

## Introduction

We, however, are confident that the Lord will soon bring to a happy conclusion the enterprise he has started so well. So that men shall praise the Lord for his works, and for his wonderful works to the children of men, glorify him, give him thanks for the things which he has done with you.

Pray for our dead companions, Master Walter of Tournai . . . Master Constant of Douai . . . John of Cambrai . . . lord Reinier . . . Our servant H. and others. . . . Pray for those dead companions.

As for me, I was ill for two months before Damietta, and almost died, but the Lord has kept me alive till now, possibly to pay for my sins with pain and tribulation.

—JACQUES DE VITRY

Jacques de Vitry, preacher of the Crusades, bishop of Acre, and eventually cardinal bishop of Tusculum, wrote several letters while accompanying the armies of the Fifth Crusade to Egypt. An eyewitness to the progress, brief triumph, and eventual failure of the Crusade, Jacques was one of the campaign's most important reporters. With Oliver of Paderborn (schoolmaster and ultimately bishop of Cologne), Jacques communicated news from the battlefield in Egypt, wrote of victory, and explained defeat. He wrote six letters while on Crusade, four of which were composed and sent from Egypt during and after the siege of Damietta. These letters reported the military progress of the Crusade and simultaneously reassured the recipients that the Egyptian campaign was God's work in action. In so doing, Jacques's

letters sought to locate the action of war in a longer story of biblical history and divine will. This was a story that was very familiar to his readers and to Crusade participants. At the same time, Jacques's letters commemorated fallen crusaders, naming them as pious instruments of God and sometimes martyrs, men who had "departed from us in this exile and joined the Lord in happiness." The letters also provided Jacques with an opportunity to communicate something of his own experience at war, although as a cleric and not a soldier. He inserted tantalizing glimpses of his subjective emotional state at various points throughout the letters, rarely discursively but still clearly enshrining his own presence in the history of this most promising but ultimately disappointing Crusade.

Jacques de Vitry's Crusade letters are some of the many sources for the Fifth Crusade in which remembering is prominent. As the above quotes from Jacques's letters indicate, remembering took a number of shapes for medieval people—eschatological, collective, and individual. Crusading itself was steeped in the language of memory by the time of the Fifth Crusade: indeed, from the capture of Jerusalem by the armies of the First Crusade in 1099, participants in the subsequent crusading movements increasingly thought of their actions in ways that recalled events of past Crusades and the events of biblical history. They understood holy war as vengeance for the loss of Christ's inheritance, and they saw themselves more and more as engaging in a tradition undertaken previously by their families, communities, and regions. Crusading in the early thirteenth century was not only an act of love, as Jonathan Riley-Smith famously asserted, but an act of remembrance.<sup>1</sup> Remembrance was articulated in Christian terms and in familial terms, as a collective endeavor and as an individual activity. Remembrance was intrinsic to motivating, justifying, and defining crusading. By the time Jacques was writing his letters home from the Fifth Crusade, memorial and commemorative ideas had come to be central to all forms of communicating the events and the ideas of the Crusade.

This book asks two main questions: Why was remembering war so important in the early thirteenth century, and what purposes did remembrance serve? As will become clear in what follows, remembering became integrated into the war experience in different and new ways at this time, both during and after the conflict. This was due to the particular and recent history of the Crusades, which stimulated a renewed interest in the articulation and communication of remembrance. The overall argument of the

book is that crusading possessed a unique temporal and spatial logic in which remembering was central. Crusading asked its participants (whether combatants or otherwise) to look both forward and backward in time for the justification and meaning of their spiritual and military actions in the present. Remembering the past both stimulated action and shaped future understandings of the triumphs and bitter defeats of the Crusade. In the case of the Fifth Crusade, which took place after a series of challenging losses in a number of theaters of crusading warfare and ultimately involved loss itself, remembrance was a significant means of explaining and expressing the sometimes devastating nature of military activity while communicating ongoing optimism about the eschatological efficacy of crusading itself.

#### WAR MEMORY

That remembering war should be so entwined with cultural and social practices and collective and individual identifications will be unsurprising to modern readers. In Western culture, especially, what Jay Winter called the “memory boom” of the twentieth century is not just an academic interest but a practice performed by countless others as part of societal life.<sup>2</sup> Collective rituals such as national memorial days, the perpetuation of national stories about war and battle as transformative historical moments, the construction of monuments memorializing war, and the existence of veterans’ associations with sometimes powerful political reach are all examples of how war is not just integrated into but integral to the performance of Western cultural identities. There are historical reasons for this interest in war memory, as a vast historiography on memory in modern Western culture attests. Kerwin Klein neatly summarizes:

We have, then, several alternative narratives of the origins of our new memory discourse. The first, following Pierre Nora, holds that we are obsessed with memory because we have destroyed it with historical consciousness. A second holds that memory is a new category of experience that grew out of the modernist crisis of the self in the nineteenth century. . . . A third sketches a tale in which Hegelian historicism took up premodern forms of memory that we have since modified through structural vocabularies. A fourth implies

that memory is a mode of discourse natural to people without history, and so its emergence is a salutary feature of decolonization. And a fifth claims that memory talk is a belated response to the wounds of modernity.<sup>3</sup>

Klein alerts us to modern historical conditions as precipitating a sort of epistemic shift in memory. Pierre Nora thought similarly. In a still influential but problematic exploration of history and memory, Nora posits that by the final decades of the twentieth century, spontaneous memory had been suffocated by the rise of history and its claims to the past. Memory as an active and dynamic lived practice was lost, and we now have only “ersatz memory”; memory “crystallized” around *lieux* (sites), as *milieux* (environments) of memory are no more. For Nora, the “quintessential repository” of unadulterated collective memory was rural peasant culture: precolonial, premodern, medieval.<sup>4</sup> For others, modernity itself has produced a “crisis of the self,” a dissociative break from the past that was experienced subjectively and as a collective sensibility, particularly as a result of the First World War. Paul Fussell thought that the war created ironic skepticism and bitter disillusionment. He found its literature (especially), eschewing romanticized tales of valor and chivalry, was sharply different from pre-twentieth-century writing—this was “goodbye to Galahad,” in the words of Siegfried Sassoon.<sup>5</sup> Others have seen the wars of modernity as precipitating the disenchantment of war: martyrdom and the Western Christian interpretation of death that had framed the rhetoric of sacrifice in centuries prior are now abandoned. These old symbols of sacrifice and redemption can be co-opted into the modern structural vocabulary of memory, but they have been historicized in the context of the contemporary rather than the past. As Stefan Goebel has recently shown, the medieval past was a significant semiotic source for the commemorative and memorial efforts of the First World War.<sup>6</sup> But whereas Goebel understands this medievalism as asserting a creative continuity with the longer past, it could also be seen as restating once again the rupture between the premodern and the modern in the form of nostalgia. Recourse to medieval images in war memorials, for instance, is more of a nod to an imagined and vanished past (itself the product of Victorian dreaming) than an uncomplicated and reassuring narrative of continuity.<sup>7</sup>

The political context for much of this historiography is the nation-state, “imagined communities” with “invented traditions” that assert political

meaning for war and for memory.<sup>8</sup> Historians like Geoffrey Cubitt and Jay Winter have suggested that the twentieth-century memory boom may be in part attributed to disengagement with progressivist narratives of nationhood after the Second World War. Cubitt suggests that as the idea of the nation as a moral project—enshrined in foundational texts like laws and constitutions—broke down in the second half of the twentieth century, remembering war came to be performed in ways that are not “official” nationalist assertions of direction and purpose. So although nations continue to ask citizens to die in their defense, “the nation” itself is now merely one agent of remembrance, and its claims to nationalist certainty have been fundamentally diminished by, *inter alia*, the political and critical work of decolonization and postcolonialism, the “dissolving tendencies of mass culture,” and globalization.<sup>9</sup>

A critical moment of this shift was the Holocaust, which, as Alon Confino asserts, added moral force to the quest to remember, brought to the fore the terminology of witnessing and trauma, and asked for repentance from the culpable.<sup>10</sup> Remembering the Holocaust acknowledged its uniqueness as a “convulsion” in historical time while challenging the claims of the nation regarding identity formation and cultural dominance.<sup>11</sup> The practice of history itself changed after the Holocaust, according to Confino, not because memory was suddenly invented as a topic for historical inquiry, but because memory was now an epistemological and hermeneutic category that could be deployed to understand the upheavals of the recent past. This, in Peter Carrier’s words, was a new genre of historical writing: Holocaust “memoriography” attends to the historical work of understanding how the Holocaust has been remembered or forgotten and to the history of the Holocaust itself.<sup>12</sup> The memory boom, therefore, has long been connected to the disruption of political and social narratives of progress located within nationalist parameters—the end of the “master narrative,” as Klein puts it.<sup>13</sup>

Such explanations for the general rise of modern memory recognize unique historical conditions. But they also create a temporality premised on abrupt historical transformations, including the institutionalization of “history,” new sensibilities born of trauma, and—most especially—the shattering impact of war. These are epistemic and paradigm shifts, the shock of which is signified by the words used to describe them—*wounds, crisis, dislocation, convulsion*. Yet if we widen our perspective on the issue of war memory, it is almost immediately clear that remembering war is

not simply a product of modernity. War memory has a much longer set of histories, many of which have nothing to do with a dramatic split between modernity and premodernity (both of which are problematic categories in themselves) or with the paradigm of the nation-state and its testing. In light of that, as I have outlined above, modern memory is frequently conceived as emerging from a particular time and premised on a historical temporality that emphasizes rupture, difference, and a departure from the premodern, interior, and collective crisis. It seems important to question the place of war memory in a more distant past. Moreover, the organizing context of the nation-state as the driver of memorial culture and a monolithic formation against which remembering pushes does not help us when we think about the longer history of war memory.<sup>14</sup> This book suggests that understanding how Crusade memory functioned requires quite precise historical contextualization and sensitivity to the many social and cultural forces that influenced its practice. At the same time, frameworks for understanding modern memory can offer medievalists hermeneutic and epistemological tools—which must be carefully deployed—for considering premodern forms of remembering war.

It is the broad task of this book to trace what remembering war meant to medieval people in order to offer a contribution to both medieval history and the history of war memory. First, I want to show that remembering war is not a specifically modern concern. It is perfectly clear that some features of war memory are specific to our own era, and I do not challenge that these are connected with the specific conditions of contemporary history. The programmatic construction of war memorials and monuments, the rise and influence of veterans' associations, new media through which war stories are told and reported are examples. But other features of remembering war are much older. Medieval people also privileged the eyewitness and oral testimony as primary conduits through which memory flowed. They gave transcendent meaning to war through commemorative practices such as liturgical procession and collective prayer. War memory communicated and perpetuated bigger collective truths about duty and belonging in the context of Christendom. Families used remembrance of war to tell stories about their ancestors and to create traditions. These were communicated in specifically medieval ways, but as in our own time, such ideas were always culturally meaningful. At the same time, the looseness of historical periodization is exposed by looking at war memory before the nation-state.

## MEMORY, TEMPORALITY, AND THE CRUSADES

I am also interested in understanding the temporality of medieval war memory. How did medieval conceptions of the link between the past and present inform remembrance of conflict? A growing literature on medieval memory continues to show that memory was thought to operate in specific cognitive and epistemological ways in medieval culture. As Mary Carruthers showed a number of years ago, theologians like Hugh of Saint Victor thought that the memory occupied a space in the body or soul. To him, remembering meant both the capacity to bring to mind things learned, seen, or experienced and an instrument of order and composition. The interior ability of an individual to store, collate, and retrieve information from the memory enabled the production of understanding and knowledge.<sup>15</sup> This “art of memory” was also predicated on the idea that past and present were fluid, that the things of the past could be brought to the present for practical and psychological benefit. Monastic novices, for example, used memory as a way of creating monastic time. A thirteenth-century English *Speculum novitii* told a novice to use liturgical time to bring to mind biblical history and scenes from the life of Christ:

At Lauds, think of the apprehended Christ. At Prime, think of Christ standing before Pilate. . . . During Terce, think of Christ raised on the cross. . . . At Sext, think of the darkness which fell upon the earth up to the ninth hour. . . . At None, think of Christ dying. . . . At Vespers, run back to the Lord’s cross . . . [at] Compline, think how you are . . . watching the Lord’s tomb so that when he arises you can run and . . . hold his feet. . . . Think of the resurrection when you wake up; arrange the breadcrumbs on your dinner plate in the shape of the cross to remind yourself of the crucifixion; as you process into church, think of your life as a pilgrimage journey to heaven; as you climb into bed, think of the entombment of Christ.<sup>16</sup>

Such memory work was deeply experiential and even emotional. However, this did not mean that one must have *actually* experienced something in the past to be able to remember it. In the case of the monastic novice, remembering Christian history was a way of ridding himself of distracting personal memories from the time he had spent as a member of secular society and replacing those “real” memories with new ones that were shared by other members of his community.<sup>17</sup>

These examples illustrate some features of medieval memory that may resonate with historians of contemporary memory. Memories are something that communities are thought to share. In the monastic world, remembering is clearly an important tool of socialization. And remembering is a way of identifying with something collective—a community, a form of spirituality, a tradition or culture. At the same time, remembering in Latin Christianity is a way to bring together the earthly and heavenly realms. In other words, medieval memory was a distinctive combination of the individual’s interior capacity to capture, store, retrieve, and use the past and the collective, the terrestrial, and the eschatological.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps no other group in Western medieval society was so acutely aware of the importance of memory as crusaders. As individuals under oath, they were part of a collective endeavor, the rhetorical justification of which stressed action—performed in memory of Christ’s sacrifice—to defend and liberate Christ’s patrimony. Preachers encouraged men to take up the cross using the memory of biblical exhortation—“If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Matthew 16:24) was a typical refrain.<sup>19</sup> The rhetoric of unity was not necessarily matched by the reality of crusading, which, as Michael Lower and others have argued, was not the uniform mass movement we imagine it to be until careful efforts by the thirteenth-century papacy widened opportunities to participate.<sup>20</sup> Yet Crusade preachers and chroniclers communicated crusading as a communal effort from the very beginning and continued to do so throughout. They asserted that Western Christians were a distinctive group with distinctive religious obligations. Even Crusade failures could be a collective responsibility, as the *peccatis exigentibus* (because of our sins) explanation for continued failure indicates.

Those who preached and wrote about the Crusades of the twelfth century also crafted a vision of time in which the biblical past and the crusading present were brought together in a new and urgent way. Crusaders had always been equated with figures from biblical history, understanding themselves to be the new Israelites—specifically the Maccabees—or new apostles, and this continued into the thirteenth century.<sup>21</sup> Guibert of Nogent thought that the armies of the First Crusade were like the Maccabees in that they fought for “the sacred rituals and for the Temple”; *Quantum praedecessores*, Pope Eugenius III’s call for the Second Crusade in 1147, used the example of Mattathias to inspire crusaders to triumph;



and in Pope Gregory VIII's great crusading letter of 1187 that preceded the Third Crusade, *Audita tremendi*, he told future crusaders to heed the example of the Maccabees, who thought that "it is better for us to die in battle than to witness the desecration of our nation and our saints."<sup>22</sup> There was more to these inspirational figures than mere similitude. The tasks of biblical heroes and contemporary crusaders were each part of a trajectory of sacred history that followed sacred time. Current events were part of this eternal, transcendent story. As Jay Rubenstein has shown, there was an apocalyptic dimension to this temporality from the start, and this was integrated into the historical accounts of the Crusade.<sup>23</sup> After the loss of Jerusalem in 1187, this was even more pronounced, as the loss of vast tracts of the Holy Land and the city of Jerusalem itself occasioned profound anxiety about the meaning of Saladin's victory. Thus, from the twelfth century, crusading temporality was eschatological in many ways. By taking up the cross, crusaders were placing themselves in a time frame that ran parallel to the terrestrial lapse of time in days and years. They were actors in an eternal history; Peter the Venerable called them the "army of the living God."<sup>24</sup> Their work was part of God's plan. "It is not for us to know why He would do this," wrote Pope Gregory VIII about the loss of Jerusalem, but it was certainly the *negotium Christi*, the business of Christ, for all crusaders to participate in its recovery.<sup>25</sup>

Crusading was also an individual activity. Each crusader made an individual vow of commitment to take up the cross—the *votum crucis*—and each participated in a later ritual of departure that eventually included individual blessing and the bestowing of a cross, staff, and pilgrim's scrip.<sup>26</sup> The reward for crusading—the remission of sins—was offered to individuals, and it was the individual who would be solely accountable for his actions on the Day of Judgment. The relationship between pilgrimage and the Crusade helps contextualize the very subjective character of this form of holy war, as has been recounted by historians since the publication of Carl Erdmann's *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens* in 1935.<sup>27</sup> As with other pilgrimages to holy places, crusading was a religious journey conducted for devout purposes. Its character was also penitential, and at least for the twelfth century, crusading could be designated a *peregrinatio* like many others. Pilgrimage contained its own temporality too, which was simultaneously retrospective and forward-looking—pilgrims looked "backward in gratitude" and "forward in hope."<sup>28</sup> Looking at Crusade memory allows us to understand

the differentiated temporalities of the medieval period without the linear and progressivist narrative of the modern as its frame. Remembering made sense of this temporality.

The third aim of this book is to look closely at the world of early thirteenth-century crusading to understand why and how war memory was important at this particular historical moment. Part of the answer lies in the diversification of crusading in the first two decades of the thirteenth century. After 1187, the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was reduced to a string of cities that ran from Tyre to Jaffa along the Syrian coastline and the island of Cyprus. The vast swathes of territory captured during the course of the First Crusade had been lost incrementally over the course of the twelfth century, and although Jerusalem continued to be the focus of crusading calls in the early thirteenth century, the Holy Land was not the principal theater of war during the first decade of that century.<sup>29</sup> The Fourth Crusade was conducted in the Byzantine Empire; the Albigensian Crusade was conducted in southern France; the Crusades against the pagan Livonians took place on the Baltic coast. The so-called reconquest in the Iberian Peninsula also absorbed the rhetoric of the Crusade during this time. At the same time, the targets of crusading were increasingly diversified too. There had been military activity against the Wends of northeastern Germany and Poland in the mid-twelfth century as part of the Second Crusade (fought on three fronts in the Holy Land, Portugal, and eastern Europe), but it was in the early thirteenth century that the Crusade became institutionalized as an appropriate instrument of defense against a range of groups within and outside western Europe—even those who, like the Byzantine Greeks or the “Cathars” of Languedoc, thought of themselves as Christian. During the same period, opportunities for participating in crusading activities were opened up, and the conceptualization of crusading was increasingly sharpened.<sup>30</sup> Recruitment, financing of crusading, and redemption of vows were all transformed under the pontificate of Innocent III as a part of his agenda of moral reform, and crusading itself was reinvigorated.

Most importantly for this book, the early thirteenth century was a time of “intense reflection” on the crusading past.<sup>31</sup> This has been most thoroughly analyzed by Nicholas Paul, whose study of family memory and crusading has paved the way for a number of recent studies in this field.<sup>32</sup> Paul found that across the Latin West during the “long” twelfth century, narratives of the crusading past, particularly those communicated in

family or genealogical histories, created and transmitted family traditions around crusading and its value. The genre of aristocratic family history writing had its heyday during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, and these texts are important sources for both understanding what we might call aristocratic self-fashioning and the creation and importance of ancestral traditions. Noble families found in the Crusades—especially the First Crusade—inspiration, instruction, and venerability, all of which were reflected in the commemorative texts they commissioned. But by the early thirteenth century, things were changing. Paul notes that although crusading ancestors remained a source of pride for noble families throughout the thirteenth century and beyond, once “the living memory of twelfth-century crusading slipped away and was replaced by literary imagination and chivalric pageantry, a new crusading era, born in the aftermath of the Third Crusade, began, populated by new heroes who fought in new landscapes.”<sup>33</sup> The foundational First Crusade narratives were being transformed by vernacular histories and by the advent of crusading romance. This is a period of significant transformation in the history of crusading in relation to the conduct and conceptualization of the Crusades and in the relationship between the crusading past and the crusading present. How this affected or stimulated remembrance is a central question of this book.

#### THE FIFTH CRUSADE

The particular focus of this book is the Fifth Crusade, which was the product of a renewed push to recapture Jerusalem (lost to the armies of Saladin in 1187) by Pope Innocent III and his successor, Pope Honorius III. First enunciated in the 1213 bull *Quia maior*, the formal call was issued as part of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, and the Crusade was subsequently preached across northern Europe and beyond by a number of high-profile and experienced preachers, Jacques de Vitry, Robert of Courçon, and Oliver of Paderborn among them. In 1217, the Crusade was under way in the Holy Land (with some northern crusaders having engaged in military activity in Portugal along the way), but it changed direction in 1218 when it decided to attack Egypt.<sup>34</sup> The port city of Damietta was besieged and eventually captured that year, but it was lost in 1221 after the costly decision to advance up the Nile toward Cairo resulted in negotiation and truce with the Ayyubid sultan Al-Kamil. The Crusade ended with the evacuation of all

crusaders (after some of high rank served a period as hostages) by the end of 1221. The Fifth Crusade had a number of distinctive features, in both its planning and its execution: it was well organized, well financed, and under the control of the pope—at least at the outset. Papal control of Crusade planning was in part a response to the disastrous Fourth Crusade—its diversion to Constantinople had been explained away by the time of *Quia maior* but remained a controversial episode, especially in the East.<sup>35</sup>

However, papal control of the Crusade did not translate to clear leadership of the Crusade; indeed, the “leadership question” has long been identified as one key reason the Crusade ultimately failed. No single leader was put in place to coordinate the Crusade before it began, although there were many contenders—the king of Jerusalem, John of Brienne; the emperor, Frederick II; the papal legate Pelagius, bishop of S. Albano (who arrived in September 1218); King Andrew II of Hungary; Leopold, Duke of Austria; King Hugh of Cyprus; and Bohemond IV of Antioch. Guy Perry’s new biography of John of Brienne notes that although the king of Jerusalem emerged as the Crusade’s *de facto* leader, this had not been planned by Pope Innocent III or his successor, Honorius III (who preferred Andrew of Hungary).<sup>36</sup> Perry notes that the leadership question was the symptom and result of the way that Crusade participation worked. Contingents large and small formed, arrived, and departed with their own leaders: in James Powell’s words, “The crusaders were not a standing army in the field awaiting a commander . . . they were a force.”<sup>37</sup> So although the blame for the failure of the Fifth Crusade has often been attributed to individuals—the procrastination of Frederick II, whose promise of manpower never materialized, or the conflict between Pelagius and John of Brienne at Damietta—there was also a structural weakness in the leadership of the Crusade in general.

Interest in the leadership of the Crusade stems from its earliest historiography, which was undertaken by Reinhard Röhricht in the nineteenth century. Röhricht was an antiquarian and schoolteacher and was one of the first to consider the Fifth Crusade as a focused area of study. His 1891 *Studien zur Geschichte des fünften Kreuzzuges* was supplemented by a number of works on German pilgrimage to the Holy Land during the crusading period; articles on key figures of the Crusade including Oliver of Paderborn, Jacques de Vitry, and Frederick II as sources; and his collection of the charters and documents of the chancery of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.<sup>38</sup> Röhricht was part of a constellation of nineteenth-century scholars who gathered

around Comte Paul de Riant's *Société de l'orient latin*, the academic society for the study of the Crusades and the group that essentially founded modern Crusades scholarship. The scholars of this period were typical of their time: they were interested in the documentation of the events they sought to describe (hence the many editions that emanated from this group), and they wrote mostly top-down and narrative history, with an emphasis on leadership, papal directives, and aristocratic participation.<sup>39</sup>

The transformative historiographical moment for this Crusade came in the later twentieth century with James Powell's 1986 monograph *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213–1221*. Powell was the first to offer a social history of the Fifth Crusade that synthesized the turn in Crusade studies to analyzing the preparations and background of crusading with questions of motivation.<sup>40</sup> His approach was innovative in a number of ways. He was concerned with moving away from the question of conflict between Crusade leaders as the dominant interpretive framework of the Crusade and was clear that the Crusade ought to be seen as part of a more general effort of renewal and reform for Christendom. He also argued that this was an especially important Crusade, as it “was being forged into an instrument for the moral transformation of society.”<sup>41</sup> Powell's careful evaluation of the planning, recruitment, financing, and conduct of the Fifth Crusade has stimulated further studies on the culture and papal direction of the Crusade. Historians have recently begun to recognize the active and distinctive role of Pope Honorius III in the Crusade, and a new edition of some key papal documents has now brought some of the letters and bulls to a wider audience.<sup>42</sup> Thomas Smith, in particular, has shown how Honorius should be viewed not as a passive inheritor of the views of Innocent III but as a “shrewd and calculating politician.”<sup>43</sup> New studies of key figures such as John of Brienne now pay more attention to the broader context from which participants in the Crusade came.

This turn to context has been the defining feature of the most recent historiography. Historians have increasingly considered the Fifth Crusade as part of a more general discourse of religious renewal in the medieval West, which encompasses monastic and clerical reform, new attention to preaching, and perhaps most distinctively, conversion.<sup>44</sup> In a number of studies, Jessalynn Bird shows that the sermons and preaching of the Crusade reflected long intellectual and spiritual lineages and that from the late twelfth to the mid-thirteenth century, Crusades exhortations were included

in sermon collections authored by networks of writers with connections to the Parisian masters.<sup>45</sup> At the same time, Crusade exhortations increasingly reflected a growing interest in conversion as one of the aims and instruments of crusading.<sup>46</sup> Such missionizing efforts are particularly associated with the Franciscans, who were active in Morocco during the time of the Fifth Crusade and whose founder, St. Francis of Assisi, was present in Egypt in 1219 in a delusional attempt to persuade the sultan Al-Kamil to convert to Christianity.<sup>47</sup> But in more general terms, the conversion agenda was part of a much broader program of renewal that was supposed to see Christendom expand farther than ever before. Crusading as an instrument of Christian expansion was linked to simultaneous efforts to deal with heresy within Western Europe, to eradicate the vestiges of paganism in the East and the Baltic, and to encourage all Christians to reform themselves through the sacrament of confession, participation in the Eucharistic ritual, and prayer.

The sources for the Fifth Crusade are diverse. The most well-known narrative accounts are Oliver of Paderborn's *Historia Damiatina* (composed between 1217 and 1222); the sources collected by Röhrich—the *Gesta crucigerorum Rhenanorum*, the *Gesta obsidionis Damiatiae*, the *De itinere Frisonum*, and John of Tulbia's *De domino Iohanne rege Ierusalem* and *Liber duellii christiani in obsidione Damiate*—and to a lesser extent, the *Historia orientalis* and *Historia occidentalis* of Jacques de Vitry.<sup>48</sup> Several local and regional chronicles also report the Crusade in varying degrees of detail and emphasis on local participants, including the *Chronicon* of Emo of Wittwerium, which is an important source for the Frisian participation; the highly problematic extensions and versions of William of Tyre's *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum*; the *Chronica majora* of Matthew Paris; the *Flores historiarum* of Roger of Wendover; and Ralph of Coggeshall's *Chronicon anglicanum* for the English view.<sup>49</sup> The preliminary expedition to the Iberian Peninsula is reported in a number of texts, including monastic chronicles and poems.<sup>50</sup>

One distinctive feature of the early thirteenth-century Crusade texts is the richness of eyewitness accounts. Oliver of Paderborn and Jacques de Vitry are especially important sources for our understanding of the Crusade because they preached and recruited for it in Europe, they traveled with it to Egypt, they witnessed the progress and eventual demise of the Crusade, and throughout this period, they wrote about it. As I discuss in

the second chapter of this book, eyewitnessing was both a significant source of authorial authority in the Middle Ages and a particularly important element in the construction and communication of memory. The letters of Jacques de Vitry are crucial in this regard. His epistolary texts were written before, during, and after the Crusade, and with others (including Oliver of Paderborn's *Historia*, which was originally written as a letter), they form an especially insightful set of texts. Charters and other "administrative" or "official" documents are also important written sources for this book. Although charters for the Fifth Crusade are sometimes scattered and are probably fewer than those that survive from the First and Second Crusades, for instance, they nonetheless provide useful insights into the preparations for crusading; relationships between individuals, families, and their religious associations; and, as I show in chapter 1, the expectation that individual crusaders would be remembered. The testaments and wills included in monastic and other cartularies are especially informative.<sup>51</sup>

Places and objects are also important sources for this Crusade. It seems that as the targets and locations for crusading diversified in the early thirteenth century, there arose considerable local and regional efforts to memorialize the Crusade outside the Holy Land. Although places with tangible links to biblical history remained central to the crusading imaginary, locations such as Lisbon and Damietta also grew to become sites of memory that were particularly meaningful to specific groups of crusaders and their descendants. Acts of remembering (whether material, spiritual, or performative) constructed new holy places on the edges of what the crusading enterprise was traditionally thought to be. The locations encountered by those who actively participated in the Crusade became sites of memory in a number of ways, as I discuss in chapter 5. Lisbon, the port city of Damietta in Egypt, and Mount Tabor in the Holy Land assumed importance during and after this Crusade as commemorative landscapes associated with sacred history (recent or biblical) and previous crusading activity. At the same time, places more conventionally associated with the Crusade, including Jerusalem, retained their value, as the *Descriptio terre sancte*, *Historia de ortu Jerusalem*, and *Historia regum terre sancte* of Oliver of Paderborn reveal.<sup>52</sup> The material fabric of memory is also rich for the Fifth Crusade. For the Holy Land, many of the relevant relics, souvenirs, tombs, coinage, and buildings for this period have been conveniently identified by Jaroslav Folda.<sup>53</sup> Of particular interest for chapter 6 of this book are the objects

associated with Jacques de Vitry, now part of the Treasury of Oignies at Namur in Belgium.<sup>54</sup> These objects, which include Jacques de Vitry's miter, portable altar, episcopal rings, reliquary of the Holy Cross, and gemstones, tell unique stories about the connections between places, the custodianship of remembrance, and the links between past and present. These principal sources for the Fifth Crusade are mostly clerical or monastic, although the diversity of genres allows for some broader contextual claims to be made for them, as I discuss throughout.

#### REMEMBRANCE PROJECTS

The terminology of memory is notoriously loose, and its categorizations are many. In this book, I mostly use *memory* to refer to an interior, individual cognitive capacity. I use the term *remembrance* in a broader sense to suggest the cultural and sometimes collective work of bringing the past to light for a variety of purposes. Thus *remembrance* functions in the way suggested by Emmanuel Sivan and Jay Winter, who describe it as “a strategy to avoid the trivialization of the term ‘memory’ through inclusion of any and every facet of our contact with the past, personal or collective. To privilege ‘remembrance’ is to insist on specifying agency, on answering the question who remembers, when, where, and how? And on being aware of the transience of remembrance, so dependent on the frailties and commitments of the men and women who take the time and effort to engage in it.”<sup>55</sup> In this book, I am especially concerned with understanding how war has been remembered, memorialized, and commemorated. I focus on a relatively short period of time around the 1220s in the context of what Jan and Aleida Assmann have termed “communicative memory”—that is, the ways in which remembering is formed, articulated, and expressed within a few generations or within living memory of an event.<sup>56</sup> The concept of communicative memory is helpful for considering the historical moment in which remembering is understood to be important. The immediate shaping and transmission of memory can tell us much about decisions to remember and to forget, about the processes of remembering and commemorative forms, and about how past peoples’ imagined memory can be useful and meaningful. Moreover, the interplay between individual experienced memory and the articulation of remembrance in a culture is a fruitful way to examine how meaning is created and attributed to historical phenomena more widely.



The Fifth Crusade took place at a significant time for the expression and communication of memory and remembrance of war. The relative longevity of the crusading movement by the second decade of the thirteenth century, its generational and ancestral pull, and its diverse locational presence all affected how war was remembered at that time. Remembrance itself became integrated into the war experience in different ways—through letter writing, the collection of objects, the memorialization of sites, and the fabrication of heroes and villains. It was during this period that the unique temporal and spatial logic of crusading came to incorporate remembrance as a central component. Remembering war was powerful during the time of the Fifth Crusade because it was a useful epistemological tool to explain and provoke actions and events. The many remembrance projects—textual, material, and visual—that were undertaken during this moment of the early thirteenth century tell stories of hope and fear, conflict and loss, and survival and death in the context of violent conflict and its aftermath. This book examines those stories.