THE THEATER OF WAR: EUROPEAN NOBILITY, CULTURAL CAPITAL, AND CRUSADING TO THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

By NICHOLAS L. PAUL

From its beginnings in the eleventh century through its decline in the early modern period, the movement of Christian holy war known as the crusades was sustained by the enthusiasm and willing participation of the European military aristocracy. Despite this, historians have yet to explain the continuing value of crusading and the maintenance of the crusading frontier for the aristocracy. This article argues for a fundamental re-evaluation of the nature of crusading, as it was perceived and experienced by European elites. Rather than large-scale military expeditions with global geo-political objectives, smaller more frequent tours of the frontier world constituted the normative crusading experience for aristocrats. These noble sojourns allowed for the acquisition of cultural capital through controlled and staged performances and interaction with the elites, landscape, and fauna of the crusading East. The study of these independent crusading expeditions requires engagement with an altogether different body of source material than usually is consulted in crusade historiography and a different set of questions to be asked of these sources, which in turn leads us to consider a different range of behavior, including tournament-going, hunting, and courtly life, as constituting the typical aristocratic crusading experience. It was through these activities that visiting aristocrats acquired the precious cultural capital that defined their social status in a period of hardening class distinctions. While aristocracy maintained crusading, crusading maintained distinction, and hence the entire European regime of lordship itself.

Smoke from the fires that ravaged Constantinople in mid-July 1203 probably still hung in the air when Count Hugh IV of St. Pol decided to write a newsletter to his friends in western Europe informing them of the dramatic events of the Fourth Crusade, still unfolding around him. Although the crusade had gone wildly off course, attacking the ancient capital of the Byzantine empire rather than the

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coastal cities of Ayyubid Egypt, Hugh wanted to reaffirm the crusaders' intention that, in the following spring, they would indeed carry their crusade toward its original target.[1] One version of Hugh's letter, directed to Hugh's "very dear friend, the noble man" (*cordiali amico*, *viro nobili*) Henry I, duke of Brabant and count of Louvain, concluded with a striking *envoi*:

> You should also know that we have accepted a tournament against the Sultan of Babylon in front of Alexandria. If, therefore, anyone wishes to serve God (to serve Him is to rule) and wishes to bear the distinguished and shining title of "knight," let him take up the cross and follow the Lord, and let him come to the Lord's tournament, to which he is invited by the Lord himself.[2]

With its bold statement that only crusaders can truly be knights and its image of a divine overlord (*dominus*) directing proceedings, Hugh's vivid *envoi* echoes much other crusading rhetoric in asking his friend to forsake the lesser knighthood he knows at home for the greater merit to be earned in pursuit of holy war.[3] But by his choice of metaphor for the encounter that was to take place before "Babylon" (Egypt, or specifically Cairo), Hugh promoted the crusade through explicit comparison with the pre-eminent stage for the performance of aristocratic identity and the enhancement of noble status: the tournament.

Hugh's metaphor of crusade-as-tournament has not escaped the attention of crusade historians, and most recently it was the starting point for an important article by Natasha Hodgson on the role of honor and shame as a regulating force in the actions of crusading knights.[4] In general, however, the metaphor and the "chivalric" culture to which it is said to point is used as an ending point of discussion, rather than as a beginning. As Jay Rubenstein has put it: "[c]rusade and chivalry, despite their obvious historical and cultural resonances, have not

[1] D. Queller and T. F. Madden, *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1997).

[2] G. L. F. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, 3 vols. (Vienna, 1856–57), 1:311: "Noveritis etiam, quod accepimus tornamentum contra soldanum Babylonie ante Alexandriam. Si quis ergo Deo vult servier, cui servire est regnare, et nomen habere militum conspicuum et clarum, tollat crucem et sequatur Dominum, et veniat ad tornamentum domini, ad quoad ab ipso domino invitatur. Valete."; trans. A. Andrea, "Count Hugh of St. Pol's Report to the West," in *The Fourth Crusade: Contemporary Sources* (Leiden, 2000), 201. The *envoi* is only in the letter to Henry of Louvain, not to R. de Balues or the other "anonymous" version to an unknown recipient.

[3] A. Grabois, "*Militia* and *malitia*: The Bernardine Vision of Chivalry," in *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. M. Gervers (London, 1992), 49–56.

[4] N. Hodgson, "Honor, Shame, and the Fourth Crusade," *Journal of Medieval History* 39 (2013): 220–39, at 220–21.

always sat easily with one another."[5] Since the burgeoning of crusade scholarship in the late 1970s, intersections between the devotional practice known as crusading and what might be called (although not unproblematically) "secular" culture and imperatives have generally been less central to scholarship than have theological and spiritual concerns.[6] The last scholar to address the crusading movement as a whole through the lens of aristocratic culture was Adolf Waas, who in 1956 argued for the existence of a distinct and native "knightly piety" (*Ritterfrommigkeit*), a concept that has continued to play a role in works dedicated to knighthood and crusading.[7]

Piety, however, was only one part of the larger complex of European aristocratic culture and can therefore only tell part of the story. Taking its cue from Hugh of St. Pol's comparison between crusading and tournaments, this study suggests a new approach to the value and significance of crusading for the European nobility rooted in aristocratic performance culture. Hugh's letter suggests that he and his contemporaries had come to see the eastern crusading frontier as a kind of stage upon which performances of noble identity could be enacted. This article will argue that the crusading frontier of the Latin East indeed provided a type of controlled environment for the exhibition of knightly prowess and other performances defining and enhancing noble status. Some elements of these performances are analogous to what we find in western Europe: giving and receiving gifts, enjoying and proffering hospitality, participating in courtly

[5] J. Rubenstein, "Poetry and History: Baudry of Bourgeuil, the Architecture of Chivalry, and the First Crusade," *Haskins Society Journal* 23 (2014): 87–102, at 87.

[6] For an account of trends in the historiography of the crusade movement since the late 1970s, see Norman Housley, *Contesting the Crusades* (Malden, MA, 2006); and C. Tyerman, *The Debate on the Crusades, 1099–2010* (Manchester, 2011). See also J. Cotts, "The Academic Historiography of the Crusades and the Twenty-First Century Debate on Religious Violence," *International Journal of Military History and Historiography* (2020): 1–34; and C. MacEvitt, "Colonialism and the Multicultural Turn in the Study of the Crusades," *Viator* 50 (2019): 49–78. Notable works dealing with aristocratic culture and society include C. A. Smith, *Crusading in the Age of Joinville* (Farnham, 2006); Conor Kostick, *The Social Structure of the First Crusade* (Leiden, 2008); T. Guard, *Chivalry, Kingdom, and Crusade: The English Experience in the Fourteenth Century* (Rochester, NY, 2013); *Crusading and Masculinities*, ed. N. R. Hodgson, K. J. Lewis, and M. M. Mesley (London, 2019); Marisa Galvez, *The Subject of Crusade: Lyric, Romance, and Materials, 1150–1500* (Chicago, 2020); N. L. Paul, "Writing the Knight, Staging the Crusader: Manasses of Hierges and the Monks of Brogne," in *Knighthood and Society in the High Middle Ages*, ed. David Crouch and Jeroen Deploige (Leuven, 2020), 141–65; S. Bennett, *Elite Participation in the Third Crusade* (Woodbridge, 2021); and A. E. Lester, "Crusading as a Religious Movement: Families, Community, and Lordship in a Vernacular Frame," in *Between Orders and Heresy: Rethinking Medieval Religious Movements*, ed. J. K. Deane and A. E. Lester (Toronto, 2022), 127–69, at 134.

[7] A. Waas, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, 2 vols. (Freiburg, 1956). The scholar to engage most directly with Waas's concept was M. Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade in Limousin and Gascony* (Oxford, 1993). The importance of crusading to the English knighthood in a later period is demonstrated in Timothy Guard, *Chivalry, Kingship, and Crusade: The English Experience in the Fourteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2013).

pursuits, demonstrating elite devotional patterns, killing and collecting high-prestige animals, and participating in socially-sanctioned, and usually quite restricted, violence. On the crusading frontier, however, these acts were immeasurably enhanced by the political circumstances of the frontier, by the devotional power of the sacred topography of the Holy Land, and by a proto-Orientalist exoticism associated with the peoples, landscape, flora, and fauna of the eastern Mediterranean. It was in this role as a stage for political and social theater –and not just a theater of war – that the eastern crusading frontier came to be seen as an unmatched source of cultural capital for western lay arms-bearers from relatively modest knights and castle lords through the highest levels of European aristocracy.

In order to comprehend properly the crusading frontier as a site of aristocratic performance and the acquisition of cultural capital, it is necessary to make three significant departures from the typical methodologies and concerns of crusade historiography. First, it requires a shift in emphasis away from the large-scale military expeditions that we canonically number as "the crusades." The decentering of these large expeditions helps us to move away from a false narrative of military expediency and immediate political utility, and closer to the lived experience of crusading, which was continuous, fluid, and often unanchored from strategic thinking and military urgency. Second, to capture this continuous experience, it is necessary to consider a range of new sources, including genres of vernacular literary works, small regional accounts (some of which remain unedited and even unknown), and many texts produced on the frontier itself both by Latin and non-Latins that are not usually exploited for information about visiting crusaders. Third, following from what these sources suggest, we must realize the full range of activities that were associated with Latin European journeys to the East and properly contextualize those activities between both Latin European and Near Eastern elite cultural practices. This article will demonstrate the advantages of these three modifications of historical perspective, having first set them in the context of modern scholarship.

Crusading and Aristocratic Culture in Modern Scholarship

What factors drove the Christian holy war first preached by Pope Urban II in 1095, what motivated participants to ritually "take up" or "accept" the cross as crusaders, and how to characterize the territories that they conquered, are questions that have received considerable historical attention since the middle of the twentieth century.[8] In general, older materialist

[8] The literature here is very extensive but it has been discussed in Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*, 75–98; and Tyerman, *The Debate on the Crusades*, 202 and 232–33.

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notions of crusaders as landless younger sons seeking their fortunes were supplanted in a marked devotional turn. More recent research has effectively contextualized crusading within the larger pattern of Latin Christian lived religion, showing its affinities with penitential pilgrimage, devotion shown to saints' shrines and holy places, and ascetic reformed monastic spirituality as well as eschatological conceptions of history.[9] Although the devotional interpretation is now ascendant, material arguments are still influential, for instance in the emphasis on "rational" calculation in Christopher Tyerman's 2015 book *How to Plan a Crusade: Reason and Religious War in the High Middle Ages*.[10]

Historical research concerning the Levantine and Mediterranean territories conquered by the crusaders, their politics, culture, and significance for the wider history of the Near East, similarly underwent significant revision. From the time of the First Crusade (1096–1099), Latin European crusaders carved out a network of their own polities consisting of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the County of Edessa, the County of Tripoli, the Principality of Antioch — all on the eastern Mediterranean littoral — together with the Kingdom of Cyprus (established in 1192) and the Latin Empire of Constantinople and its satellites in Greece (after 1204). The strength and geographical bounds of these principalities ebbed and flowed. Dealt a serious blow by Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Ayyūb (Saladin) in 1187, the kingdom of Jerusalem survived on the mainland until 1291 and then for more than a century in Cyprus and Greece. These lands, which contemporaries knew collectively as *la terre d'Outremer* ("the land beyond the sea") and which modern scholars call alternately the "Crusader States," the "Frankish Levant", or the "Latin East," were ruled by a French-speaking aristocracy who were known in Europe (perhaps derisively) as the *pullani* or *poulains*.[11] The *poulains* forged strong links of marriage and religious and military co-operation with the Christian princes of Cilician Armenia and alliances with the kingdom of

[9] Key works in this turn have included Bull, *Knightly Piety*; J. S. C. Riley-Smith, "Crusading as an Act of Love," *History* 65 (1980): 177–92; idem, *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (Cambridge, 1997); Smith, *Crusading in the Age of Joinville*; W. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia, c. 1095–1187* (Woodbridge, 2008); M. C. Gaposchkin, *Invisible Weapons: Liturgy and the Making of Crusade Ideology* (Ithaca, 2017); and J. Rubenstein, *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream: The Crusades, Apocalyptic Prophecy, and the End of History* (Oxford, 2019).

[10] C. Tyerman, *How to Plan a Crusade: Reason and Religious War in the High Middle Ages* (London, 2015); and idem, "*Principes et populus*: Civil Society and the First Crusade," in *Cross, Crescent, and Conversion: Studies on Medieval Spain and Christendom in Memory of Richard Fletcher*, ed. S. Barton and P. Linehan (Leiden, 2007), 127–51.

[11] M. R. Morgan, "The Meaning of the Old French *Polain*, Latin *Pullanus*," *Medium Aevum* 48 (1979): 40–54.

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Georgia and the Mongol Ilkhanate. They were, at various times, also allied with their Muslim neighbors.[12]

With the most extensive early archaeological and philological work corresponding precisely with the period of direct European colonial rule over North Africa and the Middle East, scholarship on the Latin East has found itself enmeshed in larger debates about European colonialism and empire.[13] By the early 1990s, most historians of the crusades and the Latin East had rejected explicit comparison with European overseas colonial ventures.[14] Among other objections, no obvious material advantage existed in the tremendously expensive enterprise to maintain control of the eastern frontier. While the Italian republics like Venice, Genoa, and Pisa benefited from the establishment of a foothold in the eastern Mediterranean, the Latin East did not serve as an economic resource for those who invested the most in blood and treasure in its defense: the European aristocracy. For most of its history, the Latin East was also not subject to the rule or control of any European power, rendering it a colony without a clear metropole.[15] In an enormously influential study, however, Robert Bartlett demonstrated the clear consonance between the Frankish conquests in the eastern Mediterranean and much larger processes of colonization within the European continent itself, from Ireland to Poland.[16] More recently, Sharon Kinoshita, Suzanne Akbari, Geraldine Heng, George Demacopoulos, and William Purkis have all advocated for the adoption of new frameworks, from postcolonial literary theory to the notion of a spiritual extractive colonialism, in order to understand crusading narrative and the causes and consequences of crusading conquests.[17]

[12] No satisfactory narrative exists of the entirety of Latin rule in the Eastern Mediterranean beyond 1187. For the earlier period, see M. Barber, *The Crusader States* (New Haven, 2012). For the later period, see J. Prawer, *The Crusaders' Kingdom: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1972); and J. Richard, *Royaume Latin de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1953).

[13] See R. Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories* (Cambridge, 2007), 1–61.

[14] B. Z. Kedar, "The Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem: The First European Colonial Society? A Symposium," in *The Horns of Hattin*, ed. B. Z. Kedar (London, 1992), 341–66.

[15] C. MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East: Rough Tolerance* (Philadelphia, 2008), 7–21.

[16] R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization, and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (London, 1993).

[17] S. Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100–1450* (Ithaca, 2009); S. Kinoshita, *Medieval Boundaries: Rethinking Difference in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia, 2006); G. Heng, *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy* (New York, 2003); G. Demacopoulos, *Colonizing Christianity: Greek and Latin Religious Identity in the Era of the Fourth Crusade* (New York, 2019); and W. Purkis, "'Holy Christendom's New Colony': The Extraction of Sacred Matter and the Colonial Status of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem," *Haskins Society Journal* 30 (2018): 177–211.

Throughout these debates — about the relative influence of God and Mammon on crusaders and about the nature and purpose of the medieval European occupation and settlement of Syria, Palestine, Greece, and Cyprus — the advent of radical new social distinctions among European elites has not occupied a central place in historical analysis. This is true despite an increasing focus on social change in the study of crusade literature. Sharon Kinoshita, for instance, seeking to place the rising tides of difference in Old French and Occitan literatures of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, foregrounds in her work on crusading narratives "the feudal nobility's emerging self-consciousness in tension with the hegemony of Latin church culture."[18] By contrast, historical scholarship, which is overwhelmingly dedicated to the prerogatives of European military elites, has strangely been little interested in how crusading lords like Hugh of St. Pol performed their social status as among the first generation of self-conscious chivalric nobility. This is underlined by Tyerman's *How to Plan a Crusade*, which quotes Hugh's letter twice: first for the tournament metaphor, which is cited among many examples of "secular propaganda" (related to recruitment) and then for what it says about the payment of soldiers, a more serious and sober topic bearing on the "real" motivations of crusaders.[19]

There is much we have lost in our understanding of the phenomenon of crusade, conquest, and settlement by not engaging with men like Hugh of St. Pol on (or in) their own terms. Thanks to the work of Maurice Keen, Jean Flori, David Crouch, and others, we know that Hugh was writing at a critical moment in the emergence of an exclusive and self-conscious noble social class and in the key period (between 1180 and 1220) for the codification of chivalric knighthood.[20] This "social transformation" or "chivalric turn" (to adopt Crouch's terminology) entailed the continuous and meticulous cultivation of reputation, the demonstration of prowess, and the embodiment of elite status through manners, clothing, speech, food, devotional patterns, and material culture. It was for this purpose that the seigneurial nobility of this period was ceaselessly itinerant within and beyond their domains, that they developed

[18] Kinoshita, *Medieval Boundaries*, 133.

[19] Tyerman, *How to Plan a Crusade* (n. 10 above), 42 and 129.

[20] M. Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven, 1984); J. Flori, *L'ideologie du glaive: Préhistoire de la chevalerie* (Geneva, 1983); idem, *L'Essor de la chévalerie, XI–XII siècles* (Geneva, 1986); idem, *Chevaliers et chevalerie au moyen âge* (Paris, 1998); and idem, "Noblesse, chevalerie, et l'ideologie aristocratique en France d'oïl (XIe–XIIIe siècle)," in *Renovacion intellectual del occidente europeo (siglo XII)*, ed. J. A. Garciáde Cortázar (Pamplona, 1998), 349–82. See also Richard Barton, "Aristocratic Culture: Kinship, Chivalry, and Court Culture," in *A Companion to the Medieval World* (Malden, MA, 2009), 500–24; D. Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900–1300* (New York, 2005), 80–96; and idem, "Chivalry and Courtliness: Colliding Constructs," in *Soldiers, Nobles, and Gentlemen: Essays in Honor of Maurice Keen*, ed. Peter Coss and Christopher Tyerman (Woodbridge, 2009), 32–48, at 33–37.

exclusive rites of passage (dubbing), and that they articulated their identity through new visual markers of identity (heraldry).

It was also, not coincidentally, a key period in the history of the tournament. It meant a great deal for a man like Hugh, whose continental lordships were near the epicenter of tournament activity and who had himself once fought with the famous champion William Marshal, to invoke the tournament in a letter to his noble peers.[21] Recent scholarship has emphasized that the high medieval tournament around 1200 was a complex affair, composed of several stages, taking place over multiple days in liminal zones between and beyond existing power structures, and involving a large number of people.[22] Essentially it was an elaborately-staged spectacle; for competitors it was a site for the enactment not only of martial prowess but no less for them and for their audiences and patrons a place for the display of courtly manners increasingly associated with imaginary settings and filled with striking visual markers of identity. It was, as Matthew Strickland has written, "an increasingly artificial and controlled environment, the context of which was as much social as martial."[23] The tournament was not simply a war-game, but a stage on which many games — some military, others political, diplomatic, devotional, and economic — would be played out. The enormous popularity of tournaments, resisting repeated ecclesiastical attempts to ban them, was due to their critical utility to the culture of nobility. As places where alliances, reputations, and careers were made, tournaments in various forms continued to grow and evolve precisely because they represented invaluable moments for the articulation and enhancement of status that was demanded if the regime of lordship was to be maintained.

The relationship between tournaments and crusading is traditionally imagined to be one of opposition. As Juliet Barker shows, popes banned tournaments and threatened participants and sponsors with excommunication because they believed that they were distractions from the crusading cause and endangered the funds, equipment, animals, and bodies of potential crusaders.[24] Knights did not share this perspective. In their experience, tournaments were places to publicly take the cross and raise monies for crusading. As Barker writes (and Hugh of St. Pol clearly agreed), "this dichotomy was only obvious to the church. To the knights who went on crusade, there was no inconsistency apparent."[25] In fact, tournaments were only one kind of space of noble performance that frequently gestured at, and even pointed the way to, another greater stage. This stage

[21] *The History of William Marshal*, trans. Nigel Bryant (Woodbridge, 2016), 90–91.

[22] D. Crouch, *Tournament* (London, 2005). See also J. Barker, *The Tournament in England 1100–1400* (Woodbridge, 1986).

[23] M. Strickland, *War and Chivalry: The Conduct and Perception of War in England and Normandy* (Cambridge, 1996), 150.

[24] Barker, *The Tournament in England*, 76–83.

[25] Barker, *The Tournament in England*, 80.

has been obscured to us, and may have been to medieval popes as well, because of another dichotomy. This is the dichotomy between crusading as it was seen from a centralizing papal and royal perspective — the perspective largely adopted by modern scholarship — and crusading as it was actually experienced by the lay aristocracy.

Crusading as a Continuous Phenomenon

It is a pernicious aspect of the scholarly and popular understanding of "crusade" that the word is held to be synonymous with large-scale, canonically-numbered military campaigns. These military expeditions were relatively infrequent and, like the one on which Hugh of St. Pol found himself in 1203, frequently disastrous. Expensive, slow, and with high rates of death, disease, and capture, the large expeditions that departed in 1147 ("Second"), 1189 ("Third"), 1202 ("Fourth"), 1248 ("Seventh"), 1270 ("Eighth"), and 1396 ("Nicopolis Crusade") required the arms-bearers who joined them to subject themselves to command structures involving higher lords or even crowned heads who might be alien to the feudal structures from which the crusaders came. Unsurprisingly, they were constantly bedeviled by political tensions and personal rivalries, like those that led to the failure of the Second Crusade at Damascus or the vengeful imprisonment of Richard I by his rival the duke of Austria following the Third Crusade.[26] We also hear of the departures from the large-scale expeditions – most notoriously on the Fourth but also notably on the Seventh Crusade – by individuals or small groups seeking to pursue their own private journeys.[27]

The course of the Fourth Crusade, of which Hugh of St. Pol was a part when he wrote his letter, presents perhaps the most famous example of aristocrats resisting the call to join such an expedition. Instead of meeting in Venice, the agreed-upon rallying spot for the army, many who had committed to join the crusade instead conducted themselves privately or in small groups to the ports of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, where they fulfilled their vows independently. Voting with their feet, Hugh's contemporaries showed that these large expeditions had unstable and perhaps unappealing associations. There is no question that the opportunities for distinction on these expeditions were great, but the stakes were also high. They were less like tournaments and other types of limited and symbolic violence, and more like that disastrous occurrence, rare and most often avoided in the Middle Ages: all-out war.

[26] J. Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven, 2007); and J. Gillingham, "The Kidnapped King: Richard I in Germany, 1192–1194," *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute in London* 30 (2008): 5–34.

[27] Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade* (n. 1 above), 46–48; and J. Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land: From the Third Crusade to the Fall of Acre* (Cambridge, 2005), 67.

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The larger-scale canonical expeditions lie at the center of all modern attempts to understand what we commonly called "the crusades," but they cannot have represented the most common experience of crusading. As the work of James Doherty and Fordham University's *Independent Crusaders Project* has shown, in the decades separating the major crusades we find nobility of every rank setting out for Jerusalem.[28] Although no comprehensive study has yet been made of such small-scale expeditions from 1099–1291 or beyond, just those undertaken by territorial princes before 1187 give a sense of the frequency of these journeys (Table 1). Counting only those individuals whose lordships extended across whole regions, we find forty-four individuals participating in thirty-seven expeditions. The list includes princes from across Latin Europe from the March of Lusatia to Galicia. Among them are five women, only two of whom were accompanied by husbands (and one of those, Countess Sibylla of Flanders, abandoned her husband Thierry of Alsace in Jerusalem). In the cases of Sigurd of Norway (1108), Fulk V of Anjou (1120 and 1129), Rognvald V of Orkney (1153), Henry I of Champagne (1179), and Godfrey III of Louvain (1183), we have quite detailed lists of the members of the princely expeditions, showing the participation of vassals, relatives, and household officers and administrators. Throughout the twelfth century we find examples of princes traveling together. Sometimes, in the case of the counts of Angoulême, La Marche, and Limoges in 1178 or in the case of Henry the Liberal of Champagne, Henry of Grandpré, and Philip of Dreux in 1180, there is a strong sense of regional collaboration. In other cases, as when Philip of Alsace joined William de Mandeville in 1177, it was apparently informed by long-standing friendship.[29] A notice written by the monks of Marmoutier in 1128 describing the scene before the departure of Count Fulk V of Anjou for his second journey to Jerusalem reveals how such an expedition could also help to forge new bonds or restore peace as it apparently did between Fulk and the lord of Amboise Hugh of Chaumont-sur-Loire.[30] The list also reveals that it was not

[28] For supporting information, see the evidence assembled for the Independent Crusaders Project (under the tab "Crusaders") hosted by the Center for Medieval Studies, Fordham University. The dataset is available at DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.12796392. See J. Doherty, "Count Hugh of Troyes and the Prestige of Jerusalem," *History* 102 (2017): 874–88; idem, "Fulcher of Chartres and Armed Pilgrims, 1104–1127," in *Chronicle, Crusade, and the Latin East: Essays in Honour of Susan B. Edgington*, ed. A. Buck and T. W. Smith (Turnhout, 2022), 273–83; idem, "The Presentation of Crusader Masculinities in Old Norse Sagas," in *Crusading and Masculinities* (n. 6 above),129–46; and idem, "Independent Crusaders and the Difficult Issue of Crusade Definition," at the Independent Crusaders Project.

[29] For the friendship of William and Philip, see E. Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World, 1066–1216* (Cambridge, 2012), 87.

[30] J. Chartrou, *L'Anjou de 1109 a 1151: Foulque de Jerusalem et Geoffroi Plantagenet* (Paris, 1928), 367–69 (no. 38).

Table 1. Independent Crusade Expeditions by Territorial Princes before 1187

Expedition	Dates
FIRST CRUSADE	***1096–1099***
Eric I, king of Denmark & Bodil of Denmark & Henry of Portugal (together)	1103
Sigurd I, king of Norway	1108–1111
Hugh, count of Troyes	1104–1107, 1114–1116, 1125–1130
Dedo IV of Wettin, marquess of Niederlausitz	1124
Conrad III, king of Germany	1124
Fulk V, count of Anjou	1120, 1129
Rodrigo Vélaz, count of Galicia	1121
Hugh of Le Puiset, viscount of Chartres	1128
Ermengarde of Brittany	1130x1134
Enguerran II, lord of Coucy	1138
CONQUEST OF EDESSA BY ZENGI/SECOND CRUSADE	***1144–1149***
Thierry of Alsace, count of Flanders	1138, 1157, 1165
Rognvaldr, earl of Orkney & William, bishop of Orkney	1151–1153
Fernando Peréz, count of Traba and Trastamara	? and 1153
William III, count of Mâcon	1156
Sibylla, countess of Flanders (w/ Thierry of Alsace)	1157
Henry de Lacy, lord of Pontefract	1158, 1177
Walter of Hereford, sheriff of Gloucester	1159
Elvira Ramirez, countess in Castille	1161
William IV, count of Nevers	1168
Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony	1172–1173
Gerard II, count of Looz	1172
Stephen I, count of Sancerre & Hugh III, duke of Burgundy & Stephen II of Auxonne	1171
Constance, countess of Toulouse	1176
Philip of Alsace, count of Flanders & Henry de Lacy & William de Mandeville, earl of Essex & Robert, advocate of Béthune (together)	1177
Roger de Mowbray	1177, 1186
Adhémar V, viscount of Limoges & William VI of Angoulême & Audebert IV, viscount of La Marche (together)	1178
Robert de Bretueil, third earl of Leicester	1179
Henry the Liberal, count of Champagne & Henry, count of Grandpré & Philip of Dreux, bishop of Beauvais (together)	1179–1181
Rudolf, count of Pfullendorf	1180
Godfrey III, count of Leuven, duke of Lower Lorraine	1183
William V, marquis of Montferrat	1183
CONQUEST OF JERUSALEM BY SALADIN	***1187***

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uncommon for lords to make multiple journeys in their lifetimes, suggesting that compared with the larger-scale expeditions, these journeys seem on the whole to have been much safer for their participants than canonically numbered crusades.

While some of these expeditions are well known, that they have not been understood as a larger pattern is due to the fact that they are so often identified with distinct initiatives: an act of penitence, a marriage embassy, a political overture. Even where different imperatives may sometimes have existed alongside a particular journey, separating them has obscured how much they and their participants had in common. Each involved a sojourn of months or even years, and during their sojourns in the Levant, participants engaged in a wide range of activities not captured by a single objective. Most importantly, these individuals were nobles, and nobility was something that had to be continuously reaffirmed and restructured through public performance of that status in speech, dress, gestures, and engagement in elite activities. What brought them to Jerusalem, be it pilgrimage or politics, paled in significance next to the need to maintain their status, which was of existential significance to them, their families, and their communities at home.

The noble sojourn was an experience open to all ranks of the aristocracy, from princes to local castle lords, knights, and landholders. Sometimes, as in the case of several knights who joined Fulk V of Anjou in 1120 or Godfrey III of Louvain in 1183, more humble participants were part of the retinue of greater lords, but in other cases such as the very minor lord Manasses of Hierges (1142) or the tournament champion William Marshal (1184), they may have effectively traveled alone. Here the happenstance of narrative reportage and documentary survival (and modern discovery) exercises an even greater warping effect on our attempt to grasp numbers or geographical distribution. Remarkably, however, and perhaps because so much more was at stake, sources survive which describe the expeditions of more minor figures in the greatest detail.

As is the case with the study of all crusaders, many of the participants in independent journeys can only be identified either through documents witnessing their departure or by brief references to their travels in local and regional narrative sources. William of Tyre, a primary chronicler of the crusader kingdom who wrote in the early 1180s, noted the arrival of many aristocrats from princes ("Henry, the illustrious count of Troyes") down to more minor barons like Ralph de Mauléon ("a warrior of great renown from Aquitaine"). Some of the visitors appear in documents produced in Palestine, and at least four produced their own written instruments while on crusade which have survived as originals.[31] An

[31] For Philip of Alsace, see N. L. Paul, "In Search of the Marshal's Lost Crusade: The Persistence of Memory, the Problems of History, and the Painful Birth of Crusading Romance," in *Crusades and Memory: Rethinking Past and Present*, ed. M. Cassidy-Welch and A. E. Lester (London, 2015), 292–310, at 303–304; and B. Hamilton, *The Leper King*

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important complement to the documentary sources can be found, however, in lengthy narrative accounts of particular journeys. Eyewitness accounts of journeys classified as "pilgrimages" and composed by clerics have been known for some time, mined mainly for their testimony about conditions in the Near East at the time of the journey.[32] For instance, the bishop of Paderborn Wilbrand of Oldenbourg's account of 1211 is often cited for its description of the Ibelin palace in Beirut.[33] Wilbrand's journey is usually classified as a diplomatic mission from the Welf emperor, Otto IV, to prepare for an imperial crusade expedition.[34] But his attention to courtly settings, as well as his visit to his uncle's tomb in Antioch, reveal that, like so many of the expeditions before it, his journey was also greatly concerned with self-conscious aristocratic display.

Recent scholarship has highlighted the existence of troubadour lyrics referring to life in the Latin East in times of peace (as opposed to the more well-known and often generic "crusade song"). What details we can glean from these texts points to frequent movement between the courts of Occitania and the Latin East, with men like Peire Vidal and Pere Bremon lo Tort moving in and out of the service of eastern lords.[35] The success of their songs, which survived to be recorded in the Occitan songbooks many decades later, suggest that the opportunities available in the Frankish courts were a popular topic across the Mediterranean.

In addition to these first-person reflections, detailed narratives also survive describing the sojourns of lay aristocrats in the Latin East. These have received far less attention, but they are critically important for several reasons. First, accounts survive that detail the experiences of travelers from the highest to the lowest ranks of noble society. Second, as works emanating from the home communities of the travelers, they tend to reflect not only on the events of the

and His Heirs: Baldwin IV and the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem (Cambridge, 2000), 119–37. For Henry the Liberal, see T. Evergates, *Henry the Liberal: Count of Champagne, 1127–1181* (Philadelphia, 2016), 265 nn. 71 and 72. The original documents composed in the East are the letter of Rudolf of Pfullendorf sent to Venice in 1180 (Venezia, Archivo Statale, S. Maria dei Teutonici, Busta 1); the charter of Andrew II of Vitré at the time of Saladin's siege of Kerak in 1184 (Laval, Bibliothèque municipale de Laval, 0209 [12207], fol. 15); the charter of Henry the Lion for the church of the Holy Sepulcher (Wolfenbüttel Staatsarchiv, Hist. Hs. I 2 Bl. 128 and Hist. Hs. I 3 S. 269); and the charter of Godfrey III of Louvain apparently written on crusade in 1183 (Brussels, Archives générales du Royaume, photo 146).

[32] D. Pringle, *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land, 1187–1291* (Burlington, 2012), 1–20.

[33] D. Pringle, "Wilbrand of Oldenbourg's Journey to Syria, Lesser Armenia, Cyprus, and the Holy Land (1211–1212): A New Edition," *Crusades* 11 (2012): 109–37, at 119. See, for instance, the recent discussion in Adrian Boas, *Domestic Settings: Sources on Domestic Architecture and Day-to-Day Activities in the Crusader States* (Leiden, 2010), 66 and 161.

[34] P. Halfter, "Eine Beschreibung Kilikiens aus westlicher Sicht: Das *Itinerarium* des Wilbrand von Oldenburg," *Oriens Christianus* 85 (2001): 176–203.

[35] L. Paterson, *Singing the Crusades: French and Occitan Lyric Responses to the Crusading Movements, 1137–1336* (Cambridge, 2018), 40–45.

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journey, but also upon the value of the journey for the individual with reference to their rank and reputation. We hear, for instance, of the fame associated with the deeds of the minor lords Manasses of Hierges (d. 1176) and Gobert of Apremont (d. 1263), and how this enhanced their status after their return.[36] Finally, although there are not many of these narratives, they can be usefully supplemented with another type of material, critically important for our understanding of this phenomenon: vernacular literature.

Perhaps the strongest argument for considering the journeys to the crusading frontier collectively, and for privileging them as a type of aristocratic display, comes from imaginative literature. David Trotter showed years ago that Old French vernacular literature, which often invokes the theme of war against Muslim or pagan enemies, only rarely employs the language, rituals, historical geography, and political history of crusading.[37] Most common, however, among the group of works that he identified as exceptional are narratives that deal with the phenomenon of the independent crusade expedition. These include the romance *Gilles de Chin*, composed by Gautier de Tournai in around 1230, Jean Renart's *Escoufle* and the *Fille du comte de Ponthieu* (both from around 1200), the Anglo-Norman *Gui de Warewic* (early thirteenth century) and the thirteenth-century prose romance *Floire et Jehane*.[38] To these might be added examples from the corpus of Middle High German courtly and bridal-quest epics, particularly the fragmentary *Graf Rudolf* (composed around 1200).[39] Finally, worth including here are the biographical *vidas* and explicatory *razos* associated with the troubadour songs of the Occitan crusaders Peire Vidal, Jaufré Rudel, Raimbaut de Vaiqeras, and Giraut de Borneil. All these works point to independent or private expeditions as the normative model for crusading.[40]

European Latin and vernacular narratives and documents are not the only materials that must be consulted to reconstruct the elite experience in the East; critical also are the sources produced in and around the Latin East either by the Francophone aristocracy of the frontier lands or by their neighbors writing in Arabic, Syriac, Armenian, and Greek. What the European texts do grant us, however, is a clear sense of a shared experience, and perhaps more importantly, a

[36] See Paul, "Writing the Knight" (n. 6 above).

[37] D. Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades (1100–1300)* (Geneva, 1988).

[38] Gautier de Tournai, *L'Histoire de Gilles de Chyn*, ed. E. B. Place (Evanston, IL, 1941); *L'Escoufle, roman d'aventure*, ed. Franklin Sweetser (Geneva, 1974); J.-P. Serge Makeieff, "La Fille du comte de Ponthieu," (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 2007); and L. Moland and C. J. R. d'Héricault, *Nouvelles françoises en prose du xiii siècle* (Paris, 1856), 85–160.

[39] *Graf Rudolf*, ed. P. F. Ganz (Berlin, 1964).

[40] *The Vidas of the Troubadours*, trans. M. Egan (New York, 1984); and *Razos and Troubadour Songs*, ed. and trans. William E. Burgwinkle (New York, 1990).

shared set of expectations, related to the phenomenon of the noble sojourn. Importantly, although they described the kingdom at its zenith, most were composed in the period after 1187 when Jerusalem itself and the southernmost section of the Kingdom of Jerusalem had been conquered by Saladin. In preserving an image of the kingdom before what was simply called "the defeat" *(la desconfiture)*, they also kept alive a memory of the Latin East that could once again be reconstituted and suggested the value of that space for the nobility of the future.[41]

The Lord's Tournament Ground: The Latin East as Stage

What made the eastern theater such an ideal stage for the western elite traveler was precisely the way that it introduced novel, foreign, and powerfully charged elements into a familiar framework of feudal lordship and European aristocratic culture. In the Latin East, the French language, the Latin liturgy, and recognizable patterns of feudal obligation and noble status were all on display, but with differences that ranged from subtle to profound. A visitor from Europe in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries arrived from a world of increasing centralization and bureaucratization of royal power which, as Gabrielle Spiegel and others have argued, led to an increasing anxiety among the landed aristocracy about their loss of independence and rights.[42] In the Latin East, the presence of central royal and princely courts had fundamentally different implications. A visitor, of course, could experience these courts as an outsider, free to choose with whom and to what degree to associate themselves in bonds of friendship and service. In this land where fiefs were overwhelmingly in cash, visitors were rewarded with precious items associated principally with the region, most often silk and relics. But beyond this — and even assuming a maximalist interpretation of the evidence — feudal relationships in the East tended on the whole to be more balanced in favor of the entire seigneurial community, which by the later twelfth century counted all knights as co-equal members of the "High Court" of the kingdom.

By about 1200, the customs of that court as an aristocratic community were the subject of sustained treatises. In these lengthy commentaries, we find that western visitors like Count Stephen of Sancerre in 1171 might be asked for their advice,

[41] Paul, "In Search of the Marshal's Lost Crusade" (n. 31 above).

[42] G. Spiegel, "Pseudo-Turpin, the Crisis of the Aristocracy, and the Beginnings of Vernacular Historiography in France," *Journal of Medieval History* 12 (1986): 207–23; R. Stein, *Reality Fictions: Romance, History, and Governmental Authority, 1025–1180* (Notre Dame, IN, 2006); and L. Sunderland, *Rebel Barons: Resisting Royal Power in Medieval Culture* (Oxford, 2017). For an account of the rise of the centralized state, emphasizing its participation in the culture of lordship, see T. N. Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Power, Lordship, and the Origins of European Government* (Princeton, 2009).

which was then recorded with honor among the *assises* of the kingdom.[43] The legal treatises themselves, most important among them the *Livre de Forme de Plait* of Philip of Novara (composed in the early 1250s) and the monumental *Livre des assises* of John of Ibelin (of about a decade later), offer complete scripts for the proper performance of noble conduct in court settings. This includes extensive coverage of cases of judicial combat, including how the challenge is made, appropriate forms of response, rules on types and sizes of weapons, the status of combatants, and the injunction that it is one of the supreme responsibilities of the *chef seigneur* that he always maintained a *champs de champions* ("field for champions").[44]

The Latin East has long been treated as a far-flung outpost of medieval Latin Europe, a "fragment society" always looking to France, and particularly in the thirteenth century to Paris, for inspiration and guidance.[45] The evidence, however, stubbornly points to the Latin East not as an imitator but as a cultural innovator, or at least as a partner in innovation, with regard to some of the most central forms of European elite culture.[46] It has long been known that the earliest Round Table tournament, the style that came to dominate the European circuit in the thirteenth century, was staged on Cyprus in 1223.[47] Tournaments had been held on the mainland since at least 1159, when the Byzantine Emperor Manuel Komnenos took part in one. The emperor became an enthusiast himself, bringing the tournament from Outremer to Byzantium. An anonymous contemporary document records the lavish clothing that he later wore in jousts, affirming that he understood their importance as a courtly political performance as much as a military sport.[48] A range of later medieval texts, some composed in the East and some by western visitors, confirm the vibrant tournament culture both on the mainland and in Cyprus.[49] The reputation of the *poulains* for their knowledge of nobility and manners may explain the success of the Cypriot knight Philip of

[43] Philip of Novara, *Livre de Forme de Plait*, ed. and trans. P. Edbury (Nicosia, 2009), 273; and John of Ibelin, *Le Livre des Assises*, ed. P. Edbury (Leiden, 2003), 763 and 766.

[44] Jacques d'Ibelin, *Livre*, in *Assises de Jérusalem ou recueil des ouvrages de jurisprudence composés pendant le XIIIe siècle dans les royaumes de Jérusalem et de Chypre. Tome premier: Assises de la haute cour*, ed. Claude Beugnot (Paris, 1841), 455

[45] D. Jacoby, "Knightly Values and Class Consciousness in the Crusader States of the Eastern Mediterranean," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 1 (1986): 158–86, at 174.

[46] L. K. Morreale and N. L. Paul, "Introduction," in *The French of Outremer: Communities and Communications in the Crusading Mediterranean*, ed. L. K. Morreale and N. L. Paul (New York, 2018), 1–14.

[47] Crouch, *Tournament* (n. 22 above), 117.

[48] S. Kyriakidis, *Warfare in Late Byzantium, 1204–1453* (Leiden, 2011), 53. Kyriakidis cites H. Maguire and L. Jones, "A Description of the Jousts of Manuel Komnenos," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 25 (2002): 104–48 for the clothing.

[49] Kyriakidis, *Warfare in Late Byzantium*, 54, cites the testimony of the *Chronicle of the Morea*, John Kantakouzenos, and Gregoras. To these should be added John of Joinville, *Vie de Saint Louis*, ed. J. Monfrin (Paris, 1995), 273 (§548). For the tournament and chivalric culture in Frankish Greece, see Teresa Shawcross, *The Chronicle of Morea: Historiography in Crusader Greece* (Oxford, 2009), 5-6 and 243.

Novara's conduct treatise *iiii tenz d' aages de l'home*, which circulated widely in the Francophone west.[50] The *Ordene de chevalerie*, the very earliest work to define knighthood as a social order regulated by a set of given conventions, has as its protagonist a *poulain*, Hugues de Tabarie, who dictates the knighting ritual.[51] John, the lord of Joinville and seneschal of Champagne, who found himself on a sojourn in the Latin East after the failure of the Seventh Crusade, offered a staunch defense of the *poulains*, siding with them and even acquiescing to being called a *poulain* himself.[52]

Among the most noteworthy features of Latin feudal society in the East is the dominant political role played by women.[53] The legal treatises themselves are a testament to this fact: the *Livre au roi* (composed around 1200) restates each point of custom in the masculine and the feminine to be clear that it applies to both men and women.[54] It did not escape the attention of male aristocratic visitors, nor the audiences of their stories at home, that for significant periods of time, the Latin East was a world in which women ruled. The fascination with the eastern ruling *dominae* appears both in the narrative accounts of visitors like Manasses of Hierges and in the romance accounts like *Gilles de Chin* and *Graf Rudolf*, but is nowhere clearer than in the famous *vida* of the Occitan troubadour Jaufre Rudel "Prince" of Blaye, who "fell in love with the countess of Tripoli, without seeing her, for the good that he heard of her from the pilgrims who came from Antioch."[55] The story builds upon the premise that tales about eastern Frankish women (in this case, Hodierna of Tripoli) circulated throughout the west and motivated men to travel to the frontier as crusaders. While it is unclear whether female lordship, as an element of eastern Frankish society, had origins or associations with similar structures in Occitania, we do find a prevalence of

[50] On Philip's popularity, see R. Tagliani, "Un nuovo frammento dei "Quatre Âges de l'homme" di Philippe de Novare tra le carte dell'Archivio di Stato di Milano," *Critica Del Testo* 16 (2013): 39–77, at 44–51.

[51] *Le Roman des Eles and the Ordene de Chevalerie: Two Early Old French Didactic Poems*, ed. K. Busby (Amsterdam, 1983), 103–20.

[52] Joinville, *Vie de Saint Louis*, 212 (§434).

[53] S. Schein, "Women in Colonial Society: The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the Twelfth Century," in *Gendering the Crusades*, ed. Susan Edgington and Sarah Lambert (New York, 2002), 140–53; N. Hodgson, *Women, Crusading, and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (Woodbridge, 2007); H. E. Mayer, "Studies in the History of Queen Melisende," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 26 (1972): 95–182; S. Lambert, "Queen or Consort: Queenship and Politics in the Latin East, 1118–1228," in *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Anne Duggan (Woodbridge, 1997), 153–69; A. V. Murray, "Constance, Princess of Antioch (1130–1164), Ancestry, Marriages, and Family," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 38 (2015): 81–96; and E. L. Jordan, "Women of Antioch: Political Culture and Powerful Women in the Latin East," in *Medieval Elite Women and the Exercise of Power, 1100–1400: Moving Beyond the Exceptionalist Debate*, ed. H. J. Tanner (New York, 2019), 225–46.

[54] *Le livre au roi*, ed. M. Greilshammer (Paris, 1996).

[55] *Biographies des Troubadours: Textes provençaux des xiii$_e$ et xiv$_e$ siècles*, ed. J. Boutière and I.-M. Cluzel (Toulouse, 1964), 16–19.

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Occitan-style codenames (*senhals*) for aristocratic women such as "Sweet" (*Dulcia*), "Pleasant" (*Plaisantia*), "Limpid" (*Clarentsa*), "Haughty" (*Orgellosa*), and the ubiquitous "Shy" — or possibly "Curvy" — (*Eschiva*).[56] The vitality of this practice in the East has not heretofore been explained or even examined, but it cannot have but helped to mark the women of Outremer as potential participants in the culture of courtly love and to enhance the power of the frontier as a courtly space. "Here," ran a letter dispatched by the prince of Antioch to the French royal court in 1155, "there are two daughters of Prince Raymond with the most beautiful faces and bodies who have reached marriageable age."[57] The effect of such appeals upon the imagination of western noblemen must have been considerable.

Our narratives describe women as among the most prominent judges of prowess and nobility in the audience of the eastern theater of crusading. In the work devoted to the career of Manasses of Hierges and the romances *Gilles de Chin* and *Graf Rudolf*, for example, the elite women of the Latin East are those who summon western knights to the frontier, praise and reward their prowess, and lament their departures. Accompanying the women in this role as arbiter and audience are the members of the military orders of the Temple and the Hospital and the priestly order of Canons of the Holy Sepulcher, who all judge the masculinity and virtue of the western knights. We know that these groups played a crucial role in the logistics of knightly journeys to the frontier. In our texts, they act as a kind of Greek chorus to shower approbation on the visiting knight. The *Life* of Gobert of Apremont, for example, claims that the Templars invited the knight to take the cross and come to their aid in Jerusalem. The Master of the Hospital himself celebrates upon Gobert's arrival, whereupon the Templars (like tournament heralds) help Gobert as "he raised his banner and his arms high over the boundary walls (*cancellos*) and made to fix them there."[58] A reputation earned with the military orders stretched internationally from the frontier to their myriad communities in Europe. As Jochen Schenk has shown, the friendships forged between the Templars and crusaders in the East were remembered long after the expedition was over and were indeed often invoked as a nobleman lay dying years after their crusade.[59]

[56] *Les Familles d'Outremer de Du Cange*, ed. E. G. Rey (Paris, 1869), passim.

[57] Rome, BAV, Reg. Lat. 179, fols. 46r-47r, at fol. 46v.

[58] Anonymous of Villers, *De beato Goberto confessore, ordinis Cisterciensis, in abbatia Villariensi in Brabantia vita* 1.2: "Igitur vir Dei pius Gobertus in nomine sanctae Trinitatis cum suis militibus et clientibus (armatis in adjutorium, ut seperius dictum, Hospitalariorum, et Templicolarum fratribus) ascenso, vexilla, et signa sua in altum super cancellos levari, atque figi praecepit." in AS, August, 4:381 (BHL 3570).

[59] J. Schenk, *Templar Families: Landowning Families and the Order of the Temple in France, c. 1120–1307* (Cambridge, 2012), 206–49.

Among the audience of the noble performance in Outremer, together with Templars, canons of the Holy Sepulchre, and Frankish aristocracy, were the crusaders' non-Latin aristocratic peers. These included members of the Byzantine court, the lords of Cilician Armenia, and the Turkish and Arab lords of the Islamicate lands that bordered the Latin East. These aristocrats participated in strikingly similar cultures of military prowess, courtly display, and even literary form as the European visitors. As revealed by the *Kitāb al-I'tibar* (*Book of Contemplation*) composed around 1183 by Usama ibn Munqidh, there was considerable appetite within the courts of Muslim Syria for stories of the prowess of Frankish knights. Usama described fighting with Franks, including their lance thrusts and parries, with a herald's eye for detail. He recorded the heraldic colors of their tunics and learned the names of their greatest knights, like a certain "Pedro" who lived at Apamea and fought in the army of the prince of Antioch.[60] Usama discussed the status of knights with no less figure than King Fulk of Jerusalem (known to Usama in a more Angevin princely fashion as *Fulk ibn Fulk*).[61] He devoted a chapter of the *Kitāb al-I'tibar* to his discussion of the training of young men for knighthood with a European knight, whom he explicitly described as a short-term visitor to the Latin East with whom he had developed a bond of intimate friendship.[62] By the thirteenth century, Uri Shachar has argued, the Frankish and Syrian aristocracies were so close that their societies can be said to have been "co-produced" by their engagements, military or otherwise, with one another.[63]

Over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Franks of Outremer invested heavily in the architecture and elite landscapes that would provide the stage for the western visitors. The new royal palace in Jerusalem, constructed before 1169 and adjoining the Tower of David, featured an enlarged reception hall (*solarium*) and an open gallery (*loggia*), both apparently intended to enhance the experience of royal receptions.[64] Like so much in the Latin East, the built environment offered a combination of the exotic and distinctive mixed with the familiar, if still impressive European style. In 1211, the noble ambassador Wilbrand of Oldenburg described the new Ibelin palace in Beirut as possessing a "delicate marble pavement simulating water agitated by a light breeze," walls covered in marble panels, a vault the color of the sky, and a pool with a fountain

[60] Usama ibn Munqidh, *The Book of Contemplation: Islam and the Crusades*, trans. P. M. Cobb (London, 2008), 52, 59, 73, and 79.

[61] Usama, *Book of Contemplation*, 76.

[62] Usama, *Book of Contemplation*, 144.

[63] U. Shachar, *A Pious Belligerence: Dialogical Warfare and the Rhetoric of Righteousness in the Crusading Near East* (Philadelphia, 2021), 13–96.

[64] Boas, *Domestic Settings* (n. 33 above), 52 and 74; and L.-A. Hunt, "John of Ibelin's Audience Hall in Beirut: A Crusader Palace Building between Byzantine and Islamic Art in its Mediterranean Context," in *The Emperor's House: Palaces from Augustine to the Age of Absolutism*, ed. M. Featherstone et al. (Berlin, 2015), 257–91.

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shaped like a dragon, that provided air conditioning and a relaxing sound. Wilbrand wrote that the water "lulls to sleep by agreeable murmurings its lords who sit nearby. I would willingly sit by it for all my days."[65] Traces of polychromy at Margat and Crac des Chevaliers suggest that paintings like the monumental images discovered at the royal abbey of Jehosaphat and which are known to have existed at Thebes may have been common in the major fortresses. The two-tiered vaulted palace at Tortosa and the recently-uncovered Great Hall and large "ceremonial" Gothic Hall of the Teutonic Knights castle at Montfort (around 1229), with its stained glass "in the French tradition," underscore the rich visual settings that were the backdrop to diplomacy and hospitality.[66]

In Europe, the built environment of gardens, parks, and water features were all critical components of the aristocratic landscape. European travelers to the Latin East, whose mental images of the Holy Land were already replete with references to paradise, the lush valleys of the Song of Songs, and the gardens of the New Testament, described seeing gardens, pools, and other features in and around Jerusalem. But the elite sites also had their own special landscapes: Wilbrand noted that the windows of the Ibelin palace looked out on "meadows, orchards, and most delightful places," and the treatise on the construction of the castle of Safad (in the 1260s) remarks that the region possessed game "to provide for the nobility."[67] There seems no reason to doubt that the Latin lords were indeed participants in what Scott Redford has called a "shared chivalric garden culture in the Mediterranean and Islamic worlds."[68] Beyond the principality of Antioch and the short-lived county of Edessa, non-Latin princes were not regularly welcomed as guests within the palaces of the crusader states; if all this building and decoration was intended to impress any visitor, it would seem to have been the visitor from the West they had in mind. The stage for the noble performance was carefully set.

Varieties of Performance

According to the European Latin and vernacular accounts, visitors to the Latin East could expect to participate in a range of activities, each of which was

[65] Pringle, "Wilbrand of Oldenbourg's Journey" (n. 33 above), 119; trans. Pringle, in *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem* (n. 32 above), 66.

[66] M. Piana, "A Bulwark Never Conquered: The Fortifications of the Templar Citadel of Tortosa on the Syrian Coast," in *Archaeology and Architecture of the Military Orders: New Studies*, ed. M. Piana and C. Carlsson (Burlington, 2014), 133–74; and *Montfort*, ed. A. J. Boas (Leiden, 2017), 9 and 176–94 (for the glass); and 7–8 and 227–32 (for the Gothic Hall).

[67] *De constructione castri Saphet: Construction et fonctions d'un château fort franc en Terre Sainte*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens (Amsterdam, 1981), 215; trans. M. Barber and K. Bate, in *The Templars: Selected Sources* (Manchester, 2002), 91.

[68] S. Redford, *Landscape and the State in Medieval Anatolia: Seljuk Gardens and Pavilions of Alanya, Turkey* (Oxford, 2000), 2, quoted in A. C. S. Peacock and S. N. Yildiz, "Introduction," in *The Seljuks of Anatolia: Court and Society in the Medieval Mediterranean*, ed. A. C. S. Peacock and S. N. Yildiz (New York, 2013), 1–22, at 12.

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emphatically public, taking place before a series of different audiences whose approbation and praise for the visitor our accounts dutifully record. The visitor's first obligation was the fulfillment of pilgrimage vows. In none of our narratives does pilgrimage or devotion occupy the most central position, but none omit to mention the opportunities the Latin East provided for displays of piety, with effusions of tears, prayers, and sumptuous gifts. In 1172, for instance, Henry the Lion of Saxony traveled to the valley of Jehosaphat, the Mount of Olives, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and the Jordan River, before ascending Quarentana.[69] Seven years later, Henry the Liberal visited Jerusalem, Hebron, Sebastia, and Nazareth "making suitable benefactions at each."[70] In narrative and literary sources, our visitors weep, pray, fast, and express exhaustion after their penitential journey, all under the appreciative gaze of the chief custodians of sacred places, the canons of the Holy Sepulcher. Both the chronicle of Arnold of Lübeck and the romance *Escoufle* also describe sumptuous gifts to the church of the Holy Sepulcher as both Duke Henry the Lion and the fictional Richard of Montvilliers place golden cups upon the altar.[71] Theodore Evergates notes the spectacular eschatacol of the charter of Henry the Liberal enacted at Hebron: "He ended by proclaiming himself 'I, Henry, count palatine of France.' Virtually the entire court of Champagne witnessed."[72]

With the formal requirements of pilgrimage complete, the noble voyagers can truly arrive. Lavish receptions were associated with the Kingdom of Jerusalem since shortly after its inception. In 1101, for example, a group of crusaders from Poitou were shocked when King Baldwin I (r. 1100–1118) invited them to feast with him before they had even recovered from the hardships of their journey.[73] A prominent visitor like Henry the Lion was received magnificently, first by an honor guard of the Military Orders of the Templars and Hospitallers. Then, in Jerusalem he was greeted by clergy singing hymns and praising him. The king of Jerusalem lodged him "in his own house" (*in domo propria*) and feasted with him for three days.[74] A humbler but well-connected knight like Manassses of Hierges was received at the royal court by his cousin Queen Melisende (r. 1131–1153). A monk at the abbey of Brogne in Namur where he died thirty-six years later

[69] Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. J. M. Lappenberg, MGH, *Scriptores* 21 (Hanover, 1869), 121.

[70] Evergates, *Henry the Liberal* (n. 31 above), 161.

[71] Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Lappenberg, 121; H. E. Mayer, "Die Stiftung Herzog Heinrichs des Löwen für das hl. Grab," in *Kreuzzüge und Lateinischer Osten*, ed. H. E. Mayer (Aldershot, 1983), 307–30; and *L'Escoufle: Roman d'aventure*, ed. P. Meyer (Paris, 1894), 18–19.

[72] Evergates, *Henry the Liberal* (n. 31 above), 161.

[73] "Cartae et chronica prioratus de casa vicecomitis," ed. P. Marchegay and E. Mabille, in *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou* (Paris, 1869), 342.

[74] Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Lappenberg, 121.

imagined the queen exclaiming to him upon his arrival: "Oh, for how long you have been expected through the dangers and travails of so much traveling!"[75] Manasses was received again in Antioch by the widowed princess Constance and his stay in Antioch was marked by feasting and leisure, culminating with the offer of gold, silver, and precious relics. Travelers received hospitality not only from Latins within the kingdom, but also from the princes of neighboring territories. Henry the Lion was reported to have been received in spectacular fashion by the Seljuq Sultan of Rum, Kilij Arslan II, and also, like many other princes, as a guest of the emperor of Constantinople.[76] Western knights also entered the service of the rulers of Cilician Armenia, close allies of the eastern Franks whose court must have been at least partly Francophone for much of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[77] As in Europe, time spent in princely courts inevitably implied courtly leisure pursuits. Elizabeth Lapina has gathered many references to board games played by Latins in the crusader states, giving life to archaeological discoveries like the dice found at Chateau Pèlerin and the Nine Men's Morris board found more recently in the excavations at Montfort.[78]

While it is unclear whether the practice or significance of these games was very different in the Latin East than in the West, another elite activity, hunting, was very different indeed. The establishment of a Latin zone of control and diplomatic relationships with the aristocracies of the Christian and Muslims Near East made possible the use of hunting as a diplomatic tool and opened the lands in their dominions for exploitation by visiting European elites. The pre-occupation with hunting as a sign of status and a form of elite socialization was a feature shared among the aristocracies of Latin Europe and the eastern Christian and Muslim Near East. Indeed, in establishing their feudal principalities in the Levant, the Franks came to occupy a land whence their own royal hunting practices had first emerged millennia earlier, and where hunting remained a critical component of political culture. In the kingdom of Jerusalem, a royal hunt, in which the king was joined by his court (including prominent visitors), was underway by at least 1131, when King Fulk died while hunting hares during his royal itinerary. In 1159, Fulk's son, Baldwin III, participated in hunts together with the Byzantine

[75] Namur, Bibliothèque du Séminaire, MS 57, fols. 130v–131r: "O diu desiderate per tot itinerum fatigationes et discrimina!" An edition and translation of the Brogne texts concerning Manasses of Hierges prepared by Wolfgang Mueller and Nicholas Paul is forthcoming under the title *Quomodo Sancta Crux ab Antiochia allata sit in Broniense cenobium* (How the Holy Cross Was Brought from Antioch to the Monastery of Brogne).

[76] Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Lappenberg (n. 69 above), 121–22 (for the reception by Kilij Arslan II), 119 (Constantinople on the way out), and 124 (Constantinople on the way back), respectively.

[77] Joinville, *Vie de Saint Louis*, ed. Monfrin, (n. 49 above), 70 (§143), trans. C. A. Smith, in *Joinville and Villehardouin, Chronicles of the Crusades* (New York, 2009), 180.

[78] E. Lapina, "Gambling and Gaming in the Holy Land: Chess, Dice and Other Games in the Sources of the Crusades," *Crusades* 12 (2013): 121–32.

emperor Manuel Komnenos.[79] But the fact of royal hunting was ultimately less significant to western visitors than the methods of hunting and the objects of the chase.

The Near East was home to a wide variety of megafauna unfamiliar to Europeans. Some of these animals, such as lions, leopards, oryxes, gazelle, and the large numbers of bird species that crossed through the region in migration, were prey.[80] Others, such as cheetah and caracal, were caught and trained as hunting animals in the same way that Europeans traditionally used hunting dogs. A richly illustrated copy of the second-century author Oppian of Apamea's *Cynegetica* made in Constantinople in 1054 reveals the wealth of opportunities in the form of animals and different hunting practices available to hunters in the regions of Syria and eastern Anatolia.[81]

The most important eyewitness observer of the hunting culture of the crusader states was the Syrian aristocrat and avid hunter Usama ibn Munqidh. Looking back on his life from later in the twelfth century, Usama recalled numerous interactions with Franks, both the local aristocracy and visitors from the west, in contexts related to hunting. Usama's stories point to a thriving market in hunting birds and mammals — and to a strong desire on the part of Europeans to hunt large and (in their eyes) exotic megafauna. He recalled the story of the unfortunate Frankish lord Adam of Hunak who asked the help of local peasants in locating a leopard; the animal ultimately killed him.[82]

Big cats occupy an outsized place in the narratives relating to western visitors to the frontier. Henry the Lion, upon his meeting with Sultan Kilij Arslan II (who was also his namesake, "Arslan" meaning "the lion" in Turkish), was given two big cats as a gift to bring back to Saxony. Arnold of Lübeck, who recorded Henry's journey, called them "leopards" (*leopardos*), but given that he says that they were "trained to sit on the backs of horses" (*docti enim erant sedere in equis*), it is more likely that they were hunting cheetahs.[83] There is a remarkable correspondence between what Arnold says about the Sultan's gift and Usama's characterizations of the trade in animals, and the Franks' (sometimes naïve) desires. Even Arnold's mistake in calling the animals "leopards" seems to prove Usama's point that the Franks (to their peril) were often unable to tell the difference between the two types of cats.[84] This confusion between friendly and deadly *felidae* may in part

[79] William of Tyre, *Chronique*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens (Leiden, 1986), 18, 27, and 32–34.

[80] P. M. Cobb, *Usama ibn Munqidh: Warrior Poet in the Age of the Crusades* (London, 2005), 8–9.

[81] Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, Cod. gr. Z. 479 (= 881)

[82] Usama ibn Munqidh, *Book of Contemplation*, trans. Cobb (n. 60 above), 123–24. And on this story in particular, see P. M. Cobb, "Infidel Dogs: Hunting Crusaders with Usama ibn Munqidh," *Crusades* 6 (2007): 57–68.

[83] Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Lappenberg (n. 69 above), 122.

[84] Usama ibn Munqidh, *Book of Contemplation*, trans. Cobb (n. 60 above), 124.

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explain the motif of the "friendly lion" of the Latin East, which is indebted to a knight who rescues it from a dragon or serpent. This motif appears associated with crusaders in the romances *Gilles de Chin* and *Gui de Warewic* was so widespread that it was included as a "type" of lion behavior in a fourteenth-century Italian bestiary, again associated with a supposedly historical French crusader in the Latin East.[85]

A rich body of evidence survives testifying to a widespread belief that the hunt and capture of lions was an experience available to visitors in Outremer. The English chronicler Matthew Paris included a detailed and illustrated anecdote in the *Chronica Maiora* describing how "among other marks of the virtue and boldness of [the English knight Hugh de Neville], he killed a lion in the Holy Land. Having first been shot in the chest with an arrow and then afterwards transfixed in the chest with a sword, the lion died with blood pouring forth."[86] The map that Matthew drew around 1240 (the only surviving political map of the crusading frontier) actually marks a forest outside of Caesarea with the words "where [there are] lions" (*ubi leones*).[87] It was in precisely this area near Caesarea where in 1251 John of Joinville encountered Elnart of Selninghem, who had arrived as part of a small expedition apparently separate from the Seventh Crusade. Joinville described Elnart's hunting practices as follows:

> He [Elnart of Selninghem] and his men took up hunting lions and caught a number of them at great risk to themselves. They would shoot at the lions as they were spurring their horses on as hard as they could. After they had fired their arrows, the lion would pounce at them and would have caught them and eaten them had they not dropped an old piece of clothing, which the lion leapt upon, tore to shreds and devoured, thinking he had trapped a man....[88]

Hunting lions and encounters with lions and other exotic beasts is also, unsurprisingly, a component of the romance tradition dedicated to the aristocratic sojourn in the East.

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[85] Paul, "In Search of the Marshal's Lost Crusade" (n. 31 above), 14–16; and idem, *To Follow in Their Footsteps: The Crusades and Family Memory in the High Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2012), 86–87. On the symbolism of the lion more generally, see Nigel Harris, "The Lion in Medieval Western Europe: Toward an Interpretive History," *Traditio* 76 (2021): 185–213.

[86] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, ed. H. R. Luard, 7 vols. (London, 1872–80), 3:71: "Inter caetera suae probitatis et audaciae insignia in Terra Sancta leonem interfecit. Leo prius sagittatus in pectore postea gladio transverberatus, eliquato sanguine expiravit."

[87] Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 2*. A restored version of the map can be consulted at the Oxford Outremer Map Project, a digital project hosted at Fordham University.

[88] Joinville, *Vie de Saint Louis*, ed. Monfrin (n. 49 above), 243–44 (§493–94); trans. Smith (n. 77 above), 267–68.

While lions may have represented the most spectacular creatures the crusaders encountered, they were far from the only component of the eastern hunting experience enjoyed by European visitors. Falconry, a pastime that receives extensive reporting in Usama's *Book of Contemplation*, was considered the highest form of hunting by European aristocrats. Bans on hawks and dogs in the official call for the Second Crusade *Quantum praedecessores* show that crusaders were prepared to bring their hunting animals with them, and Usama himself bought a European goshawk from a Genoese trader.[89] If in Usama's account, a hunting bird might be imported from Europe for sale in the ports of the Levant, it is important to note that European hunting treatises depicted the Latin East as the mythic origin point for all hunting birds. According to the twelfth-century treatise of William the Falconer, falcons originated at Mount Gilboa, and this point was once again underscored on Matthew Paris's map of Outremer, which places a falcon in precisely this location.[90]

For Gauthier de Tournai, the author of the romance *Gilles de Chin*, the crusading hero's lion hunts in the Jordan valley were articulated as a demonstration of prowess, directly connected to his subsequent victory in battle, an important reminder that amid all of feasting, hunting, gift giving, and devotional display, crusading also sometimes involved fighting. Combat, especially in the period of concern for the survival of the Latin kingdom after 1170, is so often assumed to be the primary purpose of noble journeys to the East that we find modern historians condemning with harsh words the "ineffectual" visits of small expeditions of one or two lords. While victories were always celebrated and missing out on a great battle, as Philip of Flanders managed to do in 1177, could carry with it disappointment, it is not very clear that contemporaries expected the private expeditions to accomplish major strategic feats.[91] Henry the Liberal seems to have been expected to engage in combat against Saladin at the Templar fortress of Le Chastellet in 1179, but missed his chance.[92] Henry the Lion, who was

[89] For the ban of hunting animals at the time of the Second Crusade, see Eugenius III, "Quantum Praedecessores," PL 180, col. 1065; trans. Phillips, *The Second Crusade* (n. 26 above), 280–82. For the failure of Eugenius's ban, see Eudes of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in Orientem*, ed. and trans. V. G. Berry (New York, 1948), 94–95; and Usama ibn Munqidh, *Book of Contemplation*, trans. Cobb (n. 60 above), 204–25.

[90] *Dancus rex, Guillelmus falconarius, Geradus falconarius: Les plus anciennes traités de fauconnerie de l'Occident publiée d'après tous les manuscripts connus*, ed. G. Tilander (Lund, 1963), 158.

[91] In hindsight, Philip of Flanders' 1177 siege of the fortress, which corresponded with an attack on the kingdom from the south by Saladin, appeared foolhardy to William of Tyre. In Flanders, however, contemporary chroniclers treated the expedition as a demonstration of Philip's concern to reconquer a stronghold that had been unjustly taken from the Christians some years before. See Sigebert of Gembloux, *Chronographia*, ed. L. C. Bethmann, MGH, *Scriptores* 6 (Hanover, 1844), 416–17.

[92] Evergates, *Henry the Liberal* (n. 31 above), 161.

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definitely armed and fought a skirmish in the Balkans, did not engage in any fighting in 1172. He did, however, tour the battlefields of earlier crusade expeditions and seems to have returned with a variety of stories he had heard about earlier engagements, which Arnold of Lübeck dutifully recorded in his account of the duke's journey.[93] Others, like the father and son Counts Thierry and Philip of Flanders, did fight, each prosecuting campaigns on the frontiers of the principality of Antioch during their respective independent sojourns in 1157 and 1177.[94]

There are many reasons why the fighting to be had in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was special, distinct from either combat or the tournament mêlée that were the only possible avenues for the demonstration of prowess in the West. This fighting was not only socially but also clerically sanctioned, and it was probably relatively safe, consisting of small-scale raids (*chévauchées*) when the kingdom was not threatened by a major exterior foe. The aspect that most interested our sources, however, was the presence of a frontier. Both the Gilles de Chin of romance and the historical Manasses of Hierges fought defensive border skirmishes, the latter at Antioch where his "efficacy of virtue turns back the tide of the Turks."[95] The texts dedicated to Manasses also notably claim that he would ride across the borders, making raids into enemy territory: "[he] marched to the lands of Egypt, Damascus, and Antioch beyond the boundaries of the kingdom of Jerusalem."[96] "Frequently," another text relates, "he unfurled the banners against the Babylonians and the Damascenes, bared the sword, and carried on his return the delightful stain of enemy blood."[97] Although this bloody scene is unmistakably from the crusading frontier, we might remember that tournaments, too, were fixed at liminal spaces, usually halfway between two towns or fortifications. In both contexts, chivalry shows itself at the edge.

Towards a New Model: Cultural Capital and the Crusading Frontier

The quest to understand the "value" of crusading for medieval Christians has been a pre-occupation of historians since the very dawn of the study of the crusades. For critics of the Catholic church during the Reformation and the

[93] Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Lappenberg (n. 69 above), 122–23.

[94] See Andrew Buck, *The Principality of Antioch and Its Frontiers in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge, 2017), 43 and 52.

[95] Namur, Bibliothèque du Séminaire, MS 80, fol. 35v: "incredibile memoratu est divino fretus presidio quantas hostium catervas parva manu fuderit, quanta virtutis efficatia Turcorum exercitus Antiochenis partibus influentium reflexerit."

[96] Namur, Bibliothèque du Séminaure, MS 80, fol. 35v: "Iheroslimitani regni limites eggressus Babilonie, Damasci, Antiochie finitima peragraret."

[97] Namur, Bibliothèque du Séminaire, MS 57 fol. 131v: "Frequenter babiloniis et damascenis vexilla deplicans gladios nudabat, et iocundam ex inimici sanguine maculam reportabat."

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Enlightenment, the crusading project was attacked as having no value whatsoever. The frontispiece to *Historie of the Holy Warre* published by the English cleric Thomas Fuller in 1640 depicts the church of "Eu-rope" flanked by two sacks, with one rubric reading "We went out full" and the other "But return empty." The famous entry for "Croisades" in the 1754 volume of the *Encyclopédie* of Denis Diderot similarly condemns the enterprise for "seiz[ing] a rocky outcrop worth not one drop of blood and that they might have venerated in the spirit from afar just as well as nearby and the possession of which was alien to the honor of their religion."[98]

The recent remedy for these reductive approaches has involved restoring the crusades to a robustly devotional context, rendering it as a conventional aspect of medieval lived religion. While there can be no question as to the value of this shift in perspective – it would be wrong to dismiss the idea that crusaders sought relief from the consequences of sin – it is important to remember that the vast majority of those whom we can find in the act of taking the cross and embarking for the eastern crusading frontier were members of an arms-bearing aristocracy. What sin they felt required expiation had accrued in the course of lives as landowners, warriors, and lords; crusading seems inextricably bound to their social status. And, as Richard Kaeuper has recently shown, over the course of the first two centuries of crusading history, something happened to those arms-bearers.[99] As they increasingly began to consider themselves to be a distinctive noble class, with fixed rights and privileges established at birth and demonstrated through elaborate rituals, they also became increasingly convinced that their very nobility, their knighthood, made them *less* prone to sin. As knights, they were an order equivalent to priests, chosen by God, and suffering in their service for mankind. A knight like William Marshal (1146/47–1219) would protest on his deathbed that his life was on the whole not sinful, and that clerics were wrong to insist on his repentance.[100]

If these knights did not require absolution, what good was Diderot's "rocky outcrop" to them? In the account of the expedition of Manasses of Hierges, the Holy Land was a stage, Jerusalem "a city situated upon a mountain which cannot hide, that new rock virtue, appearing in the mountains of Israel."[101] Those who traveled to this land did not return empty-handed. The dream vision of the romance accounts and the fragments of the stories of historical travelers that survive embedded in documents and written out as narratives all attest to what

[98] *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts, et des métiers, Tome 4*: Conseil-Dizier, Saint, ed. D. Diderot et al., 35 vols. (Paris, 1751–66), 4:502, s.v. "Croisades: s'emparer d'une point de rocher qui ne valoit pas une goutte de sang, qu'ils pouvoient vénérer esprit de loin comme de près, & dont la possession étoit si étrangere a l'honneur de la religion."

[99] R. Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry* (Philadelphia, 2009).

[100] *The History of William Marshal*, trans. Bryant (n. 21 above), 219.

[101] Namur, Bibliothèque du Séminaire, MS 57, fol. 130v: "Uerum quia supra montem ciuitas collocata latere non potuit apparens in montibus Israel, mons ille nouus uirtutum, flos militaris, clipeus David, sagitta Jonathae, secundus Machabaeus, novus Gedeon."

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was to be gained from these journeys. They had enacted their nobility in a landscape charged with the power of sacred history and the collective memory of earlier, victorious, holy warriors. They interacted with an elite society widely recognized as master practitioners of nobility and courtliness, whose approbation they sought in devotional, recreational, and military performances. They returned not only with reputations and stories, but also with physical objects in the form of relics and gifts: materials they would preserve, use as ritual objects, and display for visitors.[102]

What was acquired might best be described using a (highly adapted) form of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "cultural capital."[103] The acquisition of this capital required investment of a kind only available to elites and yet yielded a valuable resource which enhanced their status and distinction as elites and among their noble peers. This capital was embodied in the returning crusaders themselves, stored up in accounts of their journey and objectified in their possessions, weapons, and armor. Manasses of Hierges, who had set off for the East as the son of a minor castle functionary, was said to have returned looking "like a count" and was married to the daughter of the count of Chiny.[104] Early litigants coming to the English court of Chivalry in 1389, Richard Scrope and Robert Grosvenor, defended their claims to their coats of arms by calling witnesses who had seen those devices carried and worn on private, independent expeditions to various crusading frontiers:

> The deponent [Nicholas Sebreham] also said, that in the assemblage from all Christian countries at the insistence of the king of Cyprus, when he meditated his expedition to Alexandria in ships and galleys, one Sir Stephen Scrope was present … he further said that he was armed in Prussia, in Hungary, at Constantinople … and at Nesebar.[105]

[102] See Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps* (n. 85 above), 91–133; and idem, "Writing the Knight" (n. 6 above), 167–92.

[103] P. Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," trans. R. Nice, in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. Richardson (New York, 1986), 241–48. The value of Bourdieu's theories of capital has been demonstrated by Jonathan Jarrett with regard to the Iberian confessional frontier in the tenth century, and it seems even more applicable here. See J. Jarrett, "Engaging Elites: Counts, Capital, and Frontier Communities in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries, in Catalonia and Elsewhere," *Networks and Neighbors* 2 (2014): 211–61. Relevant also is the discussion of the definition of lay elite cultural capital in J. Guillory, *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago, 1993), 73.

[104] Namur, Bibliothèque du Séminaire, MS 57, fol. 145v: "iam non differt a comitibus specie."

[105] N. H. Nicolas, *The Controversy Between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor in the Court of Chivalry*, 2 vols. (London, 1832), 2:324. For the case, see M. Keen, "Chaucer's Knight, the English Aristocracy, and the Crusade," in idem, *Nobles, Knights, and Men-at-Arms in the Middle Ages* (London, 1996), 101–20.

It is critical to our understanding of crusading in the eastern Mediterranean that we acknowledge the role of the Latin East as a performance space for the western aristocracy. This represented, in the eyes of the military elite who supported the Latin East, a significant reason for holding these territories, and the eastern sojourn was a mechanism that they continued to employ as long as the frontier was available. In 1271, the Lord Edward of England (shortly afterwards Edward I) made his own sojourn in the East. As late as 1287, we find Alice, widowed countess of Blois constructing new defenses in the city of Acre during her own sojourn. When those defenses fell to the Mamluks only four years later in 1291 and the last Latin strongholds on the eastern Mediterranean shore were lost, Cyprus and the Latin principalities in Greece continued to host western visitors, who went there to hunt and attend tournaments and who praised their knights as some of the best in the world.[106] Still, the need for a fixed frontier meant that the fall of Acre precipitated the rise of Baltic seasonal campaigns or *Reisen*. Organized by the Teutonic knights, these campaigns offered visiting knights a package holiday. Visitors would be feasted at the table of honor (*Ehrentisch*) and included in the Order's heraldic narratives and songs.[107] By the early fifteenth century, crusading history and imagery had become part of the elaborate pageantry of the Burgundian court and would feature centrally in the public theater carried by Spanish conquerors from Spain to Mexico City.[108]

Re-orienting the study of the frontier and crusade expeditions around the acquisition of cultural capital by elites helps us to place these spaces more confidently within larger historical frameworks. Debates among crusade historians as to the colonial nature of the Levantine crusading enterprise have hinged on precisely the problem of the value and relationship of the economic dependence or value of the Frankish Levant to some nebulous European metropole. Alongside the value of the Holy Places to Christendom more generally, the regular itineraries of an international class of nobles and knights who were adherents of a universal chivalric code gave this space a meaning and function as a site of political and cultural performance: a theater of status within a theater of war.

The knightly metropole exploited the eastern frontier much like participants in the later Grand Tour — already usefully compared to an independent crusade expedition by Joachim Ehlers — cultivated the space to gain culturally important

[106] Jacoby, "Knightly Values" (n. 45 above), 162.

[107] W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen des europaischen Adels*, 2 vols. (Sigmaringen, 1989).

[108] For the Burgundian court, see E. Moodey, *Illuminated Crusader Histories for Philip the Good of Burgundy* (Turnhout, 2012). For Mexico, see M. Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians: Festivals of Reconquest in Mexico and Spain* (Austin, 2000), 123–28.

knowledge through a heavily scripted journey to points of shared significance.[109] Like later colonial elites of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries studied by John MacKenzie, their status and power closely corresponded with their exploitation of the natural world through the killing and collecting animals.[110]

The value in comparing elite practices of the central Middle Ages to later periods, however, is not to help us to join the dots on a flattened historical landscape. Contrary to the desires of modern European colonial elites steeped in medievalism, the crusades were no practice-run for later European empires. The adoption of the frontier space of the Latin East as a stage for aristocratic performances is a testament to the importance of liminal spaces and cultural capital in the unceasing maintenance of status required by aristocracies of different kinds at different times. Here it was status, and not the state, that fueled the drive for conquest and domination in the lands across the sea.

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Keywords: crusades, aristocracy, chivalry, cultural capital, Latin East, tourism, colonialism, Grand Tour, courtly culture, performance

[109] J. Ehlers, "Grand Tour avant la lettre? Schichtenspezifische Mobilität im Früh- und Hochmittelalter," in *Grand Tour: Adeliges Reisen und europäische Kultur vom 14. bis zum 18 Jahrhundert*, ed. R. Babel and W. Paravicini (Ostfildern, 2005), 23–32

[110] J. MacKenzie, *Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation, and British Imperialism* (Manchester, 1988).

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