. Almost all the letters relating to the Fourth Crusade have been translated by Alfred Andrea in *Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade*, (Boston, 2000). The translations I use here are his unless otherwise noted.

²⁴ Innocent III issued his first letter calling for a crusade to recover Jerusalem on 15 August 1198. *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1:498-505.

²⁵ Hans Mayer believes that Innocent III excluded the kings of Europe from this call to crusade because their participation would somehow limit his direction of the campaign. *The Crusades*, 196-7. I am more inclined to believe that Innocent III did not deliberately set out to exclude the monarchs. Rather, it is likely that he realized that the kings of England and France were too involved in their own struggles to heed his summons. Henry VI had recently died, leaving a three year old heir, so he could not look towards the Holy Roman Emperor for help. See, Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 119.

²⁶ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1: 498-505.

According to the pope, all those faithful to Christ – himself included - had a debt that they owed to Christ, a debt which demanded immediate payment through support of their Lord in his war.²⁷

In 1198, however, this was not a debt easily paid by the majority of Christians, a point of which Innocent could not avoid being aware.²⁸ For a start he was clear in the instructions given to his suffragans that they were to “raise warriors.”²⁹ Innocent never said that those who are were not of warrior stock should be dissuaded from taking the cross, though he did hold fast to the practice of releasing the poor, elderly, weak, or ill from their obligation to accompany the crusade host.³⁰ When Innocent spoke of the “poor” he meant those who were both without means and physically unsuited “to fight Christ’s battle.”³¹ Warriors without the financial wherewithal means were to be subsidized by wealthier crusader or by alms collected for this purpose. He extended the ability to earn remission from sin to those who could not go in person but who, “at their own expense, according to their means and rank, send qualified men there” as well as to those who “at the expense of others, still complete in person the rigors of the pilgrimage.”³² To those who contributed money and goods to aid the Holy Land the pope offered a remission of penance in “relation to the size of their subsidy and especially in proportion to the depth of their devotion.”³³ Women were another category of people for whom active participation in the crusade was not truly an option. Innocent allowed that women were allowed to travel to the Holy Land only if they were accompanied by their husband, brother or, if a widow, able to pay for soldiers to accompany her.³⁴

²⁷ Even the clergy was not immune from this obligation. In 1199 Innocent III ordered that a fortieth part of all ecclesiastical revenues be devoted to the aid of the Holy Land; in return, each cleric would receive a remission of one-fourth of any imposed penance. *Register Innocenz' III*, 2: 258.

²⁸ D. E. Queller and T. F. Madden, *The Fourth Crusade: the Conquest of Constantinople*, 2nd [rev.] edn (Philadelphia, 1997), 1-3; J. Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (London and New York, 2005), 4-7, 97-8.

²⁹ *Register Innocenz' III*, 1:500.

³⁰ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 668.

³¹ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 668; *Register Innocenz' III*, 1: 500.

³² *Register Innocenz' III*, 1:498-505.

³³ *Register Innocenz' III*, 1:498-505.

³⁴ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 1261.

Innocent III found himself one of those for whom participation in the crusade was impossible. He simply could not afford the time to accompany the crusade host to the East. Instead, he devoted a tenth of his income to the cause and arranged to “participate” in the expedition through the agency of two legates, Cardinals Soffredo and Peter Capuano, upon whom Innocent had “placed the emblem of the Cross.”³⁵ Cardinal Soffredo was to proceed directly to the Holy Land to prepare the way for the crusade host; Peter Capuano would promote the cause of the crusade in Europe and accompany the host on campaign.³⁶ As the pope’s deputies, both legates were charged with seeing that crusaders fulfilled the terms of their vows.

From the very beginning Innocent III distinguished himself from his predecessors by asserting that only the pope had the authority to determine the substance of the vow taken by crusaders. In 1198 he took the traditional stance, declaring that the substance of the vow consisted of a promise to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. He also decreed that those “warriors” who went to the “defense of the land of the Lord’s birth” were to “remain at least two years.”³⁷ In December 1199, before he had learned that a number of the French nobles had taken the cross at a tournament at Ècry, Innocent once again appealed to the Christians of the West to undertake a crusade in aid of the Holy Land.³⁸ In his desire to see the crusade come to fruition, the pope was willing to alter the terms of the vow for all crusaders in the hopes that the availability of financial support and the promise of a shorter period of service would entice a greater number of Christians to take the cross. From December 1199 the pope granted the plenary indulgence to those crusaders who

³⁵ *Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade*, 9-10; *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1: 498-505, 2: 258. For the cardinal legates see W. Maleczek, *Papst und Kardinalskolleg von 1191 bis 1216* (Vienna, 1984), 73-6, 117-24; and *Petrus Capuanus: Kardinal, Legat am vierten Kreuzzug, Theologie (+1214)* (Vienna, 1988).

³⁶ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1:498-505; Maleczek, *Papst und Kardinalskolleg*, 74.

³⁷ It is not entirely clear whether this time limit was required of all participants or only those crusaders who were sent to the East at the expense of the cities, counts and barons. *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1:503. Contemporaries certainly took it to mean that all crusaders were required to serve as a crusader for a set period of time. Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. E. Faral, *Les Classiques de l’Histoire de France au Moyen Age 18-19*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1938-39), 1: 5. The translations quoted here are taken from M. R. B. Shaw’s translation of “The Conquest of Constantinople” in *Chronicles of the Crusades*, (London, 1963).

³⁸ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 2: 258.

“remained [in the Holy Land] for at least one year” or paid for someone else to stay longer than twelve months.³⁹ As this decision to alter the substance of the crusading obligation (from two to one year’s service) suggests, Innocent III claimed the authority to modify the terms of the crusader’s service. Though incumbent upon the votary to complete the terms of the vow, Innocent III would maintain time and again over the course of the expedition that finally set out in response to this call, that only the Vicar of Christ was entitled to alter the terms of the vow in any significant manner.

The events of 1198-1205 would teach Innocent III that not all crusaders understood or accepted the essence of the crusader’s votive obligation in the same way he did, nor always were prepared to accept his word as final. When at long last the crusaders began to gather in Venice in the summer of 1202, the majority believed that they were about to embark for Syria unaware that the leaders of the crusade planned to direct the expedition towards Cairo, “because from there the Turks could more easily be crushed from any other part of their territory.”⁴⁰ This was, “kept a closely guarded secret; to the public at large it was merely announced that we were going oversea.”⁴¹ Most vows reflected the belief that the crusade would set out immediately for the Holy Land. Those who assumed the cross between 1200 and 1202 vowed to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and to “fight in God’s service” for a year.⁴² Innocent III had specified that this year’s service was to be spent in the Holy Land.

Geoffrey of Villehardouin, one of the crusaders privy to the leaders’ intentions, understood his obligation differently. He equated the service owed by the crusader with the amount of time spent accompanying the crusade army rather than time a crusader remained in the Holy Land. Villehardouin understood the crusade vow to consist of a promise to “*remain for one year in the service of God in the army.*”⁴³ The necessity of completing a pilgrimage to Jerusalem was downplayed, though if one reads between the lines one gathers that Villehardouin accepted that he had promised

³⁹ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 2: 258

⁴⁰ Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 1: 31.

⁴¹ Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 1: 31.

⁴² Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 1: 41.

⁴³ Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 1: 21, 31, 55, 97, 103.

to do so.⁴⁴ Throughout his account of the events leading up to the capture of Constantinople, Villehardouin will repeatedly chide those crusaders who chose to depart from other ports and sail directly to the Holy Land. “Let me say what a pity it was they had not come to join our army; had they only done so, the cause of Christianity would have gained a lasting advantage.”⁴⁵ He also criticized those crusaders who abandoned the host along the way – especially those who left the host so as to travel directly to the Holy Land.⁴⁶ “Only by way of Egypt and Greece can we hope to recover the land oversea.”⁴⁷ He vehemently disagreed with their perception of the crusader’s votive obligation. For Villehardouin it was more important that crusaders remained with the main host. The integrity of the army of God should be preserved at all cost so as to proceed against those deemed to be enemies as a united front.

In light of how this expedition unfolded, the distinction between how Innocent III, Villehardouin and other crusaders understood the substance of the vow was important. Neither Villehardouin, nor the majority of the crusaders who assembled in Venice in 1202, reached Jerusalem. Instead, sailing from Venice in October 1202 the crusade host first attacked the port of Zara on the Dalmatian Coast and then, sailed to Constantinople which they successfully attacked on behalf of the erstwhile heir to the throne, Alexius, before conquering it for themselves in 1204.⁴⁸ By that time, of course, crusaders had already been in the service of the crusade army for over two years – though according to Innocent III they still had an obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as well as to serve in the Kingdom of Jerusalem for an additional year.⁴⁹

Geoffrey of Villehardouin represents the outlook of one group of crusaders who preferenced the military obligation they owed to God over their status as pilgrims.

⁴⁴ Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 2: 29-31.

⁴⁵ Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 1: 31.

⁴⁶ Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 1: 96-7, 101-3.

⁴⁷ Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 1: 97.

⁴⁸ Phillips, *Fourth Crusade*, 102-281; Queller and Madden, *Fourth Crusade*, 55-193.

⁴⁹ The leaders of the crusade were eventually to convince the papal legate, Peter Capuano, to release them from this duty by allowing crusaders to commute the promise to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem into a promise to serve the new Latin Empire for an additional year. *Register Innocenz' III*, 8: 127.

One of the crusaders who accepted that the war against the Greeks was just and lawful because as a people they had seceded from the Church of Rome, Villehardouin held that the attack on Constantinople was as a valid action for those bearing the cross as was an attack on Egypt.⁵⁰ Innocent III eventually came around to this point of view – but only after the crusade army had conquered Constantinople for the second time.⁵¹ He accepted that the crusaders fought on behalf of Christ when they seized Constantinople. Nevertheless, he continued to stress that he alone was the arbitrator of what constituted the crusade obligation, and thus the crusade. There were many in the crusade army who agreed with him.

Some crusaders intent on completing their pilgrimage and begin their stint of service in the Holy Land sailed directly to Syria. Villehardouin reports that “their number far exceeded the number of those engaged in fighting the Greeks.”⁵² Others, unhappy with the way the crusade was progressing, would abandon the host along the way. A contingent of crusaders from the North of France including Simon de Montfort, Robert Mauvoisin, Dreux de Cressonsacq and Guy of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, parted ways with the crusading host at Zara to continue on to the Holy Land when the suggestion of attacking Constantinople was raised. They declared that “they would never give their consent [to this plan], since it would mean marching against Christians and they had not left their homes to do any such thing and for their part they wished to go to Syria.”⁵³ These crusaders believed their vow could only be fulfilled if they traveled to the Holy Land and offered their services to the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

Crusaders who had vowed, “in obedience to the Crucified One, to liberate the Holy Land from the hands of the pagans,” instead had been “rashly turned away from the purity of [their] vow when [they] took up arms not against Saracens but Christians, not aiming to recover Jerusalem but to occupy Constantinople, preferring earthly

⁵⁰ Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 2:

⁵¹ *Register Innocenz' III*, 8: 64.

⁵² Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, 2: 29.

⁵³ Their refusal to march against Christians is rather ironic considering the later developments of the Albigensian Crusade when Simon de Montfort was criticized for doing exactly that. Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, I, 94-7; Peter of Les Vaux de Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, I, 109-110.

wealth to celestial treasures.”⁵⁴ While Innocent III came to accept that the capture of Constantinople constituted aid for the Holy Land – “to hold [the Empire] is almost to recover [Jerusalem]” – he never believed that the service the crusaders provided to the newly established Latin Empire superceded their original obligation to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre and once there, to remain serving Jerusalem for a year.⁵⁵ In a letter of April or May 1205 he urged crusaders to delay the fulfillment of their vows and so as to provide aid to the beleaguered Latin Empire.

We enjoin for the remission of sins that, in order to solidify this same empire in its devotion to the Apostolic See and to us and to keep it more firmly under Latin lordship toward this end, you are to tarry in the regions of Romania for the space of a year . . . except, perhaps if your presence is so much more needed in the Holy Land so that it becomes necessary to hasten to its care for a while.⁵⁶

Only a year earlier, in an agreement known as the March Pact, the crusaders and Venetians swore that,

from the last day of the present month of March [1204], we ought to remain here for up to a full year for the purpose of supporting the empire and the emperor for the honor of God, the holy Roman Church, and the empire.⁵⁷

Innocent III encouraged the crusade host to remain in Constantinople for an additional year before heading to Jerusalem. Helping to establish Latin rule over the empire, although, beneficial, was not to replace the commitment crusaders had made to lend their support to the Holy Land.

Innocent III had cause to hope that, despite everything, crusaders would do as they had originally vowed. The new emperor, Baldwin, assured Innocent III in a letter written in May 1204 that once the new Latin Empire was stable he would complete what he had vowed. He declared that he would not put aside his cross until “with God

⁵⁴ *Register Innocenz' III*, 8: 134.

⁵⁵ Compare *Register Innocenz' III*, 8: 64 with a missive sent to Boniface, marquis of Montferrat, *Register Innocenz' III*, 8: 134.

⁵⁶ *Register Innocenz' III*, 8: 64.

⁵⁷ *Register Innocenz' III*, 7: 205.

granting it” he fulfilled “the purpose of the pilgrimage.”⁵⁸ Baldwin and the other crusaders engaged in the establishment of the empire did put aside their crosses, however. As the pope was to learn in the early summer of 1205 his demand that all crusaders complete the pilgrimage to Jerusalem was not to be met. His legate, Peter Capuano, released all crusaders who promised to remain in the defense of Constantinople from the preceding March to the next from their vows of pilgrimage and “from the duty of the Cross.”⁵⁹ In a letter written in response to the news, the pope castigated the legate. He exclaimed that he was,

unable not to be irritated by you [Peter] since you neither should nor could attempt such in things in any way whatsoever, regardless of whoever might have advised you otherwise and by whatever means they might have seduced your mind.⁶⁰

Innocent was clearly furious with his legate’s decision to release crusaders from their vows to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and to remain there for at least a year. On account of Peter’s decision, crusaders would no longer be required to complete either the journey to Jerusalem or be required to serve there for an additional year. In effect, the crusade was over.

Innocent’s anger at his legate is not limited to this gaffe. He went on to berate Peter, writing that

For inasmuch as they assumed the emblem of the Cross principally for this reason and they particularly vowed this to the Lord their God, namely that they would cross the sea in relief of the Holy Land, and inasmuch as having thereafter strayed from the path onto an impassable road, they have pursued temporal wages right up to today, we leave it to your judgment as to whether

⁵⁸ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 7: 152

⁵⁹ It is not entirely clear if the year’s service required of crusaders referred to the service they had promised in the March Pact, from March 1204-March 1205 or was for an additional year, March 1205-March 1206. My feeling is that it was the later. This is based upon an interpretation of Innocent’s grant of an additional indulgence. He does not suggest that this is a confirmation of the Pact, but instead appears to suggest that crusaders should serve for an additional year. *Register Innocenz’ III*, 8: 127.

⁶⁰ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 8: 127.

it was permissible for you to so transform – no, rather to pervert – such a pious and solemn vow.⁶¹

Innocent saw Peter Capuano's act as a challenge to his authority. According to Innocent, the legate had exceeded his authority when he allowed crusaders to be released from their obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and from their promise to serve in the Holy Land for a year. In the letter of July 1205, Innocent used the verb *absolvo* to describe Peter's action. His use of this term that suggests that he thought that the crusaders had been absolved or released from all obligations associated with the cross. It was generally accepted that the pope was the only one who had the authority to absolve the crusader from his or her vow.

It is possible to see Peter Capuano's actions at Constantinople from another perspective. The legate himself believed that what he offered to the crusaders was an opportunity to commute their crusading vows. Peter Capuano only released crusaders from the obligation to complete the pilgrimage to Jerusalem if they instead promised to remain in Constantinople for a year. During this year they were to serve as soldiers for the defense of the newly established Latin Empire. It was well within the legate's purview to commute crusade vows. Innocent III had granted the legates the authority to do so as part of their legation. According to the *Devastatio Compostantinopolitana* Peter Capuano came to Venice on the feast of St Mary Magdalene to raise morale amongst the crusaders through his preaching. He also "sent the sick, paupers, women and all feeble people home with letters" certifying that they had been released from their vows through his authority.⁶²

However the situation in Constantinople after April 1204 was very different from what Peter Capuano had faced at Venice in the summer of 1202 – a point upon which Innocent fixated. By 1204, the crusaders had proved that they were suited to

⁶¹ *Register Innocenz' III*, 8: 127.

⁶² *Devastatio Compostantinopolitana* in *Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade*, ed. and trans. A.J. Andrea (London, 2000), 214. Abbot Martin of Pairis when hearing of the plan to attack Zara, was horrified that the crusading host would be involved in an attack on Christians. He sought out Peter Capuano and asked that he be released from his vow. Peter refused his request on the grounds that the clergy must remain with the host and try to the best of their ability to prevent the unnecessary shedding of Christian blood. Gunther of Pairis, *Historia Constantinopolitana*, 72-3.

fighting; and now, with the resources of the Empire, there would be additional financial support available to them. Innocent did not see any reason for his deputy to excuse these crusaders from completing the journey they had promised to undertake up to six years previously. At this stage the pope was not even prepared to release those who might, at another time, have been eligible for a commutation or absolution. Some six months earlier Doge Enrico had petitioned the pope to absolve him of his vow of pilgrimage because of “the feebleness of age” and because he had been “broken down by labor.”⁶³ The doge assured the pope that even if he were personally absolved of the requirement of traveling to Jerusalem, he would do everything in his power to assure that the crusading army sailed to the Holy Land. Innocent denied his request on the grounds that this might result in the army breaking up or in case someone might fault the doge, claiming that he had taken up the sign of the cross not out of devotion to Christ, but to avenge an injury done to him personally.⁶⁴ If the pope had any say in the matter no one would be excused from the obligation the cross entailed.

That the commutation of the crusaders’ vows seems to have been based upon the pope’s own request that crusaders remain in the Empire for an additional year was deemed irrelevant by the pope. Instead, Innocent III looked to allocate blame. He was confident that the machinations of others (namely the Venetians) led Peter to release the crusaders from their vows to complete the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. No doubt he was correct in his estimation of the pressure placed upon his legate by crusaders who believed that by serving in the crusade host for close to three years, assisting in the capture of Constantinople, and remaining in the service of the Latin Empire for a year already as well as promising to remain for another, had fulfilled a penance even greater than that usually associated with the cross. Nevertheless, the crusaders did not deny that they were still under the obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and aid the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. It was a duty that must have weighed

⁶³ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 8: 64.

⁶⁴ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 8: 64.

heavily. As late as May 1204 Baldwin still planned to fulfill the “purpose of the pilgrimage.”⁶⁵ However, he could not hope to do this until the Empire was secure and Latin rule over the Greeks established. No one knew how long this would take and the empire was dreadfully short-handed. Baldwin asked Innocent III to encourage “nobles and commoners of every sort of class and of each sex” with “an Apostolic indulgence” to come to “faithfully serve our empire for a while or for life.”⁶⁶ The commutation of the vow from an obligation to complete the pilgrimage to Jerusalem to a set period of military service to be completed in the empire solved a logistical problem. The empire could be assured of a force of men for an additional year hoping, as did the pope that “through this land that land [Jerusalem] can be easily recovered.”⁶⁷

Legates often had to make decisions on their own without reference to the pope. As Innocent III recognized, they were often better suited to do so. Considering the complexity of some situations and the speed at which developments occurred, even solicitous communication such as that which seems to have been a trademark of this legation could break down. It was also true that the legate would at times have to act on his own, a point that Innocent understood. In the case of the Venetians, he told Peter that he would be disposed to leave the decision as to whether to travel or engage in relations with them while they remained excommunicate up to him,

because you are there, [and so] can better evaluate what to the Eastern province needs, the circumstances relating to negotiations, and the qualities of the people, with the result that you might act in this matter without the stigma of sin because you will have come to understand more fully how to untangle the matter.⁶⁸

This has interesting implications for crusading, especially in relationship to the substance of the crusade vow. Oftentimes innovations in the practice of crusading were the result of legatine decisions – in this case Peter of Capuano asserted that one

⁶⁵ *Register Innocenz' III*, 7: 152.

⁶⁶ *Register Innocenz' III*, 7: 152.

⁶⁷ *Register Innocenz' III*, 7: 152.

⁶⁸ *Register Innocenz' III*, 6: 208.

year's military service (on top of the service already provided by the crusaders) was an acceptable substitution for the completion of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and a year's service in the Holy Land.

While this was not an absolution of an obligation, but rather a substitution of one act of merit for another – a “transformation,” or a commutation - for Innocent it was a “perversion” of the crusade vow. Nevertheless, the legality of what Peter Capuano did at Constantinople was confirmed by Innocent. The pope's letter of July 1205 does not reverse the decision of the legate – it is rather a rebuke of the legate for an action of which the pope does not approve. Innocent does not command his legate to reverse his action, but instead to speak out as to why he has done so in order that no one confused those who have commuted their vows with those who deserted the crusade host.

By the early thirteenth century it was firmly established that the pope was the sole authority who had the right to call a crusade and act as its spiritual leader. Innocent III also believed that he was the actual director of the crusade. If nothing else, the events of 1201-05 demonstrate that the pope was mistaken about his role in the crusade. At this stage Innocent had minimal control over those who chose to participate in this campaign and even less power to enforce his will. This was not limited to his authority over the lay leaders of the Fourth Crusade. A legate who Innocent III would commend for “laudably striv[ing] to execute the duties of the legation laid upon” him was also be guilty of failing to carry out the pope's wish to see Jerusalem recovered from the Saracens. Crusaders held the upper hand. Most crusaders agreed with Innocent's assessment of their obligation, however many crusaders still reserved the right to determine how and if that obligation was met. As important as Innocent III was for the crusade movement, the crusader still had an important role to play in determining the shape of crusading in the thirteenth century.

Enforcement of the Crusading Vow during the Pontificate of Innocent III

The recruitment strategy employed by Richard I and Philip II was successful in its implementation: participation in the Third Crusade was restricted to those of the warrior class. The kings, as a result, had left behind a significant number of crusaders who had not been allowed to accompany the host or to complete their vows. Although the product of secular decrees, the church was responsible for seeing that these crusaders discharged their vows – a fact of which Archbishop Hubert Walter of Canterbury was conscious especially as he was subsequently instructed to recruit for new crusades.⁶⁹ Writing to Pope Celestine III in 1195 the archbishop asked what he was to do about those crusaders who were too sick or too poor to be coerced into fulfilling their votive obligation. The pope directed Hubert to order the immediate performance of the vow on those who had the means to go on crusade unless they provided a reasonable excuse, in which case, a delay might be granted.⁷⁰ This did not put matters to rest. Three years later when Innocent III called for Christians to take up the cross the necessity of dealing with crusaders who had yet to complete their vows remained as pertinent as ever – if not more so as a result of the political intrigues being played out in France and England. It was feared that a number of the English nobles and civil servants who had taken the cross for the Holy Land in the past and had been granted delay by the pope's predecessors would now be required to join the upcoming expedition. This exodus would drain the country of men and resources greatly needed for the struggle against Philip of France who was encouraging John's nephew, Arthur of Brittany, in his claim to the English throne. With this in mind, Hubert wrote to Innocent III in 1199 or early 1200 asking for clarification on the issue of enforcement – who was he compelled to require to fulfill their vows and in what cases might alternate arrangements be made? What he received as a response in the summer of 1200 was a directive which clearly defined in what cases the archbishop was to coerce

⁶⁹ *Regesta pontificum romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post Christum natum MCXCVIII*, ed. P. Jaffé et al. (Leipzig, 1885), no 17274; *Register Innocenz' III*, 1: 498-505.

⁷⁰ Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, 3: 317-9.

errant crusaders into fulfilling their vows and in what circumstances a crusader was allowed to delay the fulfillment of his or her vow. The pope also laid out when commutation of the votive obligation was acceptable.⁷¹

Innocent III first directed Hubert to refer his attention back to the letter he had received from Celestine III in 1196. Overall the new pope agreed with the ruling of his predecessor, adding detail where he thought clarification was necessary. As much as he believed participation in the crusade was a duty each Christian owed, he was savvy enough to know that the recovery of Jerusalem could only be attained by an organized army qualified to fight. Thus, Innocent III declared that allowing the weak and poor to go on crusade was foolhardy: the weak could not fight and the poor would not be able to support themselves on the journey unless they practiced a useful trade.⁷² However, Innocent III felt a distinction needed to be made between those whose impediments were temporary and those whose disadvantage was permanent. Celestine III had decreed that delays should be granted to those who lacked the means to crusade. Innocent III agreed with this policy, but only in the case where the impediment to crusading would be temporary. Thus, the pope would grant leave to postpone performance of a crusading vow to Savery, bishop of Bath and Wells, in June 1205. Taking into consideration the fact that the bishop's churches were loaded with debt, the man himself was not able to fight and had no means to support soldiers, Innocent III granted Savery a delay until the time came when he could afford to complete the vow in person. He ordered the bishop to return to his churches and rule them for their benefit and deliver them from debt.⁷³ On the other hand, those whose situation was permanent "must compound and according to their means and the expense they might have incurred, with allowance also for any labor expended, let them contribute to the aid of the Holy Land, performing through others what they cannot do themselves."⁷⁴ Those crusaders with permanent impediments to crusading were to commute their vows into a cash payment; they should, in other words, redeem their vow. Thus

⁷¹ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 1261-2.

⁷² Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 668.

⁷³ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 668.

⁷⁴ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 668

someone like Henry of Wiceton, who could not fulfill the vow he had taken for the Third Crusade because of old age, was released from his vow on the condition that he promise to pay twenty-five marks (£16 – 13s – 4d) to the Master of the Temple in London on the next feast day of St. John the Baptist, and twenty-five pounds every Easter thereafter. The money received from the redemption of the vow was intended to go to the aid of the Holy Land.⁷⁵

The pope assumed that everyone who took the cross incurred an obligation to complete a penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem, although he believed that a distinction should be made “between those who pronounce a vow for the sake of defending the Holy Land and those on whom the path of pilgrimage is enjoined as satisfaction for their sins.”⁷⁶ In the case of those who had taken the vow out of devotion to the Lord and out of care for his patrimony, Innocent declared that more attention should be paid to seeing that they provided aid to the Holy Land rather than the completion of the pilgrimage itself.⁷⁷ Thus, if the votary was useless for fighting, although able to make the journey, it would be better to have him redeem his vow and provide financial aid to the Holy Land rather than to have incurred travel expenses and have been of little or no use. For those upon whom participation in the crusade was enjoined as a penance (these individuals did not necessarily make a vow, though they probably assumed the cross) more effort should be expended on seeing that they complete the pilgrimage, regardless of whether or not the individual was fit for fighting. The difficulty of the journey had to be experienced in order to make amends to God for sinful behavior.⁷⁸ Innocent, therefore, allowed that in some cases those who were unsuited to fighting might accompany the crusade host to the Holy Land. In his opinion, the need to do penance outweighed any trouble the host might encounter as a result of the presence of what were essentially non-combatants.

⁷⁵ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 1085.

⁷⁶ In *Post miserabile* Innocent reminded crusaders that victory would only be theirs if they undertook the pilgrimage to the Holy Land with “humility of heart and body . . . [and walked] in the Law of the Lord.” *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1:504-505. Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 1085

⁷⁷ Innocent variously described the Holy Land as Christ’s “inheritance” or his “patrimony.” *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1:498-505.

⁷⁸ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 1261-2.

Nevertheless, Innocent III did concede that in certain circumstances it was to the advantage of both the votary and the effort to recover the Holy Land if some crusaders redeemed their vows. Vow redemption was seen to be an especially suitable way in which to deal with what Innocent deemed to be the most problematic of crusaders - women. Innocent instructed Hubert to allow those women who did not wish to stay at home to accompany their husbands, if their husbands were going; "but others [e.g. widows], unless they happen to be rich and able to take soldiers with them, should redeem the vow they have made."⁷⁹ It was presumed that both methods of fulfilling the vow – either through redemption or by accompanying the crusade host on the journey to the East - allowed the crusader to receive the spiritual benefits associated with the crusade. Calling for Christians to take up the cross in 1198, Innocent III had granted to those who fulfilled their vows, the "full forgiveness of their sins, of which they have been moved to penitence in voice and heart and . . . a greater share of eternal salvation."⁸⁰ Commuting a vow to crusade to a vow to pay a specific amount of money towards the defense of the Holy Land did not affect the spiritual benefits offered by the pope because once the payment had been made the terms of the vow were complete.

Innocent told Hubert that he wished for "religious and reliable men" to be responsible for making the dispensations he had laid out, because "careful discrimination must be used concerning these things lest the salvation of souls or the profit of the Holy Land be endangered."⁸¹ This pope was not going to allow the king of England to decide who would fulfill the crusade vow in person, as Richard I had been granted license to do during the Third Crusade. The archbishop asked the pope for further clarification on this matter; who exactly, he asked, had the authority to act upon the pope's instructions? In a letter written in September 1201 Innocent III replied that "the execution of the law pertain[ed] only to those who receive[d] a special

⁷⁹ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 1261.

⁸⁰ *Register Innocenz' III*, 1: 503.

⁸¹ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 1261-2.

mandate from the apostolic see.”⁸² As the chief executor of the crusade in England,⁸³ the archbishop knew that he had the pope’s mandate to compel crusaders to complete their vows. Hubert also seems to have had the power to grant delays or allow crusaders to redeem vows. Just as was the case with Peter Capuano, the pope did not grant Hubert the right to absolve crusaders of their vows. This was a right reserved exclusively for the pope.⁸⁴

In this same letter of September 1201, the pope went on to clarify his policy for redemption so that Hubert would know exactly who should be allowed to redeem their vows and who was to be required to do exactly as they had promised. Unlike Ralph Niger, Innocent believed that nobles and great men “energetic in counsel, able to bring with them many soldiers” who were too old or too unfit to fight could still prove useful to the crusade host.⁸⁵ Those men, declared the pope, “are not useless for fighting, who while themselves unable to fight, assist those who can by giving mature counsel and supply by others what they lack themselves.”⁸⁶ They were not to be allowed to redeem their vows. Concerning those clerics “who take vows, not on those on whom the toil of pilgrimage is enjoined as penance;” unless they were energetic in counsel, trained as preachers, engaged in the service of great men or were wealthy enough to bring others as soldiers at their own expense they should be encouraged to redeem their vow rather than to complete it. Non-combatants were not to accompany the host unless they could prove themselves useful.⁸⁷ Once again, the pope was careful to suggest that he intended these policies to benefit the Holy Land.

“In so great a crisis of Christendom” the pope was even willing to contravene established legal principle. He told Hubert that “to avoid impeding help for the Holy Land, men might take the [crusade] vow and fulfill it without consent of their

⁸² *Regesta pontificum romanorum inde ab anno post Christum natum MCXCVIII ad anno MCCCIV*, ed. A Potthast, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1874-75), 1, no. 1469; C.R. Cheney, *Hubert Walter* (London, 1967), 129.

⁸³ *Letters of Pope Innocent III*, no. 318.

⁸⁴ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 1261; *Register Innocenz’ III*, 8: 127.

⁸⁵ Ralph Niger, *De re militari et triplicari peregrinationis Jerosolimitane*, ed. L. Schmutge (Berlin, 1977), 227; *Regesta pontificum romanorum*, ed. Potthast, 1, no. 1469.

⁸⁶ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 1261.

⁸⁷ *Regesta pontificum romanorum*, ed. Potthast, 1: no. 1469; Cheney, *Hubert Walter*, 129.

wives.”⁸⁸ Legal experts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries agreed that marriage was a contractual relationship based upon mutual consent. One of the mutual obligations of each partner was to accede to the other’s desire for conjugal relations; the crusade took one’s spouse away from home for an extended amount of time, which would deprive one’s wife of the right to conjugal relations. Up until this point it had always been assumed that the consent of one’s wife was a prerequisite for crusaders.⁸⁹ Though canon law held that one vow could not overturn another, Innocent III was willing to allow the crusade vow to trump the marriage vow.

The two letters Innocent III had sent to Hubert Walker quickly found their way into collections of canon law, and so became general rules to be applied to crusaders throughout Christendom. Innocent III authorized the publication of the letters and requested that copies be transmitted to the university at Bologna. Included in the decretal collection known as the *Compilatio tertia*, compiled by a notary of the Roman Curia in 1209, the letters are to be found in the section on vows.⁹⁰ Two other decretals of importance for understanding the enforcement of crusading in this period were also to be found in the *Compilatio tertia*. The decretal *Magne devotionis* laid down the general rule for assessing the amount to be collected when redeeming vows. Innocent III decreed that the amount collected was to be equal to the sum which would have been spent had the vow been fulfilled.⁹¹ The second decretal, *Licet*, asserted that just as in Roman Law, votive obligations left unfulfilled at death were inherited; the heir’s obligation could be enforced by sequestration of the inherited estate.⁹² Made during the first four years of Innocent’s pontificate, all of these policies in regards to the crusade vow were maintained up until 1213 when Innocent III issued *Pium et Sanctum, Quia maior* and *Vineam Domini* which together form the final and most comprehensive statement of the pope’s crusade ideology.⁹³

⁸⁸ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 904-5

⁸⁹ J.A. Brundage, “The Crusader’s wife: a Canonistic Quandary,” *Studia Gratiana* 12 (1967), 427-41.

⁹⁰ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 76-7.

⁹¹ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 214: 58-61.

⁹² Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 214: 8.

⁹³ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 814, 817-23; *Studien zum Register Innocenz’ III*, 84-7.

Enforcement in Action: England, 1198-1213

The papacy had always claimed that it had the right to compel crusaders to fulfill their vows, but not since the pontificates of Urban II and Paschal II had a pope expended so much energy toward seeing that all crusaders completed the terms of their vow. If it was not possible for a crusader to journey to Jerusalem as a soldier of Christ, Innocent ordered his clergy to see that alternate arrangements were made to pay the debt the crusader owed God as a result of his vow. Ever the pastor, Innocent was concerned for the souls of his flock. Participating in the crusade was a means by which an individual could attain salvation, but only if he fulfilled his vow to God or died trying. Souls were at risk of being damned so long as crusade vows went unfulfilled. Innocent III was equally sincere in his concern for the threat posed to Christendom by the enemies of Christ. In his opinion, only an army of crusaders could drive back their advance. Innocent wished to recruit as many crusaders as possible, as quickly as possible. Laggards would have to be seen to with the utmost severity. Although the pope's decretals discuss what was to be done with the sick, the old and the poor, as well as wealthy and noble crusaders, it was the latter group who most concerned Innocent when it came time to enforce crusading vows. It was unlikely that the recovery of Jerusalem could take place without the support and participation of the wealthy and powerful. What occurred in England between 1199 and 1213 proves this point. Surviving evidence remains to show the efforts on the part of the pope and his clergy to force the nobles of the realm to complete their vows. It is also possible to observe the challenges they had in doing so.

After a delay of almost three years, the crusade called for in 1198 looked as if it was finally on its way. In November 1199 a group of French nobles led by Count Theobald of Champagne and Count Louis of Blois had taken the cross at a tournament held at Écry.⁹⁴ The following year was spent in preparation for the crusade;

⁹⁴ This expedition whose original goal was to recover Jerusalem would be what historians now call the Fourth Crusade (1202-04). It is a crusade which has attracted a lot of scholarly attention. The best introduction to the topic is undoubtedly to be found in D. E. Queller and T. F. Madden, *The Fourth Crusade: the Conquest of Constantinople*, 2nd [rev.] edn (Philadelphia, 1997). One should also consult

arrangements were made for a summer departure from Venice. In a mandate of May 1201, Pope Innocent III exhorted the English prelates to support the crusade. One way in which they could do so, he suggested, was to compel by excommunication and interdict all crusaders who had put aside the sign of the cross, even those who might have obtained pardons from the pope's predecessors, to perform their vow.⁹⁵ These crusaders should be ready to depart with the crusade host the following summer at the appointed time settled upon by the counts of Flanders, Champagne and Blois.⁹⁶ The archbishop of Canterbury was appointed as executor of this mandate for the whole of England. On 24 August 1201 Archbishop Hubert assembled the bishops of England to a council held at Westminster where he passed on the pope's order to seek out crusaders who had not yet completed their vows. Everyone who had made a crusade vow was to resume his cross by Martinmas (10 November) 1201 and be ready to depart on crusade by Candlemas (2 February) 1202.⁹⁷

Among the errant crusaders were magnates of whom King John claimed to have need in England. The king asked Hubert Walter for dispensations on their behalf on the grounds that their continued presence in England was indispensable to him.⁹⁸ Christopher Cheney saw the second batch of questions sent by Hubert to Innocent III and to which the pope replied in 1201, as a response to the pressure he was under to release certain important men from their vows. John's request was not unusual; Richard I had asked and received from Innocent's predecessor, Clement III, the "power of releasing from the Cross any of his subjects he wanted to in order to govern

C. M. Brand, "The Fourth Crusade: Some Recent Interpretations," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 12 (1984), 33-45. An overview of the sources left to historians can be found in A. J. Andrea's *Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade*, The Medieval Mediterranean 29 (Boston, 2000).

⁹⁵ When Innocent III refers to "pardons" he most likely means the delays granted by Clement III, rather than absolution from the votive obligation. *Letters of Pope Innocent III*, no.364; *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 5-6; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 3: 17.

⁹⁶ Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 4: 165-7.

⁹⁷ Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 4: 173.

⁹⁸ C.R. Cheney, *Pope Innocent III and England* (Stuttgart, 1976), 253; Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 214: 1088-90. A similar request was made in regards to some of John's Norman magnates. Innocent III asked the archbishop of Rouen and the abbot of Persigne to determine whether the service of the constable and seneschal of Normandy and of Count Robert of Meulan were so necessary to King John that they could not go overseas without doing him and his kingdom great injury. *Regesta pontificum romanorum*, ed. Potthast, 1: no. 1521.

the affairs of the realm.”⁹⁹ Innocent III was not so accommodating. Men who had wealth, experience, and were fit to fight – qualities that would be in great demand in the coming campaign – would not be excused from their vows without good reason. In the first of the two surviving letters, Innocent sets out the process that should be followed if a crusader wished to receive an absolution from his vow. After receiving the crusader’s request for absolution, the pope will

write to those who know best their persons and circumstances, that they shall diligently look into the truth of the impediments alleged and shall arrange for them what is best for the salvation of their souls and the help of the Holy Land, taking care that there is no deceit in the avoidance of the vow.¹⁰⁰

The pope was well aware that not everyone who assumed the cross wished to participate in the crusade; he obviously feared that some crusaders might not be completely honest in their applications to him. Some of those he suspected of having questionable grounds for absolution included some of the chief English magnates. In November or December 1201 the pope wrote to Bishop Eustace of Ely and Abbot Samson of St. Edmunds ordering them to inquire whether the reasons offered by King John for absolving the crusading vows of Geoffrey FitzPeter, Hugh Bardolf, William of Stuteville, William Brewer, Robert Berkeley, and Alan and Thomas Basset were valid. These cases were complicated by the fact that upon Richard’s command three of these men (Geoffrey FitzPeter, Hugh Bardolf, and William Brewer) had “laid aside the Cross and were permitted to remain at home.”¹⁰¹ Richard I was said variously to have either been the beneficiary of “the trifling sums they had collected” or to have “obtained an immense sum of money by this means.”¹⁰² In spite of the exchange of funds, these men did not redeem their vows, but instead were granted an absolution or delay of their votive obligation. The money collected from these crusaders was money

⁹⁹ *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 6.

¹⁰⁰ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 1261-2.

¹⁰¹ These three men had held posts as sheriffs and itinerant justices. Richard had made Geoffrey sheriff of Northamptonshire 1185. He had also served the king as a justice and as chief forester. In 1187, William was a justiciar; in the past he had served as sheriff of Devonshire. Meanwhile, Hugh had served as justiciar since 1184, as sheriff of Cornwall from 1185 to 1187 and of Wiltshire in 1188. *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 6, no. 4.

¹⁰² *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, 6; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 3: 17.

raised in their lands as the result of a royal tax in aid of the king's crusade.¹⁰³ As they had laid aside the cross, they were no longer exempt from the tax imposed on non-crusaders by the king. Innocent III, however, had ordered Hubert Walter and the clergy of England to "compel without distinction those who have laid aside the cross they had taken up and carry out their pilgrimage, eschewing appeal and notwithstanding any indulgence they might have received from our predecessor."¹⁰⁴

King John was obviously acquainted with the contents of the letter of 1200 in which Innocent had laid out that in certain circumstances crusaders might be released from the obligation to see their vow fulfilled either temporarily or permanently, depending on what their individual circumstances were.¹⁰⁵ He may not have yet learned of the contents of the second letter sent by the pope to the archbishop in September 1201 when the following occurred at the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds.

Then, suddenly, on St. Agnes's Day [21 January 1202] a messenger came from the king bringing a papal mandate which ordered the bishop of Ely and the abbot of St. Edmunds to investigate the cases of Geoffrey FitzPeter, William of Stuteville and certain other magnates who had taken the cross. The king had sought absolution for them, *claiming that they were physically unfit* and that he needed their counsel in the government of the kingdom. The messenger also brought a letter from the king with the command that when the abbot had seen the letter he should come and speak with the king about the pope's mandate. The abbot was agitated and said: 'I am beset with trouble on every side: either I shall offend God or I shall offend the king.'¹⁰⁶

To decide what to tell the pope undoubtedly placed the abbot in a difficult position. His temporal lord, the king of England, was involved in a contest with Philip Augustus of France for control over the Angevin possessions on the mainland and perhaps even for his crown. It was a conflict that continued in spite of the truce engineered by the papacy which had expired upon the death of Richard I of England.¹⁰⁷ The crusade had already called away John's Flemish allies, as well as two of his strongest allies in

¹⁰³ This tax was known as the Saladin Tax and was promulgated by Henry II and Philip II at LeMans shortly after both kings had taken the cross for the recovery of the Holy Land in 1188. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 2:17.; Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti*, 88-90.

¹⁰⁴ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 1261-2.

¹⁰⁵ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 1261-2.

¹⁰⁶ Jocelin of Brakelord, *Chronicle*, 135.

¹⁰⁷ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 214: 552-3.

Normandy; Count Geoffrey III of Perche and his brother and successor to the county, Stephen, had both taken the cross. To lose those who supported him in England could have had disastrous consequences.¹⁰⁸

John convinced some of his most useful allies and officials – the seven men mentioned above – to disregard the pope's command that they take up their crosses and join the crusade host gathering at Venice. These men must have agreed that in such troubled times it was their duty to remain and serve their king. Both John and his men knew it was dangerous not to complete what one had promised and were well aware that the pope was demanding that everyone who had taken the cross fulfill the terms of the vow; thus, the king set out to secure the pope's approval for their delay. That the king had knowledge of the letter Innocent had sent to Hubert Walter in 1200 cannot be doubted. Although there is no evidence that these men were in fact fit and healthy (however, they would have been of little use to John if they were not), the king was aware that crusaders who were physically unsuited to travel to Jerusalem or to fight were deemed by the pope to be more useful to the Holy Land if they redeemed their vows rather than participating in person. If he knew of Innocent's second letter on this subject in which it was decreed that this particular rule did not apply to noblemen and magnates who though unable to fight could still be of use to the crusading army, he must have hoped that the men put in charge of assessing the suitability of the crusaders would be partial to him.

As these seven men were of the class and status most suited for participation in the crusade, Innocent deemed an inquiry into their cases necessary. If they were, in truth, unsuited to battle, it still had to be determined whether they could aid the Holy Land in another way. Innocent also required the abbot and bishop to establish whether the absence of these men from England would be detrimental to king and country. The abbot of St. Edmunds must have had his doubts that the reasons offered by John would be sufficient for the pope to release these crusaders from the obligation of fulfilling the vow in person: otherwise he would not have feared that he would offend the king with

¹⁰⁸ F. M. Powicke, *The Loss of Normandy*, 2nd edn., (Manchester, 1968), 246-7.

his judgment. Another mandate of September or October 1202, recounting the results of the inquiry ordered a year previously, makes it apparent that the abbot's and bishop's findings did not, in fact, favor the king. Evidently, William of Stuteville and Robert of Berkeley had claimed that for certain and sufficient reasons the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of Worcester had absolved them by papal authority. Innocent III proclaimed this absolution null because the archbishop of Canterbury did not have the authority to absolve them of their vow. He also deemed null and void any papal letters of absolution which did not mention the former inquiry. The men were ordered to complete their pilgrimage to Jerusalem as should other nobles, who were willing and able to perform this task, but had yet to embark upon the journey to the East.¹⁰⁹

None of the aforementioned magnates are known to have followed the pope's order: William of Stuteville and Hugh Bardolf died in 1203-04. William Brewer seems to have eventually decided to send a substitute in his place; his nephew and namesake, the bishop of Exeter, went on the crusade of 1227-29 for the expiation of his own sins and those of his uncle, who was still alive and who allowed his nephew to spend the 4000 silver marks which the Templars had been holding for him at Acre.¹¹⁰ Robert of Berkeley rebelled against King John and died on 13 May 1220 without fulfilling his vow to crusade.¹¹¹ The Bassets also appear to have remained in England and to have died as errant crusaders.¹¹²

Geoffrey FitzPeter, earl of Essex and chief justiciar of England, was the only one of the king's men to receive a papal mandate that would allow him to postpone the fulfillment of his votive obligation. As chief justiciar, the earl often acted as regent when King John was away from England visiting his continental possessions. On 7 July 1205 he was granted leave to postpone the performance of his crusading vow for

¹⁰⁹ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 214: 1088-90.

¹¹⁰ *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III, 1225-32* (London, 1903), 89-90; S. Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216-1307* (Oxford, 1988), 149 n. 169.

¹¹¹ *The Lives of the Berkeleys Lords of the Manor of Berkeley in the County of Gloucester from 1066 to 1618*, ed. J. Maclean, 3 vols. (Gloucester, 1883-85), 1: 92-8.

¹¹² Cheney, *Pope Innocent III and England*, 253.

three years on the condition that his request was found to be just by the bishop and dean of London. He argued that because of the war being fought against Philip II, the English king and magnates would not let him depart and the French king would not let him pass through his county. Moreover, his children were young and were in need of his protection against his enemies who would disinherit them if he was absent. The earl also alleged that he was needed to safeguard the nuns of Shouldham, a convent which he had founded. If the pope saw fit to authorize a delay, Geoffrey FitzPeter promised to found a hospital for poor travelers and to subscribe sixty marks sterling a year in aid of the Holy Land. Both the bishop of Ely and the archbishop of Canterbury supported the earl's request.¹¹³ The king had also written to Innocent on the earl's behalf asking that Geoffrey FitzPeter's vow be granted a delay of five years.¹¹⁴

Only after proving a satisfactory impediment to his departure and making a considerable donation to the Church and Holy Land was Geoffrey FitzPeter legally allowed to delay his vow. Innocent III's commitment to enforcing the vows of prominent crusaders was made even more evident two years later when, in April 1207, he accused Geoffrey FitzPeter of not making proper use of his mandate for delay. The war between England and France was over (for the moment) and the other reasons the delay had been granted were also no longer valid. Furthermore, he had not made the donations he had agreed to in return for the delay. The bishops of Ely and Chichester were to exhort the earl of Essex to delay no longer and, if necessary, to threaten him with ecclesiastical censure.¹¹⁵ Significantly, it was about this time that Innocent III was seriously considering calling another crusade to the East before the crisis in Provence led him to divert the crusading machinery against the Albigensian heretics.¹¹⁶ This plea was to fall on deaf ears. It was not until he was on his deathbed

¹¹³ *Letters of Pope Innocent III*, nos. 633, 660; Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 215: 745-6.

¹¹⁴ *Foedera, conventiones, literae et cuiuscunque generic acta publica inter Regis Angliae . . .*, ed. T Rymer, 3rd edn., rev. G. Holmes, 10 vols. (Farnborough, 1967), 1: 44.

¹¹⁵ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 215: 1136-7.

¹¹⁶ Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 133.

in 1213 that Geoffrey FitzPeter “fulfilled” his vow by redeeming it for a payment of 2000 marks.¹¹⁷

As much as the pope believed he had the right to compel crusaders to fulfill their votive obligation, this was only possible if he had the support of the clergy. It does not appear that the pope’s threat of excommunication and interdict was carried out by the archbishop of Canterbury or any of the English bishops. The only errant crusader known to have been formally excommunicated in this period due to non-performance was not under the jurisdiction of Hubert Walker. The count of Eu was excommunicated, not by the French clergy, but by Innocent in 1203 because he had torn off his cross and refused to leave for the Holy Land.¹¹⁸ Ultimately, in this period it remained up to the votaries themselves to determine whether or not they would do as they had promised. Geoffrey FitzPeter appeared confident that he would eventually secure release from his votive obligation. In his case, crusading appeared to have meant supplying the Holy Land with material aid.

***Quia major* and the Preaching of the Fifth Crusade**

The need to wrest Jerusalem away from its Muslim captors was one felt by Christians at all levels of society. The majority of Christians appear to have agreed with Innocent’s assertion that they should “avenge the injury done to the Crucified One” by taking up the cross. Yet, crusading was an activity closed off from a large portion of the population in the early thirteenth century.¹¹⁹ The tension between the necessity of crusading and the inability of many to do so would eventually be stretched to the breaking point. Between Easter and Whitsuntide 1212 a spontaneous movement erupted in France and Germany. Thousands of men, women and children abandoned their herds and ploughs and headed towards Jerusalem. According to the chronicler Reiner of Liège they intended to cross the sea and recover the Holy Sepulchre since

¹¹⁷ A. Mercati, “La prima relazione del Cardinale Nicolò de Romanis sulla sua legazione in Inghilterra (1213),” 286-7.

¹¹⁸ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 215: 184-5.

¹¹⁹ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1: 500.

kings and princes had proved unable to do so. "The conviction that God had rejected the rich and mighty and was counting only on the poor to recover the Holy Land was obviously so strong among the common people in 1212 that they did not wait for the pope to summon another army, but rather went on their own initiative to bring it about."¹²⁰ Some of these people must have taken vows since Innocent refused to dispense the vows of some of the pilgrims who came to Rome, telling them to proceed on crusade when they came of age.¹²¹ The "crusaders" failed in reaching their goal, but they were successful in bring to the surface the general populace's dissatisfaction with the current state of the crusading movement. Innocent had also been disappointed by the failure of the Fourth Crusade to recover Jerusalem and secure the Holy Land. The Children's Crusade convinced him that enthusiasm for crusading was wide-spread and very much alive. It also demonstrated that many Christians at the lower level of society associated the cross with an armed pilgrimage for the liberation of Jerusalem. The events of 1212 were to have a great effect on the pope's proclamation of a new crusade to the East in 1213, when the two-year truce that the leaders of the Kingdom of Jerusalem had made with the Muslims came to end.

This time around Innocent decided to integrate the type of people who had taken part in the Children's Crusade - in particular, the lower classes -- into the official movement. In April and May 1213 two bulls were sent to every province of Latin Christendom. One, *Vineam Domini*, summoned an ecumenical council to be held in Rome in two years time. It also inaugurated a period of preparation during which the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the secular princes were urged to consider ways to accomplish the reform of the Church; to make an effort to establish peace amongst the rulers of the West; and to do everything in their means to promote a new crusade.¹²² From 1187 onwards it had been asserted that the success of crusading was dependent on the reform of the Church, but never before had such effort been made to see that it

¹²⁰ P. Raedts, "The Children's Crusade of 1212," *Journal of Medieval History*, 3 (1977), 289, 310.

¹²¹ "Albreici monachi Trium-Fontium Chronicon," *MGHS*, 23: 893-4.

¹²² Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz' III*, 84-7.

was done.¹²³ Neither had such attention been paid to the process whereby all of Christian society might be prepared for the forthcoming expedition. The instructions were so detailed as to require a separate letter be sent to those Innocent had chosen to promote the crusade.¹²⁴ The second bull, *Quia major*, explained Innocent's preliminary plan for a new crusade to the faithful.¹²⁵ There are two revolutionary aspects concerning the crusade contained within *Quia major*. First of all, Innocent made no specific reference to Jerusalem or the Holy Sepulchre. Gone are the references to pilgrimage. Reaching the Holy Sepulchre was not even held up as the primary goal of this expedition. Instead, the pope characterized this venture as a military campaign, casting it in terms his audience would understand. Christ had "so to speak, been ejected from the kingdom that he bought with his own blood." His vassals had the duty to "faithfully struggle for him . . . to expend not only their goods but persons for him" as they would for "any temporal king."¹²⁶ Innocent's first priority was to save the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem from total extinction and to that end he described this campaign as a "temporal labor."¹²⁷

Nevertheless, Innocent assumed that crusaders were aware that taking the cross in aid of the Holy Land implied the obligation to complete a pilgrimage. Though the Innocent focused on the need to counteract the recent fortification of Mt. Tabor by al-Mu`azzam to the exclusion of all else in the letters detailing the need for a new crusade, there is other evidence to suggest that he hoped that the crusade would eventually recover Jerusalem.¹²⁸ Allusions to Jerusalem and pilgrimage were plentiful in the sermons James of Vitry delivered when recruiting for the Fifth Crusade. At one stage he wrote that the Holy Sepulchre was

held in honor by all faithful Christians, in as much as many, after they have taken the sign of the cross out of love of Christ and out of devotion exert

¹²³ Gregory VIII, "Epistolae et privilegia," *PL* 202: 1539-42; Riley-Smith, *What were the crusades?*, 37.

¹²⁴ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 814.

¹²⁵ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz' III*, 88-97.

¹²⁶ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz III*, 88-97.

¹²⁷ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz III*, 89.

¹²⁸ Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, 19.

themselves on land and at sea, so that they may see and honor [the Holy Sepulchre] in person.¹²⁹

The desire to protect Jerusalem remained current. Invoking the Holy Sepulchre remained a powerful recruitment tool for those who the pope commissioned to preach the crusade.

The events of 1217-21 suggest that crusaders vowed to travel to the Holy Land, even if they did not specifically promise to visit the Holy Sepulchre. The vanguard of crusaders setting out on the Fifth Crusade, including Andrew of Hungary and Hugh of Cyprus, traveled directly to Acre where they arrived in fall 1217. Here they served with the King of Jerusalem and the Templars, until their departure in January 1218. Their first foray found the “soldiers of Christ” marching towards Bethsan “where the enemy had pitched camp.” Upon the “arrival of the army of the living God” the camp broke up and retreated.¹³⁰ After devastating the environs, the host, crossing

the Jordan on the vigil of Saint Martin, washed [their] bodies at leisure in it and rested throughout two days . . . then on the shore of the Sea of Galilee [they] made three day’s rest, wandering through places in which [the] Savior deigned to work miracles and conversed with men in His corporal presence. [They] looked upon Bethesda, the city of Andrew and Peter . . . places were pointed out where Christ called his disciples, walked on the sea with dry feet, fed the multitudes in the desert, went up into the mountain alone to pray . . . and thus, [they] returned to Acre.¹³¹

Though they had not prayed at the Holy Sepulchre these crusaders did visit many of the most important pilgrimage sites in the Holy Land. Crusaders from the province of Cologne who departed in 1218 sailed directly to Acre. After delaying for a short time,

¹²⁹ C. Maier, *Crusade Propaganda and Ideology. Model Sermons for the Preaching of the Cross* (Cambridge, 2000), 88-9

¹³⁰ Oliver of Paderborn, “Historia Damiatina” in *Die Schriften des kölnen Domscholasters, späteren Bischofs von Paderborn und Kardinal-Bischofs von S. Sabina*, ed. H. Hermann Hoogeweg (Tübingen, 1894), 164.

¹³¹ Oliver of Paderborn, “Historia Damiatina,” 164-5.

preparations were for “leading the army of the Christians into the land of Egypt.”¹³² From that point forth, however, most crusaders appear to have traveled directly from their homes to Egypt in order to join the crusade host.¹³³ The import with which Villehardouin invested the obligation to serve with the main crusade host appears to have been shared by many who participated in the Fifth Crusade. Presumably, they believed that once victory in Egypt was secured the host would proceed to the Holy Land.

Clearly the vows crusaders made between 1213 and 1221 included a promise to serve Christ as soldiers – though it is not certain from his pronouncements on the crusade how long the pope expected crusaders to stay in the East or even that he had a specific period in mind. Innocent III ordered that those who employed soldiers send them off with expenses for three years.¹³⁴ Elsewhere the pope decreed that if the “campaign lasts for rather more than a year the crusaders are to be immune from taxes or tallages and other burdens.”¹³⁵ Innocent may have expected that crusaders would remain with the crusade host for the entirety of the campaign which might be as short as a year or as long as three years.¹³⁶ Many crusaders appear to have been content to serve for a year before returning home.¹³⁷ Duke Leopold VI of Austria “who for a year and half had fought faithfully for Christ, full of devotion, humility, obedience and generosity” withdrew from Damietta in April 1219.¹³⁸

Much more significant than the failure to reference Jerusalem in *Quia maior*, was Innocent’s announcement that he was abandoning the requirement that those who

¹³² Oliver of Paderborn, “Historia Damiatina,” 175.

¹³³ Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, 137-72.

¹³⁴ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz III*, 89.

¹³⁵ *Conciliorum*, 268-9.

¹³⁶ This is what appears to have happened. The crusade host arrived at Acre – the last remaining stronghold in the Latin Kingdom - before setting off for Egypt. Aside from the reinforcements brought by Frederick II no other crusaders appear to have completed a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, 175-204.

¹³⁷ One feature of this crusade was that as one group of crusaders departed Egypt, reinforcements would arrive. Oliver of Paderborn, “Historia Damiatina,” 208-9.

¹³⁸ Oliver of Paderborn, “Historia Damiatina,” 207.

took the crusading vow should be examined for fitness by an ecclesiastical authority prior to assuming the cross. Innocent declared that

because it would mean that aid to the Holy Land would be greatly impeded or delayed if before taking the cross every person had to be examined to see if he was able to fulfill a vow of this kind, we concede that anyone who wishes, except persons bound by religious profession, may take the cross in such a way that it may be commuted, redeemed, or deferred by apostolic mandate when urgent need or evident expediency demands it.¹³⁹

This meant that anyone who wished to take the cross could do so, regardless of their health, age, sex, or income level. Innocent wanted every member of Christendom to participate in some form or another in the new crusade. He intended to offer as many opportunities to take the cross as possible, ordering that

once a month there must be a general procession of men separately and, where it can be done, with women separately, praying with minds and bodies humbly disposed and with devout and fervent prayer, that merciful God will relieve us of this shameful disgrace by liberating the [Land] from the hands of the pagans... with the wise proviso that during that procession the preaching of the cross which brings salvation should always be offered to the people in a way that is assiduous and encouraging.¹⁴⁰

Because there were now regularized and recognized rules about who could redeem or commute their vows, those who were unsuitable to participate physically in the crusade would still be able to aid the Holy Land and share in the “full forgiveness of sins” and a “greater share of eternal salvation.”¹⁴¹

Contemporaries were struck at how revolutionary a policy this was. Allowing people to take the cross without examination and then allowing some of them almost at once to commute their obligation into a vow to give alms to the crusade caused confusion and concern among some of those Innocent III had charged with recruiting

¹³⁹ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz III*, 93-4.

¹⁴⁰ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz III*, 95.

¹⁴¹ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz III*, 91-2.

for the crusade. Conrad, dean of Speyer, doubted that this was truly the pope's intention. In a letter of 9 September 1213 Innocent replied that this was precisely what he wished Conrad to do.

You can deduce clearly from the encyclical [*Quia major*] what you ought to do about women and other persons who have taken the cross and are not suitable or able to fulfill the vow. It states expressly that anyone, except a religious, may take the sign of the cross at will in such a way that when urgent need or evident expediency demands it that vow may be commuted or redeemed or deferred by apostolic mandate.¹⁴²

Despite hesitation in some quarters, the new policy seems to have been successful in Germany, Hungary and England where men, women and children were reported to have taken the cross in great numbers.¹⁴³ The response to preaching in France, however, was surprisingly lukewarm. The situation there was far from favorable. The nation was divided by the Albigensian crusade, and large segments of the northern aristocracy, who had fought in that crusade, were embroiled in a conflict over the succession to the county of Champagne. Others were preparing for war against John of England and Emperor Otto IV.¹⁴⁴ But the reluctance must also have had something to do with the pope's policy regarding the recruitment of crusaders. William the Breton described the recruitment efforts in France, commenting that

The papal legate Robert Courçon and many others with him and under him preached publicly in French throughout the entire kingdom, and they caused many to be signed without discrimination; children, the elderly, women, the lame, the blind, the deaf, and lepers: on account of which many rich people were reluctant to take the cross because of this confusion. This kind of [crusader] was presumed to impede the business of the cross rather than helping the Holy Land.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 905.

¹⁴³ Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, 77-83; Mayer, *The Crusades*, 218; "Annales de Waverteia," in *Annales. Monastici*, ed. H.R. Luard, RS 36, 5 vols. (London, 1864-69), 2: 281; "Annales prioratus de Dunstaplia" in *Annales. Monastici*, 3: 40.

¹⁴⁴ Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, 33.

¹⁴⁵ William the Breton, "Gesta Philippi Augusti Francorum Regis," *RHGF*, 17: 108.

Dissatisfaction with the recruitment policy seems to have arisen from a misunderstanding of what the pope's intentions were. The nobles and knights who considered fighting in the Holy Land mistakenly thought that these crusaders, who were obviously unsuited to the task, would be accompanying the army to the East. Apparently, they believed that the crusade needed to be organized as would any other war. In their estimation non-combatants should not be allowed to play an active role in this pilgrimage.

Financial considerations had undoubtedly played a part in Innocent's plan to allow crusaders to redeem their vows. One of the explanations for the failure of the Fourth Crusade was a lack of financial support for the expedition.¹⁴⁶ Innocent was determined that this would not occur again. At the Fourth Lateran Council it was decreed that "absolutely all the clergy, whether subordinates or prelates, should give a twentieth part of ecclesiastical income for three years for the aid of the Holy Land."¹⁴⁷ The pope himself donated 30,000 pounds to the effort.¹⁴⁸ The money collected from vow redemption would be a valuable and perhaps even a lucrative means of fundraising. It is this element of his plan which would leave Innocent and the Church open to criticism. The pope was aware of this danger. In a letter of instruction sent to the abbot of Salem, the former abbot of Neuburg, the dean of Speyer and the provost of Augsburg, all of whom were preaching the crusade, he wrote:

So that you should show by your actions that you bear in your hearts the wounds of Jesus Christ, we strictly order you to deny yourselves all financial rewards: you must not accept anything from anyone but food and other necessities and even those you must take moderately and modestly... You must be careful to watch your behavior and appearance in these and other matters, so that people will find in you no fault that might be taken as a cause of offence.. If anything is offered to you for the aid of the Holy Land, have it deposited carefully in some religious house.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Madden and Queller, *The Fourth Crusade*, 178; Phillips, *Fourth Crusade*, 108-10, 131-2.

¹⁴⁷ *Conciliorum*, 269.

¹⁴⁸ *Conciliorum*, 268.

¹⁴⁹ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 822; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 130-1.

Not until after the fall of Damietta in 1221 were there charges that the papacy had redeemed the vows of able-bodied crusaders during the recruitment drive of 1213-1215, thus depriving the Holy Land of much needed resources.¹⁵⁰ There is little to suggest that this complaint was valid. If anything, under Innocent III and his successor Honorius III the papacy vigorously resisted the efforts of able-bodied crusaders to secure exemptions.¹⁵¹

The Consequences of Pope Innocent III's Enforcement & Recruitment Policies

When Innocent III launched a full-scale recruitment campaign with the goal of inspiring every member of Christian society - irrespective of their age, class or sex - to take the cross for the recovery of the Holy Land in 1213, he demanded that the faithful promise to "gird" themselves "for the service of the Crucified One."¹⁵² Crusaders who "fought faithfully for him will be crowned in happiness by him."¹⁵³ Innocent III made it clear to contemporaries that the crusader's vow was to be discharged, no matter what circumstances he or she found themselves in; otherwise they would be assured of the censure of the Church and the anger of God on judgment day. Everyone agreed that the crusade required participants to provide Christ with military service. Regardless of what the French believed, the pope was cognizant that not every individual who assumed the cross could hope to fulfill the terms normally associated with the crusade vow, nor did he expect or desire that they should. Innocent III believed substitution, commutation and especially, redemption to be acceptable ways of fulfilling the crusade vow. Crusaders were not to be released indiscriminately lest the salvation of souls or the aid of the Holy Land be obstructed. Those who were suited to the physical and financial demands of the crusade had no choice but to fulfill their vow in person. Those who were unsuited (according to the terms laid out by the pope himself) could

¹⁵⁰ *Chansons de croisade avec leur melodies*, ed. J. Bédier and P. Aubry (Paris, 1909), 148-9.

¹⁵¹ Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, 93.

¹⁵² Tangl, *Studien Innocenz III*, 91-2.

¹⁵³ Tangl, *Studien Innocenz III*, 91.

choose to commute or redeem their vows according to their means. By establishing these rules relating to the enforcement of the crusade, Innocent III was able to extend participation in the crusade to those groups of people who had been overlooked in the past. The faithful displayed their gratitude to Christ for rescuing them from “eternal death” and demonstrated their devotion to the land where he lived, died and was resurrected by assuming the cross. Taking up the cross would lead to their salvation.¹⁵⁴ A crusader was still someone who made a “vow to join a military expedition with defined aims,” but after 1213 one could commute that vow into a more pacific obligation. One could ‘crusade’ by supplying financial aid to the army of Christ.¹⁵⁵

Innocent III’s policies relating to the crusade vow were of great importance to the crusading movement of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Crusading was once again an option open to everyone, just as it had been at the time of the First and Second Crusades. Innocent’s policy of only allowing the redemption, substitution or commutation of a vow in cases where the crusader was unsuited to personal participation was confirmed by his successor, Honorius III (1216-27), and by Gregory IX (1227-41) in the first few years of his pontificate.¹⁵⁶ In 1240 Gregory commanded that crusaders “unable to fight” should not bother to travel to Rome to receive papal absolution; instead, those recruiting for the crusade were “to compel [them] to redeem their vows.”¹⁵⁷ From this point forward it was more common to see the automatic redemption of vows. Form letters for receipt of payments made for the redemption of vows began to be formulated in the 1280s.¹⁵⁸ By the last decade of the thirteenth century formulas used by preachers of the cross show that it had become

¹⁵⁴ Tangl, *Studien zum Innocenz’III*, 88-9.

¹⁵⁵ Riley-Smith, *What were the crusades?*, 2.

¹⁵⁶ Lloyd, *English Society*, 19; *Councils and Synods*, 1: 196.

¹⁵⁷ Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ed. H.R. Luard, 6 vols. RS 57 (London, 1872-83), 4: 6-7.

¹⁵⁸ William of Hoo, *The Letter Book of William of Hoo, Sacrist of Bury St. Edmunds 1280-1294*, ed. A. Gransden (Ipswich, 1963), 57.

customary for those unsuited for physical participation in the crusade to take the vow with the intention of redeeming for money.¹⁵⁹

All of this was to have consequences for the substance of the crusade vow. Men and women continued to take the cross, but it was no longer necessary for them to fulfill their obligation in person. The words they spoke did not necessarily reflect their actions. The knowledge that one did not necessarily have to personally participate in an expedition in order to receive the plenary indulgence led crusaders to place conditions on the fulfillment of the crusade vow.¹⁶⁰ Thus, in October 1248 crusaders in France and Poitou assumed the cross on the condition that if they were unwilling or unable to set out for the Holy Land they could redeem their vows for a fixed sum of money. The amount was fixed at the time the cross was assumed.¹⁶¹ In the thirteenth century the cross signified a commitment to aid the Holy Land, but the way in which one chose to do this varied significantly from one crusader to another. The irony, of course, is while seeking to establish the pope's authority to define what the crusade entailed; Innocent III supported a practice that would eventually allow crusaders to take a more independent role in deciding how they would fulfill the terms of the crusade vow.

¹⁵⁹ A. Gottlob, *Kreuzablass und Almosenablass: eine studie über die Frühzeit des Ablasswesens* (Amsterdam, 1965), 307-8; S. Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade 1216-1307* (Oxford, 1988), 9.

¹⁶⁰ Conditional vows become common in Innocent IV's pontificate, although they were allowed under Gregory IX. Purcell, *Papal Crusading Policy*, 129; Lloyd, *English Society*, 21.

¹⁶¹ *Layettes*, 3: no. 3726. A similar arrangement was made in England in January 1252 when agreements between Henry III and individual crusaders that either the crusaders would go in person or give in aid of the crusade the amount they would have spent if they had gone. *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III Preserved in the Public Record Office, 1227-72*, 14 vols. (London, 1902-38), 1251-1253: 231, 436.

**Chapter Six “To Uproot and to Plant”:
Vows of *Crucesignati* at War in Europe, 1198-1216**

The turn of the thirteenth century saw enemies of the faith jeopardizing the physical and spiritual well-being of Christians and their territory from both within and without. The various Muslim powers were believed to pose the greatest threat to Christians' physical security. The danger posed to Christian territory had grown significantly since Saladin invaded the Kingdom of Jerusalem and seized the most holy of Christian sites in 1187. Some ten years later, the “Saracens” clearly retained the upper hand after having

weakened and shattered the lances of the French; repulsed the efforts of the English; for a second time restrained the Germans; [and,] subdued the spirited Spanish [in the West].¹

As Innocent noted, for much of the twelfth century Christians struggled against Islamic peoples on two fronts. The situation on the Western front was somewhat better than in the East, though it was feared that the Almohads would take advantage of the quarrels between the Spanish kings to launch an offensive. Attacks on the faith and faithful were not limited to the Mediterranean basin, however. On the northern borders of Christendom, missionaries were hard at work converting and subduing the pagan Livonians and Estonians in the territories adjacent to the Baltic Sea. This was a thankless task; the peoples of this region did not want to abjure their own faith in favor of Christianity, nor did they look forward to submitting to the authority of the Church. For this reason, Christian clerics and ecclesiastical centers were targets for violent attacks. When Bishop Berthold came to Ueküll in 1197 the Livonians “received him cordially at first, but at the consecration of the cemetery at Holm, some conspired to

¹ This passage recounts the outcomes of the expeditions undertaken in aid of the Holy Land by Frederick I, Richard I, Philip II Augustus and Henry VI. In Spain, Caliph Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb had seized Alcácer do Sal and Silves on 21 July 1192. On 19 July 1195, at the Battle of Alarcos, Alfonso VIII had suffered an ignominious defeat at the hands of the caliph. *Die Register Innocenz' III*, ed. O. Hageneder and A. Haidacher, 8 vols. (Graz, Rome Vienna, 1964-), 1: 345.

burn him in the church, others to kill him, and others to drown him.”² Eventually, Berthold’s opponents would have their way. The following summer the bishop was set upon by three of the “pagans.” Two of the men held him down while another “pierced him in the back with a lance;” together they “tore him to pieces from limb to limb.”³

Less physically threatening, but no less dangerous enemies were to be found within Christendom. As pope, Innocent learned that heretics “called Waldensians, Cathari, Patarines, and others whoever they are and by whatever names they are called, are entangling innumerable people with their snares and are corrupting them with the yeast of falsehood.”⁴ The appeal of these heresies, as Innocent well knew, lay in their espousal of the *vita apostolica*, or the model of Christian life presented in the gospels. The idea that following the life described in the gospels was the best way to lead a Christian life had grown in popularity amongst the laity and clergy alike in the twelfth century.⁵ Overenthusiastic adherents to this model of piety oftentimes came to an understanding of the role of the Church that was at odds with official doctrine.⁶ The pope feared what might happen if heretical ideas about the Church and about the central tenets of faith were allowed to flower. Not only did he believe that significant numbers of his flock face might face eternal damnation, but he was certain that the very foundations upon which Christian society was based would collapse.⁷ Heretics were not the only ‘internal’ concern. Christians of otherwise orthodox belief who refused to submit to papal authority were also suspect; one only has to remember that crusaders justified their attack on Constantinople in 1204 with the claim that Greeks were schismatics and therefore, enemies of the pope and the church. Willfully disobeying the Vicar of Christ was, in effect, to reject the Church’s teachings and

² Henry of Livonia, *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. with an introduction by J.A. Brundage (Madison WI, 1961), 32.

³ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 33.

⁴ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 3: 172.

⁵ Interestingly enough, the crusade was also presented as a way in which to imitate Christ. These two visions of what the *imitatio Christi* consisted of would appear to have emerged out at the same time.

⁶ G. Tellenbach, *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century*, trans. T. Reuter (Cambridge, 1993), 7, 227.

⁷ H. Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages. The Historical Links between Heresy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Women’s Religious Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century, with the Historical Foundations of German Mysticism*, trans. S. Rowan (Notre Dame, 1995), 35-42.

become an adversary on par with a non-believer. One imperial official who failed to desist from appropriating territory over which the pope claimed sovereignty was, in Innocent's estimation, "a second Saladin."⁸

The obligation to overcome the varied and numerous enemies threatening Christ and his Church weighed heavily on Innocent III. With his office came the responsibility "to resolve tangled questions, to reveal things hidden in doubt . . . to comfort the weak, to confound heretics, [and] to strengthen Catholics."⁹ Though he favored peaceful resolution to conflict, Innocent also recognized that "wounds do not [always] respond to the treatment of a poultice."¹⁰ Contests pitting Christian against non-Christians could be problematic, persuasion rarely gained the desired result and ecclesiastical coercion was not an option. In the event that a wound did not respond to a salve, the pope suggested it "should be cut . . . with a knife."¹¹ The knife at Innocent's disposal was the crusade. In the years since Pope Urban II had proclaimed the First Crusade it had been established that the pope had the authority and the responsibility to rouse the *militia Christi* to fight battles on behalf of Christ and the Church for the defense of his followers and their territory. Time and again during the course of his pontificate Innocent would rouse the faithful to take up arms and beat back non-believers whether they be Muslim, pagan, or heretic. Even those who flagrantly disobeyed the pope's orders in respect to papal territory were given little quarter. Although this pope expanded the definition of 'aiding the Holy Land' to include praying, fasting and giving alms¹² he was never to lose sight of the essential fact that 'to crusade' was to go to war on God's behalf.

⁸ *Register Innocenz' III*, 2: 212 (221), 217 (226), 268 (280).

⁹ This list of "duties" is taken from the sermon Innocent III gave at his consecration in February 1198. Sermon 4:2, *PL* 217:653-60. Moore, *Innocent III*, p. 26, n.3; Tillman, *Innocent III*, p. 40, n.4. For an alternate date for this sermon see M. Maccarrone, "Innocenzo III prima del pontificato," *Archivio della R. Deputazione romana di Storia patria* 9 (1966), 133.

¹⁰ *Register Innocenz' III*, 10: 149; *PL* 215: 1246-7; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 78-80.

¹¹ *Register Innocenz' III*, 10: 149; *PL* 215: 1246-7 *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 78-80.

¹² In 1213 Innocent decreed that once a month there should be processions in which Christians begged God to free the Holy Land and restore it to Christian rule. Bishops should encourage their flocks to pray and undergo fasts on behalf of the Holy Land. Special prayers were added to the mass. G. Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz' III* (Weimar, 1929), 96. Translation from *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 118-24.

Innocent III conception of crusading was traditional, and yet unconventional. It remained a potent blend of holy war and pilgrimage. In his opinion, the crusade not only could, but undoubtedly should, be deployed wherever the enemies of Christ threatened Christian security. The crusade was too valuable a weapon in the fight against enemies of the faith and too great an “opportunity to win salvation” to be employed solely for the struggle against Islam in the Levant.¹³ This view of the crusade was in direct contrast to that espoused by Alexander III and the majority of twelfth-century crusaders who had continued to link the cross with the physical site of Christ’s resurrection.. Taking up the cross meant that one was also embarking upon a pilgrimage. According to Innocent, however, the crusade was a pilgrimage on which the crusader progressed towards the heavenly Jerusalem. It was not necessary for the crusader to reach the physical city of Jerusalem, it was only required that he vow to lay down his life for Christ.¹⁴ The pope granted to “all those submitting to this labor personally and at their expense full forgiveness of their sins . . . and as the reward of the just we promise them a greater share of eternal salvation.”¹⁵

All soldiers who labored in defense of the Church were on a pilgrimage and, in a manner of speaking, bearing a cross. The pope suggested that this was, in fact, the case and should be reflected in practice. Thus, only months after calling for Christians to take the cross for the recovery of Jerusalem, Innocent instructed Italian crusaders to set out against Markward of Anweiler, the defender of Hohenstaufen interests in southern Italy. In the same year, the pope confirmed that those Germans who assisted in converting and subduing pagans in the Baltic were eligible for a remission of penance; in 1204 the bishop of Riga was granted the right to recruit crusaders yearly for expeditions intended to strengthen the Church in Livonia. Cathar heretics and their

¹³ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz’ III*, 89.

¹⁴ This reflects the idea- making headway in scholarly circles - that no penance could ever prove satisfactory, but that God would treat penances as though they were. That “a free and generous remission of all punishment – detached, in a sense, from the nature of the penance performed – could be granted by the pope on God’s behalf was already implicit in the writings of St. Bernard of Clairvaux at the time of the Second Crusade.” Riley-Smith, *What were the crusades?*, 63.

¹⁵ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1:498-505. Under Innocent the fully developed indulgence made its first appearance. Riley-Smith, *What were the crusades?*, 59-64.

supporters in the south of France were the target of a crusade launched in 1209. In 1211 Innocent III agreed to grant the crusade indulgence to those who attacked the Almohads in the Iberian Peninsula.

Under Innocent III, the increasing frequency of crusades launched in the western Mediterranean and in the north of Europe might be expected to have led to a severing of the crusade from its moorings in pilgrimage.¹⁶ The only journey these crusaders undertook was from their homes to the battlefield where they would engage the enemies of Christ in combat. There was certainly no expectation on the part of Innocent III or these ‘non-traditional’ crusaders that they would be required to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre or even a local pilgrimage site in order to be eligible to receive the full indulgence granted to those who took up the cross. Nevertheless, many of the crusaders who fought in Iberia, the Languedoc and in the Baltic in the first two decades of the thirteenth century continued to identify themselves as pilgrims and would continue to use the language of pilgrimage to describe the activity in which they were engaged. They remained both *crucesignati* and *peregrini*.

It is not easy to interpret such conservatism, especially when it flies in the face of the obvious fact that these crusaders were not, in fact, traveling to a shrine to offer their prayers. Identifying the crusade as a pilgrimage and its participants as pilgrims may simply have become a habit over the course of the twelfth century. The form of the vow continued to emphasize the crusader’s status as a pilgrim. It may also have been a way to emphasize the penitential nature of the enterprise: regardless of where they served, crusaders were still expected to behave as pilgrims, albeit armed pilgrims, by “being humble in heart and body and observing moderation in food and clothing” while in the service of the cross.¹⁷ These were pilgrims hoping to gain entry to the heavenly Jerusalem. The crusader was “ready to expose [himself] to great and hard experiences in the hope of eternal reward.”¹⁸ Or, perhaps it reflected a more

¹⁶ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 193.

¹⁷ *Conciliorum*, 243; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 125-9.

¹⁸ Innocent III, “*Omnia Opera*,” 215: 1340.

philosophical view which equated the substance of the crusade to be a pilgrimage no matter its accidents. The crusade was a pilgrimage, wherever it was fought. Why? Each crusader took a journey in order to serve Christ, a journey that culminated on the battlefield. The battlefield itself was sanctified by the blood, sweat and tears of those Christians who fought there. And because crusaders fought to defend Christian territory, any territory in which they fought to protect the people Christ claimed as his own and the land in “which the Christian name is revered” was, arguably at least, worthy of veneration.¹⁹

The vow crusaders took for expeditions directed towards the Moors in Spain, heretics in France and the pagans in the Baltic reflect the idea that joining and accompanying the crusade host, wherever it was deployed, continued to be classified as a “pilgrimage.” Without exception crusaders vowed to serve Christ in a military capacity; they also contracted to provide this service at a certain time and in a specific place in the company of other crusaders. This was true of those crusaders who participated in the victorious battle at Las Navas de Tolosa. During the octave of Pentecost (13-20 May) 1212, “the faithful of Christ gathered at Toledo from all parts of the world because of the remission granted by the Lord Pope, the Vicar of the Lord Jesus Christ to those going off to give battle in support of Christendom in Spain.”²⁰ Earlier that year Innocent had announced that anyone who joined Alfonso VIII of Aragón in a campaign against the Almohad Caliph, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Nāsir (1199-1213), would receive a remission of sins.²¹ Neither here, nor in any of the other documents relating to the crusades Innocent launched in Spain or the Baltic, does the pope spell out exactly what the extent of the military service needed to be in order to receive the indulgence. Only during the course of the Albigensian Crusade, when circumstances made it clear that the success of the endeavor depended upon troops willing to stay for an extended period of time, did the pope’s representatives establish

¹⁹ Matthew Paris, *Chronica majora*, 4: 430.

²⁰ Archbishop Arnould-Amaury of Narbonne in Mondéjar, *Memorias históricas de la vida y acciones del rey D. Alonso el Noble, octavo del nombre* (Madrid, 1783), Appendix civ, cvi.

²¹ D. Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia hasta Inocencio III (963-1216)* (Rome, 1955), 497-8 (31 January 1212), 500-01 (4 February 1212).

exactly how long one had to remain in the service of the cross in order to receive the indulgence. Otherwise the pope, like the crusaders, assumed that these campaigns would follow traditional norms for campaigns in the specific region or that the leaders of the campaign would determine the terms of the military service required of those who fought under their command.

The 'hands-off' approach to the substance of the crusade vow in these arenas was in stark contrast to the attention Innocent paid to the vows made by crusaders wishing to aid the Holy Land. There is, I believe, good reason for this. First of all, in the case of Spain, the pope applied the mechanisms and privileges of the crusade to pre-existing conflicts in which traditions regarding the conduct of penitential war were well-established and familiar. Although many Spaniards may not have been accustomed to taking the cross for a campaign against the Almohads they were accustomed to receive a remission of penance for their efforts. The crusade vow wrought little change in these expeditions, except perhaps for an increase in the spiritual reward granted for participation. The crusade vow was likely to consist of a promise to join the king at a certain time and place and to accompany the crusade host on campaign until a certain military objective was attained. At times it may also have included a promise to serve for a specific period of time associated with the usual obligations of military service owed to one's temporal lord. Where a pre-existing tradition did not exist, as was the case of the crusade against pagans in the Baltic or heretics in the south of France, it was up to the papal legates to establish a minimum period of service. In the North, the model of the Holy Land crusade was invoked, whereas the requirements of vassalage and pre-existing military customs, either alone or in combination, determined the substance of the vow of *crucesignati* involved in rooting up heresy and "planting" new Christian communities in the Languedoc. No matter how pervasive the idea that the crusade was a pilgrimage continued to be, it did not reflect reality. In the thirteenth century, whether fighting in the East or against enemies within Europe crusaders were engaged in fighting wars.

Requirements of vassalage, and pre-existing customs regarding penitential and temporal war were not uniform in thirteenth-century Christendom. Heterogeneity was the hallmark of the vows taken for the crusades called by Innocent III. The substance of each vow was distinctly local in flavor. The ‘localization’ of the crusade was not without its complications, however. Over time it became increasingly difficult for some contemporaries to distinguish between private or royal wars fought for the benefit of the individual noble, king or bishop, and struggles intended to protect Christendom at-large. Once crusaders accepted that the cross did not require them to undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the meaning ascribed to the activity described by Innocent III as the “business of God” shifted.²² While never really laying aside the conception of the crusade as a pilgrimage, participants were much more likely to perceive the crusade as a penitential war. In many ways this is what Innocent III hoped would happen. He hoped that Christians recognized, as did he, the crusade for what it was: the only war to hold out the promise of benefiting both the individual and the community of Christian people. He did not foresee how the extension of crusading into the localities would allow both his successors and succeeding kings and nobles to use the crusade to advance their personal and political agendas.²³

The Albigensian Crusade and the Forty Day Vow

Even at present, when most historians appear to agree that crusades fought in locations other than the Holy Land were seen by contemporaries as valid expressions of the movement, the Albigensian Crusade (1209-29) continues to occupy an ambiguous place in the history of crusading. Some scholars have proclaimed that, because it was directed against heretics and those Catholics who protected them, it was nothing more than a perversion of the original idea of crusading,²⁴ while others see the novelty of Pope Innocent III’s proclamation as a logical “application of crusading

²² Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz’ III*, 94.

²³ To appreciate how, for example, King John I and his barons manipulated the crusade for their own political purposes see Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 134-7.

²⁴ Mayer, *The Crusades*, 214.

ideology and machinery”²⁵ and “inevitable” considering the long pre-history of justifying violence against enemies of the faith.²⁶ It has long been suggested that the confusion and antagonism arising from the papacy’s decision to graft crusade ideology onto a secular endeavor was one of the primary reasons enthusiasm for the crusading movement declined over the course of the thirteenth century.²⁷ More recently, however, at least one scholar has argued that “far from arousing widespread resentment” the Albigensian Crusade “received considerable support and was regarded as part of a general campaign against the enemies of the faith.”²⁸

Leaving modern interpretations aside, there can be little doubt that in the call to take up arms against the heretics of southern France Innocent III was declaring a crusade “in the fullest sense of the word.”²⁹ The language of the 1209 call to crusade promises

with assurances the remission of their sins, granted by God and by his vicar, to those who burning with zeal for the orthodox faith, gird themselves manfully against this kind of pestiferous people.³⁰

This language echoes that used previously for crusades to the Holy Land;

We exhort therefore all of you in God, we ask and command, and, for the remission of sins enjoin: that those who are of God, and, above all, the greater men and the nobles do manfully gird themselves; and that you strive so to oppose the multitude of the infidels.³¹

²⁵ Tyerman, *Invention*, 32.

²⁶ Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 136.

²⁷ P. A. Throop, *Criticism of the Crusade: A Study of Public Opinion and Crusade Propaganda* (Amsterdam, 1940), 1-65.

²⁸ E. Siberry, *Criticism of Crusading, 1095-1274* (Oxford, 1985), 167.

²⁹ N. Housley, “Crusades against Christians” *Crusade and Settlement*, ed. P. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), 28.

³⁰ Innocent III, *Opera Omnia*, 215: 1354-8.

³¹ P. Rassow, “Der Text der Kreuzzugsbulle Eugens III,” *Neues Archiv*, XLV, 303. Also see *Historia de expeditione Frederici Imperatoris*, ed. A. Chroust, *MGHS* n.s. 5 (Berlin, 1928), 6-10 and *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacri spectantes quae supersunt aevo aequales ac genuinae: Die Kreuzzugsbriefe des Jahren 1088-1100*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck, 1901), 136; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 38.

Like his predecessors, Innocent III was careful to point out that God “does not need [the crusaders’] service,” rather he was “giving [them] an opportunity of serving him in an acceptable manner in this crisis.”³² The same spiritual reward, known as an indulgence, was offered to the “recruits of Christian knighthood” who were willing to “vindicate such a terrible injury to your God” as had been offered previously to those who fought in the Holy Land.³³ The temporal benefits customarily granted by the Church to the crusader³⁴ were also to be given to those who took up arms against the heretics. In October 1208 papal letters sent to the prelates and to the king of France ordered a moratorium on crusader’s debts. Prelates were allowed to mortgage the revenue of their benefices for two years to help with expenses. And, most importantly for crusader’s peace of mind, crusaders’ family, property and possessions were placed under ecclesiastical protection.³⁵ One of these missives reminded the French clergy that those who wanted to receive the indulgence and have their property protected in their absence must take “the life-giving sign of the cross” and wear it on their breast.³⁶ There can be little question, therefore, that in prescribing that participants in the Albigensian Crusade take the cross, Innocent presumed that they would first take a formal crusading vow.

Although Innocent III did not specify what form the Albigensian crusade vow was to take, the evidence suggests that those who took vows in 1208-09 understood them to be similar in form, if not in substance to those taken for crusades to the Holy Land. The actions of one particular crusader, Duke Odo III of Burgundy, serve to illustrate that the response to the Albigensian Crusade was as conventional as the call. In early June 1209 one finds Odo making arrangements for his departure. He had been recruited for the campaign by the papal legate, Abbot Arnould-Amaury of Cîteaux, and had been granted permission to leave on crusade by King Philip of France.³⁷ First,

³² Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 215, 1354-8; *Historia de expeditione Frederici*, 9.

³³ William of Puylaurens, *Chronica magistri Guillelmi de Podio Laurentii*, trans. and ed. J. Duvernoy (Paris, 1976), 54-5.

³⁴ Brundage, *Canon Law*, 159-90.

³⁵ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 215: 1469-71; Rassow, “Der Text der Kreuzzugsbulle,” 304.

³⁶ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 215: 1469.

³⁷ *HGL*, 8: 563-4.

he and his wife, Alice, visited the abbey of Cîteaux where the duke, leaving his domains “to defend the Catholic faith against the heretics and wishing to protect the interests of the abbey,” granted a certain part of the forest of Fesc to the monastery.³⁸ A few days later the duchess came to an agreement with the bishop of Chalon, who also had taken the cross, to fix the conventions to follow should her husband not survive the crusade.³⁹ The impending endeavor must have been considered every bit as dangerous as an expedition to the Holy Land even without the prospect of a long and perilous journey. A charter dated to the time of Odo’s departure for the mustering of the army at Lyon also follows the traditional model:

Let it be known to all present and future that I, Odo, duke of Burgundy, am signed with the cross against the Albigensian heretics... donate and concede [to Cluny] for the health of my soul... all the men that I have at Fleury...⁴⁰

Other men, including some of his vassals, were making similar preparations for their own departures.⁴¹ Innocent III had directed that the “recruits of Christian knighthood” harass Raymond VI, drive out the heretics and expel the aforementioned Count “and his followers from the castles under his lordship and take their lands where, after the heretics have been banished, Catholic inhabitants must be put in their place.”⁴² There was no telling how long this would take, and so preparations were made on the presumption that there would be a significant period of absence from one’s home.

As was the case for those who vowed to serve Christ in the Holy Land, those who answered Innocent III’s call to crusade in 1209 incurred an obligation to do as they had promised God and the Church they would. In this case, the vow consisted of a promise to join with other crusaders at a pre-arranged time and place in order to eradicate – through the use of arms – the Albigensian heresy that was flourishing in the Languedoc. In practical terms this meant launching an offensive against the

³⁸ *Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne de la race Capétienne*, ed. E. Petit, 9 vols. (Dijon, 1885-1905) 3: 424-5.

³⁹ *Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne de la race Capétienne*, 3: 425.

⁴⁰ “*Noverint omnes presentes et futuri quod ego Odo, dux Burgundie, cruce signatus contra hereticos Albigenses... donavi et concessi, pro remedio anime mee... omnes homines quos habebam apud Floriacum.*” This charter is found in *Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne de la race Capétienne*, 3: 425-6.

⁴¹ *Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne de la race Capétienne*, 3: 165-70, 433.

⁴² Innocent III, “*Opera Omnia*,” 215: 1358, 1360.

temporal authority of the region – Count Raymond VI of Toulouse and his vassals. No reference was made to the need for the crusader to complete a pilgrimage. The cross stood less for Jerusalem than for orthodox belief. Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay - the author of the *Hystoria Albigensis*, an ardent supporter of the crusade, and from the spring of 1212 until 1219 an eyewitness to much of what he describes - was aware of men who had not fulfilled their vows and condemned them for it.⁴³ In a letter to Conrad, dean of Speyer, written in September 1213 Innocent III advised that

those who have taken the sign of the cross and have proposed to set out against the heretics in Provence and have not yet translated their intention into action must be diligently persuaded to take up the journey to Jerusalem, because this is an action of greater merit. If perhaps, they cannot be persuaded, they must be compelled to carry out the vow they have not yet fulfilled.⁴⁴

The Church's effort to see that the votive obligation was discharged through participation or commutation suggests that the vow was also treated in the same way previous crusading vows had been. The novelty of the Albigensian Crusade – that it was fought against heretics and the Christian nobility who had refused to eradicate heresy from their domains in a land close to most of the crusader's homes - seems to have had no effect on the enthusiasm and preparations for the crusade.⁴⁵

One of the more interesting features of the pope's call to crusade was the stipulation that if Count Raymond VI of Toulouse - excommunicated in May 1207 for, among other things, the failure to persecute the heretics who resided within his domains⁴⁶ - was "brought to his sense by this sort of harassment" then the Church must allow him to make satisfaction. The Count would be required to "give sure signs of his repentance" by dissociating himself from heretics and making peace with the

⁴³ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 187; 2: 114-5.

⁴⁴ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 904-5; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 131-2.

⁴⁵ The only surviving contemporary criticism of Innocent III's call to crusade seems to have come from Philip Augustus, king of France, who questioned the legality of the pope's invitation to French nobles to help themselves to the Count of Toulouse's territory. (Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 215: 1354-8). If Innocent notified him that the count had been convicted of heresy - which he had not been - then the king, as his suzerain, should have been the one to confiscate his fief. *Histoire générale de Languedoc*, 8: 558.

⁴⁶ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 215: 1166-8; *RHGF* 13: 140.

Catholic Church.⁴⁷ In practical terms this meant that if the Count was willing or able to reconcile himself to the Church at any time before or during the impending military venture, the crusade would no longer have an explicit target.

Albeit belatedly, Raymond VI eventually recognized the threat posed by an army of the Christian faithful. The *Chanson de la croisade albigeoise* reports that when

the count of Toulouse...saw too all his enemies poised to attack, [he] knew that the crusaders would invade all and any part of his lands without hesitation. He sent into Gascony therefore to his comrade the archbishop of Auch... and to the abbot of Condom, a man of noble birth, to Raymond of Rabastend, a generous giver, and to the prior of the Hospital. All these were to go to Rome...to speak to the pope, for they were eloquent men, and would make some arrangement.⁴⁸

The pope and the count were reconciled during the winter of 1209. As a guarantee of future obedience to the dictates of the Church and her representatives Raymond was to turn over seven of his strongest castles to the legate assigned to Languedoc, Master Milo.⁴⁹ In an elaborate act of ceremonial and public penance Raymond swore to follow the above agreement and formally reconciled himself to the Church, receiving absolution at the hands of the legate on 18 June 1209.⁵⁰ Four days later Raymond “asked the legate to bestow on him the cross as a means of protecting his territory against invasion by the crusaders. The legate agreed and bestowed the cross on the Count and just two of his knights.”⁵¹

In assuming the cross Raymond VI demonstrated to the entire Christian community that his beliefs were orthodox, that he was concerned about the heretics within his domains and that at long last he was willing to proceed against them in a manner the Church deemed appropriate. As Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay points out, the privileges granted to the crusader placed Raymond VI, his family and his temporal

⁴⁷ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 215, 1354-8.

⁴⁸ *La Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoise*, ed. and trans. E. Martin-Chabot, 3 vols (1931-61), 1: 30-1.

⁴⁹ *Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoise*, 1: 30-3; Innocent III “Opera Omnia,” 216: 89; Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 75-6.

⁵⁰ Innocent III “Opera Omnia,” 216: 89-98; Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 75-6.

⁵¹ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 79-80.

possessions under the protection of the Church, making it illegal for the Church's army of crusaders to attack him. The Count of Toulouse may indeed have been "a false and faithless crusader [who] took the cross not to avenge the wrong done to the crucifix, but to conceal and cover his wickedness for a period"⁵² as this chronicler claimed, but those rights were still to be accorded to him as long as he fulfilled his vow by taking up arms against the heretics. It certainly seemed that the Count took his vow seriously enough for in July 1209 he met up with the crusading host at Valence and promised the commanders of the army that he would obey them in all things. The count accompanied the crusade host to Béziers and on to Carcassone.⁵³

Raymond VI's sudden capitulation, and his new status as a crusader, left the erstwhile crusading army in a quandary. The response to the Cistercian preaching campaign of 1208-09 impressed contemporary observers. "The indulgence which the Pope had promised to anyone proceeding against the heretics had been published throughout France, with the result that huge numbers of nobles and commoners had taken up arms, ready with the sign of the cross on their breasts to confront the enemies of the cross."⁵⁴ This group convened in Lyon during the first few days of July 1209. Just as they were ready to converge upon Toulouse and the surrounding region, Raymond VI took the cross and the city made peace leaving the crusaders with the rather vague objective of attacking the "Albigensis."⁵⁵

It was Raymond VI who suggested marching against his nephew, Raymond-Roger Trencavel, the viscount of Béziers. The *Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoise* - composed by William of Tudela, (1209-13) who was loyal to the South but opposed to heresy and an anonymous author (1213-19) who was fervently anti-Montfort and anti-crusade - paints Trencavel as a charming young man of orthodox faith who had not had enough experience to possess any sort of power over his vassals who "maintained

⁵² Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 79-80.

⁵³ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 85-6. Raymond stayed with the crusade army throughout the summer of 1209. In August 1209, like the Counts of Nevers and Burgundy, he returned to his home – Toulouse – on good terms with Simon de Montfort. It would appear that he, like the other crusaders, believed his obligation to have been fulfilled.

⁵⁴ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 80.

⁵⁵ *Chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, 1: 38-9.

the heretics in their towers and castles.”⁵⁶ One of his uncle’s greatest enemies, he had refused to make an alliance with him against the crusaders earlier in the year. When he too came to recognize the threat presented by an influx of crusaders into his domain he, like Raymond VI, attempted to reconcile himself to the Church. The legate Milo, however “despised him and refused his request.”⁵⁷ By mid-August 1209 the crusade army had taken and destroyed Bézier, won Carcassone (the leading fortresses of the Trencavel domains) and captured the viscount. Following the pope’s instructions to replace heretics with “Catholic inhabitants . . . who, according to the teaching of orthodox faith, must serve in holiness before God,” Simon de Montfort was elected by the crusaders to be the new Viscount of Bézier and Carcassone.⁵⁸ He took “charge of the government of the territory for the glory of God, the honor of the Church and the suppression of heresy” in late August.⁵⁹ It is at this point that the majority of the crusaders felt that their votive obligation had been discharged and began to return home.

As he settled himself in his newly acquired territory, Simon de Montfort began to grow

anxious, for very few of his friends decided to stay with him; most of them preferred to go back to the neighborhood of Paris. The mountains are wild and the passes dangerous and none of them wanted to be killed in that country.⁶⁰

The exodus of crusaders back to their homes in northern France left Simon de Montfort in a tenuous position. He controlled two major cities along with some two hundred villages and towns that had either been occupied on the march from Bézier to Carcassone or had capitulated once the latter had surrendered. The defense of these holdings was left to about 30 crusaders who had chosen to remain with the new viscount. These knights were related to Simon de Montfort by friendship, kinship, or

⁵⁶ *Chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, 1: 44-7.

⁵⁷ *Chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, 1: 32-3.

⁵⁸ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 215: 1358.

⁵⁹ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 102.

⁶⁰ *Chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, 1: 88-9.

by feudal ties.⁶¹ They believed that the nearby fortresses of Minerve, Termes and Cabaret “in which the principal enemies of our faith were living at the time” needed to be captured in order to consolidate their newly acquired position.⁶² In a letter written to the pope in late August Simon remarked that he was almost alone.⁶³ Simon’s letter was not a song of triumph, and he made it abundantly clear that he expected more than moral support from the pope.⁶⁴ What Simon de Montfort needed was more money, so he could continue to employ and support those who remained with him, and more men to assist him in retaining, and perhaps expanding, the lands restored to the Catholic faith.

Early November 1209 brought forth a flurry of letters from the papal curia in response to Simon de Montfort’s request for assistance. Appeals for aid were directed to Emperor Otto IV⁶⁵ and to the kings of Aragon and Castile.⁶⁶ The French bishops of Languedoc and Provence were ordered to recruit crusaders within their dioceses by offering the same indulgence and privileges that had been granted to the first wave of crusaders.⁶⁷ At the same time Innocent III wrote to Simon congratulating him on his success and confirming his election as Viscount of Bézier and Carcassone.⁶⁸ To the crusaders who remained with Simon, whom he praised for their faith, the pope promised reinforcements and money to pay their wages by Easter.⁶⁹

Although a few crusaders did arrive at the beginning of Lent, accompanied by Simon’s wife Alice,⁷⁰ it was not until late July and August that large numbers of

⁶¹ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 119; P. Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois* (Paris, 1944), 186-90; M. Roquebert, *L’Epopée Cathare*, 4 vols. (Toulouse, 1970), I, 288-90.

⁶² Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 113-14; William of Puylaurens, *Chronica*, 62-3.

⁶³ “*me fere solum inter inimicos Christi...cum non multo milite reliquerunt.*” Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 141-2.

⁶⁴ J. Sumption, *The Albigensian Crusade* (London, 1978), 104.

⁶⁵ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 153-4.

⁶⁶ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 154.

⁶⁷ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 215: 1547.

⁶⁸ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 151-53.

⁶⁹ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 156. Interesting to note that these men are referred to as “*signatorum exercitu.*”

⁷⁰ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 146.

reinforcements are reported to have appeared.⁷¹ These crusaders came from further a field; in many of the chronicles from Germany and Flanders 1210 is the year given for the calling of crusade.⁷² At the siege of Termes there were

many barons . . . many a good knight and fine young men of noble race – Germans, Bavarians, Saxons, Frisians, men from Maine, Anjou, Normandy and Brittany, Lombards and Longobards, Gascons and Provençals. The lord archbishop of Bordeaux was there and so was Sir Amanieu d'Albret and men from Langon. All those who came *did their forty days duty*.⁷³

This is the first allusion to an obligatory term of military service required of those who took the cross. Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay also made mention of a forty-day obligation for the first time in the late summer or early autumn of 1210.

So matters stood when the Bishop of Beauvais, Count Robert and the Count of Ponthieu left the army and returned home leaving Christ's business unfinished and indeed in a most critical and dangerous position. If I may be allowed to record what they allowed themselves to do, they left without completing their forty days of service.⁷⁴

The third narrative account of the Albigensian Crusade, the *Chronica* - composed circa 1250 and important for piecing together events after 1219 - by William of Puylaurens, a native of Languedoc who acted as a notary to the counts and bishops of Toulouse - makes reference to a forty-day vow under the year 1211.⁷⁵ Sometime between Innocent's call for reinforcements in November 1209 and the autumn of 1210 it appears, therefore, that a minimum period of crusade service was introduced.

The *Hystoria Albigensis* is the only source to provide an explanation for the introduction of a forty-day period of service. Here, its establishment is ascribed to the

⁷¹ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 170-2, 176-8; "Appendicis Roberti de Monte ad Sigebertum," *RHGF*, 18: 343.

⁷² Caesarius of Heisterbach, Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. J. Strange, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1851). Translated as *The Dialogue on Miracles* by H. Von, E. Scott and C.C. Swinton Blau, 2 vols. (New York, 1929) 1: 345; "Annales Stadenses" *MGHS* 26: 355; "Reineri Annales" *MGHS* 16: 663; "Annales Floreffenses" *MGHS* 16: 626; "Annales Parchenses" *MGHS* 16: 606.

⁷³ *Chanson de la croisade albegeoise*, 1: 132-4.

⁷⁴ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 187.

⁷⁵ William of Puylaurens, *Chronica*, 72-3.

papal legates Abbot Arnould-Amaury of Cîteaux, soon to be raised to the archbishopric of Narbonne by Simon de Montfort, and either Milo, the pope's notary (died January 1209) or Thedisius, a canon of the cathedral of Genoa, who

aware that most of the crusaders were somewhat lukewarm in their enthusiasm for the campaign and perpetually anxious to go home, had laid it down that the indulgence promised to the crusaders by the Pope would not be granted to anyone who failed to complete at least one full period of forty days in the service of Jesus Christ.⁷⁶

This would not be the first time that papal legates initiated *ad hoc* changes to crusade policy. Only four years previously Peter Capuano had released crusaders from the obligation of completing the pilgrimage to Jerusalem if they promised to remain in Constantinople for a year.⁷⁷ Similarly in 1209-10, there is nothing to suggest that the legates consulted Innocent III in this matter, or that he was made aware of the forty-day period of service until after it had been established.

The introduction of a forty-day period of service was the way in which the legates chose to address and resolve this set of very specific problems. No matter how traditional the pope believed the Albigensian Crusade to be, the actions of the legates in 1210 testify to awareness, at least on their part, that it did possess a certain number of unusual features. First, the military situation in 1210 was quite different than it had been in 1209. Now that Simon de Montfort was the temporal lord of the area in which the crusaders would be fighting he assumed leadership of the crusade host. The viscount needed the service of men loyal to him and his cause to help him consolidate his control over the county of Bézier and Carcassone. A forty-day period of military service would not have been unfamiliar to the Northern French, German or Flemish knights who constituted the majority of the Albigensian crusading armies. From the mid-twelfth century forty days had become a standard period of military service owed by vassals to their lords.⁷⁸ The earliest example of this term is to be found in an

⁷⁶ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 187.

⁷⁷ *Register Innocenz' III*, 8: 127.

⁷⁸ Belperron, *La croisade*, 149; P. Guilhiermoz, *Essai sur l'origine de la noblesse en France au Moyen Age* (New York, 1902), 276-9.

inquest in the bishopric of Bayeux made by Henry I in 1133. The inquest revealed that the bishop owed forty days of service to the King of France and another forty days service to the duke within the boundaries of Normandy.⁷⁹ A charter issued in 1187 by the commune of Dijon also fixed the minimum service required of the city's garrison by the Duke of Burgundy at forty days. In the thirteenth century, two castles in Saint-Pol informed the count that they owed him no more than forty days service per annum.⁸⁰

In keeping with the advent of Northern French rule in Languedoc came the imposition of certain other "uses and customs of the region of Paris" as is seen in December 1212 issuance of the Statutes of Pamiers.⁸¹ At this moment almost all of the Languedoc was in Simon's hands. In order to consolidate his power and to "bring peace and order permanently to this land"⁸² he set down rules by which the territory was to be ruled. Pamiers declared that the customs of Northern France were to be followed in matters of military service and inheritance. This allowed Simon to demand knight service from his vassals as the Count of Toulouse and former Viscount of Béziers and Carcassonne had never been able to do. The new Viscount appears to have required his vassals to provide forty days service.⁸³

Another anomaly was the fact that this crusade was neither explicitly nor implicitly linked with any specific pilgrimage destination. The absence of a long and arduous journey also served to distance this crusade from its roots in pilgrimage while an unstable political situation in most areas of Northern Europe may have also created difficulties for those wishing to participate in the crusade. Throughout the course of

⁷⁹ RHGF, 13: 699; S.E. Gleason, *An Ecclesiastical Barony of the Middle Ages. The Bishopric of Bayeux, 1066-1204* (Cambridge MA, 1936), 68, 77.

⁸⁰ *Chartes de communes et d'affranchissements en Bourgogne publiées avec les encouragements du Conseil général de la Côte-d'Or et sous les auspices de l'Académie impériale de sciences, arts, et belles-lettres de Dijon*, ed. J. Garnier, 3 vols. (Dijon, 1867-77), 1: 11; *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis Conditum a Carolo du Fresne, domino Du Cange, auctum a monachis ordinis S. Benedicti, cum supplementis integris D.P. Carpenterii, Adelungii, aliorum, susque digessit G.A.L. Henschel; sequuntur Glossarium gallicum, Tabulae, Indices auctorum et rerum, Dissertationes*, ed. C. Du Cange, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883-87), 6: 347^b.

⁸¹ Sumption, *Albigensian Crusade*, 154-5; For the text of the Statutes see, *HGL*, 8: 625-35.

⁸² *HGL*, 8: 626.

⁸³ *HGL*, 8: 628.

the Albigensian Crusade those who participated often called themselves 'pilgrims' and used 'pilgrimage,' 'road' and 'way' to describe their journey, just as did crusaders who traveled to the East. More often than not, as in the case of Count William of Pontheiu, the language of pilgrimage (*iter*) was employed alongside that of crusading (*cruce signatus*).⁸⁴ What was peculiar about the identification of the Albigensian Crusade with a pilgrimage, both before and after the experiences of 1209,⁸⁵ was that there no major pilgrimage sites within the area to which these crusaders were journeying.

The lack of a specific pilgrimage site must have caused logistical problems for the crusaders and their leaders, for it meant that there was not one distinct location where crusaders could go to discharge their vow as had been customary for those who vowed to crusade from the time of the First Crusade. Accounts of twelfth century crusades to the Holy Land agree to an astonishing degree that the crusader's obligation was discharged when one reached the Holy Sepulchre and prayed there.⁸⁶ With Jerusalem in Muslim hands after 1187 it became somewhat more complicated to meet this condition, though it still was assumed that crusaders would have the opportunity to do so;⁸⁷ failing the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, crusaders were still expected to travel to the Holy Land and serve there for a least a year.⁸⁸ In the case of the crusade to the Holy Land, the remission of penance granted to participants remained intrinsically linked with the "rigors of this journey," even as an increased emphasis was placed on

⁸⁴ *Recueil des Actes des Comtes de Pontieu (1026-1279)*, ed. C. Brunel, Collection de Documents inédits sur l'Histoire de France (Paris, 1930), n. 211; Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 136.

⁸⁵ Peter of Les Vaux de Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, II, 243 n. 3; "Chronica regia coloniensis," *MGHS*, 25: 826.

⁸⁶ See *Gesta Francorum et aliorum hiersolimitanorum*, ed. R. Hill (London, 1962), 92; FC, 325, 331-2, 436; Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 215: 260-1, 699-702, 710-4; Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. E. Faral, Les Classiques de l'Histoire de France au Moyen Age 18-19, 2 vols. (Paris, 1938-9), 1: 80.

⁸⁷ The terms of the truce made between Richard I and Saladin in September 1192 included a provision that allowed the crusaders to visit Jerusalem as pilgrims as long as they traveled there unarmed. *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade. A Translation of the 'Iterarium Peregrinorum et Gestis Regis Ricardi*, (Woodbridge, 1997), 371-9.

⁸⁸ *Register Innocenz' III*, 2: 258.

the penitential aspects of military service in the Lord's army.⁸⁹ Certainly, this could not be the case for the Albigensian crusader, for whom the journey to the battlefield would not have been especially long or burdensome. The shortness of the journey had not been taken into account during the first campaign, for the prevailing belief seems to have been that one campaign would be enough to "wipe out the treachery of heresy."⁹⁰ That it did not prove to be enough was seen as part of God's design for the salvation of humankind.⁹¹ "He wished His enemies to be subdued gradually and progressively, so that as sinners ... took up arms ... the prolongation of the war would prolong the opportunity for them to gain pardon."⁹²

Yet, how would someone who made a vow with the vague aim of fighting the "Albigensis," and not to visit one particular holy place where he could collect palms or some other visible proof,⁹³ know himself and prove to others that he had satisfactorily fulfilled his obligation? In this situation, the legates' solution to the crusader's predicament was to introduce a standard and publicized minimum period of service for all crusaders who wished to receive the indulgence. By remaining with the crusade host for at least forty days the crusader could be assured that he had fulfilled his vow in the eyes of God and the church. The forty day requirement also undoubtedly made it easier to identify who had yet to do as they had vowed and a standard period of service would provide Simon de Montfort with reinforcements that were required to stay for close to six-weeks; if used correctly, the incoming crusaders could thus be of real assistance to the Church's cause.

Of additional concern for those leading the crusade was the need for recruitment among a population that was involved in almost constant warfare with

⁸⁹ *Register Innocenz' III*, 1:498-505. As noted in chapter five, Innocent III maintained that if the crusade had been imposed as a penance it was crucial that the penitent complete his or her vow in person. The difficulty of the journey had to be experienced in order to make amends to God. Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 1261-2.

⁹⁰ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 215: 1354-8.

⁹¹ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 215: 1547; *Layettes du trésor des chartes*, ed. A. Teulet *et al.*, Inventaires et documents publiés par le direction des Archives, 5 vols. (Paris, 1863-1909), 1: 899.

⁹² Peter of Les Vaux de Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 114.

⁹³ Proof that the vow had been completed in the case of crusaders who traveled to the Holy Land, certainly during the twelfth century and perhaps later as well, was to return home with palms gathered near Jericho. See FC, 318-20; WT, 984.

their neighbors. In 1209 the king of France, Philip Augustus, had excused himself and his son Louis from participation in the crusade because he found himself “beset on his flanks by two great and dangerous lions, Otto, self-proclaimed Emperor and John, King of England, who were devoting all their powers to overturning his kingdom.”⁹⁴ The crown prince, Louis, took the cross – along with a number of the French nobility – in 1213 but was then “prevented from joining the crusade by numerous burdensome wars.”⁹⁵ There is other evidence also that the conflict between England and France affected crusaders’ participation. Alard de Strépy, a vassal of King John, and a few other knights were unable to accompany Simon de Montfort to Toulouse after a summons from the English king in April 1213. It had been established that crusaders could occasionally postpone the fulfillment of their vows if certain circumstances, such as war within their domains or service required by a suzerain, hindered their immediate participation.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, these crusaders were accused of demonstrating “a poor commitment to Christ’s work.”⁹⁷ A short and definite period of service would be attractive and practical to knights from Northern Europe who would also be expected to help their king and protect and advance their own interests.

Committing to serve as a soldier for a forty-day period, the men who took up the cross against the heretics and their protectors were also completing a recognizable period of penance. Penitentials (manuals used by parish priests to administer confession) often contained lists of tariffs to be paid by the sinner.⁹⁸ An examination of eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth century penitentials demonstrate that priests commonly prescribed forty-day periods of penance for a variety of sins. For example, if one killed a man during the course of a public war one would be assigned forty days

⁹⁴ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 74.

⁹⁵ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 2: 242.

⁹⁶ Innocent III, *The Letters of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) concerning England and Wales: A Calendar with an Appendix of Texts*, ed. C.R. Cheney and M.G. Cheney (Oxford, 1967), nos. 633, 660.

⁹⁷ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 2: 116 n.3.

⁹⁸ The standard study of penitential practice in the middle ages is provided by Cyrille Vogel. Recently, Sarah Hamilton in her examination of penitential practice in the high middle ages and Mary Mansfield in a study of thirteenth century penitential liturgy in France have refined Vogel’s tripartite model of penance. S. Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance, 900-1050* (Woodbridge, 2001); M. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in thirteenth-century France* (Ithaca, 1995).

penance. The forty-day fast, known as the *quadragesima*, was the most important feature of the multi-year penances listed in the tariffed penitentials.⁹⁹ The spiritual reward awarded for a pilgrimage to Rome or Compostella was the remission of forty-days of penance. When Innocent III first Raymond to rouse his vassals against the heretics he offered the count and his men an indulgence of forty-days penance.¹⁰⁰ This grant of course, was something quite different than what was on offer in 1209. Crusaders were offered a plenary indulgence for forty days service.

Forty days is an interesting period of service. One has to wonder why it was that the legates did not require crusaders to serve for a year as was the case for crusaders who went to the aid of the Holy Land or, as we shall see was the normal stint for crusaders fighting against the Livonians in the North. I believe it to have been a combination of several things. First of all the legates were “aware that most of the crusaders were somewhat lukewarm in their enthusiasm for the campaign and perpetually anxious to go home.”¹⁰¹ These crusaders, and those who came after them, were not willing to stay for an entire year. Forty days was an acceptable compromise: the crusaders would be free to go home after six weeks and Simon de Montfort, like other French lords, could draw on these ‘vassals’ for a period of time to which all crusaders would have been accustomed to providing for their lord on an annual basis. Secondly, the legates had the example of Spain close to hand. When expeditions against the Almohads were granted the status of crusades, participants were only expected to serve as long as the campaign season lasted.

Preachers were instructed to preach the crusade with the forty-day requirement, for the crusaders recruited in France and Germany during the winter of 1210-11 by William, the archdeacon of Paris and Jacques de Vitry “were anxious to return home after their forty days service.”¹⁰² In an anecdote intended for use as a preaching exemplum Stephen of Bourbon, who recruited for Louis VIII’s expedition to the South in 1226, relates the story of an Albigensian crusader who was convinced by the

⁹⁹ Mansfield, *Humiliation of Sinners*, 26.

¹⁰⁰ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 1: 94, 165.

¹⁰¹ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 187.

¹⁰² Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 281-2; II, 27.

archdeacon of Paris to remain for an additional forty days so that his deceased father could be liberated from purgatory through this additional service.¹⁰³

In practice, however, the forty day period of service proved to be no boon for Simon de Montfort and the crusade. The numbers of recruits who were aware of the time constraints appear to have been plentiful and far-flung.¹⁰⁴ Although some men made the journey more than once or stayed for a longer period of time,¹⁰⁵ the majority of men left after serving their forty days. After 1210 a precarious pattern of seasonal arrivals and departures emerged.¹⁰⁶ As each winter approached the crusading army disappeared, leaving Simon with a small group of devoted knights, so that their enemies “were no more afraid of them than an acorn.”¹⁰⁷ Those who remained in the South never knew more than a few weeks in advance how strong the relief army was going to be. This made it extremely difficult to plan an effective strategy or to see things through to the end. In one instance, the surrender of a castle was accepted, with its inhabitants allowed to go freely with their arms, after “our men took into account that almost all the crusaders were due to leave after completing their forty days service, so that the Count [Simon de Montfort] would be almost alone.”¹⁰⁸

From 1211 onwards, when the crusading army decided upon the conquest of the County of Toulouse – the legates had once more excommunicated Raymond VI - confusion as to what sort of conflict this actually was steadily increased. Some contemporaries began to view the Albigensian Crusade as a private war fought for the benefit of Simon de Montfort and a few northern knights, rather than as a struggle to protect the greater Christian community from heresy. Much of the poetry of the period portrayed this crusade as a feudal or temporal dispute between the king of France and

¹⁰³ Stephen of Bourbon, *Anecdotes Historiques, Légends et Apologues*, ed. A. Lecoy de la Marche (Paris, 1877), 36-7.

¹⁰⁴ *Chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, 1: 133-4; 276-80; Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 237-8; “Reineri Annales,” 664.

¹⁰⁵ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 2: 28, 182-3, 242-3; “Hugh de Lacy, earl of Ulster (d. 1242),” *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. S. Lee (London, 1909), 9: 378.

¹⁰⁶ *Chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, 1: 105.

¹⁰⁷ *Chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, 1: 276-9.

¹⁰⁸ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 2: 32-3.

the Church against the Count of Toulouse and the King of Aragon.¹⁰⁹ This had much to do with the actions of Simon de Montfort and the legates, who, as the pope himself said, were not content “with the spoliation of heretics, instead of which you have robbed loyal Catholics of their land and ... unashamedly usurped the domain of the count of Toulouse.”¹¹⁰ But the forty day service period may also have contributed to such perceptions, precisely because such a limitation was so standard a feature of secular feudal and private military campaigns.

The ambiguities of the expedition’s status as a crusade were underscored in January 1213 when Innocent III ordered the legate Arnould-Amaury to devote his attention to

negotiating treaties for peace and a truce with our dearest son in Christ, Peter the illustrious King of Aragon and counts and barons . . . so that you may through such treaties provide a secure and lasting peace for the whole of the South. You should thus cease to call Christians to arms, or weary them through the indulgences granted by the Apostolic See for the fight against the heretics, until or unless you receive a specific instruction on the matter from the Apostolic See.¹¹¹

Innocent III thereafter refused to re-instate the indulgence on more than a local level. After receiving numerous entreaties from the southern prelates to re-establish the crusade, the pope agreed to make a single, but important, concession.¹¹² The legates were allowed to grant the crusade indulgence, but only to the inhabitants of Provence.¹¹³ Essentially, Innocent III was demoting the war against the Albigensian heretics to what one might characterize as a ‘local’ crusade. These crusades possessed the same mechanisms and privileges as the Holy Land crusade, but only local residents were to be recruited and participate in them.

When suspending the Albigensian Crusade in January 1213 Innocent III reasoned that

¹⁰⁹ Siberry, *Criticism of Crusading*, 161; *HGL*, 8: 612-9.

¹¹⁰ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 744.

¹¹¹ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 744-5; Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 2: 97.

¹¹² Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 835-6; 839; 842-3.

¹¹³ Innocent III, “Opera Omnia,” 216: 852.

a more urgent cause is now at hand . . . the Holy Land, which is a portion of our inheritance from the Lord, is greatly in need of help . . . and the less we are engaged on other matters the more we will be able to attend effectively to the general and special business of Christian believers in opposing the faithless race of Saracens.¹¹⁴

The sense that the new crusade to the Holy Land was more important than those being fought in Spain and against the heretics is re-enforced in the April 1213 bull, *Quia Maior*, sent to every diocese of Western Christendom. Besides initiating a two-year period of preparation for a new crusade to the East, the bull also publicized the pope's demotion of the Albigensian Crusade. Innocent III revoked

the remissions and indulgences formerly granted by us to those setting out . . . against the heretics in Provence, chiefly because they were conceded to them in circumstances which have already entirely passed and for that particular cause [the struggle against heresy] which has for the most part disappeared, for so far affairs in both places have gone well, by the grace of God, so that the immediate use of force is not needed. If perchance it was needed, we would take care to give our attention to any serious situation that arises. We concede, however, that remissions and indulgences of this kind should remain available to the people of Provence.¹¹⁵

Without question, he believed that *at this particular moment* "the journey to Jerusalem [was] . . . an action of greater merit," not because he believed the efforts in Provence to be inherently inferior, but because he no longer believed the Cathars to be a danger.¹¹⁶ The outlook in the East, however, was not so bright. Now that crusaders had gained a measure of success in Provence (and in Spain – the victory at Las Navas de Tolosa was fresh in the pope's mind) and the danger from heresy had abated the combined effort of all Christians was needed to put things right in the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

That the Albigensian crusade continued to be fought on a larger scale than Innocent III had intended for a further sixteen years was due to the untiring efforts of

¹¹⁴ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216, 744-5.

¹¹⁵ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz' III*, 94.

¹¹⁶ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 904-5.

men like Abbot Guy of Les Vaux de Cernay (made Bishop of Toulouse by Simon de Montfort in 1212) and William, the archdeacon of Paris. In 1214 they convinced the papal legate in charge of crusading in France, Robert Courçon, to reinstate the indulgence and allow the crusade to be preached once more in Northern France, alongside the Fifth Crusade.¹¹⁷ This appears to have been accomplished without reference to Innocent III. After the death of Simon in August 1218, Honorius III, Innocent III's successor on the papal throne, officially re-instated the crusade indulgence to anyone who helped bring to a "successful conclusion the crusade against the heretics of Toulouse."¹¹⁸ While there is no explicit mention of the forty-day service period in Honorius's bulls, the 1219 expedition of Prince Louis of France demonstrates that it was still the common practice. Arriving before Toulouse on 16 June 1219 with an army large enough to encircle the city walls, Louis besieged the city for forty-five days at which point he burned the siege engines, released his prisoners and marched home.¹¹⁹ Even in the last years of the crusade there is evidence that a forty-day vow was still in use. In 1226 Louis VIII, now king, set out certain conditions that must be met before he would assume the cross. One of those conditions, agreed to by Romanus (the legate assigned to the French court) and sixteen French bishops was that the king would be able to return from the South whenever he chose without offending God or the Church.¹²⁰ Thus, he could return before his forty days was up, if necessary, without being penalized. He had already been offered attractive terms for leading a crusade: the indulgence, a truce with England enforced by ecclesiastical sanctions and the revenue from a ten percent tax on the Church. It is testimony to the desire of Honorius III and the Church to see the end of a struggle which had lasted almost twenty years that Louis' demand for a shorter period of service was met.

Louis VIII made his third and final journey to the Languedoc in 1226. Roger of Wendover records that the Count of Champagne came to him "having been employed forty days in the siege, and according to the French custom, asked to return home."

¹¹⁷ Peter of Les Vaux de Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 2: 185-6.

¹¹⁸ Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 1: 319-20.

¹¹⁹ William of Puylaurens, *Chronica*, 107-09.

¹²⁰ *Layettes*, 1: 69-70.

The king refused to grant permission for him to leave. The count's reply was that "having served his forty days of duty he was not bound to, nor would he stay any longer."¹²¹ Whether this "French custom" was the service owed to the king or that of the crusade is not clear. One might hazard a guess that it was the former - Louis VIII's "was not a crusading army in the sense that the host of 1209 had been. It was the royal army in the service of the church."¹²² In February 1224 Amaury de Montfort had ceded any claim he or his heirs had to the lands his father had won from the barons of the South to the king of France.¹²³ Since this was to be a war to recover what were now royal lands, as well as a Crusade, Louis demanded "full military service from his vassals."¹²⁴ However, because of the unique form of the crusade vow as it was taken for this location, it is relatively unimportant to be certain which lord, temporal or heavenly, was demanding the service. Strictly speaking, the count could fulfill simultaneously the military service he owed as a vassal to both the French King and to God.

The forty-day vow was both innovative and traditional. Although its intent may have been to lessen confusion as to what expectations should be met when crusading in a location very different from the Holy Land, it also served to add to the confusion of both modern scholars and contemporaries as to whether the war being fought was feudal or holy, universal or local. In many ways, it probably was one of the contributing factors for the extended length of the engagement (1209-29). The legates followed tradition when they equated a period of time spent in military service with a particular penitential tariff. Secular notions of what constituted an adequate amount of military service were also integrated into the rhetoric of this crusade. Like his legates,

¹²¹ Roger of Wendover, *Liber qui dicitur Flores historiarum ab Anno Domini MCLIV. annoque Henrici Anglorum regis secundi primo*, ed. H. Hewlett, RS 84, 3 vols. (London, 1886-89), 2: 312. Translations based upon *Roger of Wendover's Flowers of History, Comprising the history of England from the descent of the Saxons to A.D. 1235; formerly ascribed to Matthew Paris*, trans. J. A. Giles, 2 vols. (London, 1849).

¹²² Sumption, *Albigensian Crusade*, 215-6.

¹²³ *HGL*, 8: 789.

¹²⁴ *HGL*, 8: 816-7; J. R. Strayer, *The Albigensian Crusade* (New York, 1971), 130; "Ex Chronico Turonensi," *RHGF*, 13: 313.

Innocent III used feudal imagery in his crusade bulls to describe the obligations owed to God by the Christian.¹²⁵ The legate's innovation was not to alter the crusading vow forever. The forty-day vow is unique to the Albigensian Crusade. It is not found in any other arena or in any other time, even in crusades that were fought within Europe against political opponents of the papacy. In this situation, the crusade institution adapted for as long as was necessary or useful. As one historian has noted recently, the crusades "reflected and refracted their surrounding context."¹²⁶ This is certainly true of the Albigensian Crusade whose rhetoric, rituals and forms were at times seen by crusaders to be both traditional and contextual.

Localizing Crusading: Crusade Vows in Spain

Over the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries the kings of the Christian states of Aragon, Castile, León, Navarre, and Portugal were gradually able to expand the borders of their territories south into areas once ruled by the Almoravids and, after 1174, by the Almohad caliphate. As noted earlier, the Christian rulers were as much rivals of each other as they were of their Muslim neighbors; conquest was not always limited to the southern parts of the peninsula, nor was every war involving Muslims and Christians part of the continuing effort to drive the enemies of the faith out of the Iberian Peninsula. Intending to partition Navarre between them, the kings of Castile and Aragon invaded in 1198, forcing Sancho VII to seek aid from the Almohads in Morocco.¹²⁷ This behavior was reprehensible, claimed the Provençal troubadour Peire Vidal (fl. 1180-1206).¹²⁸ Instead of fighting amongst themselves the kings of Spain, "ought to make their war against the people who do not believe in our law, until Spain

¹²⁵ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz' III*, 89-90.

¹²⁶ Tyerman, *Invention of the Crusades*, 2.

¹²⁷ "Chronica Latina regum Castellae," ed. L.C. Brea in *Chronica Hispania Saeculi XII. Pars I*, ed. E. Falque, J. Gil and A. Maya, CCCM 71 (Turnholt, 1990), 50-52. Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie sive Historica Gothica*, ed. J. Fernández Valverde, CCCM 72 (Turnholt, 1987), 253-4.

¹²⁸ E. Hoeffner, *Le troubadour Peire Vidal, sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris, 1961).

is all of one faith.¹²⁹ Contemporary observers, including the pope, believed it was the duty of the Spanish kings to expend their martial energies against the enemies of the faith. Kings were the natural leaders of crusades in Spain; it was to their domains that any new territory seized from the Muslims would be added. It is unlikely that the pope would have considered assembling an army of crusaders to attack the Almohads without the support and participation of the Spanish kings.¹³⁰ One of Innocent III's first priorities in Spain was therefore to establish peace amongst these kings before 1209 when a ten-year truce with the Almohads expired. In 1204 the pope refused Pedro II of Aragon's request for a legate and indulgence for a proposed attack on Majorca. As there remained dissention between the Christian rulers of Spain, the pope advised Pedro "not to lead an army against the Saracens at this time."¹³¹

For Spanish kings like Alfonso VIII of Castile, fighting the Moors was part of their duty as king.¹³² Realistically, they could be expected to campaign against the Almohads without being granted the privileges associated with the cross. In the past, there may have been some hesitation to see their expeditions in this light due to the pervasiveness of the links with Jerusalem. However, now that this requirement had fallen by the wayside there were obvious benefits - both earthly and heavenly - to having a campaign awarded the status of a crusade. A crusader-king would receive any territory or plunder acquired in the course of the expedition as well as the remission of penance granted by the pope to those who took up arms against the enemies of the faith. The army he led was both an army of God and the royal host, comprised of the vassals who usually owed the king military service, but with the cross were also subject to the Church. In addition, it might be possible for a king to supplement the army he could raise (made up of vassals and mercenaries) with troops of crusaders

¹²⁹ C. Alvar, *Textos trovadorescos sobre España y Portugal* (Madrid, 1978), 241-2.

¹³⁰ One only has to remember Adrian IV's advisory to the kings of England and France in 1154. Neither was to undertake a crusade to Spain without the express approval of the Spanish monarchs.

¹³¹ Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia hasta Inocencio III*, 329-30 (14 February 1204).

¹³² Sancho II of Portugal would be deposed by Pope Innocent V in 1245. The reason given was his failure to pursue the crusade. E. Peters, "The Shadow King: Rex Inutilis," *Medieval Law and Literature, 751-1327* (New Haven, 1970), 135-69 and "Rex Inutilis: Sancho II of Portugal and Thirteenth Century Deposition Theory," *Studia Gratiana* 14 (1968), 253.305.

from neighboring lands. Innocent III would command the bishops of France and Provence to recruit crusaders for a Spanish expedition in 1212.¹³³ In the future when taxation of the clergy for the crusade and the redemption of vows became more prevalent, the crusader-king could take advantage of the money raised to fund crusades which in another setting might have been classified as wars of conquest.¹³⁴

In September 1211 Alfonso notified his vassals that they were to muster at Toledo on the following Trinity Sunday.¹³⁵ It is likely that he would have done so with or without Innocent's support. However, in January 1212 Innocent III ordered the bishops of France and Provence to recruit for the Spanish crusade. They were to announce that anyone who joined Alfonso VIII of Aragón in a campaign against the Almohads, or provided financial support for the campaign against al-Nāsir, would receive a remission of sins.¹³⁶ Evidence suggests that the crusade was preached extensively throughout France.¹³⁷ In the north there was lukewarm response, in contrast to Gascony and Poitou where Alfonso VIII's physician collected numerous recruits.¹³⁸ Some crusaders from the North reportedly arrived in Toledo as early as 5 February 1212 which may suggest that they had either heard news of the forthcoming campaign against the king of Morocco before the bishops of France began to preach the cross in February and March 1212,¹³⁹ or else that they were already linked to Alfonso VIII by ties of vassalage. Most of the other crusaders began to gather in

¹³³ Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia hasta Inocencio III*, 497-8 (31 January 1212), 500-1 (4 February 1212).

¹³⁴ For instance, in 1219 Honorius III allowed Archbishop Rodrigo of Toledo to use half the clerical tax of a twentieth being raised for the Fifth Crusade to support his the crusade in Spain. Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia hasta Inocencio III*, 208-9 (15 March 1219).

¹³⁵ Rodrigo, *Historia de rebus*, 257-8.

¹³⁶ Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia hasta Inocencio III*, 497-8 (31 January 1212), 500-1 (4 February 1212).

¹³⁷ *Textos trovadorescos sobre España y Portugal*, ed. C. Alvar (Madrid, 1978), 91-6; Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogue*, 1: 303.

¹³⁸ Lucas of Túy, *Chronicon Mundi in Hispania Illustrata*, ed. A. Schott, 4 vols. (Frankfurt, 1603-08), 4: 110; Rodrigo, *Historia de rebus*, 259-60; "Chronica Latina regum Castellae," 57.

¹³⁹ Innocent's letters ordering the French clergy to preach the crusade were issued at the very end of January 1212. It may be that these were the second round of letters – reminders – and that a previous batch that is no longer extant was sent out in the autumn of 1211. Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia hasta Inocencio III*, 497-8, (31 January 1212), 500-1 (4 February 1212); *Anales Toledanos I, España sagrada*, 23: 396-7.

Toledo in the middle of May. Among their number were the archbishops of Narbonne and Bordeaux, the bishop of Nantes, a handful of counts and viscounts from the southern regions of France, knights representing various Spanish military orders as well as the Temple and the Hospital, nobles from all of the Iberian kingdoms and the urban militias of Castile.¹⁴⁰ Three of the Spanish kings put their differences aside to join together for the duration of the expedition – Alfonso VIII of Castile, Pedro II of Aragón, and Sancho VII of Navarre. Sancho was a late recruit to the crusade and Pedro was suffering a financial crisis; it was clear to everyone involved that Alfonso VIII was the undisputed leader of the crusade.¹⁴¹ The Castilian king's primacy did not come cheap, however. He had to pay the expenses of the 2,000 knights and their squires, 10,000 sergeants on horseback and up to 50,000 foot soldiers who came to Toledo. He also gave Pedro II a daily allowance while on the campaign and supplied the French contingents with horses and pack animals suitable for the expedition.¹⁴²

The *peregrini* (as the Infanta Berenguela was to describe them in a letter to her sister Blanche) who assembled in Toledo in order to accompany Alfonso VIII had either taken the cross before their arrival or would take the cross before leaving for the south on 20 June.¹⁴³ The form of the vow taken for the Spanish expedition no doubt resembled that taken by crusaders to the Holy Land or those taken by crusaders fighting the Albigensian crusade – in other words, it would have confirmed the warrior's status as a pilgrim. The substance of their vow was not specified, although it appears to have consisted of a promise to join the crusade host for the campaign against the Almohad caliph. The French crusaders who joined Alfonso VIII claimed to want to “die for the name of Christ.”¹⁴⁴ The idea of the crusade as an opportunity to imitate Christ's sacrifice was obviously at play here. Criticism was leveled at French

¹⁴⁰ *Chronica Latina regum Castellae*,” 56-8; Rodrigo, *Historia de rebus*, 259-60, 273

¹⁴¹ M. de Mondéjar, *Memorias históricas de la vida y acciones del rey D. Alonso el Noble, octavo del nombre* (Madrid, 1783), Appendix, cvi; “*Chronica Latina regum Castellae*,” 57.

¹⁴² González, *Alfonso VII*, 3: 567-68; *Chronica Latina*, 57.

¹⁴³ González, *Alfonso VII*, 3: 568, 570, 573; “Albrici monachi Trium-Fontium Chronicon,” *MGHS* 23:894.

¹⁴⁴ *Anónimo de Madrid y Copenhague*, trans. A. Huici Miranda, *Anales del Instituto de Valencia* 2 (Valencia, 1917), 122; M. Defourneaux, *Les Français en Espagne aux XIe et XIIe siècles* (Paris, 1949), 185ff.

crusaders when they abandoned the crusade host after less than a fortnight. Uncomfortable in the heat, angry at Alfonso VIII after he forbade them from plundering the fortress of Calvatara and disappointed that they had not yet met up with the Muslim army, all but 130 French crusaders abandoned the host and returned home in early July. Like the rest of the crusade army they had presumably vowed to accompany Alfonso VIII for the duration of the campaign and were criticized for not doing so. Despite this betrayal, however, the crusaders gained an undisputed victory over the caliph and his army at Las Navas de Tolosa on 16 July.¹⁴⁵ This victory brought an end to the crusaders' obligation. "In a great and terrible battle" the crusaders were "saved."¹⁴⁶ Shortly afterwards Alfonso VIII packed up and led the crusaders back to Toledo where he disbanded the Christian host.¹⁴⁷

The crusade vow was adapted to fit the established patterns of military service in Spain. Spiritual rewards were granted to those individuals who took the cross, joined the crusade host (led by the king), and fought the Muslims for either the length of the campaign season or until the specific military objective had been met, whichever came first. In return, they would receive a remission of sins and, in most cases, have fulfilled their duties as vassals of the king who led the campaign. These crusaders received benefits equal to those awarded to those crusaders who fought in the Holy Land. By 1212 the papacy had established and contemporaries accepted that taking the cross for conflicts in Spain was not only possible but also laudable. The efforts in Spain were thought to be part of the greater war being waged by Christians. Archbishop Arnould-Amaury of Narbonne supposed that Christ had granted "victory to Catholic Christians . . . over three kinds of wanton men and enemies of his holy church, namely, the eastern schismatics, the western heretics, and the southern Saracens."¹⁴⁸ It is somewhat of a surprise therefore, that in 1213 Innocent III prohibits anyone except the Spanish from taking the cross for expeditions against the Moors, citing the same reasons as for suspending the wide-scale preaching of the Albigensian

¹⁴⁵ "Chronica Latina regum Castellae," (49).

¹⁴⁶ Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia hasta Inocencio III*, 519-21.

¹⁴⁷ Ricardo of San Germano, *Chronicon*, *MGHS* 19:335.

¹⁴⁸ Mondéjar, *Memorias históricas*, Appendix, cvi.

Crusade.¹⁴⁹ Some contemporaries adopted the stance that the Spanish crusade was primarily a national endeavor. Frisian crusaders who stop in Galicia to visit the shrine of St. James at Compostella on the way to the East in June 1217 were asked to stay and collaborate with the Portuguese who planned an attack on a near-by Muslim stronghold. The Frisian crusaders refused to join the Portuguese, citing the pope's revocation of the crusade indulgence.¹⁵⁰ They continued their voyage East on 26 July. Not all crusaders were dissuaded from lending assistance. A number of crusaders from the Rhineland stayed behind to assist in the Portuguese venture.¹⁵¹

Honorius III adopted his predecessor's attitude towards the *reconquista*. He told Fernando II of Castile (1217-52) that although the struggle against the Saracens in Spain

is the business of all the faithful because it pertains to Christ and to the Christian faith, there is no doubt that it pertains especially to you and to the other kings of Spain because they remain in occupation of your land, to the very grave injury of all Christendom.¹⁵²

While Innocent III and his successors believed that crusading remained the concern of all Christians, those who lived in the frontier regions where Christians and non-Christians met were to be held responsible for executing the business of the cross in their own area. This was nothing new. The Latin residents of the Kingdom of Jerusalem acted as the guardians of the Holy Places. Praised.¹⁵³ What was new was

¹⁴⁹ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz' III*, 94.

¹⁵⁰ Lucas of Túy, *Chronicon*, 11; Emo, *Chronicon*, *MGHS*, 23:478-80; "Chronica regia Coloniensis," 239-40; Oliver of Paderborn, *The Capture of Damietta*, trans. J. J. Gavigan (Philadelphia, 1948), 20-1.

¹⁵¹ Al-Himyarī, *Kitāb ar-Rawd al Mi'tar*, trans. M. del Pilar Maestro González (Valencia, 1963), 324-6; L. Gonzaga de Azevedo, *História de Portugal*, 6 vols. (Lisbon, 1940-42) 5: 86, 192-3; J. Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia de la bula de la cruzada en España* (Vitoria, 1958), 139-41; A. Herculano, *História de Portugal desde o começo da monarquia até o fim do reinado de D. Alfonso III*, 9th edn. 8 vols. (Lisbon, n.d.), 4: 76-95.

¹⁵² D. Mansilla, *La documentación pontificis de Honorio III(1216-1227)*, (Rome, 1965), 429-32 (25-26 September 1225).

¹⁵³ Phillips, *Defenders*, 1, 18.

the general acceptance that the Spanish kings' and their subjects' duty was to include taking "the sign of the cross to set out against the Moors of Spain."¹⁵⁴

Localizing Crusading: The Baltic Crusades

Crusades launched in Spain and in the Baltic share some obvious similarities. In the north, as in Spain, members of the local secular and clerical aristocracy had been rooting up unbelief and planting Christianity long before the advent of the crusade. They had continued to do so both with and without the acquisition of crusading privileges. In both cases, when the papacy did extend the status of a crusade to these struggles against non-Christians, they deemed the crusade to be the express concern of the local Christian community. In other words, both crusades were "localized." Differences do exist, however. The overall aim for the Spanish was to drive the Moors out of the peninsula entirely so as to re-establish Christian rule over areas in which Muslims lived. The mission on the northern frontier was of an altogether different kind. Since the time of Charlemagne Christian expansion into the north and east of Europe was led by missionaries and supported by soldiers. In recognition of the pattern that the expansion of Christendom took in the Baltic, control of the crusade (both in terms of recruitment and leadership) was placed in the hands of bishops rather than the local nobles or kings. Although forced conversion was not legally tenable, those churchmen who promoted the crusades against pagan often suggested that those who bore the cross 'defend' new converts with force. Some even went so far as to suggest that the goal of the crusaders was to convert non-believers. In 1147 Bernard of Clairvaux told Saxon crusaders that they were to "fight the Wends until such a time as by God's help the [pagans] shall either be converted or killed."¹⁵⁵ Crusaders in the north were charged with defending the Church and propagating the faith through expansion into new territories. As in the East, crusading in the Baltic

¹⁵⁴ Mansilla, *La documentación pontificia de Honorio III*, 429-32 (25-26 September 1225).

¹⁵⁵ Bernard of Clairvaux, "Epistolae" in *S. Bernardi Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq, H. Rochais, and C.H. Talbot, 8 vols. (Rome, 1957-), letter 394.

centered upon pilgrimage and territorial expansion. Conversion was also a goal.¹⁵⁶ Through the “many wars” fought in the thirteenth century”the pagans were to be converted.”¹⁵⁷ Crusaders who came to convert the Livonians and Estonians in the early thirteenth century promised to travel from Germany to Riga and, once there, to spend a year serving as soldiers under the bishop and the local military order.

Crusading in the Baltic was to disappear between 1147 and 1195, though as Alexander III pointed out in 1171/2, Christians were constantly engaged in spreading “the religion called Christian with a strong arm.”¹⁵⁸ The primary source for the events surrounding the conquest of East Baltic lands in the early part of the thirteenth century is Henry of Livonia’s *Chronicle* composed in Latin between 1225 and 1229. Henry was most likely a German and was undoubtedly a member of the parochial clergy subject to Bishop Albert of Riga, the main force behind the conquest in Livonia from his election in 1199 until his death in 1229.¹⁵⁹ Like the bishop, Henry was both priest and soldier; he served as a propagator of the faith and pastor to the people in his diocese, yet was also known to have “hurried to the ministry of shields and swords.”¹⁶⁰

From this chronicle, we learn several things. The first thing to appreciate is the way in which contemporaries conceived of this mission. Bishop Albert of Riga and Henry of Livonia, like Bernard of Clairvaux and Charlemagne before them, walked a fine theological line when they used force to urge non-believers to convert to Christianity. Just war theory held that a war was only considered just if waged defensively. This is especially true of the crusade, which was launched in order to recover lands that once had belonged to Christians, or in the case of the Holy Land were considered to be the patrimony of Christ himself. The Baltic lands had never before been settled by Christians; this was a war of conquest in which Christians were acting on the offense. However, this was not how Henry of Livonia presented the

¹⁵⁶ B.Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission. European Approaches toward Muslims* (Princeton, 1984), 70-1.

¹⁵⁷ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 53.

¹⁵⁸ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, series I, vol. 3, ed. C.A. Christensen, H. Nielsen and L. Weibull (Copenhagen, 1976), 37-8.

¹⁵⁹ J.A. Brundage, “Introduction,” *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. J.A. Brundage (Madison, 1961), 12-13.

¹⁶⁰ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 179.

efforts of his fellow clergymen and the Germans who came to aid them. Crusaders coming from Germany to Riga were, in his opinion, engaged in fighting a defensive war. Upon hearing how many Livonians had been baptized in the spring and summer of 1196 (and then renounced their baptism) Celestine III “thought they should not be deserted and decreed that they ought to be forced to observe the faith which they had freely promised.”¹⁶¹ It was not only people who had to be “protected” but Christian property as well. One of the first things any good missionary did was to build and consecrate a church and thus, establish a Christian settlement. These settlements were often targets for pagan raids. In 1203 pagan Estonians burnt a church at Oesel, laid waste to the land and “carried away the bells and belongings of the church.”¹⁶² Seeing this, the “pilgrims” came took up arms wishing “to avenge the losses of the Christians.”¹⁶³

Throughout his *Chronicle*, Henry of Livonia was consistent in his use of the Latin term “*peregrinus*” to describe those who Bishop Albert had “signed with the cross.”¹⁶⁴ This was no accident; in Henry’s estimation those who journey to Riga were undertaking a pilgrimage. The city of Riga was founded in the summer of 1203. Albert immediately moved the convent of regulars and the Episcopal see from Uexküll to Riga, where he consecrated the new cathedral to the Virgin Mary.¹⁶⁵ Thereafter, the crusaders whom the bishop gathered on his almost yearly visits to Germany first stopped at Riga before undertaking any raids against the pagans. One might be tempted to explain this away by noting that this was the largest settlement in the area, one with a substantial harbor and thus the logical place from which to begin a military expedition. It appears, however, that something more than this is going on. First of all, early in the *Chronicle* Henry remarks upon the origin of Riga’s name from *rigo*, to irrigate. This is an appropriate name for,

¹⁶¹ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 30.

¹⁶² *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 41

¹⁶³ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 41

¹⁶⁴ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 35.

¹⁶⁵ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 40.-

It is irrigated from below, for as they say, it is well moistened in its waters and pastures; or, since the plenary remission of sins is administered in it to sinners, the irrigation from above, that is, the kingdom of heaven is thus administered through it.¹⁶⁶

Only later do we learn, that Bishop Albert identified Livonia as “the land of the Mother, which hitherto been among the pagans.”¹⁶⁷ The identification of Livonia with the dowry lands of the Virgin Mary meant that the territory to which crusaders traveled was in fact Christian in origin and considered to be sacred. By this understanding, those who traveled from afar to protect this land and to offer their prayers at the cathedral dedicated to the Virgin were pilgrims and their journey a pilgrimage.

The vow taken by those who accompanied Albert from Germany to Riga must have included a promise to complete a pilgrimage to the “land of the Mother.” Riga was the site associated with the plenary remission granted to the crusaders.¹⁶⁸ The crusade vow, thus, was discharged upon offering prayers in Riga. This created a similar problem to that faced by crusade organizers in the Holy Land. If a vow was discharged at a specific place and that place was the first place one visited, how could one ensure that the votary provided the much sought after military aid? The experience of the 1147 crusade against the Wends had shown that a simple promise to attack the pagans until they “converted or were killed” was not entirely effective. The bishop of Riga was also faced with another potential complication. He was both the spiritual and secular ruler of Livonia. In 1206 the Holy Roman Emperor, Philip of Swabia (1199-1208) bestowed Livonia on Albert as a fief and thus the bishop had “every right of lordship and law.”¹⁶⁹ He also had been granted the right to personally recruit crusaders in the emperor’s lands.¹⁷⁰ The men he recruited would not have been subject to him by

¹⁶⁶ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 37.

¹⁶⁷ This comes to light at the Fourth Lateran Council where Bishop Albert of Riga lobbies Innocent III to renew his authority to enlist “pilgrims who would go with [him] to secure the new church against the assaults of the pagans” in return for a remission of sins. Innocent agrees to this request and thus, Henry remarks “Rome makes laws, while Riga irrigates the nations.” *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 152.

¹⁶⁸ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 35, 40.

¹⁶⁹ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 68

¹⁷⁰ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 68. n. 66.

any secular ties. In normal circumstances it would not have been expected that the bishop would be able to demand that knights from Germany provide him with an established amount of military service. The bishop was not their secular lord. However, because the knights who came to Riga were crusaders, normal rules did not apply. Crusaders, as pilgrims, were subject to ecclesiastic authority for the duration of their pilgrimage. The bishop, therefore, had the right to establish what the terms of service were to be. Early on it was decided that crusaders who came to Livonia owed God at least a year's service in return for the remission of penance granted as a result of their labor. The crusading obligation established for Livonian crusaders directly invoked the vows of 'traditional' crusaders. Like those who took up the cross in aid of the Holy Land in 1199, those who decided to join the crusading host in Livonia vowed to complete a pilgrimage and once in the vicinity of the holy site (in this case, Riga) to remain in the service of the cross for a year. The identification of crusade with pilgrimage prevailed in the most unlikely of circumstances.

A pattern of yearly arrivals and departures emerges after 1199. Once the year passed crusaders were free to take off their crosses and return home with a full remission of all their confessed sins. After celebrating Easter [6 April 1208], "those who had completed their year of pilgrimage . . . were now [at Dünamünde] preparing to return to Germany [in the company of Bishop Albert]."¹⁷¹ While waiting for the weather to clear, Riga was attacked. Learning of the attack, Bishop Albert went to the crusaders,

and made known to them the damages to the church and invited them to become its defenders and strong auxiliaries by resuming the sign of the cross. He comforted them by reminding them of the previous plenary remission of their neglected sins, and, because of the greater indulgence and eternal life. After hearing these things, about three hundred of the better ones, did not fear, by again taking up the cross, to serve as a wall for the house of the Lord and to go back to Riga.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 76-77.

¹⁷² *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 77-78.

First established by Alexander III and then again by Innocent III as the appropriate amount of service required of the crusader who, traveling to the Holy Land, wanted to secure a specified remission of penance, the “year of service” was to migrate to the North. It is not altogether surprising that a feature of the Holy Land crusade was appropriated for a crusade whose leaders clearly saw their efforts as part of the larger effort to defend Christendom from its enemies.

Notwithstanding its crucial role in the crusading movement as a whole, the Baltic Crusade possessed self-consciously regional characteristics that would distinguish it from all other forms of the crusade. One sign of both the orthodoxy and the distinctiveness of the Baltic Crusade may be observed in the insignia of the military order established by Bishop Albert and Abbot Theoderic of Treiden in 1202.¹⁷³ Pope Innocent gave this order, the Brotherhood of the Militia of Christ, the rule of the Templars in recognition of their desire to live a communal life in which they would dedicate themselves permanently to multiplying “the faithful and to preserve the church among the pagans.”¹⁷⁴ He also bestowed upon them an “insignia to be worn on their clothing, a sword and a cross.”¹⁷⁵ The Templar insignia consisted only of a cross; the addition of the sword marked out these monks as a different military order. Although these monks lived according to the rule established for the Templars, their mission was distinguishable from that of the knights of the Temple. They were to devote themselves to the establishment and protection of the Church in Livonia. It is from this insignia that the order acquired the name to which they were most often referred – the Swordbrothers.

The nature of the mission also determined the very different recruitment patterns established for the Baltic Crusade. Both the bishop of Riga and Innocent III conceived of the Livonian crusade as an essentially German enterprise. Up until 1204 the pope continued to see Bishop Albert’s mission as a necessary and laudable

¹⁷³ Henry of Livonia ascribes the foundation of the Brotherhood of the Militia of Christ to Theoderic, the abbot of Treden. Other sources attribute the founding of the order to Bishop Albert of Riga. *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 40, n. 34.

¹⁷⁴ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 40.

¹⁷⁵ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 40.

enterprise but still ancillary in comparison to his loftier plan to recover the Holy Land. In 1199 the pope summoned northern Christians to the defense of Christian converts in Livonia for the remission of sins. Only those who had made a vow to undertake a pilgrimage (not a crusade) to Jerusalem were to be allowed to commute their vows to a promise to fight pagans in Livonia.¹⁷⁶ Five years later, however, Innocent was willing to extend the full indulgence to those who participated in this campaign. Those Germans who had taken the cross for the Holy Land but were unable to fulfill it on account of poverty or ill health might commute it to a vow to fight the pagans.¹⁷⁷ Albert and his representatives were authorized to open the churches in the province of Bremen to preach the crusade; a grant that was extended in 1215.¹⁷⁸ Every year until 1224 Albert of Riga would return to Germany in order to recruit crusaders; consequently, in the Baltic the framework for a “perpetual crusade” was established.¹⁷⁹ It was a conception of crusading Innocent IV made official when in 1245 he decreed that the same indulgence granted to those who fought in aid of the Holy Land should be granted to “all in Germany who, in response to the Teutonic Knights and without public preaching put on the sign of the cross and wish[ed] to go to the aid of the faithful.”¹⁸⁰

“An Action of Greater Merit”: Jerusalem and Europe

Along with the multitude of clergymen from over eighty ecclesiastical provinces and the representatives of cathedrals, monasteries, kings and dukes, Bishop Albert of Riga traveled to Rome in the autumn of 1215. All had assembled in response to the pope’s summons for an ecumenical council to discuss matters pertaining to the reform of the Church and the recovery of Jerusalem. The bishop was no doubt aware

¹⁷⁶ F.G. von Bunge, *Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten*, 15 vols. (Revel, Riga and Moscow, 1853-1914), 1: 11-13.

¹⁷⁷ *Register Innocenz’ III*, 7: 139.

¹⁷⁸ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 152.

¹⁷⁹ Riley-Smith, *Crusades*, 163, 213; A. Ehlers, “The Crusade Against Lithuania Reconsidered,” *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150-1500*, ed. A. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), 24-5, 42-4.

¹⁸⁰ J. Voigt, *Codex Diplomaticus Prussicus*, I: 59-60.

of the pope's revocation of the crusade indulgence in both Provence and in Spain for everyone except for those who lived in the areas, which had been announced in the same letter in which the pope had summoned this council.¹⁸¹ Correctly or not, Innocent III had cause to believe that the struggles against both the heretics in the Languedoc and the Moors in Spain had come to a satisfactory and successful ending. These "successes" obviously boded well for the future: if, as Innocent believed, God had "renewed the miracles of the Old Testament and in a great and terrible battle [Las Navas de Tolosa and had] saved his people who had been cast down" certainly he might now be expected to aid the Christians in the recovery of Christ's patrimony.¹⁸² The bishop of Riga wanted to make clear to the pope that the struggle to protect Christians from their pagan neighbors in Livonia was far from over. In the presence of the assembled council, the bishop reported on the "troubles, the wars and the affairs of the Livonian church." He was able to make his case for not "abandoning" Livonia convincing, and received from the pope a renewal of his license to preach the crusade and to enlist crusaders – but only, in Germany.¹⁸³

Spring 1213 saw Innocent III demanding that those crusaders who had taken the cross, but had yet to set out for the Languedoc or Spain should commute their vows into an obligation to "take up the journey to Jerusalem, because this is an action of greater merit" In so doing Innocent III appeared to be contradict himself. From at least 1200 the pope had allowed that crusades, no matter where they were fought, were equal to each other.¹⁸⁴ If one looks closer, however, it becomes clear that the pope was not overturning this inherent equality. Christians should strive to beat back the enemies of Christ wherever they were found, *especially* if the threat was one that affected them personally. There was no penitential hierarchy. This is the key point about Innocent's conception of the crusade: where you crusaded did not determine the indulgence you received as a reward for your service, for uprooting and planting. It

¹⁸¹ Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz' III*, 88-97.

¹⁸² Innocent III to Alfonso VIII of Castile, "Opera Omnia," 216: 703-4; *Crusades: Idea and Reality*, 59-60.

¹⁸³ *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, 152.

¹⁸⁴ Innocent III, "Opera Omnia," 216: 904-5.

was the service itself and the completion of the vow that mattered: crusading in Spain, the Baltic, against heretics in Languedoc, in the Holy Land – all were equally beneficial. However, the pope also held that Jerusalem and the Holy Land was a territory in which each Christian had an interest. Every Christian should strive to protect the land that was Christ's own. Crusading in aid of the Holy Land was a duty every Christian owed to Christ.

In suggesting that crusading in aid of the Holy Land was an “action of greater merit” Innocent III expressed an opinion that most crusaders would have agreed with. Save for a small group of churchmen and their circle of supporters, most twelfth century crusaders continued to equate the cross with the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and military service in aid of the Holy Land. Only gradually, as institutional authorities made it abundantly clear that the cross did not necessarily require the votary to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, were contemporaries willing to ascribe a more figurative meaning to the cross. Innocent III was instrumental in this regard. He established that “taking the cross” for papally approved campaigns would result in the crusader becoming the beneficiary of the plenary indulgence no matter where or against whom the crusade was directed.

Conclusion

In September 1234 Pope Gregory IX issued *Rachel suum videns*, a bull summoning all Christians to serve Christ by taking up the cross for the aid of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.¹ The mendicant friars whom the pope had commissioned to preach the crusade were ordered to promote the crusade to amongst all segments of society and not to practice discretion when signing volunteers with the cross.² Those unsuited for the pilgrimage to the East would be directed to redeem their vows almost immediately after making their vow.³ Matthew Paris reported that in England many were signed with the cross, but that those “signed with the cross one day, on the next day redeemed their vows.”⁴ Gregory IX appears to have been successful in the employment of this tactic. Funds gathered from vow redemptions in the 1234-36 were reported to have been substantial.⁵ At the same time, however, enthusiasm for the impending campaign remained strong. Many of those signed with the cross chose not to redeem their vows, preferring to travel to the Holy Land and engage the enemy in battle.

The recruitment policy Gregory IX pursued in 1234-35 shows that the pope firmly believed that he had the authority to not only authorize the commutation, redemption or postponement of vows, but also to compel crusaders to do so at his command.⁶ In

¹ Gregory IX, *Les Registres de Gregoire IX*, ed. L. Auvray, 3 vols. (Paris, 1899-1955), no. 2200; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora* ed. H. R. Luard, RS 57, 7 vols. (London, 1872-83), 3: 280-7. The treaty Frederick II had made with the Ayyubid sultan of Egypt, al-Kamil, in which Christians regained possession of Nazareth, Bethlehem, a piece of land from linking Jerusalem to the sea, part of the district of Sidon, the castle of Tibnine, and the city of Jerusalem itself (which was to remain unfortified) was set to expire in July 1239. *Historia diplomatica Frederici secundi*, ed. J. L. A. Hülliard-Bréholles, 6 vols. (Paris, 1852-61), 3:86-90.

² *Pontificia Hibernica: Medieval Papal Chancery Documents Concerning Ireland, 640-1261*, ed. M. P. Sheehy, 2 vols. (Dublin, 1962-65), no. 214; Gregory IX, *Registres*, nos. 2203-10.

³ Michael Lower argues that although Innocent III was responsible for introducing automatic vow redemption as a means of crusade financing, it was not a policy he pursued wholeheartedly. Gregory IX on the other hand would make this policy the cornerstone of his recruitment and fundraising efforts. *The Baron's Crusade: a Call to Arms and its Consequences* (Philadelphia, 2005), 14-17, 34-5.

⁴ Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, 3: 287-8.

⁵ W. Lunt., *Papal Revenues in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1934), 1: 432, 2: no. 533; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Reports on Various Collections*, 2 vols. (London, 1901-08), 1: 190; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, 4: 134, 6: 138; Lower, *Baron's Crusade*, 55-7.

⁶ Gregory IX, *Registres*, no. 2200.

December 1235 when news of a crisis in the Latin Empire reached Rome, Gregory made the decision to order that crusaders in England, Hungary, and France who had taken the cross for the proposed expedition to the Holy Land fulfill their vows by helping the emperor, John of Brienne, retain his hold on Constantinople.⁷ Despite employing what in theory should have been powerful methods of persuasion (including offering the plenary indulgence and the promise of funding), Gregory IX was to face widespread rejection of his efforts to convince crusaders that a crusade to the Latin Empire was in the best interest of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.⁸ Crusaders like Thibaut of Champagne and Richard of Cornwall refused to commute their vows. They had answered the pope's call to undertake a pilgrimage to recover the Holy Land for the remission of all their sins. They had vowed to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and to attack the non-believers who threatened the Holy Land. They had no desire to commute their vows, nor did they believe that they should. When the crusading magnates of England gathered in Northampton in November 1239 they swore an oath so that

their honest vow, might not be impeded by the caviling of the Roman church, nor be turned aside for the shedding of Christian blood, to Greece or in Italy, as had been hinted to them was intended, all swore to set out in that year to the Holy Land, to liberate the holy church of God.⁹

These men did not see the efforts to aid the Latin Empire as equivalent to the task they had vowed to undertake. For many crusaders living in the middle of the thirteenth century to crusade meant that one vowed to serve in the Holy Land, to fight the infidel and to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre.

I refer to this episode for several reasons. The first is to emphasize that although in theory it may have appeared the pope had the authority, the means and, in this case, the

⁷ Gregory IX, *Registres*, nos. 2874-78. The efforts and eventual failure of Gregory IX to effect the diversion of the entire crusade host to Constantinople is documented in Lower's *Baron's Crusade*, 58-177.

⁸ In February 1238 Gregory IX even threatened to revoke the indulgence granted to the English barons who had promised to go to the Holy Land. He was forced to reconsider when Richard of Cornwall pursued the matter in the papal curia. Gregory IX, *Registre*, no. 3528, 4268.

⁹ Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, 3.620. Gregory IX feared that the English contingent would join up with Frederick II and advance on the papal states. This statement shows that they did not intend to do this, at least not while they bore the cross.

will to persuade crusaders to alter the terms of their vows the reality was that he could not compel the crusader to change the substance of the promise made to God if the crusader was unwilling to do so.¹⁰ Gregory's inability to convince the majority of crusaders to commute their vows to other expeditions shows that well into the thirteenth century crusaders themselves maintained a primary position alongside the papacy in defining the activity we refer to as 'crusading.' This touches upon the second reason for including this incident. Namely, to show that a diversity of opinion in regards to what constituted a crusade persisted in the thirteenth century, as it had throughout the twelfth. Michael Lower has argued as a result of the variant and localized responses to papal policy regarding the crusade in the period 1234-40, the crusade as an institution cannot and should not be seen as an "expression of a common Christian identity."¹¹ Neither should the crusade be understood as a monolithic institution. It was a movement constantly in flux, an activity that could be understood in a variety of ways depending on one's perspective. There was, in other words, no single definition of crusading upon which everyone would have agreed upon in the twelfth century, nor would there appear to have been in the thirteenth century. In the opinion of the pope, Baldwin of Courtenay and the few French magnates who traveled to Constantinople in July 1239 an expedition secure the safety of the Latin Church in Greece was a 'crusade.'¹² However, many those who took the cross in 1234-36 the activity for which one assumed the cross was still linked with the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It was a vision of crusading that had prevailed, as has been shown here, throughout the twelfth century in spite of efforts by various individuals, groups, and families to promote a notion of the crusade as a holy war that the pope could direct against anyone who threatened the Church and Christians no matter where they were to be found.

¹⁰ The crusaders stance was the approach taken in the canon law of the period. Raymond of Peñafort in his *Summa de casibus penitentiae* (c.1222-1228/9) allows that the pope alone had the authority to commute and redeem crusade vows, however he assumed that it the crusader, not the pope, who will make the decision to commute or redeem their vows. There was no sense that the pope might compel a crusaders to do so. Raymond of Peñafort, *Summa de casibus penitentiae* (Rome, 1603), 56. Brundage, *Canon Law*, 19, n.45.

¹¹ Lower, *Baron's Crusade*, 7-8.

¹² "Albrici monachi Trium-Fontium Chronicon," *MGHS* 23: 946, 948.

In this dissertation, I set out to examine the vows made by crusaders in the hope of answering a relatively straightforward question: what did 'crusading' mean to crusaders? Knowing that the Church required participants in the crusade - *crucesignati* or those wearing the sign of the cross – to make a solemn vow committing themselves to the endeavor first proposed by Urban II at Clermont in November 1095, I undertook to discover what the form and substance of the votive obligation was. As the vow itself was comprised of a personal statement of intent to carry out a certain series of actions, I hoped that by ascertaining what acts individual crusaders promised to complete I might gain access to contemporary notions about what constituted a 'crusade.' I realized, of course, that this approach was complicated. by the fact that although the vow was a reciprocal pact made between an individual and God, the Latin Church acted as God's guarantor. Institutional authorities, especially the pope, therefore had a significant say in establishing the terms of the crusade vow. The votary had to fulfill the minimum requirements laid out by the pope as necessary for the reception of the spiritual benefits associated with the new form of penitential pilgrimage in order to be assured of his reward. Nevertheless, this cannot and should not overshadow the fact that the vow was still an agreement between the individual and God – one which was oftentimes personalized to reflect one's own understanding of this activity. Thus, after a thorough examination of vows taken by crusaders over the course of the twelfth century, I found the answer to the question I posed to be anything but simple. Crusaders and those who organized and promoted the crusade in the first century in which crusading took place possessed different understandings of what it meant to be signed with the cross.

The diversity of opinion regarding the activities to which those signed with a cross should be obligated to undertake emerged after the success of the first armed penitential pilgrimage set in motion at Clermont in 1095.¹³ Those who answered Urban II's call first promised God that they would strive to liberate Jerusalem from Muslim rule. It was understood that they would engage in battle as soldiers of Christ. Crusaders also solemnly vowed to travel to Jerusalem and offer their prayers at the Holy Sepulchre.

¹³ The diversity and disunity of the host that set out to take Jerusalem in 1096 is document in T. S. Asbridge, *The First Crusade: a New History* (New York, 2004).

Thus, in addition to being soldiers those who took the cross were also pilgrims. Thus, crusaders also solemnly vowed to travel to Jerusalem and offer their prayers at the Holy Sepulchre. Observers and participants alike understood the First Crusade first and foremost as a pilgrimage. One sees this no more clearly than by looking at the form of the vow taken by crusaders in 1095 and thereafter.¹⁴ The crusade vow mimicked the vow made by devotional pilgrims in the period leading up to the First Crusade with two important additions. First, as one pronounced the vow a cloth cross was attached to the votary's garment,¹⁵ and secondly, "benediction was bestowed on swords along with [pilgrim's] staffs in recognition that unlike other pilgrims the crusaders were allowed, in fact encouraged, to carry weapons while undertaking their penance."¹⁶ If one was to allow for any consensus in regards to how participants saw the crusade it would have to be based upon this: to one extent or another every crusader agreed that the crusade was a peculiar form of pilgrimage.

Although all twelfth-century crusaders accepted that the crusade was a pilgrimage, they along with their contemporaries did not always agree on the extent to which the cross signified an obligation to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Most of those who up the took the cross after the capture of Jerusalem in 1099 continued to assume that the cross they bore upon their shoulders meant they had a duty to complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. In Chapter Two I argue that Alfonso I accepted that fighting the Almoravids was an endeavor equal in merit to the battle waged against Saracens in the East and took the cross in 1125 for this very purpose. What was telling,

¹⁴ Only from the mid-thirteenth century, when crusaders begin to place conditions on the vow they made, was the formulation of the vow altered. A step whereby the terms of the vow were inscribed in writing was added to the cross-taking ritual. On the 22 September 1290, for example, Brother Fulk "delivered the cross to Hugo de Fonte, notary of Marseilles, present and humbly and most devoutly requesting by the delivery of this present instrument [the cross], in remission of his sins, as is given to others of Christ's faithful wishing to go abroad to the Holy Land, and have enjoined strictly upon him" either to "personally coss with the next general passage," send a substitute to take his place, or to pay "aid to the Holy Land." A. Gottlob, *Kreuzablass und Almosenablass: eine studie über die Frühzeit des Ablasswesens* (Amsterdam, 1965), 308.

¹⁵ For example, After agreeing to assume leadership of the crusade host in 1201, the marquis of Montferrat was conducted to the church of Notre Dame at Soissons where the bishop "accompanied by the saintly Fulk, and two Cistercian friars . . . fastened the cross to his shoulder." Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. E. Faral, Les Classiques de l'Histoire de France au Moyen Age 18-19, 2 vols. (Paris, 1938-39), 1: 44.

¹⁶ Ekkehard of Aura, "Chronicon," 214.

however, was that in liberating the Ebro Valley from the Almoravids, the king of Aragón intended to open up another route for pilgrims to travel to Jerusalem. He continued to associate the cross with the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and appears to have planned to discharge the crusade vow by offering prayers at the Holy Sepulchre. This view of the crusade – which preferenced the Jerusalem pilgrimage as its defining characteristic – was also espoused by members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In Chapter Three I argue that Pope Alexander III, for example, believed that completion of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem was an essential component of the crusader's penance. For Alexander and many others, the cross signified a individual's commitment to aid and protect the Holy Land. In order to receive the plenary remission of sins and protection offered to the crusader it was necessary for the votary to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in addition to his martial duties.

The substance of the vows taken by crusaders who associated the cross with the earthly Jerusalem included a promise to visit the Holy Sepulchre and a pledge to serve Christ as a soldier. How much military service the crusader was required to provide once in the Holy Land was often unclear and open for discussion. Until the pontificate of Alexander III, where time limits of service were established by the pope, the crusade vow had been discharged once one reached the Holy Sepulchre and prayed there regardless of how much aid the crusader had offered. After the loss of Jerusalem to Saladin in 1187 the goal of the Holy Land crusade was once again to liberate the city where Christ had lived and died a point reflected in the substance of the vows taken by crusaders who accompanied the armies of Frederick II, Philip II Augustus, and Richard I. After the experiences of the Third Crusade it became clear that winning Jerusalem would not be enough to save the Latin Kingdom. As the military goals of crusades shifted to Egypt, the substance of the vow shifted to a more generic promise to provide aid to the Holy Land. After 1216 it was increasingly common to see crusaders promise to “go personally to the Holy Land on the next general passage” or, if personal participation in the expedition was not feasible to “give a third of all his goods in aid of the said land.”¹⁷

¹⁷ *Historical Papers and Letters from the Northern Registers*, ed. J. Raine, RS 61 (London, 1873), 46-51.

On the other hand, there were those crusaders and other contemporary observers who understood the crusader's pilgrimage metaphorically. "Since we were signed with the cross from baptism alone, we cannot forgo the sign of the cross. . . . so, you, too, cannot cross the sea of the world and reach the heavenly Jerusalem without the cross."¹⁸ Taking the cross demonstrated the crusader's willingness to leave the comfort of his home and risk his life to defend Christ. For those *crucesignati* the pilgrimage was more a spiritual quest than a physical journey. Acting as befit a pilgrim while on campaign (dressing modestly, abstaining from sexual relations, forgoing the usual pursuits of gambling, participating in penitential rituals, praying, fasting, etc.) the crusader would, through his actions, be assured of entrance to the heavenly Jerusalem. The activity associated with the cross therefore did not necessarily need to be tied to a single geographic location. "It is no virtue to rescue Christians from the Saracens in one place, only to expose them to the tyranny and oppression of the Saracens in another," argued Urban II in 1096.¹⁹ In Chapter Two it is suggested that some of his successors, namely Paschal II and Calixtus II, concurred. These two popes were to extended the mechanisms and privileges associated with the "cross" to wars waged on the Balearic Islands and in the Iberian Peninsula. There were also members of the laity which saw the innate potential of the crusade. In 1117 Raymond Berenguer III succeeded in having Paschal II frame his proposed expedition to Tortosa as a crusade-like venture, if not an actual crusade. In doing so, he hoped to be able to recruit extra troops from Genoa, Pisa and other areas.²⁰

Overall, as can be observed from the discussion of the scope of the Second Crusade contained in Chapter Two, Bernard of Clairvaux was the biggest proponent of the view that saw the crusade as a weapon to be used in the struggle against the enemies of Christ. In the long term, he would prove to be the most influential in promoting it

¹⁸ James of Vitry, "Sermon II" in C. Maier, *Crusade Propaganda and Ideology. Model Sermons for the Preaching of the Cross* (Cambridge, 2000), 106-7.

¹⁹ Urban II to the counts of Besalú, Empurias, Roussillon and Cerdaña and their knights, c. January 1096 - 29 July 1099 in *Papsturkunden in Spanien. I Katalonien*, ed. P. Kehr (Berlin, 1926), 287-8.

²⁰ Further study of the way in which the counts of Barcelona perceived and used the crusade is needed. They appear to have been amongst the earliest of the Spanish monarchs to equate their efforts at reconquest in crusading terms.

throughout Europe. In his writings he was able to detach the idea of crusading from the Holy Land. He believed the sort of *imitatio Christi* crusaders engaged in could occur anywhere that God put “himself into a position of necessity or pretends to be in one.”²¹ As popular as this idea was during the mid-twelfth century – the Second Crusade would be fought on three fronts – it was only to be expressed sporadically by those in charge of promoting crusades up until the pontificate of Innocent III.²² Some institutional authorities, such as Alexander III, seem to have questioned whether or not the conflicts in the North or in Spain were truly ‘crusades.’ Those authorities who did see the conflicts as valid expressions of the crusade idea, like Cardinal Hyacinth (later, Celestine III), encouraged those engaged in fighting against non-Christians to assume the cross. The substance of these vows varies significantly from that taken for the Holy Land crusades and even from region to region. However, it would appear that in most cases crusaders promised to serve Christ in a military capacity, contracting to provide this service at a certain time and in a specific place in the company of other crusaders. In some cases, an effort was made to link the cross with a pilgrimage site – as in Livonia. Otherwise, the experience of joining the host, bearing the cross and engaging in battle continued to be seen as a penitential journey and described as a pilgrimage.

These two understandings of the crusade co-existed throughout the twelfth century. It is true that eventually the idea that the substance of the vow was based upon one’s willingness to serve Christ – no matter where he needed help – came to dominate papal policy regarding the crusade after 1198. The reason for this was simple. Innocent III established in law that all wars fought against the enemies of the Church were to be understood as equally important to the spiritual and physical health of Christendom. To struggle against those who denigrated Christ and his followers was to serve Christ – thus, soldiers should all wear the cross and receive payment for their efforts. The payment granted to the crusader was the same no matter where he fought. Every crusader who took the cross between 1198 and 1216 was promised a plenary indulgence upon

²¹ Bernard of Clairvaux, “Epistolae,” 653.

²² The Cistercians seem to have adopted this line exclusively. Where one sees non-traditional crusades (e.g. Livonia) there is almost always a Cistercian involved the promotion of the expedition. This is another topic which needs to be explored in future.

completion of his or her vow. Yet, as Gregory IX will learn in 1235, the understanding of the crusade as an activity which demanded that the votary complete a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre remained popular, especially with the laity, well into the thirteenth century. While everyone was willing to accept that the pope had the authority to call a crusade, to grant an indulgence and the authority to release crusaders from their vows, it was not universally agreed that he should divert the crusade away from the Holy Land. In other words, not every Christian accepted the papal definition of the crusade. This was as true in the twelfth century: in those cases, crusaders usually expressed their disagreement by refusing to heed the pope's call.

The uniformity which one finds in the form of the crusade vow taken alongside the diversity of opinion regarding the substance of the crusader's votive obligation over time and place have interesting implications for the history of the crusades and Christian holy war. First of all, the fact that the form of the crusade vow remains the same throughout this period suggests that crusader recognized that the activity they were engaged in was something distinct and different from other pious behaviors they would have been accustomed to participating in. Thus, it can be argued that what one has here is an identifiable phenomenon the outlines of which can be discussed. However, as the difference in the way in which crusaders appreciated their obligations suggest, the ability to define precisely what the crusade was becomes increasingly difficult. The easiest solution, therefore, is to accede to this reality and suggest that there were a variety of ways contemporaries defined this activity and that one was not necessarily more valid than the other. In fact, if this study shows anything it should be that the crusaders were as important to the movement as was the pope and that the crusade was never entirely the instrument of the papacy during this period. That the crusade was not monolithic suggests that to see a single and unified theory of Christian holy war in this period would be both premature and unfounded. Ideas about how and when violence could be construed as 'positive' were under discussion in this period. It is unfair and dangerous to suggest that in the first century after 1095 there is a purposeful and protracted offensive against Islam as a competing ideology. Instead, one sees contemporaries using the crusade as another

way in which to express their particular religious concerns and beliefs. Thus, it is no surprise that one often sees ideas concerning the crusade parallel the developments in other religious movements and ideas outside the realm of holy war and pilgrimage per se. In particular, the crusade comes to incorporate notions of the *imitatio Christi*, church reform, and sacrificial piety.

It is possible to observe through the examination of crusade vows the way in which medieval Christians perceived the world in which they lived. In particular, one observes the importance accorded to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Exploration of the substance of the crusade vow both complicates and strengthens our knowledge of the relationship between the papacy, the local church, and the laity in this period. Created by the reform papacy as a way for the laity to play a more positive role in Christian society, the Church – in particular, the pope – would claim ownership over this activity. The truth of the matter was quite different. The crusade was an activity dominated by the laity, and it was their perception of the crusade which held the most weight in the thirteenth century. Here, as elsewhere, the medieval papacy was not always able to support its claims to control over the soldiers of Christ.

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