

INTRODUCTION

Converting the World

SINCE THE ANTIQUARIANS of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries established the scholarly rules and conventions that govern the professional study of the past, historians have put an enormous amount of effort into investigating the Crusades.¹ Many aspects of the Crusade experience, however, remain underexplored. Despite a few valuable studies, conversion is one of the more neglected topics. Interested, as I have long been, in the Crusades of the French king Louis IX, who reigned from 1226 to 1270, I have returned frequently to the relevant sources in order to see what more can be learned about his two exceedingly well-planned and yet, from the point of view of his Christian contemporaries, disappointing expeditions of 1248–1254 and 1270. The specific aspect scrutinized in this book is the king's program for the conversion of Muslims, which incorporated, because of

1. Florida State College at Jacksonville professor Andrew Holt's blog assembles the views of a large number of leading historians of the Crusades, whom he invited to identify the most important books on the subject. Taken together, this has turned out to be one of the more comprehensive and by far the most engrossing review of crusade literature presently available: <https://apholt.com/2017/07/27/historians-rank-the-most-important-books-on-the-crusades/>. See also Jonathan Phillips, Thomas F. Madden, Marcus Bull, and Andrew Jotischky, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Crusades* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

circumstances, a small number of pagan refugees as well. This was part of a complex of conversionary impulses long associated with Louis IX. There are notable differences among his various efforts, but there are also remarkable parallels and similarities. I shall first be summarizing for the reader these other, better-investigated endeavors, as well as some related developments in the thirteenth century, in order to set the scene for the king's attempts to bring Muslims and pagans to the Catholic faith.

Before doing so, I want to acknowledge that in order to fill in gaps in the story of the king's project, I have sometimes had to press the evidence hard. However, I do acknowledge explicitly which assertions are only possibilities or plausibilities, and I have tried to avoid introducing statements as potentially true and then presuming them to be true thereafter. Rather, I have hypothesized in the manner, "if this is the case, then such-and-such should follow." Often enough, hypotheses without direct proof have generated conclusions for which I believe the evidence is compelling. In any case, I hope this explanation of my approach encourages an open-minded reading of the reconstruction of events presented in this book.

In general, the policies and programs that Louis IX instituted to encourage conversions—in particular those targeting dissenting Christians, notorious sinners (prostitutes and manifest usurers being two such groups according to medieval moral thought), and Jews—had a very hard edge to them. In order for them to reconcile with him, the king demanded the converts' full renunciation of the beliefs and practices that defined their fallen state. The transformation of Christian dissidents into faithful Catholics was primarily a task for the ecclesiastical authorities. The effort had come to have an urgency about it in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in large part because clerical elites claimed that heresy had long been spreading and would continue to do so unless rigorous means were employed to arrest its extension and, indeed, to extirpate it as a whole. These percep-

tions and their consequences constitute an almost classic theme in the scholarship; historians such as Robert Moore and Malcolm Lambert have treated them with great sensitivity.²

Some scholars do not think the nature and extent of the threat to Catholic orthodoxy was as serious as contemporary churchmen believed.³ Yet, however misguided the clerics may have been, they made it their mission to find and expose heresy. They did so eventually (in the mid-1230s) by the implementation of inquisitions of heretical depravity. These became the principal mode of ferreting out religious difference among baptized Christians. The crown, in the reign of Louis IX, fully embraced the mission “with all thankful support.”⁴ The goal of these inquisitions was conversion, securing the return of contrite dissidents to the Catholic fold. Yet sometimes the inquisitors failed to achieve their goal. Contumacious heretics not only put their own salvation at risk, the orthodox observed, but could also lead other Christians astray and jeopardize their chance to enter into Paradise.⁵ In cases of contumacy, clergy turned to secular authorities for assistance. Clerics could not impose capital punishment in such instances because the church abhorred blood (“ecclesia

2. Robert Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent* (New York: Blackwell, 1985); Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002). See also Christine Ames, *Medieval Heresies: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015). On Moore’s views, see the respectful but nonetheless critical assessment in John Arnold, “Persecution and Power in Medieval Europe: *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, by R. I. Moore,” *American Historical Review* 123 (2018): 165–74.

3. Mark Pegg, *The Corruption of Angels: The Great Inquisition of 1245–1246* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

4. William of Chartres, “On the Life and Deeds of Louis, King of the Franks of Famous Memory, and on the Miracles That Declare His Sanctity,” in *The Sanctity of Louis IX: Early Lives of Saint Louis by Geoffrey of Beaulieu and William of Chartres*, ed. M. Cecilia Gaposchkin and Sean Field (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 142, paragraph 19.

5. Jacques Le Goff, *Saint Louis* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), 58–59, 785–88; William Chester Jordan, *Louis IX and the Challenge of the Crusade: A Study in Rulership* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 157–58.

[4] INTRODUCTION

abhorret a sanguine”). Instead, they “relaxed” (delivered) contumacious heretics into the hands of secular rulers for execution, typically by burning.⁶

As to prostitutes, Louis IX articulated policies of social segregation piecemeal before 1254 and more comprehensively thereafter, expelling them to the peripheries of towns and away from main roads and holy places, threatening the loss of their goods if they violated these directives, and criminalizing the actions of people who leased them dwellings too near the prohibited spaces. He expected these measures to motivate them to abandon their profession.⁷ With the king’s support, the bishop of Paris, William of Auvergne (d. 1249), provided group housing in the city and financial support for those who promised to reform themselves and live quasi-monastic lives. This meant also furnishing religious instruction and the necessary endowments to sustain the women over the years.⁸ The temporary relief from financial vulnerability, often a key factor in taking up sex work,⁹ offered some repentant prostitutes the opportunity to reenter society and to marry.¹⁰ For others, it allowed for the possibility of later professing at a genuine monastic house, taking their conversion to a higher stage.¹¹ The king’s and similar other programs subjected the women temporarily or permanently to the stringent disci-

6. Edward Peters, *Inquisition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 50–51 and 68–72.

7. Keiko Nowacka, “Persecution, Marginalization, or Tolerance: Prostitutes in Thirteenth-Century Parisian Society,” in *Difference and Identity in Francia and Medieval France*, ed. Meredith Cohen and Justine Firnhaber-Baker (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2010), 185–86 and 190–91.

8. William Chester Jordan, *Men at the Center: Redemptive Governance under Louis IX* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2012), 90; Jordan, *Challenge of the Crusade*, 188–89; Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, 218–19, 292, 400.

9. Nowacka, “Persecution, Marginalization, or Tolerance,” 181–82.

10. Nowacka, “Persecution, Marginalization, or Tolerance,” 190–91.

11. Nowacka, “Persecution, Marginalization, or Tolerance,” 190; Joëlle Rollo-Koster, “From Prostitutes to Brides of Christ: The Avignonese *Repenties* in the Late Middle Ages,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32 (2002): 115.

pline of the church and secular authorities in the communal housing furnished to them. This may not have been to their liking, but authorities had not forced the women (by contemporary understandings of force) to take up residence. Over time, though, some of them may have chafed under the discipline and come to rue their choice.

Usurers, as remarked, also attracted the king's attention. He and his mother, Blanche of Castile, as regent, prohibited lending at interest in a series of pronouncements, the centerpiece of which was the Ordinance of Melun of 1230.¹² Moreover, Louis IX took extraordinary measures to follow up on the prohibition and eradicate usurious practices.¹³ The goal, expressed in language drawn from Ephesians 4:28, was for the usurers to give up traditional moneylending and "live by the honest work of their own hands," not, as the criticism went, by mulcting poor people in distress by means of high-interest consumption loans.¹⁴ Jews were the principal focus of the anti-usury campaign because of their prominence as moneylenders in the lower reaches of the consumer credit market.¹⁵ In time, despite manifest subterfuges and clandestine practices, the campaign drastically reduced usurers' profits, causing widespread pauperization.¹⁶ It is not clear that any immediate occupational shift improved the financial situation for Jews, however, since other than moneylending, they were restricted to producing goods for the small market of their coreligionists.¹⁷

As dissenters from the Christian faith, the Jews also stimulated the king's interest in other aspects of moral reform and, of

12. William Chester Jordan, *The French Monarchy and the Jews from Philip Augustus to the Last Capetians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), 131–32.

13. Jordan, *French Monarchy and the Jews*, 132.

14. Jordan, *Challenge of the Crusade*, 154–55 n. 15.

15. Jordan, *French Monarchy and the Jews*, 26–29.

16. Jordan, *French Monarchy and the Jews*, 154–76.

17. Jordan, *French Monarchy and the Jews*, 148–49.

course, in *religious* conversion.¹⁸ To turn this interest into reality, he imposed a whole range of crippling disabilities on them. For example, at his command his officials consigned hundreds of copies of the Talmud to destruction by burning, the justification being that it contained passages that appeared to insult Jesus and the Virgin Mary and taught doctrines that deviated from those of the written Torah or Old Testament.¹⁹ A series of orders preserved for Normandy for 1235 show that Louis IX also forbade Jews to go to brothels or to prostitutes who were working independently. He limited their access to taverns in an evident effort to cut down on drunkenness and contact with Christians, though he mitigated this last prohibition slightly; travelers who needed to rest overnight in a tavern that doubled as an inn might do so. Nevertheless, the suspicion of “negative outcomes,” if there were too many occasions for proximity between Jews and Christians, was unrelieved, as the Norman evidence also reveals. The king particularly charged Jews to dismiss Christian servants in their employ who had been excommunicated and who thus might have their animus for the church reinforced by Jewish expressions of hatred for Christianity.²⁰

There is no doubt that the restrictions detailed above extended beyond Normandy. Moreover, in the culmination of its program in the 1250s and 1260s, the government obliged individual Jews everywhere in the kingdom to wear distinguishing signs on their clothing and to endure sermons preached in their synagogues and in Christian spaces—the Dominican convent in Paris, even the royal palace in the capital—urging them to aban-

18. Juliette Sibon, *Les juifs au temps de saint Louis* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2017), 22–64.

19. Jordan, *French Monarchy and the Jews*, 137–41; William Chester Jordan, “Marian Devotion and the Talmud Trial of 1240,” in *Religionsgespräche im Mittelalter*, ed. Bernard Lewis and Friedrich Niewöhner (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), 61–76.

20. For a discussion of the Norman directives, see Jordan, *French Monarchy and the Jews*, 135.

don Judaism for Christianity.²¹ None of these measures, illiberal as they may now appear, constituted force in the dominant contemporary moral calculus governing permissible incentives to convert.²² Yet, there were also less-disciplinary inducements. These included the patronage that came with royal and aristocratic sponsorship at baptism and yearly pensions for the new Christians.²³

The groups mentioned above do not exhaust the objects of Louis IX's or his contemporaries' concerns. The impulse in the thirteenth century was to convert—"to christianize and evangelize," in Geraldine Heng's words—the whole world.²⁴ It was to convert every part of it to a purity of devotion and, indeed, of moral living, as contemporary Catholics understood it. The hopes and strategies that emerged out of this impulse have stimulated a good deal of sophisticated scholarship. Some episodes are particularly vivid indicators of this totalizing vision. Although there are undoubtedly more that are worth addressing than those discussed here, I will concentrate on a small handful that are most directly relevant to the current study. These include the rise of the friars and the *béguines*, the eschatological and apocalyptical movements and discussions common in the period, the reform program of the Fourth Lateran Council and later church councils, the striking efflorescence of relic devotion, and the crusading enterprise itself. I do not attempt to offer comprehensive reviews of these issues in the pages of this introduction or to

21. Jordan, *French Monarchy and the Jews*, 149–50, 160, and 163. To the sources cited there, add "Notes sur quelques manuscrits du Musée britannique," ed. Léopold Delisle, *Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Ile de France* 4 (1877): 189.

22. Sibon, *Juifs au temps de saint Louis*, 32–33.

23. Jordan, *French Monarchy and the Jews*, 128–50.

24. Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 304 (see also 50–51 nn. 31–32).

pretend that they are not themselves interrelated, but I hope to provide sufficient background to situate readers and deepen the story told in the chapters that follow.

Even if churchmen exaggerated the threat of religious dissent, the array of ecclesiastical and political reactions to the reputed danger had a transformative effect on Christian society. In the first instance, it appeared to justify a resort to violence for its suppression in the Albigensian Crusade (1209–1229), a precedent of immense importance and long-lasting impact.²⁵ In addition, as we have already seen, the threat churchmen imagined gave rise to the inquisitions of heretical depravity in the aftermath of the war. Another reaction, the one I shall be stressing, was the growth of preaching by men of evangelical disposition, whose aim was the spread of true doctrine and enforcement of the proper performance of the Christian life in a way that would challenge and ultimately nullify popular and potentially heretical criticisms of the basic practices of the church.²⁶

Not all of the groups that one associates with this antiheretical outpouring escaped the suspicion of heterodoxy themselves. The Humiliati, for example, endeavored to live what they took to

25. Mark Pegg, *A Most Holy War: The Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Christine Ames, *Righteous Persecution: Inquisition, Dominicans, and Christianity in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); James Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society: Power, Discipline, and Resistance in Languedoc* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Lucy Sackville, *Heresy and Heretics in the Thirteenth Century: The Textual Representations* (York: York Medieval Press, 2011); Peter Diehl, "Overcoming Reluctance to Prosecute Heresy in Thirteenth-Century Italy," in *Christendom and Its Discontents: Exclusion, Persecution, and Rebellion, 1000–1500*, ed. Scott Waugh and Peter Diehl, 47–66 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996); James Given, "Social Stress, Social Strain, and the Inquisitors of Medieval Languedoc," in Waugh and Diehl, *Christendom and Its Discontents*, 67–85.

26. Jeannine Horowitz, "Popular Preaching in the Thirteenth Century: Rhetoric in the Fight against Heresy," *Medieval Sermon Studies*, 60 (2016): 62–76; Sackville, *Heresy and Heretics*, 41–87.

be the simple gospel life implicit in the name they bore.²⁷ Their endowed fraternal communities were patterned on the coenobitic life, accepted a hierarchy of internal discipline, and gave a nod to episcopal oversight. However, their insistence on preaching, though many were laypeople, got them into trouble with bishops. They responded to criticisms by means of strategic compromises in ways that ultimately allowed them to survive and to carry out their missionary tasks, but not everyone was convinced. Nevertheless, their communities satisfied many of the critics, including the popes. Louis IX of France, on the contrary, while clearly sharing many of their values, was suspicious of the Humiliati and refused to endow houses for them in France or even to let them expand there from Italy.²⁸

The king's reason may relate to another group, called loosely Waldensians. Although the scholarship on this group/movement has been characterized by skepticism, as Peter Biller has nicely mapped,²⁹ a few matters seem certain, at least to me. The Waldensians shared the missionary zeal of the Humiliati and other contemporary or near-contemporary groups, but were divided about making strategic concessions to the demands of the institutional church, such as promising to preach only with episcopal licenses. Their name possibly stems from a merchant, Valdès or Waldo of Lyon, who renounced his wealth and assumed the garb and behavior of a poor holy man. Inspired by his example, the Waldensians preached a gospel of renunciation of worldly possessions. Many also appear to have begun to challenge the priesthood's authority and, following from this, to attack the sacramental system. Those Waldensians who were willing to submit

27. Frances Andrews, *The Early Humiliati* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

28. William Chester Jordan, "Louis IX: Preaching to Franciscan and Dominican Brothers and Nuns," in *Defenders and Critics of Franciscan Life: Essays in Honor of John V. Fleming*, ed. Michael Cusato and Guy Geltner (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 224–25.

29. Peter Biller, "Goodbye to Waldensianism?," *Past & Present* 192 (2006): 3–33.

to ecclesiastical censure—or pretend to—were, like the Humiliati, reconciled and did effective (exemplary) work in the communities in which they resided and preached under license. Others who refused to reconcile fell victim to prosecution as heretics or fled to the mountains to practice their faith as they wished, in anticipation that a final end-time reckoning was near at hand. God would come to rescue the truly good and faithful men and women who burned with the fervor of their love for Him.

A Spaniard named Dominic and an Italian named Francis, as most readers know, were critical personalities in the further expansion of these evangelical movements.³⁰ Dominic of Calaruega (1170–1221), in some ways a more opaque personality, was motivated to convert heretics in southern France (conventionally referred to as Cathars, whether the terminology is appropriate or not) and ultimately the losers in the bitter war of annihilation referred to above, the Albigensian Crusade.³¹ Francis of Assisi (1182–1226), who first focused on the towns of northern Italy, took his message to Christians who were orthodox in name but failed to live up to the values they otherwise accepted. These people included, as one might expect, usurers and prostitutes, but extended to merchants, bankers, shopkeepers, and the middle and lower orders in general. Francis in particular had an irrepressible zeal in his missionary activity and an explicit belief that he was God's holy agent. Neither he nor Dominic rejected the authority of the institutional church, and both found their patrons in a succession of popes.

The men and, soon, women³² who flocked to the new orders—the Dominicans (Order of Preachers) and Franciscans

30. On Dominic, see Ralph Bennett, *The Early Dominicans: Studies in Thirteenth-Century Dominican History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1937), 18–30. On Francis, see Jacques Le Goff, *Saint Francis of Assisi* (London: Routledge, 2004) and Augustine Thompson, *Francis of Assisi: A New Biography* (London: Cornell University Press, 2012).

31. Pegg, *Most Holy War*.

32. Marie-Humbert Vicaire, "La naissance de Sainte-Marie de Prouille," in Pierre Mandonnet, *Saint Dominique: l'idée, l'homme et l'oeuvre*, vol. 1, 99–114

(Order of Friars Minor)—set about to transform the world. The Dominicans dedicated themselves to propagating right doctrine through learning, and they were early on attracted to the higher schools, including the University of Paris. As their name implies, they were also dedicated to persuasion by preaching. When all else failed, however, they resorted to repression. It was a short step to Dominican involvement, preponderant involvement, in the inquisitions of heretical depravity. In its early years, the Franciscan order's attraction to the schools was peripheral. They were rather more like animate symbols of the faith, wandering mendicants living off alms. Their male adherents (not the women³³) traveled about like holy men of old, and they preached and exhorted their listeners to amend their lives in preparation for the Lord's return.

While Dominicans and Franciscans came to dominate the scene in terms of evangelical piety, the impulse to prepare the world for the Second Coming of Christ had many other partisans. There were the Brothers or Friars of the Sack, the Pied Friars, and the like, all licensed to preach and exemplify the simple life for the Christian faithful.³⁴ As the Dominicans and Franciscans found a powerful patron in the French royal family, including Louis IX, so too did these friars. Eager as they were to pledge obedience to the pope, they did not evoke reservations such as the king had about the Humiliati.³⁵ One ought to note, however, that in the reckoning of some critics, all of these groups were defective in that their devotion did not culminate in the highest

(Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 1937); Miles Pattenden, "Canonisation of Clare of Assisi and Early Franciscan History," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 59 (2008): 208–26.

33. Catherine Mooney, *Clare of Assisi and the Thirteenth-Century Church: Religious Women, Rules and Resistance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 47–48.

34. Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars: The Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Pied Friars* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 2006).

35. Andrews, *The Other Friars*, 25, 105–6, 183, and 199; Jordan, *Challenge of the Crusade*, 185 and 190.

form of conversion, namely the taking of *monastic* vows, signaling the move from the lay to the religious life. Very troubling to conservatives was many friars' refusal to live in enclosed and scrupulously regulated and disciplined communities.

If wandering friars failed to meet some of the traditional mid-thirteenth-century criteria of the perfected life, so too did another group of people who shared the moral fervor of the day. Discussing them reveals some additional fault lines in the reform movement. *Béguines* were typically widows or never-married laywomen who dressed plainly but did not take vows and often lived independently rather than in groups. They represented themselves as practicing renunciation of worldly life, but it was up to them as to whether to persist in the practice. Unlike nuns, they were not *de jure* obliged to do so. Thirteenth-century Paris was replete with such women. Their "halfway" conversion, from the critics' point of view, seemed dangerously incomplete, even though the king was an ardent supporter.³⁶ To take another example, the king's sister Isabelle (d. February 1270) was no *béguine*, but she embraced virginity, rejected marriage, lived a rigorously ascetic life in many other ways, and founded a convent of nuns on the then-existing Franciscan model, whose rule she helped to write.³⁷ Yet she herself refused to take the veil, even though she kept an apartment at the convent. Ultimately this provoked clerical displeasure, as Sean Field has shown.³⁸ In other words, conversion was itself a contested category in the thirteenth century. How much did one have to change for observers to reckon one a genuine convert and thus a person contributing to that improvement of Christian society that would bring a final reconciliation with God?

36. Tanya Miller, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris: Gender, Patronage, and Spiritual Authority* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 25–34.

37. Sean Field, *Isabelle of France: Capetian Sanctity and Franciscan Identity in the Thirteenth Century* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006).

38. Sean Field, *Courting Sanctity: Holy Women and the Capetians* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, in press).

It comes as no surprise, perhaps, that the eschatological and apocalyptic were expressed both in tandem with the growth of the mendicant, béguine, and similar movements (such as the Italian “Order of the Apostles”³⁹) and in opposition to their spread. So the teachings of the Calabrian mystic Joachim of Fiore (d. 1202) prophesying a new status or phase in salvation history came to be associated—though, as David Burr has demonstrated, not always uncritically—with the mission and person of Francis, canonized in 1228 less than two years after his death.⁴⁰ To be sure, conservative thinkers disliked this association, another theme in Burr’s book. Saint Francis was wildly popular, and as stories spread about his life and miracles, men and women accepted that God had specially chosen him to support His church. This did not mean that the saint’s life had opened up a new dispensation that in the extreme imaginings of Francis’s admirers might even be the critical act in a new age of the Holy Spirit.

Other conservatives and cynics respected Francis without believing that his followers lived up to his model or that the model was worthy of imitation by, say, kings such as Louis IX. The author of the harshest academic critique of mendicant spirituality was a professor at the University of Paris, William of Saint-Amour. He referred to his treatise *De periculis novissimorum temporum* as a commentary on the end-times.⁴¹ In this rendering, the friars’ coming was the bad omen, an aspect of the Antichrist’s plan, a conclusion echoed by the prolific northern French poet Rutebeuf, one of the professor’s zealous supporters.⁴² William’s work

39. See, for example, Jerry Pierce, *Poverty, Heresy, and the Apocalypse: The Order of the Apostles in Medieval Italy, 1260–1307* (New York: Continuum, 2012).

40. David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001).

41. Editorial introduction to William of Saint-Amour, *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, ed. Guy Geltner (Paris: Peeters, 2008), 1.

42. For the reference to the Antichrist, see *Oeuvres complètes de Rutebeuf*, ed. Edmond Faral and Julia Bastin (Paris: A. and J. Picard, 1977), vol. 1, 254–55, ll. 93–117. For other works and passages in Rutebeuf’s works in support of William of Saint-Amour, see vol. 1, 243–48, 258–66, 273 ll. 92–105, and 311 ll. 193–215. As

occasioned papal censure and exile from France at the behest of the French king.⁴³

The point is that the coming of the apocalypse was the framing narrative for multiple discussions of reform and crisis in the thirteenth century, a fact established meticulously in the work of Nicholas Vincent.⁴⁴ The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 was “a show with a meaning,” in Brenda Bolton’s memorable words.⁴⁵ Drawing directly and indirectly on the writings of the ancient fathers of the church, especially Pope Gregory the Great, and on the magisterial teachings of the late twelfth-century Parisian scholar Peter the Chanter and his circle, its canons envisioned a thoroughgoing purification of the Catholic religion from the top down.⁴⁶ One may infer from the canons that this would reach the lowest levels by a new stress or reemphasis on pastoral care carried out by a metaphorical army of energetic prelates.

The fathers of the Council, especially Pope Innocent III, himself an avid supporter of the Dominican and Franciscan orders, envisioned a long, ongoing program that would require incredible effort:

Indeed, *it is time*, as the blessed apostle said, *for judgment to begin at the house of the Lord* [1 Pet. 4:17]. For all corruption in the people comes first from the clergy, because *if the priest, who is anointed, sins, he makes the people guilty* [Lev. 4:3].

a guide to understanding Rutebeuf’s medieval French, Michel Zink’s translation into Modern French (Rutebeuf, *Oeuvres complètes* [Paris: Bordas, 1989–1990]) has been extremely helpful.

43. Editorial introduction to William of Saint-Amour, *De periculis*, 1–22.

44. Nicholas Vincent, “Corruent Nobiles!”: Prophecy and Parody in Burton Abbey’s Flying Circus.” In press.

45. Brenda Bolton, “A Show with a Meaning: Innocent III’s Approach to the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215,” in *Innocent III: Studies on Papal Authority and Pastoral Care*, 53–67 (Aldershot, UK: Variorum, 1995).

46. In general, see John Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and His Circle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970); and specifically on the appeal to Gregory the Great’s authority, vol. 1, 24, 53, 57, 90–91, 95, 115, 196, and 339.

It is certain that when the laity see [the clergy] sinning shamelessly and outrageously they also will fall into sins and ungodliness because of the [clergy's] example. And when they are reproved by anyone, they immediately make excuses for themselves saying, *The Son can do only what he has seen the Father doing* [John 5:19] and *It is enough for the disciple if he is like his master* [Matt. 10:25].

So this prophecy is fulfilled, *The people will be just like the priest* [Hosea 4:9]. Indeed now the sea says, *blush with shame, O Sidon* [Isa. 23:4] for this is where evils have come into the Christian people: faith decays, religion grows deformed, liberty is thwarted, justice is trampled underfoot, heretics emerge, schismatics grow haughty, the faithless rage, the Agarenes conquer.⁴⁷

In such manner the pope addressed the prelates of the Council in 1215 in anticipation of the deadly struggle between Muslims (Agarenes) and Christians to turn back the former's conquests as an element or even the culmination of universal reform.

Innocent III threw himself into the reform effort immediately, only to die a premature death in 1216 at the age of 56.⁴⁸ The First Council of Lyon in 1245, despite Norman Tanner's assertion that concerns for reform had begun to wane, "promot[ed] and confirm[ed]," as he himself recognized, "the general canonical legislation for religious life"—in other words, continued Innocent III's program.⁴⁹ In 1274, and with greater emphasis, the fathers at the Second Council of Lyon kept up the pressure to reform the world.⁵⁰ Moreover, both the Fourth Lateran Council, as we

47. Translation in Aden Kumler, *Translating Truth: Ambitious Images and Religious Knowledge in Late Medieval France and England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 21.

48. John Moore, *Pope Innocent III (1160/61–1216): To Root Up and to Plant* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 254–55.

49. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. Norman Tanner (London: Sheed and Ward, 1990), vol. 1, 274.

50. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 305–6; *Crusade and Christendom*:

have seen, and the Second Council of Lyon emphatically yoked the crusade to this process, like oxen to the plow.⁵¹ The mid-thirteenth-century archbishop of Rouen, Eudes Rigaud, who will make an appearance later in this book, was a Franciscan, a crusader, and a close friend of King Louis IX. He would come to embody all these impulses.⁵²

Yet, long before the Fourth Lateran Council, Pope Innocent III had already linked his vision of the reform of the world to the crusade by authorizing the expeditions that now go under the collective name of the Fourth Crusade (1204) and strategizing about similar wars. To the pope, “it was essential,” in the words of Danielle Park, “*to eradicate sin from Christian society* in order to bolster the crusade efforts” (my emphasis).⁵³ The planners of the Fourth Crusade targeted Muslim power in Egypt and the Holy Land.⁵⁴ A small expedition, separate from the main body of forces, did adhere to this goal, but the brunt of the military effort, for reasons it is not necessary to go into here, was diverted to an attack on the Byzantine Empire and led to the Frankish conquest of Constantinople and, in its wake, the establishment of the Latin Empire.⁵⁵ When Pope Innocent III first heard the news, he vented his dismay at a crusade gone wrong, but on re-

Annotated Documents in Translation from Innocent III to the Fall of Acre, 1187–1291, ed. Jessalynn Bird, Edward Peters, and James Powell (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 449–73. For a full treatment of the Council, see Burkhard Roberg, *Das zweite Konzil von Lyon [1274]* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1990).

51. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 267–71 (canon 71 of Lateran IV), 297–301 (canon ii.5 of Lyon I), 309–14 (constitution i of Lyon II).

52. Adam Davis, *The Holy Bureaucrat: Eudes Rigaud and Religious Reform in Thirteenth-Century Normandy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 65–129.

53. Danielle E. A. Park, *Papal Protection and the Crusader: Flanders, Champagne, and the Kingdom of France, 1095–1222* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 2018), 99.

54. David Nicolle, *The Fourth Crusade 1202–04: The Betrayal of Byzantium* (Oxford: Osprey, 2011), 2; *Crusade and Christendom*, 56.

55. Jonathan Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (New York: Viking, 2004); Nicolle, *Fourth Crusade*.

flection, and probably influenced by the dominant providential, even millenarian, narratives of the victorious First Crusade, he managed to interpret the conquest as another powerful sign of God's plan and a further step in the coming transformation of the world. Only now this would include the (impending) conversion of the schismatic Greeks.⁵⁶ As he expressed it later in the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council, even while excoriating practices in the Eastern Church that were deemed deviant, "we would wish to cherish and honour the Greeks who in our days are returning to the obedience of the apostolic see."⁵⁷

The conquest of Constantinople did more. The victors took the spoils back to the West. Its sanctuaries and palaces received wave after wave of relics that returning crusaders had taken from the caches of holy objects in church treasuries and private collections in Constantinople; of course, there was an existing market in Holy Land relics returning with pilgrims.⁵⁸ By implication, the West was supercharged with holiness by the transfer of these relics.⁵⁹ Not all of the spoils from Constantinople came to the West immediately after 1204. Many of the victors who

56. Marco Meschini, "The 'Four Crusades' of 1204," in *The Fourth Crusade: Event, Aftermath, and Perceptions*, ed. Thomas Madden, 27–42 (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 30–32. On millenarian expectations in the First Crusade, see Jay Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven: The First Crusade and the Quest for Apocalypse* (New York: Basic, 2011), and Jay Rubenstein, "Lambert of Saint-Omer and the Apocalyptic First Crusade," in *Remembering the Crusades: Myth, Image, and Identity*, ed. Nicholas Paul and Suzanne Yeager, 69–95 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012). See also the rather more intricate picture painted in Philippe Buc, "Crusade and Eschatology: Holy War Fostered and Inhibited," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 125 (2018): 304–39.

57. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 235, canon 4.

58. Michael Angold, *The Fourth Crusade* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014), 227–35. See also Nicholas Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps: The Crusades and Family Memory in the High Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 102–4.

59. Alexis Charansonnet and Franco Morenzoni, "Prêcher sur les reliques de la Passion à l'époque de saint Louis," in *La Sainte-Chapelle de Paris: Royaume de France ou Jérusalem céleste?*, ed. Christine Hediger (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), 61–99; Anne Lester, "What Remains: Women, Relics and Remembrance in the

established residence in the Empire retained the most precious relics for themselves, but regularly fiscal pressures obliged them to sell some of these to westerners or to allow westerners to redeem them from Italian moneylenders who held them as pledges for loans. This is how in the late 1230s King Louis IX obtained the Crown of Thorns and other relics of the Passion, for which he erected over the next few years a new chapel reliquary, the Sainte-Chapelle, in Paris.⁶⁰ As Sophie de Sède pointed out long ago and more recent historians have confirmed, there are many themes in the glass of the magnificent royal chapel, one worthy of note being the salvation history that looks forward to the conversion of the world under David's messianic successor (as evoked, for example, in the Tree of Jesse).⁶¹

Louis IX of France, like many Christians in Europe, was actively concerned, even as the construction team brought this monument to the triumph of Christianity to fruition, about just how this transformation would come about. What kind of end-time events would signal it? One interpretation predicted a titanic clash between the forces of good and evil. The contemporaneous invasion of Central and Eastern Europe by Central Asian warriors, the Mongols, appeared to support this.⁶² Although images of the Mongols were not fixed, Westerners frequently

Aftermath of the Fourth Crusade," *Journal of Medieval History* 40 (2014): 311–28.

60. See the collection of articles in *La Sainte-Chapelle de Paris*.

61. Sophie de Sède, *La Sainte-Chapelle et la politique de la fin des temps* (Paris: Julliard, 1972). See also Alyce Jordan, "Seeing Stories in the Windows of the Sainte-Chapelle: The *Ars Poetria* and the Politics of Visual Narrative," *Mediaevalia* 23 (2002): 39–60; Elizabeth Reynolds, "The Development of Stained Glass in Gothic Cathedrals," *JCCC Honors Journal* 4 (2012): 1–11 (4); Michelina Di Cesare, "Reading the Bible through Glass: The Image of Muhammad in the Sainte-Chapelle," in *The Image of the Prophet between Ideal and Ideology: A Scholarly Investigation*, ed. Christiane Gruber and Avinoam Shalem, 187–200 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 198.

62. Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221–1410* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014), 58–86; Heng, *Invention of Race*, 287–98.

imagined them as the captive peoples, the apocalyptic figures of Gog and Magog of the Book of Revelation, broken out of the mountainous prison to which Alexander the Great had consigned them, to destroy Christianity.⁶³

On the other hand, might the Turks emerge as the end-times foe? Symbolically significant in this second eschatological scenario was the loss of the holy city of Jerusalem, which had been accessible to Christians since the late 1220s thanks to a treaty negotiated by Emperor Frederick II (r. 1220–1250), and had come fully into their hands in 1243. The city was nonetheless vulnerable because of inadequate fortifications.⁶⁴ Khwarezmian Turks overran it in 1244, “desecrat[ing] the Christian Holy Places and the tombs of the Latin kings.”⁶⁵ The soul-searching in the West provoked by this event was profound. Was Emperor Frederick II’s exhausting and seemingly interminable conflict with the papacy itself a sign of the end-times? Was he the Antichrist?⁶⁶ Was the biblical prophecy fulfilled that the heathens would rampage in Jerusalem, which was God’s shrine?: “O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; Thy holy temple have they defiled; They have laid Jerusalem on heaps. The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, The flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; And there was none to bury them” (Vulgate, Psalms 78:1). One could have found churchmen who thought so.⁶⁷ A few scholars may exaggerate how

63. Jackson, *Mongols and the West*, 146–48. On the changing views of Mongols and their role in apocalyptic scenarios, see Felicitas Schmieder, “Christians, Jews, Muslims—and Mongols: Fitting a Foreign People into the Western Christian Apocalyptic Scenario,” *Medieval Encounters* 12 (2006): 274–95.

64. David Abulafia, *Frederick II: A Medieval Emperor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 184.

65. Peter Holt, *The Age of the Crusades: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London: Longman, 1986), 65–66.

66. Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 430–31.

67. Guillaume de Nangis, “Gesta sancti Ludovici,” in *Recueil des historiens*

powerful this theme was in, say, the windows of the Sainte-Chapelle, as Alyce Jordan cautions, but it is certainly there.⁶⁸

Waging war in the form of a crusade—just and holy violence—seemed a reasonable response to the devastation in the Holy Land and a way to enter once again into the mercy of God. Men in the know, such as the bishop of Beirut and the patriarch of Antioch, urged this course of action on Pope Innocent IV.⁶⁹ The occasion for French leadership was ironically auspicious, too, precisely because in a sense the king had been recalled from death to life to organize it. Louis IX had fallen desperately ill in late 1244, the year of the loss of Jerusalem. Linking the preservation of his life to the need to deliver the Holy Land, he pledged on his sickbed to lead the crusade, though some of the people around him at the time probably did not believe he would survive to fulfill his vow.⁷⁰ Others had no confidence that a vow taken in such circumstances was binding, so when the king recovered, he re-swore it in full command of his faculties and set about preparing for the war.⁷¹ Never, as we shall now see, was the impulse to use the crusade to convert the world far from his thoughts.

des Gaules et de la France, ed. Martin Bouquet et al. (Paris: V. Palmé, 1840–1904), 346.

68. Alyce Jordan, *Visualizing Kingship in the Windows of the Sainte-Chapelle* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 24.

69. Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1951), vol. 2, 256.

70. Jean de Joinville, *Vie de saint Louis*, ed. and trans. Jacques Monfrin (Paris: Garnier, 1995), 211–12, paragraphs 106–7.

71. Matthew Paris, *Chronica majora*, ed. Henry Luard (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1872–1883), vol. 5, 3–4.