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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Katherine Lee Hodges-Kluck entitled "The Matter of Jerusalem: The Holy Land in Angevin Court Culture and Identity, *c.* 1154-1216." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in History.

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The Matter of Jerusalem: The Holy Land in
Angevin Court Culture and Identity, *c*. 1154–1216

A Dissertation Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Katherine Lee Hodges-Kluck
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DEDICATION

To Mr. John Hartman, who taught me the joy of studying history,

and to Bill North and Victoria Morse, who inspired me to become a medievalist.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation reshapes our understanding of the mechanics of nation-building and the construction of national identities in the Middle Ages, placing medieval England in a wider European and Mediterranean context. I argue that a coherent English national identity, transcending the social and linguistic differences of the post-Norman Conquest period, took shape at the end of the twelfth century. A vital component of this process was the development of an ideology that intimately connected the geography, peoples, and mythical histories of England and the Holy Land. Proponents of this ideology envisioned England as an allegorical new Jerusalem inhabited by a chosen people, and believed that England's twelfth-century kings were also destined to rule the terrestrial kingdom of Jerusalem in the Holy Land. Drawing upon biblical history, local legends, crusading ideology, and eschatological beliefs, twelfth-century English writers strove to associate England with the Holy Land not only through the crusade movement, but also in the greater scope of Christian and mythic history. The prime movers behind these developments were attached to the courts of the so-called Angevin kings of England—Henry II (r. 1154–89) and his sons Richard I (r. 1189–99) and John (r. 1199–1216)—who were also counts of Anjou in France (hence, Angevin). While historians have long recognized these rulers' contributions to the development of government institutions such as the exchequer and common law, I call attention to a crucial ideological movement that underlay these bureaucratic innovations in England. Ultimately, I argue that the Angevins' active participation in the wider political and intellectual movements of twelfth-century Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Near East was essential to the creation of a unified English identity.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CSEL   Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum

CTB   *The Correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162–1170*. Edited and translated by Anne J. Duggan. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000.

DIP   Gerald of Wales, *De Instructione Principum*. Edited by J. S. Brewer. Anglia Christiana. London: Impensis Societatis, 1846.

EHR   *English Historical Review*

Explanationum   [Pseudo-Alan of Lille]. *Prophetia Anglicana Merlini Ambrosii Britanni. Septem Libris Explanationum in Eandem Prophetiam*. Frankfurt: Joachim Brathering, 1603.

Itinerarium   *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade: The Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*. Translated by Helen J. Nicholson. Crusade Texts in Translation. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001.

Materials   *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*. Edited by J. C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard. 7 vols. Rolls Series. London, 1875–1885.

ODNB   *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

RS   Rolls Series

VSH   "Appendix 1: The *Vita sancte Helene* of Jocelin of Furness (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 252)," in Antonina Harbus. *Helena of Britain in Medieval Legend*. Cambridge, UK, 2002. Pp. 150–182.

INTRODUCTION

On July 27, 2012, the 80,000 spectators sitting in London's Olympic Stadium, and a television audience of several hundred million viewers around the globe, watched as the thirtieth Olympiad was opened by a children's choir singing the words of William Blake, "And did those feet in ancient time / Walk upon England's mountains green: / And was the holy Lamb of God, / On England's pleasant pastures seen!" In the center of the stadium, a pastoral scene spread out before the audience, overlooked by a terraced green hill topped by a large oak.[1] As the Shakespearean actor Kenneth Branagh ascended the base of the hill, the children concluded their song, "I will not cease from Mental Fight, / Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand: / Till we have built Jerusalem, / In England's green & pleasant Land." Later in the performance, members of the Royal Navy, Army, and Air Force carried the flag of the United Kingdom up the miniature hill, where they hoisted it aloft as another children's choir sang the national anthem. The spectacle of any Olympic opening ceremony is intended to present a slice of the host country's cultural identity to the world at large; in London in 2012, the first image of itself that the United Kingdom showcased to audiences around the globe was this idyllic tableau of the "green and pleasant land" of England, a new Jerusalem.[2]

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[1] The grassy hill that presided over this scene was modeled upon Glastonbury Tor in Somerset. The symbolism of Glastonbury as a national icon, and its unique connections to Jerusalem, is intimately connected to the history of Glastonbury Abbey during the reigns of the Angevin kings, and to the
[2] "London 2012 - Relive the impressive Opening Ceremony!", Olympic.org: Official Website of the Olympic Movement (2013). Online at http://www.olympic.org/news/london-2012-the-opening-ceremony/204829 (Accessed 22 January 2014).

This dissertation examines the influence of Jerusalem on the development of English identity some eight and a half centuries before the London Olympics, during the period from *c*. 1154 to 1216. It was during this time, I argue, that a coherent English national identity, transcending the social and linguistic differences of the post-Norman Conquest period, first took shape. A vital component of this process was the development of an ideology that intimately connected the geography, peoples, and mythical histories of England and the Holy Land. Proponents of this new ideology envisioned England as an allegorical new Jerusalem inhabited by a chosen people (themselves), and believed that England's twelfth-century Angevin kings were also destined to rule the terrestrial kingdom of Jerusalem in the Holy Land.

In the introduction to his collection of essays on *The English in the Twelfth Century*, John Gillingham notes that twelfth-century England does not fit a "modernist" understanding of nation, in which "the masses shared a sense of collective identity with the elite."[3] Such a modernist view derives from theorists like Benedict Anderson, who posits that collective national identities only formed after the establishment of a broad print culture and a general reading public that cut across class boundaries, beginning at the end of the eighteenth century.[4] Modern nationalism, however, did not appear overnight out of nothing. Anderson's model fails to account for the deeper, more ancient ideas and hopes that over the preceeding centuries had shaped the connections between the lands and and peoples of Europe. Johann Huizinga, for example, argued for the

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[3] John Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Idenity and Political Values* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), xxiv.
[4] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised Edition (New York: Verso, 2006), 4, 36–46 .

formation of "national consciousness… by around 1100," with national rivalries then further articulated during the Crusades.[5] Gillingham similarly suggests that an "imagined community" (to use Anderson's term) also existed in twelfth-century England. For Gillingham, this community was formed by "'imperialist' disdain" for England's Celtic neighbors in Wales and Ireland.[6]

Another competing is put forward by Adrian Hastings, who has argued that the key element of national identity is "an extensively used vernacular literature."[7] Hastings also idenitifies religion as a part of nationalism, but for him it is always secondary to the vernacular, supporting national idenity but not fully viable in its own right.[8] While Hastings does allow for an increasing national consciousness in England in the centuries following the Norman Conquest—particularly from the mid-twelfth century onward—he does not see that consciousness finding full expression until the triumph of the English vernacular in the late fourteenth century.[9] Indeed, he asserts that "it would be foolish to doubt that the distinct, self-conscious national idenity of England was temporarily weakened by the use of French."[10] Elaine Treharne has similarly emphasizes a close link

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[5] Johann Huizinga, *Men and Ideas: History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance*, trans. James S. Holmes and Hans van Marle (New York: Meridian, 1959), 100, 108. See also Kathy Lavezzo, "Introduction," to *Imagining a Medieval English Nation*, ed. Kathy Lavezzo, Medieval Cultures 37 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004): vii–xxxiv, at x–ix.

[6] Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, xxv. For a discussion of such "us" versus "them" ideas in Anglo-Saxon England, see Alfred P. Smyth, "The Emergence of English Identity, 700–1000," in *Medieval Europeans: Studies in Ethnic Identity and National Perspectives in Medieval Europe*, ed. Alfred P. Smyth (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998): 24–52, at 28. For Anderson's discussion of the term "imagined communities," see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6–7.

[7] Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 2–3.

[8] Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*, 4.

[9] Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*, 5, see also 35–65. The essays in *Imagining a Medieval English Nation*, ed. Lavezzo, similarly emphasize the later medieval period in England.

[10] Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*, 44.

between national identity and the English vernacular.[11] For Treharne, the English idenity of Anglo-Saxon England survived in spite of, rather than because of, Angevin rule. As I argue in this dissertation, however, the creation of a national idenity was fully possible in the trilingual culture of twelfth-century England, long before English became the dominant language of the kingdom, and it was fostered and encouraged by the Angevin kings and members of their court.

Hastings' and Treharne's focus on language and Gillingham's post-colonial definition of self against "other" idenitify important components of the development of national identity, but they are in many ways too limiting in scope. A different—and, I believe, more nuanced—model for understanding the development of English identity during the Angevin period can be found in the work of the ethnographer Anthony Smith, who identifies religious ideology as the key element of national identity formation. Smith strives to overturn the assumption that nationalism (in its modernist sense) is a secular substitute for, and therefore antagonistic to, religious ideology.[12] He asserts instead that the foundational elements of national identities are found "in the realm of culture, and… more especially in the domain of 'religion'."[13]

Throughout this dissertation, I follow Smith's definitions of 'nation' and 'national identity':

> **Nation:** "a named human population occupying a historic territory and sharing common myths and memories, a public culture, and common laws and customs for all members."[14]

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[11] Elaine Treharne, *Living through Conquest: The Politics of Early English, 1020–1220*, Oxford Textual Perspectives (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
[12] Anthony Smith, *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), vii, 9.
[13] Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 3, see also 5.
[14] Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 24.

National Identity: "the maintenance and continual reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions that form the distinctive heritage of the nation, and the identification of individuals with that heritage and its pattern."[15]

Important in both these definitions is the idea that the nation is rooted in four primary elements: "community, territory, history, and destiny."[16] In the following work I explore the expression of these four themes in Angevin interpretations of history, crusading ideology, local legends, and eschatological beliefs. By drawing upon these ideas, twelfth-century writers, I argue, strove to associate England with the Holy Land not only through the crusade movement, but also in the greater scope of Christian and mythic history. In the process, they created a new idea of what it meant to be Angevin and English.

Admittedly, in 1154, a unified English identity was hard to imagine. England had been ruled for nearly a century by French-speaking Norman rulers, and a two-decades-long civil war was finally drawing to a close. Poised to take the throne were Henry Plantagenet—duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, count of Anjou and Maine—and his wife Eleanor, the duchess of Aquitaine and former queen of France.[17] From their backgrounds, these monarchs seem an unlikely pair to preside over the emergence of English identity. Yet over the next sixty years, we can see the deliberate cultivation of an increasingly coherent English cultural and political identity among the members of the royal and ecclesiastical courts of Angevin England. This was not, of course, the British nationalism of the nineteenth century, but rather a collective understanding of the relationships between people, bureaucracy, history, rulers, and the land itself.

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[15] Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 24–5.
[16] Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 31.
[17] Henry was duke of Aquitaine by right of his marriage to Eleanor.

For over half a century the Angevin king Henry II (r. 1154–89), his wife Eleanor (1122/4–1204), and their sons Henry "The Young King" (r. 1179–83), Geoffrey (1158–86), Richard I (r. 1189–99), and John (r. 1199–1216) ruled over an empire spanning the British Isles and numerous territories on the Continent. Their court attracted some of the greatest figures of the era, from warriors to theologians to authors of romance. In terms of wealth, land, and power, the Angevins towered over their neighbors. Gerald of Wales, in his *Topography of Ireland*, wrote of Henry II, "Your victories vie with the world, since you, our western Alexander, have… spread your victories as far as nature has spread her lands… If the bounds of your expeditions be sought, one would reach the ends of the earth before finding their limits."[18] The idea of an Angevin empire stretching from England to the foothills of the Pyrenees is today generally accepted in the scholarly community—particularly when applied to the reign of Henry II—yet that definition of empire remains focused on the British Isles and Angevin territories in what is now France.[19]

For many scholars, the Angevin court has long represented a symbol of medieval political and intellectual progress. Historians like F. M. Powicke, Warren Hollister, and Thomas Keefe sought to examine the political structures of twelfth- and thirteenth-century England, noting developing forms of bureaucracy and the king's use of personal

[18] Gerald of Wales, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, ed. J. S. Brewer (vols. 1–4), James F. Dimock (vols. 5–7), and G. F. Warner (vol. 8), RS, 8 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1861–91), v: 189–90: "Certant enim cum orbe terrarium victoriae vestrae: cum a Pirenaeis montibus usque in occiduos et extremos borealis oceani fines, Alexander noster occidentalis, brachium extendisti. Quantum igitur his in partibus natura terras, tantum et victorias extulisti. Si excursuum tuorum metae quaerantur, prius deerit orbis quam aderit finis."

[19] On the concept of an Angevin empire, and the problems in defining it, see John Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire*, Second Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), esp. 3–4; See also John Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*; Martin Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire 1154–1224*, trans. David Crouch (Harlow, UK: Pearson Education Limited, 2007).

power and charisma to sustain the government.[20] Other historians, by contrast, have dwelt

upon the more erratic aspects of the Angevin court. J. E. A. Jolliffe argued that the

Angevin kings ruled through a combination of personal judgment and carefully directed

anger. Thomas Bisson has more recently made a surprisingly similar argument that it was

arbitrary, violent lordship rather than organized governmental bureaucracy that kept the

Angevins in power.[21] Notably, some evidence for the establishment of a more clearly

defined English nation appears in the important governmental reforms of the era. To take

two very different examples, Henry II helped to make the exchequer a permanent part of

the government of the realm, while John's acceptance of Magna Carta standardized

weights and measures across England. These steps helped to establish a more coherent

bureaucracy and trade system within the island, at the same time fostering a broader

sense of cultural unity.[22]

       Scholars have also revised their interpretations about the personalities and

abilities of the Angevin kings. Historians like John Gillingham have portrayed Richard I

not as the absentee king of earlier times, but rather as an effective administrator as well as

warrior. So, too, have some of John's biographers sought to clean up his generally

negative image, stressing that his reign was a key moment in the development of English

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[20] F. M. Powicke, "The Angevin Administration of Normandy," *EHR* 21 (Oct. 1906): 625–649; C. Warren Hollister and Thomas K. Keefe, "The Making of the Angevin Empire," *Journal of British Studies* 12, no. 2 (May 1, 1973): 1–25.

[21] J. E. A. Jolliffe, *Angevin Kingship*, Second Edition (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1963); Thomas N. Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Power, Lordship, and the Origins of European Government* (Princeton University Press, 2010).

[22] See, e.g. Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*, 83; Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire*, 76, 81.

government.[23] This revisionism sheds important light on the administrative innovations

of Richard's and John's reigns, although it does not fully explain either king's

shortcomings as a ruler.

Moving beyond the evolution of administrative structures, a more recent

generation of historians has emphasized the development of competing and overlapping

identities in Angevin controlled lands, most notably Normandy and Brittany.[24] Martin

Aurell and Nicholas Vincent, for instance, have drawn attention to the large proportion of

Englishmen and English-born Anglo-Normans in the Angevin court.[25] Other scholars,

such as Charity Urbanski and Laura Ashe, examine the role of literature in solidifying the

competing dynastic narratives of England's noble families into a broader national

narrative.[26]

The Angevin court is widely recognized as a center of patronage for literature and

science. Eleanor of Aquitaine, whose court in southern France is usually celebrated as the

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[23] John Gillingham, *Richard I* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999); Stephen Church, John's most recent biographer, explains that "My purpose in this book is not to attempt to rehabilitate King John but to accept that, in the eyes of many of his contemporaries, he ended his days as a tyrant… It is a story… that is not constrained by the knowledge that his life would end in disaster, but which examines his life as though it was not foreordained that it would end in Magna Carta and civil war." Stephen Church, *King John and the Road to Magna Carta* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), xxi. See also W. L. Warren, *King John* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of CA Press, 1961, 1978).

[24] See, e.g., two research projects being carried out by scholars in the United Kingdom: Daniel Power and Tony Moore, Ed Mackenzie, Jamie McLaughlin, and Katherine Rogers, "The 'Lands of the Normans' in England (1204–44)" (HRI Digital: University of Sheffield, UK, 2007). Online at http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/normans/index.shtml, Accessed 1/24/2013; Keith Stringer, Andrew Jotischky, Alex Metcalfe, and Sarah Rose, "The Norman Edge: Identity and State-Formation on the Frontiers of Europe (Lancaster University: Lancaster, UK). http://www.lancs.ac.uk/normanedge/, Accessed 1/24/2013. See also Judith A. Everard, *Brittany and the Angevins: Province and Empire, 1158–1203*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[25] Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*; Nicholas Vincent, "The Court of Henry II," in *Henry II: New Interpretations*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007): 278–334.

[26] Charity Urbanksi, *Writing History for the King: Henry II and the Politics of Vernacular Historiography* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013); Laura Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066–1200* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

embodiment of courtly love and the inspiration for troubadour song, is traditionally portrayed as the primary Angevin patron of romantic literature. While Eleanor's Aquitainian connections certainly provided poets and singers with access to patronage, many historians have questioned the historical reality of the cult of courtly love.[27] This revisionism has not completely dislodged Eleanor from her position at the center of literary creation, but it has removed her from her position as the sole Angevin figure associated with patronage of the arts and learning. Henry II, for instance, encouraged scholars and poets to come to his court and supported the introduction of Arabic learning into England.[28] The patronage of members of the Angevin court also cultivated the popularity of Arthurian literature from the mid twelfth century onward. Recent French historiography has begun to bridge the gap between the literary Arthur and the historical Angevin kings. Historians Martin Aurell, Amaury Chauou, and Alban Gautier have each written substantial monographs placing Arthur in a historical context and highlighting the ways in which the kings of England used Arthur's popularity to promote their own royal image.[29] The great English lordships, including large abbeys and cathedrals, also served as centers of patronage.[30]

Scholars of Angevin England have also grappled with reconciling the role of the English monarchy during the 1190s with Richard I's absentee kingship while on crusade

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[27] See, e.g., Joachim Bumke, *The Concept of Knighthood in the Middle Ages*, trans. W. T. H. and Erika Jackson (New York: AMS Press, 1977), esp. 83, 120, 157; Constance Brittain Bouchard, *Strong of Body, Brave & Noble: Chivalry & Society in Medieval France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 136.

[28] Dorothee Metlitzki, *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England* (Yale University Press, 1977).

[29] Martin Aurell, *Le Legende du Roi Arthur 550–1250* (France: Perrin, 2007); Amaury Chauou, *Le Roi Arthur* (France: Seuil, 2009); Alban Gautier, *Arthur* (Paris: Ellipses, 2007).

[30] See, e.g., Robert Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075–1225* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 512–534.

and during his captivity in Germany. For many historians, Richard's departure for the Holy Land has also meant his departure from events in England and France. Aside from the economic impact of taxes levied to free him from captivity, Richard's crusade has often been portrayed, from an English perspective, as little but a foolish venture that almost lost him his kingdom. Only recently have historians begun to suggest that Richard was actively concerned with English affairs, even while abroad, and that his role in the crusade may have been more than simply a selfish move or one born of excessive devotion to the Holy Land.[31] On the whole, however, scholars have treated the Third Crusade—and, by extension, Angevin connections to the Holy Land—as distinctly separate from affairs in England. As I will show, English chroniclers in fact believed that Richard, in his role as a crusader, enhanced, rather than diminished, England's power and its role in the wider community of Christendom.

Studies examining the relationships between medieval England and the Holy Land are few and far between. Beatrice Siedschlag's 1939 catalogue of English participants in the crusades shed light on the numbers and origins of the crusaders, while Christopher Tyerman's 1988 *England and the Crusades* importantly demonstrated the influence of English bureaucracy and military strategy on the outcome of the crusades.[32] Yet few historians have focused on how the crusades influenced England in return, and only recently have scholars begun to ask how the crusading movement shaped medieval culture more widely. Nicholas Paul, for example, has demonstrated that throughout

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[31] E.g., Gillingham, *Richard I.*
[32] Beatrice N. Siedschlag, *English Participation in the Crusades, 1150–1220* (Menasha, WI: The Collegiate Press, 1939); Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095–1588* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), esp. 54, 59.

twelfth-century Europe there was a lively and popular tradition of dynastic histories

focused upon a crusader ancestor or ancestors. Rather than making the Angevin lords'

attempts at dynastic promotion less exceptional, such a tradition instead shows that the

chroniclers of the Angevin court were actively engaging in a larger, pan-European

discourse about crusading and family power. The messages inherent in such family

propaganda would have been instantly recognizable to people in England and abroad. By

linking crusading heroes from the family's past with those in the present, the Angevins

demonstrated that they were a success story. This success was further demonstrated by

the fact that the comital family of Anjou now also held the crown of England.[33]

     The role of ideological movements and historical memory in shaping medieval

identities has become a particularly rich field of inquiry in crusades studies in recent

years. The editors of *Writing the Early Crusades*, for example, call attention to the

centrality of historical writing in "the formation and mutation of collective memory," and

stress the importance of integrating crusades history with the "main contours of European

historical development."[34] In their introduction to *Remembering the Crusades*, Nicholas

Paul and Suzanne Yeager similarly highlight the "invocation of sacred memory" as a

"commemorative discourse" that shaped how crusaders experienced and thought about

the Holy Land. By reenacting historical pilgrimages to Jerusalem, such as the one

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[33] Nicholas L. Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps: The Crusades and Family Memory in the High Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 18, 207–50.
[34] Marcus Bull and Damien Kempf (eds.), Introduction to *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory* (Boydell, 2014), 3–4.

legendarily made by Charlemagne, crusaders integrated themselves into a larger framework of shared cultural memory.[35]

A special issue of the *Journal of Medieval History* (2014) further explores new ways to integrate "studies of memory and the history of the crusades."[36] Its editors draw special attention to the idea that "memory is a social endeavour" that, in the context of the crusades, provided "a dialectical framework that involved those who went on crusade and those who remained at home. Crusade experiences were set within and given meaning in the social context of 'home'."[37] In other words, the crusading experience was relevant not only in the front lines of battle in the Holy Land, but also because that experience was shaped by—and in turn, shaped—contemporaries' ideas about their homelands.

The rich chronicles of the Angevin period provide us with an opporuntity to draw together these various strands of history, memory, and national identity. These chronicles, which were usually written by men with close connections to the royal court, provide insights into the construction of an Angevin master narrative centered on England and the English. The ways in which the authors of these chronicles weave together history, legend, theology, politics, chivalry, and their own interpretations of events provide invaluable insights into their minds and those of their contemporaries. Additionally, the manuscripts of these chronicles contain marginalia that further reflect

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[35] Nicholas Paul and Suzanne Yeager, "Introduction: Crusading and the Work of Memory, Past and Present," in *Remembering the Crusades: Myth, Image, and Identity*, ed. Nicholas Paul and Suzanne Yeager (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 3 (quote), 4.
[36] Megan Cassidy-Welch and Anne E. Lester, "Memory and interpretation: new approaches to the study of the crusades," *Journal of Medieval History* 40:3 (2014): 225–236, quote at 225.
[37] Cassidy-Welch and Lester, "Memory and interpretation," quotes at 231.

how the Angevins imagined not only England but also Jerusalem, Muslims, and the foreign territories of the Holy Land.

Among the chroniclers from the Angevin period who feature prominently in this study are William of Newburgh (1135/6–*c*. 1198), Roger of Howden (d. 1201/2), Ralph de Diceto (d. 1199/1200), Richard of Devizes (*c*. 1150–*c*. 1200), Gerald of Wales (*c*. 1146–1120x23), and Ralph of Coggeshall (*fl*. 1207–1226). Also valuable as a source of information for both late twelfth-century England and the Third Crusade is the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* (Journey of the Pilgrims and the Deeds of King Richard), written *c*. 1217–22 by the Augustinian canon Richard,[38] itself based on the Norman poet Ambroise's lengthy *Estoire de la Guerre* (History of the Holy War), written *c*. 1194–9. These texts place Jerusalem and its relations to England and the Angevins at the center of their narratives.

Related to the chronicles are the Latin and Anglo-Norman hagiographies, biographies, and treatises produced during the Angevin period. Walter Map's (d. 1209/10) rather puzzling work *De Nugis Curialium* (Courtiers' Trifles) sheds light on the day-to-day workings of the Angevin court, as well as on its history and mythology. Adam of Eynsham's (*c*. 1155–*c*. 1233) life of St Hugh of Lincoln (d. 1200), Jocelin of Brakelond's (*fl*. 1173–*c*. 1215) biography of Abbot Samson of Bury St Edmunds (d. 1211), and the several *vitae* of St Thomas Becket (*c*. 1120–1170) all provide the perspectives of prominent Angevin churchmen. The letter collections of Thomas Becket and John of Salisbury (d. 1180) also offer an ecclesiastical perspective of church-state

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[38] On Canon Richard, and his possible identity as Richard de Templo, chaplain of Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, see C. J. Tyerman, "Richard (*fl*. 1216–1222)," *ODNB*.

relations in twelfth-century England. Commemorative works like the poetry of Osbert of

Clare (d. *c.* 1158) and Geoffrey of Vinsauf (*fl.* 1208–13) grant further insights into

contemporary views of the Angevin kings and their legacies. These hagiographies,

biographies, and treatises often provide a more individual voice than is found in the

narrative summaries of the chronicles and thus offer valuable supplements to them.

Another important set of sources for this dissertation are the many literary works

of romance, legend, and epic that grew increasingly popular throughout the twelfth and

thirteenth centuries, and which reflect the kinds of stories that members of the Angevin

court found both entertaining and relevant. This literature has traditionally been

identified, following the tripartite divisions of the twelfth-century poet Jean Bodel (1165–

1210), as falling into the Matter of Britain, the Matter of France, and the Matter of Rome.

The first of these 'matters' encompasses particularly the stories of the court of King

Arthur and the prophecies of Merlin. The works of Chrétien de Troyes (*fl. c.* 1159–91)

and Marie de France (*fl. c.* 1180–*c.* 1189) helped popularize tales of chivalry and

folklore, while the poets Wace (*c.* 1100–1174x83) and Layamon (*fl. c.* 1190–1215)

translated Geoffrey of Monmouth's (d. 1154/5) influential *Historia Regum Britanniae*

(History of the Kings of Britain) into the Anglo-Norman and English vernaculars,

respectively. The French texts are a good reminder that, as John Gillingham puts it, "A

strongly held patriotism can perfectly well be expressed in the language of the former

invader."[39]

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[39] Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, xx.

Alongside the literary romances, histories and epics about the exploits of historical figures like Alexander the Great, Charlemagne (the Matter of France), and the Roman emperors (the Matter of Rome) provided a rich source of both entertainment and edification. The Angevin interest in the classical history of the Holy Land and its relevance to their own times can be found in works like Jocelin of Furness's (*fl*. 1199–1214) life of Helena Augusta and the poems of Joseph of Exeter (*fl. c*. 1180–94). Art history, archaeology, and geography provide further insights into expressions of identity at home and abroad. For the Angevins, I argue, the "Matter of Jerusalem" was just as important as the three divisions of literature outlined by Jean Bodel, and it overlapped with them in many places.

This dissertation explores what these diverse sources reveal about Jerusalem's role in the formation of an increasingly distinct English national identity during the Angevin period. The argument is divided into five thematic chapters. Chapter one explores the rhetoric of the Holy Land in Henry II's quarrel with Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury. The second chapter examines the crusading vows of the Angevin kings and contemporary interpretations of Richard I's leadership on the Third Crusade. Chapter three analyzes the affinity between England and Jerusalem in Angevin narratives about the fourth-century Roman emperor Constantine and his mother Helena. The fourth chapter discusses the treatment of holy war in early Arthurian literature and examines the Angevin appropriation of Arthurian mythology for political purposes. Chapter five turns to Angevin ideas about prophecy and eschatology during the time of the Third Crusade, examining massacres of England's Jews alongside apocalyptic beliefs

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that suggested that Richard I was the Last World Emperor, destined to reunite the Roman Empire before the second coming of Christ.

These chapters are organized to highlight the evolution of Angevin thought regarding England and the Holy Land. I begin with the political events of Henry II's reign, tracing the ways in which the king and his followers attempted to build and articulate a message of dynastic power. This drive to define their new dynasty as distinct from both their predecessors the Normans and from the Capetians in France led the Angevins to increasingly focus on the idea of England, a new Jerusalem, as the wellspring of their power. In the 1180s and early 1190s, driven by events abroad, the Angevin focus then turned eastward, toward the terrestrial city of Jerusalem. Against the backdrop of the Third Crusade, Angevin writers sought ways to link England's history and mythology to the Holy Land, thereby helping to justify English participation in the Third Crusade. In the final chapter I examine how these overlapping claims to the inheritances of England and Jerusalem led to a belief that Richard I was destined to play a central role in determining the fate of Christendom.

The great nineteenth-century historian Kate Norgate wrote that Henry II's ascension to the throne of England, "scarcely less than that of William the Conqueror, [marked] the beginning of a new era."[40] The significance of the Angevin era, she emphasized, was recognizable not only to modern historians, but also to twelfth-century people themselves.[41] Ultimately, Norgate concluded, "the whole policy of the Angevin

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[40] Kate Norgate, *England under the Angevin Kings*, 2 vols. (London and New York: MacMillan, 1887), i: 407.
[41] Norgate, *England under the Angevin Kings*, i: 407.

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kings tended to mould their insular subjects into an united England nation."[42] This

dissertation takes Norgate's conclusions as its starting point. I argue that a full

understanding of the emergence of a united English idenity needs to move beyond

Norgate's focus on the Angevins' bureaucratic and judicial reforms and the development

of English vernacular literature. Rather, as I demonstrate in the following chapters, the

emerging sense of English national identity in this period entailed a much deeper

ideological change, shaped by the Angevin court's understanding of England's

relationships to Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

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[42] Norgate, *England under the Angevin Kings*, ii: 490.

CHAPTER 1
The Holy Land and the Becket Affair

Angevin rule in England began on a hopeful note. Osbert of Clare, the prior of

Westminster Abbey when Henry II came to power in 1154, praised the new king as the

savior of the English people and the pride of his family.[43] Specifically, Osbert saw Henry

continuing the work of the king's paternal grandfather, Count Fulk V of Anjou—who had

ruled Jerusalem from 1131 to 1143—and of Fulk's son and Henry's uncle, Baldwin III (r.

1143–63). "The kings of Jerusalem," Osbert wrote to Henry, "your paternal uncle and

grandfather, to whom every wicked one (*pravus*) has yielded, properly grace you."[44] Just

as Fulk and Baldwin had ruled the kingdom of Jerusalem and protected it from the

Infidel, so would Henry establish England as a "new Jerusalem" (*Jerusalem novam*) and

restore order after years of civil war. Osbert also imagined the role the Holy Land might

play during Henry's reign: "And the next ones [i.e., victories] are for you whom even

now they celebrate there. The Saracens, full of immeasurable sorrow, are hard-pressed,

and the Christians already exult at the fall of the profane cult."[45] Osbert implied that

Henry, as the heir to both England and Jerusalem through his familial connection to Fulk

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[43] Osbert wrote his poem in 1153, when the Treaty of Westminster guaranteed Henry's succession to the throne of England.

[44] Henry was Fulk's grandson from the count's first marriage to Ermengarde of Maine, while Baldwin III was Fulk's son by his second marriage to Melisende of Jerusalem. Osbert of Clare, *The Letters of Osbert of Clare, Prior of Westminster*, ed. E. W. Williamson (Oxford University Press, 1929), 131: "Reges Jerosolymorum /te condecorant decorum / Tui patruus et avus quibus cedit quisque pravus." Osbert's poem to Henry is found in BL Cotton MS Vitellius A XVII, ff. 144r–146r (for the quote, see f. 145r). See also Paul, *To Follow in their Footsteps*, 209.

[45] Osbert of Clare, *Letters*, 131: "Hique proximi sunt tibi qui sic nunc triumphant ibi. / Tribulantur Sarraceni immenso dolore pleni / Et exultant Christiani cultus casu iam profani." See also BL Cotton MS Vitellius A XVII, f. 145r; and Paul, *To Follow in their Footsteps*, 210.

and Baldwin, would preserve Jerusalem's liberty while also healing the war-torn England.

The ideas in Osbert's poem, as Nicholas Paul has noted, reflect one of the great moral and political dilemmas of Henry II's reign.[46] On the one hand, the king should focus his efforts upon caring for England; on the other hand, the king was expected to think on the fate of Jerusalem, the kingdom ruled by his close relations. This two-fold expectation for England's king intensified in the 1170s and 1180s. In England, the Becket Affair, together with rebellions by Henry's sons, threatened to undermine Henry's political and religious authority. During the same period, the pressure to protect the Holy Land took on a greater urgency. From 1174 to 1185, the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem was ruled by Baldwin IV, a leper who ascended to the throne at age thirteen, and then by his nine-year-old heir and nephew, Baldwin V (r. 1183–6).[47] At the same time, the Ayyubid sultan Saladin began to increase military pressure on the crusader states, ultimately capturing Jerusalem in October of 1187.[48] Henry II found himself caught between these competing expectations, and ultimately focused his attention on affairs closer to home. Nevertheless, concern about the Holy Land, as well as investment in the idea of England as a new Jerusalem, continued to influence politics in England throughout Henry's reign.

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[46] Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 210.

[47] Baldwin IV's father and uncle were both sons of Fulk V of Anjou. Bernard Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs: Baldwin IV and the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1, 23. On the lack of centralized government in the kingdom of Jerusalem, see p. 45.

[48] The Zengid ruler Nur ad-Din died in May 1174, making possible Saladin's ascendancy. Anne-Marie Eddé, *Saladin*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2011), on Saladin's consolidation of power 67–102, on his campaigns in Palestine 196–237, on his capture of Jerusalem 218–227; Hamilton, *The Leper King*, 1, 98–9.

The history of early Angevin England, however, is dominated not by the figure of the first Angevin king, but rather by his London-born friend-turned-enemy, Thomas Becket. When Henry became king, he appointed his friend chancellor of the realm. In 1162, Becket stepped down from this elite post to become the archbishop of Canterbury, chief primate in England. Less than a decade later, Thomas was dead, killed at the altar of Canterbury Cathedral by four knights claiming to act in the king's name. The story of Henry II's reign is, arguably, the story of the archbishop's brutal murder and its repercussions. But this story is not limited to Angevin England; it also has many surprising connections to Jerusalem. Indeed, the relationships between early Angevin England and the Holy Land were multivariate and evolved over time. Thomas Becket's life and death cast a long shadow over Angevin history, and it is therefore with Becket that I begin my examination.

One of the witnesses to the murder of the archbishop was Becket's longtime household clerk and companion, William FitzStephen, who subsequently composed a *vita* to celebrate the archbishop's memory. Just as "the blessed Thomas the Apostle, who suffered in India, illuminated the East with faith," William proclaimed, so "here the blessed Thomas the Martyr, who suffered in England, has illuminated the whole West." These two Thomases, one in the East and one in the West, formed a spiritual and geographical balance, the fulcrum of which was Christ and Jerusalem. As William explained, "Jesus Christ who suffered in Jerusalem, is indeed the universal light at the end of the world, 'the true light, illuminating all men coming into this world' as though

about to unite the extremes by a middle term."[49] This chapter examines the political and

hagiographical expressions of this connective balance between Christ and Thomas

Becket, Jerusalem and England.

The details of Thomas Becket's famous conflict with Henry II over the liberties of

the English Church are well known, and historians—William Stubbs, James C.

Robertson, Kate Norgate, David Knowles, Frank Barlow, W. L. Warren, Richard

Mortimer, Anne Duggan, Nicholas Vincent, Martin Aurell, to name just a fraction of the

more important writers—have long grappled with the implications of these events. The

scholarly focus has largely been concerned with understanding the specifics of why

Henry and Becket quarreled for so many years, examining the relationship between the

English Church and royal government, and establishing Henry's relative guilt or

innocence in Becket's bloody murder.[50] The great nineteenth-century historian Kate

Norgate cast the conflict as a "turning point" in England's social and political history,

seeing the resolution of the affair as a two-sided loss that signaled the beginning of the

end for English monasticism and the English Church.[51] Henry II's twentieth-century

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[49] William FitzStephen, *Materials*, iii: 154: "Sed et de Domino Jesu Christo et beato Thoma apostolo et de hoc beato Thoma martyre aliquis clericus non improbabiliter intellexit et dixit, 'Beatus Thomas apostolus passus in India fide illuminavit orientem. Hic beatus Thomas martyr passus in Anglia totum illuminavit occidentem, Jesus Christus passus est Jerosolymis, et extremitatem mundi lux communis, lux vera, illuminans omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum, quasi medio termino conjuncturus extrema. Et quae est locorum, eadem Domini mediam, quinto die festivitate apostoli praecedente, martyris consequente.'" Cf. John 1:9.

[50] See, e.g., Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986); Thomas M. Jones (ed.), *The Becket Controversy* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1970); Anne J. Duggan, *Thomas Becket, Reputations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Anne J. Duggan, "Introduction" to *The Correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162–1170*, ed. and trans. by Anne J. Duggan, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), i: xxii (hereafter *CTB*); Richard Winston, *Thomas Becket* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967); Paul Dalton, Charles Insley, and Louise J. Wilkinson (eds.), Introduction to *Cathedrals, Communities and Conflict in the Anglo-Norman World*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), esp. 14–17.

[51] Norgate, *England under the Angevin Kings*, ii: 431-436, quote at 431.

biographer, W. L. Warren, was concerned with explaining how after Becket's death

Henry's actions were motivated by a desire to maintain good relations with the papacy.[52]

More recently, Martin Aurell has placed the quarrel within the broader context of the

"traditional rivalry" (*rivalité traditionelle*) over ecclesiastical primacy between the sees

of Canterbury, York, and London, as well as the post-Gregorian intellectual struggles

between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*.[53]

      Another focus of scholarly attention has been the relic cult associated with Becket

and the cathedral at Canterbury. In a 1985 lecture, Richard Southern examined how—in

spite of the tense relationship between the martyred archbishop and the monks of Christ

Church in Canterbury—it was the monks who capitalized on the chances to promote the

new cult.[54] Influenced by the anthropological turn of the 1970s and 1980s, historians like

Ronald Finucane and Jonathan Sumption analyzed the social nature of Becket's cult.

They calculated the number of posthumous miracles attributed to Becket and tried to

catalogue the social classes, gender ratios, and origins of the pilgrims to Canterbury, as

well as the many kinds of illnesses that Becket was reputed to have cured.[55] Benedicta

Ward examined another social aspect of the cult, tracing its evolution from a fairly local

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[52] W. L. Warren, *Henry II* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), esp. 518–531.
[53] Martin Aurell, "Le Muertre de Thomas Becket: Les Gestes d'un Martyre," in *Bischofsmord im Mitterlalter: Actes du Colloque de Göttingen, Septembre 2000*, ed. Natalie Fryde and Durk Reitz (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003): 187–210, at 189.
[54] R. W. Southern, *The Monks of Canterbury and the Murder of Archbishop Becket* (Canterbury: The Friends of Canterbury Cathedral and the Trustees of the William Urry Memorial Fund, 1985). See also Michael Staunton, "The *Lives* of Thomas Becket and the Church of Canterbury," *Cathedrals, Communities and Conflict in the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. Paul Dalton, Charles Insley, and Louise J. Wilkinson, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011): 169–186.
[55] Ronald C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977); Jonathan Sumption, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Mediaeval Religion* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1975).

tradition within the Canterbury community to its broader fame across Europe.[56] More

recently, Rachel Koopmans has approached Angevin miracle stories from the perspective

of oral history, seeing Becket's posthumous miracles as a product of word-of-mouth

transmission from pilgrims to the monks recording the stories.[57]

Historians have written extensively about the rapid spread of Becket's popularity

not only throughout England but also across Europe, within only a few years of the

archbishop's death. Ronald Finucane describes the cult as "pan-European," stretching

"from Scotland to Sicily," while Richard Gameson has portrayed it as ranging from

Scandinavia to Italy and Sicily.[58] Benedicta Ward's description of the cult's diffusion

references "accounts of miracles performed 'east and west', in the Holy Land and in

Norway."[59] Ward's mention of the Holy Land in relation to Becket's cult is surprisingly

rare within this scholarship. The traditional narrative of the early Angevin period centers

around the Becket Affair as it played out within England and France. Most historians of

the Becket Affair mention the Holy Land only in passing, generally in reference to Henry

II's penitential vow to go on crusade following Becket's murder, or to the way

Canterbury came to join Rome, Jerusalem, and Santiago de Compostela as a major

pilgrimage site (topics discussed below).[60]

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[56] Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event, 1000–1215*, The Middle Ages (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), esp. 89–109.

[57] Rachel Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collecting in High Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), esp. 125–200.

[58] Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, 39, 124; Richard Gameson, "The Early Imagery of Thomas Becket," in *Pilgrimage: The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan*, ed. Colin Morris and Peter Roberts (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 46–89, at 50–1.

[59] Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 98.

[60] See, e.g. Paul, *To Follow in their Footsteps*, 212; Aurell, "Le Muertre de Thomas Becket," 187.

As this chapter argues, there is much more that we can learn about these events by examining how the Angevins connected England to the Holy Land through the person of Thomas Becket. The Becket Affair dominated the political discourse of Henry II's reign, while Becket's cult was intimately linked to religious expression both in England and the Holy Land. Indeed, his cult provided a shared focus of spiritual expression not only for the Angevin lords, but also for their subjects, whether they were soldiers fighting in Palestine or peasant pilgrims visiting Canterbury. Becket and Canterbury formed the heart of Angevin politics and spirituality, a place that they still largely retain today. Members of the Angevin court molded the cult of Becket into a model of Englishness, and they did so by stressing the spiritual and physical ties that bound England to Jerusalem.

The Becket Affair: Political Rivalries and Crusading Rhetoric

At the start of Rogation Week in late April 1166, Thomas Becket, the exiled archbishop of Canterbury, made his way to Soissons. There he visited the city's monasteries, praying at their shrines before the relics of various saints.[61] The archbishop was seeking the saints' aid in his quarrel with Henry II over the liberties of the English Church, and his choice of shrines was no accident. Mary, as the mother of God, was the ultimate intercessor; Pope Gregory the Great was closely associated with the Church of

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[61] Amy Kelly, "Eleanor of Aquitaine," in *The Becket Controversy*, ed. Thomas M. Jones, Major Issues in History (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1970), 142–3; James Craigie Robertson, *Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: John Murray, 1859), 184. John S. Ott, "Educating the Bishop: Models of Episcopal Authority and Conduct in the Hagiography of Early Twelfth-Century Soissons," in *Teaching and Learning in Northern Europe, 1000–1200*, ed. Sally N. Vaughn and Jay Rubenstein, Studies in the Early Middle Ages, vol. 8 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006): 217–53, at 247. For a list of the monasteries of Soissons and the various relics that each housed, including Christ's baby tooth, see Ott, 224.

England; and St Drausius, a bishop of Soissons who had died some five centuries earlier and become a popular protector of crusaders, was recognized as having the power to aid people against their foes.[62] Twelfth-century Soissons, moreover, was known for hagiographical works promoting the "episcopal administration and authority" of its "bishop-saints."[63] Thomas may also have been remembering how in 833 Louis the Pious had performed public penance at the church of Saint-Médard in Soissons, rendering his royal self into the hand of the Church.[64] Such themes would undoubtedly have appealed to Becket, who even in exile was trying to assert his own power and authority over the Church of England and the Angevin king, Henry II.

By Pentecost, Becket had continued on to Vézelay. The Burgundian town had famously played host to Bernard of Clairvaux twenty years earlier; it was there that Bernard called upon the nobility of France to take part in what became the Second Crusade. The town's connections to the crusading movement were well enough entrenched that in 1190 the kings of England and France chose it as their meeting place before departing for the Third Crusade.[65] Becket's speech there drew upon the same emotions as a crusading sermon, calling for action against those who posed a threat to the Church (in this case, the followers of Henry II). He preached the Pentecostal sermon to a large crowd, excommunicating his enemies, anathematizing six sections of the

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[62] Kelly, "Eleanor of Aquitaine," 142–3; Robertson, *Becket,* 184.

[63] John Ott, "Educating the Bishop," 230, 231.

[64] Mayke de Jong, "Power and Humility in Carolingian Society: The Public Penance of Louis the Pious," *Early Medieval Europe* 1 (1992): 29–52, at 29.

[65] Richard of Devizes, *The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes of the Time of King Richard the First*, ed. John T. Appleby (London and New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1963), 15; *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade: A Translation of the Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, trans. Helen J. Nicholson, Crusade Texts in Translation (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 1997), 150–1; Robertson, *Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, 186.

Constitutions of Clarendon (which Henry had issued in 1164 as an assertion of royal control over England's clergy), and freeing England's bishops of their obligations to uphold the Constitutions.[66]

Becket had chosen the setting for his speech with deliberate care. The sermon was a powerful statement of the archbishop's authority and was calculated to strike Henry II a major blow. Becket therefore needed to make his stand in a setting that would convey the full gravitas of his message. His preparations at Soissons and his Pentecost sermon at Vézelay show that he was well aware of the influence that crusading imagery and imagination could have upon an audience. By framing his condemnation of England's king and his supporters in this context, Thomas essentially made the point that his struggle—the struggle over the liberties of the English Church—was akin to and just as important as the struggle to protect the Holy Land from the infidel.

Becket's enemies also made use of ideas about Jerusalem and crusading to counter this speech. Richard de Lucy and Alan de Neville, whom Thomas had excommunicated in his sermon at Vézelay because of their support of Henry II's cause, vowed to take the cross.[67] De Neville turned to Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London (r. 1163–87), for help. Foliot was one of Becket's most vociferous foes; their letters to each other

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[66] Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 110–1, 113; Kelly, "Eleanor of Aquitaine," 142–3; Robertson, *Becket*, 186–7. For a discussion of the response to Becket's sermon, see Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 115–123. Thomas did not go so far as to excommunicate Henry II, although he did excommunicate many of Henry's close associates. See Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 114.

[67] For a report of de Lucy's vow to go on crusade, see the letter from Brother Nicholas [of Mont-Saint-Jacques] of Mont-Rouen to Archbishop Thomas of Canterbury, Rouen, before 18 November 1166, *CTB*, i: 550, 550n9, and 551.

were openly hostile.[68] Gilbert accused Thomas of cowardice, noting how the archbishop sought to flee the realm instead of standing to fight, in the process abandoning all the other clergy of England. Gilbert argued that change must come from within the kingdom, not from abroad. Becket, he argued, should make his stand shoulder-to-shoulder with England's clergy, for "islands are indeed a king's strongest prisons, and escape from them is well-nigh impossible. If we must fight, let it be at close quarters."[69] Even if England had become a prison for the clergy, Foliot implied, it was better to stay there and work for change together than it was to abandon England by fleeing to a foreign land.

In addition to disagreeing about the morality of Becket's exile, the two men also butted heads over the ecclesiastical politics of England. Foliot believed not only that London deserved an archbishopric, but also that it should supersede Canterbury as the supreme archdiocese of England. This ambition, together with his continued support of Henry II's policies, made him a natural enemy of the exiled archbishop of Canterbury. When Alan de Neville requested his help in 1166, Gilbert Foliot lifted the sentence of excommunication that Becket had placed on the knight. De Neville would still have to do penance in Rome as well as in Jerusalem for having "laid violent hands" upon Becket's chaplain William, but this was a small trade-off for excommunication.[70]

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[68] For instance, Herbert of Bosham, writing in Becket's name, referred to Gilbert Foliot in one letter as "that so-called bishop of London, no true bishop (*Episcopus enim ille dictus Londoniensis… non uerus episcopus*)," accused him of false worship, and suggested that the bishop of London had "bloodstained hands (*cruentis manibus*)." *CTB*: ii, 1306–7. See also Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 119, and *CTB*, i: 499–537; *CTB*, ii: 843–51, 856–7 (in which Becket informs Gilbert that he is excommunicating him).

[69] *CTB*, i: 540–1: This letter explains that Becket excommunicated Alan de Neville because "*uiolentas in Willelmum cappellanum nostrum manus iniecit.*" See also "Letter, Gilbert Foliot to Thomas Becket," in *The Becket Controversy*, ed. Jones, 39.

[70] Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 160.

Importantly, de Neville's desire to go on crusade had provided Bishop Foliot with a ready-made opportunity to oppose the archbishop of Canterbury. Typically a bishop would not be able to absolve someone excommunicated by an archbishop, but Foliot treated Thomas Becket's sentencing of Alan de Neville as all but void, because Becket had, Foliot claimed, abandoned his position in England and therefore could no longer lay claim to the power he had wielded as archbishop of Canterbury. By allowing de Neville to make his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Gilbert essentially claimed for himself the spiritual power that he asserted Thomas had given up. Thus Alan de Neville's desire to go to Jerusalem, while not central to the debate over Church liberties, nevertheless played a role in shaping the form that the conflict took.

Gilbert Foliot also wrote a lengthy letter to Thomas Becket in September 1166, warning him to be cautious about inflicting any form of extreme punishment, namely excommunication, upon Henry II. Gilbert suggested that the English clergy felt confusion, shame, and sorrow over the rift caused by the Constitutions of Clarendon, and he acknowledged that England needed help. He admitted to Becket that the king had been mistaken in his actions, adding that "tears will continue flowing down our cheeks until the Lord reverses Zion's captivity, and consoles the mourners in Jerusalem, and turns the eyes of mercy upon Jerusalem's forsaken ones."[71] Here, the troubles plaguing the English Church become synonymous with those suffered by the Old Testament Zion, and Gilbert drives home his assertion that Becket has forsaken England, his Jerusalem.

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[71] *CTB*, i: 506: "In maxillis nostris iuges lacrime perseuerent donec conuertat Dominus captiuitatem Syon, et consoletur merentes in Ierusalem, et clementie reducat oculos in desolatos Ierusalem." Cf. Lam. 1:2; Ps. 125:1.

The bishop of London went on to admonish Becket to think carefully before daring to pronounce a sentence of excommunication upon the king of England. Citing Henry II's "sweetest children, his most noble and upright wife [Eleanor of Aquitaine], the many realms subject to him, the company of friends, and the ranks so many people obeying his commands," Foliot implied that excommunicating the king would destroy this rather idyllic image of family and friends and introduce instability into Henry's empire. Moreover, Gilbert continued, Henry would not be dissuaded from "having spurned everything, so that he might set out naked after the Lord Jesus carrying His cross."[72] This comment no doubt is in part a general, idealized description of a penitential sinner. But it is also an attempt to suggest to Becket that Henry II would be able to take crusading vows if only the archbishop would give up their pointless feud. If Thomas were to excommunicate the king, he would be preventing Henry from doing God's work. With this clever bit of rhetorical manipulation, Bishop Foliot sought to assert Henry's dominance as lord of a vast realm, to portray the king as the (occasionally mistaken but ultimately well-meaning) protector of the English Church, and effectively to diffuse Thomas's threat of excommunication.

The Becket Affair: Political Rivalries and Biblical Rhetoric

In addition to capitalizing on crusading rhetoric, the English clergy also drew upon biblical references to Jerusalem to make political points. It is not surprising that the

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[72] *CTB*, i: 530: "dulcissima pignora, nobilissima coniunx et honesta, subiecta sibi regna quam plurima amicorum cetus et suis obsequentium nutibus tot populorum agmina, mundi queque pretiosa, uix detinet, uix blandiendo persuadent quin spretis omnibus post crucem suam portantem Dominum Iesum nudus exeat." Cf. Luke 14:27; Matt. 10:38.

correspondence for the Becket affair is full of such references and allusions—most learned correspondence of the period was.[73] Becket and his allies, however, saved direct references to Jerusalem for certain subjects, particularly Henry II and his destruction of the Church of England. In mid-1164, for example, an unidentified supporter wrote to the archbishop of Canterbury, drawing parallels between Henry II, the Roman emperor Constantius II (r. 337–361 CE), and the Greek king Antiochus IV Epiphanes (r. 175–64 BCE), famous historical persecutors of Jerusalem.

Constantius, Becket's *amicus* argued, drew to his court some "insufficiently spiritual bishops" who "having ignored their own churches, were frequently present at court, charming Caesar with base flattery, [and] obeying royal rather than Gospel edicts."[74] The reference is clearly to those English bishops—especially Roger de Pont L'Évêque, archbishop of York (r. 1154–81), and Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London—who had supported Henry's position and signed the Constitutions of Clarendon against Becket's explicit orders. In this instance, Becket's *amicus* suggested that if Henry was like Constantius, Thomas was like St Martin, who had served in the military under Constantius but had ultimately devoted his life to the Church. Martin, who had become bishop of Tours, was also closely affiliated with the house of the counts of Anjou.[75] In addition to drawing a general distinction between the bad secular ruler and the good spiritual leader, this passage thus subtly implied that Becket was being a good Angevin

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[73] See, e.g., Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 104–9, 116, 121, for an analysis of some of the biblical rhetoric used in the Becket Affair.

[74] *CTB*, i: 108: "Legitur…quosdam minus spirituales episcopos, propriis pretermissis ecclesiis, curie frequenter interfuisse, turpi adulation Cesarem delinisse, regiis potius quam euangelicis edictis paruisse."

[75] On the relationships between the medieval counts of Anjou and the cult of St Martin of Tours, see Sharon A. Farmer, *Communities of St. Martin: Legend and Ritual in Medieval Tours*, First Edition (Ithaca. N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1991). See also Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 25, 235, 245.

by emulating Martin, while Henry and his English bishops were usurpers who had betrayed the 'proper' Angevin identity.

Becket's *amicus* continued his letter, turning to the figure of Antiochus, the second-century BCE Greek king whose story is told in 2 Maccabees. Antiochus was famous for responding to a revolt in Jerusalem in 167 BCE by killing 40,000 Jews and selling another 40,000 into slavery.[76] As Becket's *amicus* framed the story, Antiochus, "recently driven to fury against the Lord's priests," wished to destroy Jerusalem's holy places. The real target of this criticism was not Antiochus himself, but rather those "particularly pestilential men" of Israel who had supported the king because they were "jealous of the primacy of the High Priest."[77]

Again, the parallels to the Becket Affair are clear. Antiochus represented Henry II, while the "pestilential priests" were those clergy in England who backed the king. The High Priest Menelaus, who had been appointed by the king and then driven out of Jerusalem by the rebels, was Becket.[78] In this casting of the story, there is a clear implication that Jerusalem represented Canterbury, and Israel symbolized England. Becket's friend concluded his summary of 2 Maccabees with a wish: "If only they [the Jerusalemites, i.e., the clergy of Canterbury] had found a prophet in Israel [i.e. a supporter within England] who, casting out the leprosy of the prince of Syria [i.e. Henry

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[76] 2 Maccabees 5:11–14.
[77] *CTB*, i: 110: "Cum enim Antiochus, furia in Domini sacerdotes nuper inuectus, sancta in Ierosolimis conculcare… disponeret, ecce aliqui progressi ex Israel, uiri utique pestilentes… aut certe pontificis summi prioratui inuidentes."
[78] 2 Maccabees 5:5.

II], lest even he be infected, cursed the offered abundance of gold or of raiment, indeed even of the whole realm."[79]

The chronicler Roger of Howden recorded an 1166 letter from Becket to Robert of Melun, bishop of Hereford, that echoed the biblical imagery invoked in this anonymous letter. Thomas set the conflict squarely within an English context. In the letter, he asked how Robert, "who we were hoping was about to redeem Israel, about to free the Church from servitude" could stand by and watch while the king's supporters "have deceived England, the cornerstone of the people." Thomas further reminded the bishop, "they have caused England to go astray in its works, as though it were a drunk man, vomiting and trembling; and what the head and tail do will be of no use to England, because they have devoured Jacob, and have desolated his place."[80]

Here Becket likened the English clergy to the Old Testament princes of Tanis and Memphis. "Where now," Isaiah 19 asks, "are your wise men?... They [the princes] have caused Egypt to go astray in all its works, as though it were a man drunk and vomiting."[81] England, Becket implies, could be saved neither by him nor his exiled supporters. Unless a member of the clergy of England would stand up in support of righteousness and oppose Henry's policies, the kingdom would dissolve into chaos like biblical Egypt had done. Indeed, the kingdom's future depended upon the strength of a hero from *within*

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[79] *CTB*, i: 114: "Vtinam et inuenerint prophetam in Israel, qui principis Syri lepram eiciens, ne et ipse lepra participet, oblatam auri uel uestium, immo et regni totius, copiam execretur."

[80] *CTB*, i: 442–7: "tu, de quo sperabatur quod esses redemturus Israel, liberaturus a servitute ecclesiam… 'deceperunt Angliam, angulum populorum… errare fecerunt Angliam in opera suo, sicut erat ebrius, vomens tremensque et non erit Anglie opus, quod faciat caput et caudam,' quis comederunt Iacob, et locum eius desolauerunt." See also Roger of Howden, *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houdene*, ed. William Stubbs, RS, 4 vols. (London, 1868–1871), i: 250–2.

[81] Isaiah 19:12,14: "ubi sunt nunc sapientes tui… Dominus miscuit in medio eius spiritum vertiginis et errare fecerunt Aegyptum in omni opere suo sicut errat ebrius et vomens."

England itself, who would lead England out of the wilderness of exile and along the straight paths of the Lord to Jerusalem.[82]

Calls for Peace

The above examples reflect several ways in which rhetoric about the Holy Land—whether historical, biblical, or in the contemporary context of crusading—was put to use for political ends in the Becket Affair. The conflict between Thomas Becket and Henry II was further shaped by actual contemporary events in the Holy Land. Even before the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin's forces in 1187, Christians in the West felt pressure to aid the Frankish settlements against the incursions of the Zengid Turks, and events in the Levant had the potential, according to some contemporaries, to influence the outcome of the Becket Affair. In early 1165, for instance, an anonymous friend wrote to Becket, explaining that Henry wished to cross the Channel to make peace with the Flemings and the French, but was afraid of leaving England open to Welsh attacks. Another friend of theirs, Becket's *amicus* wrote, felt that Henry simply needed a good excuse to cross the Channel. Perhaps, he suggested, Pope Alexander III (who was in France at the time) would summon Henry to meet with him, "because of the dangers threatening the Church, or because of the calamity in the city of Antioch, recently announced to him [Henry]."[83]

The calamity to which Becket's compatriot referred was the Zengid ruler Nur ad-Din's capture of the Christian commanders Duke Bohemond III of Antioch, Count

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[82] See Isaiah 40:3: "parate viam Domini rectas facite in solitudine semitas Dei nostri."
[83] *CTB*, i: 178: "pro imminentibus ecclesie periculis, atque pro Antiochene Urbis nuper ad eum perlata calamitate."

Raymond of Tripoli, Hugh of Lusignan, and Constantine Coloman of Byzantium, following the battle of Harenc in August 1164.[84] Thomas's allies hoped that the great impact of this disturbance in the East would motivate Henry to come to the pope in France, at which point Becket might also speak with the king. "And this is the one and only way," Becket's friend wrote, "for restoring peace between you."[85] Thomas's allies were so desperate for the archbishop to be reconciled with Henry that they hoped to capitalize upon the threat the Muslims posed to Christendom as a means by which to bring the two men together. If only Alexander would summon Henry to discuss this threat, then perhaps reconciliation would be possible.

Although neither Becket nor his enemies were averse to using crusading rhetoric when it suited their purposes, the archbishop of Canterbury and his companions were also critical of the crusading movement's potential to be derailed from its original intent. In a letter to John of Canterbury, bishop of Poitiers, in February 1169, Becket's supporter John of Salisbury (d. 1180) denounced "the most wretched event" of the Second Crusade, "grievous to the church." The Second Crusade had led, he elaborated, to "plundering and injustices."[86] Essentially, John argued, it was important to undertake a crusade for the correct, worthy purposes, and under the auspices of peace. This could not happen unless Becket was first restored to Henry's good graces.

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[84] John J. Robinson, *Dungeon, Fire and Sword: The Knights Templar and the Crusades* (Brockhamton Press, 1999), 111; *CTB*, i: 179n7, 550n9.

[85] *CTB*, i: 178: "Hancque solam et singularem pacis inter uos reparande superesse uiam."

[86] *Letters of John of Salisbury*, ed. W. J. Millor and C. N. L. Brooke, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1979), ii: 632: "rei miserrimus et ecclesiae dolendus eventus docuit de rapinis et iniuriis." Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 37, quotes this passage. See also Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 23.

John of Salisbury's doubts concerning the restoration of peace between the two men would appear justified based on the outcome of negotiations in France early in 1170, led by Frederick, archbishop of Tyre, and attended by various diplomats including representatives of Henry II's uncle, King Amalric I of Jerusalem (r. 1162–72). Henry had proposed that he and Louis VII of France lead a crusade, and a meeting was called to discuss the possibility of such an undertaking.[87] The kings' plans to depart in 1171 were problematic because Henry and Becket remained enemies.[88] Before leaving for Jerusalem, Henry would need to set his affairs in order, which included reconciling with the exiled archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop Froger of Séez, Geoffrey Foulquia (the Master of the Temple), Brother Geoffrey of Auxerre, and Alexander of Cologne (the abbot of Cîteaux) were thus dispatched to escort Becket to a meeting at Chaumont. Before Thomas could arrive to discuss the terms of reconciliation, however, the planned crusade was cancelled, and the truce between Henry and Thomas had to be put on hold.[89] Indeed, John of Salisbury intimated to Baldwin, archdeacon of Totnes, that Henry had been feigning sincerity the whole time. Rather, he suggested, the king had never intended to reconcile with Becket and his preparations for crusade had all been a sham meant to mislead those who were involved in the talks.[90]

These negotiations show the close connection between the progression and resolution of the Becket Affair, events in the Holy Land, and the possibility of the king of

[87] *CTB*, ii: 1140–141n4. See also Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 199–200; Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 180.
[88] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 37.
[89] *CTB*, ii: 1140–141n4; Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, 180–1. For Henry's political balancing act between appeasing France, maintaining his empire, and going on crusade, see Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 40–1, 54. See also *Letters of John of Salisbury*, ii: 6.
[90] *Letters of John of Salisbury*, ii: 692–7.

England going on crusade. While any reconciliation between king and archbishop would have been only superficial (as was eventually proven by Becket's murder), had Henry chosen to carry through with his proposed voyage to the East, the ultimate outcome of the conflict (i.e. Becket's untimely death in December 1170) might have been delayed or even avoided. Indeed, many of Becket's closest companions advocated for such an outcome. The fate of Jerusalem thus served as an important factor in the ongoing struggle between Thomas Becket and Henry II, helping to shape their conflict and negotiations for possible resolutions.

Postmortem: St Thomas Martyr and the Holy Land

While the influence of Jerusalem and the Holy Land is visible in the politics of the Becket Affair, it never played more than a secondary role. Both the king's men and Becket's invoked the Holy Land to give special force to political arguments, while the prospect of a crusade that never materialized left all involved parties in a state of perpetual anticipation. The murder of Archbishop Becket before the altar of Canterbury Cathedral on December 29, 1170 would change all of that. In the aftermath of Thomas's martyrdom, the Holy Land gained a much more central place in the political and spiritual discourse of Angevin England. The men who promoted Becket's cult drew explicit parallels between Thomas's death and Christ's Passion; Becket's reputation for working miracles encouraged pilgrimage between England and the Levant; the penance of Henry II and Becket's killers was largely focused on providing aid to the Holy Land; and the archbishop of Canterbury's cult was exported to Jerusalem and Acre in a distinctly English manner.

Thomas's death at the hands of four knights with ties to the royal court sent off shockwaves throughout not only England but across Europe more broadly.[91] It was reminiscent of the 1127 murder of Count Charles the Good of Flanders, who had been killed by several of his household knights while he was praying at the altar of the church of St Donation in Bruges.[92] That assassination had unleashed chaos and civil war in Flanders;[93] what, then, might happen in England under similar circumstances? In the days and weeks immediately following Becket's death, there were still many questions about what had happened, why, and—perhaps most importantly—what was now the status of the dead Thomas.

Many people, remembering Becket's excesses as chancellor and stubbornness as archbishop, questioned whether he truly was a martyr, and whether he should be considered worthy of sainthood. For those who did acknowledge the archbishop's sanctity, there was still some question about how properly to express devotion for him, as the pope had not yet canonized him.[94] In England, several of Becket's supporters or members of the Canterbury community, notably John of Salisbury, Edward Grim, Benedict of Peterborough, William of Canterbury, and Herbert of Bosham, sought to record the important moments of the archbishop's life and posthumous miracles. Their miracle collections reflect the international spread of the cult.

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[91] The murder of bishops and other high-ranking church officials was not unheard-of in the twelfth century. Becket's cult's popularity was due to the particular circumstances of his death and to the efforts of his promoters, rather than to the uniqueness of the murder itself. See Natalie Fryde and Dirk Reitz (eds.), Introduction to *Bischofsmord im Mitteralter / Murder of Bishops* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 7–8.

[92] Galbert of Bruges, *The Murder of Charles the Good*, trans. James Bruce Ross (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 111–2, 118–9.

[93] James Bruce Ross, Introduction to Galbert of Bruges, *The Murder of Charles the Good*, 5.

[94] Thomas Becket was officially canonized on Ash Wednesday (21 February), 1173. Frank Barlow, "Becket, Thomas," *ODNB*.

The miracles on occasion served to emphasize the English character of Becket's cult, and at the same time to define what 'English' meant in the context of the Angevin court. Becket's clerk and biographer William of Canterbury (fl. 1162–1174) told the story of Reginald, a priest from Wretham near Norwich, who had learned through a vision that the best way to show devotion for the not-yet-canonized Thomas was to do so in English. In Reginald's vision, the monks were preparing to sing an antiphon honoring Thomas's memory, when one of them objected, pointing out that, "the martyr had not yet been entered into the catalogue of martyrs by apostolic authority." Therefore, the monk said, "let it be sung in English."[95] Later, after waking from his vision, Reginald remembered the antiphon, and taught it to others. William of Canterbury recorded the lyrics:

> *Hali Thomas of hevenriche,*
> *Alle postles eve[n]liche,*
> *Ðhe martyrs ðhe understande.*
> *Deyhuamliche on here hande.*
> *Selcuth ded ure Drichtin*
> *Ðhat he ðhi wetter wente to wyn.*
> *Ðhu ert help in Engelande,*
> *Ure stefne understande.*
> *Thu hert froure imang mankynne,*
> *Help us nu of ure senne.*

> Holy Thomas of the heavenly realm
> Equal of the apostles,
> The martyrs lift you up
> Daily on their hands.
> Our Lord did a wondrous thing
> When he turned water to wine.
> You are salvation in England,
> Our voices lift up.
> You are comfort among mankind,

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[95] William of Canterbury, *Materials*, i: 150: "nondum enim ex apostolica auctoritate catalogo martyrum martyr ascriptus erat." See also Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 104.

Save us now from our sins.[96]

This song offers a rare glimpse beyond the more usual French (Anglo-Norman) and Latin literary sources.[97] It also suggests a recognition that Thomas was not just any saint, but one with an exalted status that placed him above the other saints. This story, moreover, emphasizes not only that the English vernacular was used for showing devotion to Thomas, but also that, at least initially, monks were encouraged to remember the saint in English, rather than in French or Latin.

The rhetorical language that the monks used to describe their martyred leader made it very clear that Becket's death paralleled that of Christ.[98] In making such an association, these authors also drew comparisons between England and the Holy Land, Canterbury and Jerusalem. The Jerusalem-related stories and miracles associated with Becket can be roughly divided into two categories: those which draw comparisons between Canterbury and the holy city, and those which deal directly with pilgrims either traveling to, living within, or returning from the East (Jerusalem or Damascus). In both groups, there are strong links between England and Palestine. These connections indicate

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[96] William of Canterbury, *Materials*, i: 151. William also gave a Latin translation of this antiphon: "Potest autem Latine sic exprimi; 'Sancte Thoma, civis coelestic, par omnibus apostolis, martyres excipiunt te suis manibus quotidie. Salvator noster mirum fecut, qui tuam aquam in vinum vertit. Tu es juvamen Angliae; voces nostras attende. Tu es solamen in humano genere; a peccatis nostris nos averte, evo vae.'" See also Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 104.

[97] Elaine Treharne explains that, "from about 1020 or so there is barely any 'original' writing [in English] at all until about 1170." After the Norman Conquest, Anglo-Norman texts had gained popularity in England, particularly amongst the elite, while "Latin continued to dominate manuscript production." Compared to the hundreds of Anglo-Norman manuscripts and thousands of Latin ones, Treharne presents a list of fewer than fifty twelfth- and early thirteenth-century manuscripts written in English, not including cartularies and occasional English glosses in other manuscripts from the period. That English was used at Christ Church, Canterbury, is further suggested by the number of English manuscripts produced in Canterbury during this period, including BL Cotton Vespasian D XIV (dated to the middle to the second-half of the twelfth century), which includes a late twelfth-century Latin prayer about Becket at its beginning. Treharne, *Living through Conquest*, 5, 124–7, 156–7.

[98] Aurell, in "Le Meurtre de Thomas Becket," 207–10, discusses this hagiographical emphasis on Becket's similarity to Christ.

that late twelfth-century Angevin authors believed that Becket's death not only made England a pilgrimage destination, but also helped to reinforce typological connections between England and the Holy Land broadly, and Canterbury and Jerusalem specifically.

Becket's biographer William of Canterbury had no hesitation in stating outright that Becket was not just another martyr, but one whose death and miracles bore an unmistakable resemblance to those of Christ. "The principle cause is the Lord," William wrote, "and the martyr who is similar to the Lord in [his] passion." He went on to list the many ways that Becket could be compared to Christ. Both men knew in advance where they would suffer their passion yet approached it without hesitation: "Just as people sought to apprehend Jesus, so did they Thomas, but no one was able to lay a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come." Both Christ and Thomas suffered their passions after supper; neither man tried to hide from his guards, but rather announced himself to them; both men were wounded by four knights.[99] Of course, all martyrs and saints patterned themselves (or else their biographers patterned them) after Christ.[100] But William wanted to make his readers draw the connections as directly as possible, and thus was quite explicit about these parallels.[101]

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[99] William of Canterbury, *Materials*, i: 1–2: "Causa principalis Dominus est, et martyr qui Domino similis est in passione. Nam sicut Dominus imminente passione sua loco passionis appropinquavit, ita Thomas sciens futurorum ad locum quo pateretur accessit. Sicut Jesum, ita Thomam quaerebant apprehendere, sed nemo misit in eum manum, quia nondum venerat hora ejus. Dominus triumphavit ante passionem suam; Thomas ante suam. Dominus passus est post coenam; Thomas passus est et post coenam. Dominus a Judaeis triduo Jerosolymis custoditus; Thomas diebus aliquot intra septa ecclesiae suae custoditur. Dominus quaerentibus eum occurrens ait, 'Quem quaeritis Ego sum;' Thomas quaerentibus eum, 'Ecce ego.' Dominus, 'Si me quaeritis, sinite hos abire;' Thomas, 'Nulli circumstantium noceatis.' Unus ibi, unus hic, vulneratur. Ibi milites quatuor, his milites quatuor."

[100] On the literary trope of *imitatio Christi* in medieval saints' lives, see Thomas Heffernan, *Sacred Biography: Saints and Their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 5, 30.

[101] Cf. Aurell, "Le Meurtre de Thomas Becket," 207–8.

Like William, Benedict of Peterborough (*c.* 1135–1193) was quick to draw

parallels between Canterbury and Jerusalem, Becket and Christ. Benedict gathered

together what Rachel Koopmans calls "the most widely circulated shrine collection of the

age," a collection that, combined with that by William of Canterbury, recorded 665

pilgrims visiting the cathedral between the years 1171 and 1177.[102] Describing the state

of the cathedral at Canterbury after the archbishop's death, Benedict wrote, "You might

think that Canterbury no less than Jerusalem is mourned with those prophetic dirges.

Indeed all the paths of our Zion were mourning."[103] Here Benedict suggested that

Canterbury's suffering upon Becket's murder was as powerful as Jerusalem's suffering

had been when it was destroyed and the Temple sacked by the Chaldeans in 589–7

BCE.[104]

The first miracles that Benedict of Peterborough attributed to the martyred

archbishop reinforced Canterbury's place alongside Jerusalem by explicitly linking

Thomas and Christ. Benedict reported a vision he had shortly after the archbishop's

death. Thomas appeared to Benedict as he slept, dressed as though ready to celebrate

Mass, whereupon the monk inquired in French, "Lord,…aren't you dead?" Replying in

Latin, Becket said, "I died, but I have risen."[105] The likenesses to Christ's Resurrection

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[102] Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate*, 3, see also 114; Sumption, *Pilgrimage*, 122.
[103] Benedict of Peterborough, *Materials*, ii: 22; Benedict of Peterborough, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Thomas of Canterbury*, ed. J. A. Giles, Caxton Society Publications XI, Burt Franklin Research & Source Works Series 154 (New York: Burt Franklin, 1967), 34: "Putares threnis illis propheticis non minus Cantuariam defleri quam Jerosolymam. Illugebant quidem omnes viae nostrae Sion." Cf. Lam. 1:4.
[104] A reference to the destruction of Jerusalem chronicled in Jeremiah 52:4–27, and the intense mourning that followed, as described in Lamentations.
[105] Benedict of Peterborough, *Materials*, ii: 27; Benedict of Peterborough, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Thomas of Canterbury*, 39–40: "'Domine,' inquam, 'nonne mortuus es?' At ille Gallice interroganti respondit sermone Latino, 'Mortuus fui, sed surrexi.'" See also Gameson, "The Early Imagery of Thomas

are unmistakable. Benedict's emphasis on the language the two men spoke also helps to emphasize Thomas's spiritual authority: Benedict spoke the colloquial tongue, while Becket invoked a higher register through his use of Latin.[106]

As Benedict's vision continued, the saint ascended to the altar, where he began to perform the *Laetere Jerusalem* introit to the mass for the fourth Sunday in Lent.[107] This is a telling choice, for not only did this day mark an important date in the medieval Christian calendar, it was also closely associated with the taking of crusading vows.[108] The German emperor Frederick I Barbarossa, for example, began his public preparations for the Third Crusade on this day.[109] As Sylvia Schein has noted, the introit had by the middle of the twelfth century become associated with the Christian victory at Jerusalem in 1099:

> Jerusalem the earthly
> The origin of the Celestial
> Rejoice in the New Feast
> Jerusalem be praised.

Becket," 59. The language echoes that of the Gospels. Compare to Rom. 8:34: "Christus Iesus qui mortuus est immo qui resurrexit." Cf. also Matt. 27:64.

[106] We should not think of Angevins—at least those who were educated—as being limited to the use of a single language, whether English, Latin, or French. Elaine Treharne, in her discussion of the Eadwine or Canterbury Psalter (Cambridge MS Trinity College R.17.1), which was made at Christ Church in the mid-twelfth century, argues that "Metaphorically teaching 'Language' in mid-twelfth-century Canterbury involved a very visual demonstration of the dynamism of trilingualism, of the practical and theoretical interrelatedness of language: Latin, French, and English, each has its place…with the Latin dominating…and the two vernaculars being given—*prima facie*—equal weight… here for all to literally see there is unanimity of the three languages operating in England in this period." Treharne, *Living through Conquest*, 173.

[107] Benedict of Peterborough, *Materials*, ii: 29; Benedict of Peterborough, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Thomas of Canterbury*, 40. Compare to Edward Grim, *Materials*, ii: 441, who also reports Benedict's dream, but does not mention Becket's performance at the altar.

[108] For examples of the introit being used to mark meetings, knighthood ceremonies, and consecrations, see Roger of Howden, *Chronicle*, ii: 303, iii: 318, and iv: 41. See also William of Canterbury, *Materials*, i: 161.

[109] Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 288; Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History* (New Haven, CT, 1987), 111.

Jherusalem terrestris
principium celestis
laetare novis festis
Jherusalem exulta.[110]

The *Laetere Jerusalem* introit was part of the larger Feast of the Liberation of Jerusalem,

praising God's role as the Savior of the city. In Jerusalem itself, the celebration included

a procession from the Holy Sepulcher to the Temple of the Lord, where the public

sermon would then be preached.[111]

Between the taking of Jerusalem in 1099 and the end of the Second Crusade, the

liturgical service for the Feast of the Liberation of Jerusalem was expanded to include a

commemoration of "the crusaders killed in the battle for Jerusalem, and…for Godfrey of

Bouillon."[112] By the time that Benedict of Peterborough recorded the miracles of Thomas

Becket, these elements had been part of the feast's celebration for several decades. The

archbishop's performance of *Laetere Jerusalem* in Benedict of Peterborough's vision,

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[110] Sylvia Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City: Crusader Jerusalem and the Catholic West (1099–1187)*, Church, Faith and Culture in the Medieval West (Burlington, VA: Ashgate, 2005), 29.

[111] Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 29–30. Schein offers a detailed description of the elements of the sermon: "The verses used most often are Zechariah 9:9: 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! / Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! / Lo, your king comes to you; / triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass...' (quoted four times); Isaiah 60:1: 'Arise, shine; for your light has come, / and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you' (also four times); Isaiah 2:3: 'It shall come to pass in the latter days / that the mountain of the house of the Lord / shall be established at the highest of the mountains, / and shall be raised above the hills, and all the nations shall flow to it; / and many people shall come, and say: / Come let us go up the mountain of the Lord; / to the house of the God of Jacob; / that he may teach us his way / and that we may walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem' (twice); Isaiah 66:10: 'Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, / all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy; / all you who mourn over her' (twice). The office of Vespers was dominated by the emotions of separation and longing of people exiled from Jerusalem: 'By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion... How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O, Jerusalem, let my right hand wither' (Psalms 137:1, 4–5). The liberation is perceived as the return of the exiles: 'When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion we were like those who dream' (Psalms 126:1). Based upon the texts such as the description in Revelation of the Heavenly Jerusalem (Revelation 21:1–3; 21, 25) and the hymn *Urbs beata Hierusalem*, used since the eighth century in the liturgy for dedication of churches, the liturgy of 'In Festivitate Sancte Hierusalem' echoes the emotions of the conquerors like Raimond of Aguilers and present the earthly Old Testament's Jerusalem as prefiguring the Christian Jerusalem."

[112] Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 30.

paired with Thomas's resurrection, were clearly meant to convey a message of triumph over death and over one's enemies, in a context evocative of the First Crusade. In making these connections, Benedict further reinforced the idea that Becket was like Christ, and Canterbury like Jerusalem. Just as Christ had shed his blood in Jerusalem for the salvation of mankind, so had Becket's healing blood flowed across the floors of Canterbury Cathedral, and both had triumphed over death.

In another miracle related by Benedict of Peterborough, Godith, the daughter of a certain Baldwin of Wye, presented two candles at Becket's shrine. The flames went out, but by the power of the saint, not only did they relight, but all the lamps and candles throughout the church lit up. Benedict praised the miracle, thanking God, "whose fire is in the Zion of Canterbury, and whose road [leads] to heavenly Jerusalem!"[113] Again Benedict presents Canterbury as analogous to Jerusalem. The idea of a spontaneously lighting candle brings to mind the miracle of the Holy Fire at the Holy Sepulcher. Since the ninth century, Christians had gathered in the Rotunda of the Resurrection (the Anastasis) every Easter to witness the Holy Fire descend from Heaven into the lamps around Christ's tomb (the edicule).[114] The Fire's seemingly spontaneous ignition was a sign of God's power pervading the site of Christ's tomb, just as the relighting of Godith's candle signaled the spiritual power permeating the site of Becket's tomb.

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[113] Benedict of Peterborough, *Materials*, ii: 121; Benedict of Peterborough, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Thomas of Canterbury*, 134: "Per omnia benedictus Dominus, cujus ignis est in Cantuariensi Sion, et caminus ejus in coelesti Jerusalem!"
[114] Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders*, 24–5; Martin Biddle, *The Tomb of Christ* (Thrupp, Gloucestershire, UK: Sutton, 1999), 138. I discuss these architectural elements of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at greater length in Chapter Three.

Visual and material culture also played a crucial role in establishing links between Jerusalem and Canterbury. Tim Tatton-Brown's analysis of pilgrimage shrines in England has shown that a number of twelfth-century cathedrals, including St. Paul's, Glastonbury, Salisbury, and Canterbury, housed "tomb-shrines, with holes in their sides." This style of tomb, which allowed for pilgrims to insert parts of their bodies into the tomb alongside the saint's relics, was modeled on "the newly built Tomb of Christ in the edicule at the centre of the rotunda in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem."[115] The German monk Theoderic, who visited Jerusalem in 1172, described Christ's (empty) tomb as having "in its side… three round holes"; the surviving stained glass windows at Canterbury Cathedral show a similar style for Becket's tomb.[116]

Richard Gameson has demonstrated, moreover, that the visual rhetoric of Becket reliquary châsses echoed the visual symbolism of the Crucifixion and Entombment of Christ.[117] This parallelism is also present in the early thirteenth-century narrative stained glass window at Chartres Cathedral, which depicts the clerk Edward Grim (fl. 1170–c.1186) holding a cross over Becket's head at the moment of the martyrdom.[118] Chartres

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[115] Tim Tatton-Brown, "Canterbury and the architecture of pilgrimage shrines in England," in *Pilgrimage: The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan*, ed. Colin Morris and Peter Roberts (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 90–107, at 95. See also John Guy, *Thomas Becket, Warrior, Priest, Rebel: A Nine-Hundred-Year-Old Story Retold* (New York: Random House, 2012), 339, who explains that that not all of the plans were carried out to make Canterbury's architecture echo that of Jerusalem.

[116] Theoderic, *Libellus de Locis Sanctis*, quoted by Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders*, 24; Several medallions from the windows of the Trinity Chapel at Canterbury Cathedral show pilgrims visiting Becket's tomb, which has two holes in its base. A similar tomb with two holes is depicted in the Becket windows at Sens Cathedral. See Madeline Harrison Caviness, *The Early Stained Glass of Canterbury Cathedral, circa 1175–1220* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), plates 159, 160, 197f, 207, 210, 211.

[117] Gameson, "The Early Imagery of Thomas Becket," 56, 63; Aurell, "Le Meurtre de Thomas Becket," 209.

[118] Gameson, "The Early Imagery of Thomas Becket," 67.

had special connections with Becket: John of Salisbury, who had been a clerk at

Canterbury from 1147–1163 before going into exile with Thomas, was writing his

biography of the martyred archbishop when he was elected bishop of Chartres in 1176.[119]

John's presence at Chartres undoubtedly influenced the traditions about Becket there.

The same Edward Grim depicted in the Chartres Cathedral window looked to both

the Old and New Testaments to understand Becket's place in biblical history. Grim, an

eyewitness who had been wounded during the attack on the archbishop, compared

Becket's role as chancellor of England to that of Joseph in Egypt. Both men had held

great power and wealth, and Grim implies that Henry II, like Pharaoh, relied upon

Becket's advice in order to rule the kingdom.[120] In enumerating the miracles that

happened after the saint's burial, Grim lauded Thomas:

> For this [man] is indeed the lover of the brothers and of the people of Israel, he is
> the one who prays much for the people, and for the holy city Jerusalem, in whose
> triumph heaven rejoices, by whose sufferings the holy Church is confirmed in
> faith, by whose merits and intervention the blind see, the lame walk, the leprous
> are made clean, the dead are revived, and the poor resound glory to Christ.[121]

Edward Grim's portrayal of Becket invokes the parallels to Christ that I have outlined

above, but he also connects the archbishop to the greater history of the people of Israel.

Joseph, son of Jacob (Israel), had helped to lead his people to success in Egypt when he

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[119] David Luscombe, "John of Salisbury," *ODNB*. Herbert Bosham described John of Salisbury as "natione Anglus" when he noted John's election as bishop of Chartres, again emphasizing John's connections to England even as he left for France. Herbert of Bosham, *Materials*, iii: 524.

[120] Edward Grim, *Materials*, ii: 363. Grim was interpreting Becket's death through typological exegesis, a method in which people or events (types) from the Old Testament directly prefigure people or events (antitypes) revealed by the New Testament. For an in-depth discussion of the types of biblical analysis popular in the twelfth century, see Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, trans. Mark Sebanc, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998).

[121] Edward Grim, *Materials*, ii: 442–3: "Hic est enim fratrum amator et populi Israel, hic est qui multum orat pro populo, et pro civitate sancta Jerusalem, cujus triumpho laetatur coelum, cujus passionibus sancta in fide confirmatur Ecclesia, cujus meritis et interventu cauci vident, claudi ambulant, leprosi mundantur, mortui resurgunt, et pauperes resonant gloriam Christo."

was Pharaoh's vizier. By association, Grim implies that Thomas, as Henry II's chancellor, had similarly led the people of England from a wilderness of corruption and anarchy into an era of stability and prosperity. Moreover, Becket's miracles were connected to his love of the brothers (that is, the monks at Canterbury) and the people of Israel (that is, England). Through these merits, and his prayers for Jerusalem (Canterbury), Becket was able to perform miraculous cures for those pilgrims who came to visit his tomb.

Visions and Pilgrims

When the four knights murdered the archbishop at the altar of Canterbury Cathedral, most of Europe was taken by shock. But, Benedict of Peterborough tells us, Thomas's death was foreseen ten years before it happened, by a monk living in Jerusalem. Bertha of Gloucester related the story to the monks at Christ Church, having herself heard it from an Englishman returning from the Holy Land in 1160. In the story, a monk in Jerusalem asked the pilgrim where he came from. "From England," he replied, to which the monk exclaimed, "O England, England! How attractive you will be!" The monk went on to inquire whether the pilgrim had ever been to Canterbury. When the pilgrim said that he had never seen the town, the monk cried out, "O Canterbury! How attractive, how delightful you will be! For there will come a day, when the people flood

to it, just as at present they frequent blessed Giles, or blessed Jacob [Santiago], or Rome, or Jerusalem."[122]

Santiago de Compostela, Rome, and Jerusalem were, of course, the three major pilgrimage destinations for European Christians. Giles most likely refers to Saint-Gilles-du-Gard near Arles, which was not only on the Camino de Santiago, but also had been a stop on pope Urban II's crusade-preaching tour in 1095 and was closely associated with Count Raymond IV of Toulouse, one of the most important leaders of the First Crusade.[123] By placing Canterbury amongst these famous sites, Benedict of Peterborough's story tied England and Jerusalem together in a multi-directional web of personal interactions, pilgrimage, and prophecy.

According to Becket's companion and biographer Herbert of Bosham (d. *c*. 1194), the patriarch of Jerusalem learned of the martyrdom within fifteen days of the saint's death. Herbert cites as his reference for this story none other than the patriarch Heraclius himself. Heraclius visited England in 1185 in an attempt to get Henry II and his knights to help protect young Baldwin V and the kingdom of Jerusalem from the "intolerable hostile incursions of pagans" threatening them (see Chapter Two).[124] After hearing people in England speak about Becket, Heraclius "declared with a very truthful assertion" that he himself had received the news of the martyrdom from a monk in Jerusalem, who

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[122] Benedict of Peterborough, *Materials*, ii: 35–6; Benedict of Peterborough, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Thomas of Canterbury*, 48: "'Amice,' inquit, 'unde es?' At ille 'De Anglia.' Tunc monachus, 'O Anglia, Anglia! quam amoena futura es!' Rursumque ad peregrinum, 'Cantuariae,' inquit, 'unquam fuisti?' Quo respondente se nunquam urbem illam vidisse, 'O,' inquit, 'Cantuaria! quam amoena, quam delectabilis futura es! ecce enim venient dies, in quibus fluent ad eam populi, sicut inpraesentiarum frequentant beatum Aegidium, vel beatum Jacobum, vel Romam, vel Jerosolymam.'"
[123] Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders*, 54–5.
[124] Herbert of Bosham, *Materials*, iii: 514: "intolerabiles ethnicorum hostiles incursus."

had learned of it in a vision the same day it happened and told the patriarch a fortnight later. Heraclius then related the story to those present at the Angevin court.[125]

Gerald of Wales described a similar miraculous vision near the end of his *Vita S. Remigii* (written *c*. 1198–1213).[126] According to Gerald, knowledge of Becket's murder reached Jerusalem "in the land of Palestine, on the same night." As with the prophecy related by Benedict of Peterborough, a monk learned the news in a vision: he was taken up to heaven, where he saw the Lord place a bejeweled golden crown upon the head of a man. An angel explained to the monk that the man he saw in his dream was Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, who was now being rewarded in heaven for the persecutions he had endured on earth. This monk then told his vision to "the first pilgrims coming from England."[127]

Such tales of miraculous visions and foresight about Becket's death emphasized a close relationship between what happened in Canterbury and what was known in Jerusalem. Their authors implied that Thomas's death was of such great import that the news was known immediately, or even in advance, at the center of Christendom. Moreover, the hagiographers emphasized the central role played by English pilgrims in spreading the word about these visions. Thomas had died at Canterbury, so it was only

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[125] Herbert of Bosham, *Materials*, iii: 514–6: "assertione firmavit certissima."

[126] Remigius was the first bishop of Lincoln. The final chapters of Gerald of Wales's *"Life of St. Remigius"* examine the lives of six English bishops, and are taken by some scholars as a separate text, generally called De *Vitis Sex Episcoporum Coetaneorum*. See James D. Dimock (ed.), in Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, vii: 43n1. The first edition of the *Vita S. Remigii*, dating to *c*. 1198, is no longer extant; the only copy of the text is a second edition, which Gerald presented to Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, *c*. 1213–4. Dimock (ed.), Preface to Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, vii, ix–x; Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales, 1146–1223* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 218.

[127] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, vii: 54: "Item Jerosolymitanis Palaestinae finibus, nocte eadem, monachus quidam vidit in somnis se quasi in coelum raptum… et non longe post, cum primis peregrinis de Anglia venientibus, veritas eventus eidem, et aliis qui haec audierant, tempori et horae conveniens, est declarata."

fitting that Englishmen should confirm the visions of the Jerusalemites and carry the tales

of their visions back home with them. In Herbert of Bosham's version, the patriarch of

Jerusalem himself came to England and told the story. All three hagiographers implied

that God was raising Canterbury to a pilgrimage status on par with Jerusalem, setting up a

direct exchange of knowledge and flow of people between the two cities.

Pilgrims were, of course, the lifeblood of any saint's cult. Becket's shrine, as one

of the most important in Europe, attracted a wide range of social classes from many

nations. When the future king of France, Philip II Augustus (r. 1180–1223), fell ill in

1179, his father Louis VII (r. 1137–80) had a vision in which St Thomas instructed him

to go to Canterbury to ask for his son's restored health. But before he could make the

journey, the chronicler Roger of Howden stressed, Louis had to ask for Henry II's

permission to enter England. Roger thus set Louis's famous visit to the shrine in a very

pro-English context.[128] Louis needed the Englishman St Thomas to help save the heir to

the French throne, and had to obtain leave from the king of England before doing so.

There is a certain degree of irony in this, for in life Thomas had been an ally of the

French king, while this ethereal Becket downgraded the status of Louis and gave his

support to Henry II, the man responsible for his exile and, at least indirectly, for his

death. By framing the story of Philip's cure in this way, Roger of Howden made the

occasion into a clear assertion of English royal and spiritual power. Notably, Philip's

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[128] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 193.

biographer Rigord made no mention of Louis's pilgrimage to Canterbury, merely

commenting that prince's health improved thanks to his father's prayers.[129]

A number of the cures attributed to Becket ended with the cured person vowing to

undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Benedict of Peterborough reported one instance

where Ralph of Langton was cured of leprosy, upon which he "pledged that he would go

to Jerusalem out of love of the martyr." However, in spite of appearing about to set out

for Jerusalem, Ralph instead returned home. There, his leprosy reappeared even worse

than before.[130] Many of Thomas's miracles show this trope of the saint dealing harshly

with people who reneged on their pilgrimage vows. In a tale similar to Ralph's, but with a

more positive outcome, a man named Edmund "instantly took up the cross to go to

Jerusalem for love of the martyr; and all the people who saw this gave praise to God."[131]

In several miracles related by William of Canterbury, the saint watched over

pilgrims traveling between England and the Holy Land, saving them from storms at sea

and helping pilgrims of all nationalities not fall prey to highwaymen or pirates on their

way to and from Jerusalem.[132] Similarly, but with a greater emphasis on the Englishness

of both the saviors and the saved, Roger of Howden reported that Becket, along with

Saints Edmund the Martyr and Nicholas the Confessor, rescued a ship of Londoners—

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[129] Rigord, *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton: Historiens de Philippe-Auguste*, ed. H. François Delaborde, 2 vols. (Paris: Renouard, 1882), i: 11–12.

[130] Benedict of Peterborough, *Materials*, ii: 182–3; Benedict of Peterborough, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Thomas of Canterbury*, 193–4: "Jerosolymam enim se ob martyris amorem spopondit iturum… quasi Jerosolymam profecturus, a nobis recessit, domumque reversus (nescio quo occulto Dei judicio) adeo leprosus apparuit, quod nemo unquam exstiterit contagio leprae sordidior."

[131] Benedict of Peterborough, *Materials*, ii: 63: "crucem e vestigio Jerosolymam iturus pro martyris amore suscepit; et omnis plebs, ut vidit, dedit laudem Deo."

[132] William of Canterbury, *Materials*, i: 326, 362, 363, 466. See also Matthew Paris, *Matthaei Parisiensis, Monachi Sancti Albani: Chronica Majora*, ed. H. R. Luard, RS, 7 vols. (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1877–84), ii: 365.

including William FitzOsbert (d. 1196) and Geoffrey the goldsmith—who were caught in a tempest while sailing to the Levant in 1190 to take part in the Third Crusade.[133] Stories like these encouraged English pilgrims to put their trust in Thomas Becket's powers as a healer and an intercessor who would protect them on the journey to the Holy Land.

Similar instances of pilgrims making vows to go to Jerusalem are also found in the miracle stories of other English shrines. Two pilgrims visiting St Frideswide's shrine in Oxford after her translation in 1180, for example, vowed to make pilgrimages to the Holy Sepulcher and to the Holy Land more generally, while another wished to visit Santiago de Compostela.[134] St Frideswide's shrine was quite new: although its church had supposedly been rebuilt by King Ethelred, Henry II gave the house new life by establishing it as an Augustinian institution. The translation of the saint in February 1180 was part of a campaign by the prior, Philip, to further promote the cult of the Anglo-Saxon saint. Importantly, many of the miracles attributed to Frideswide mimicked those being performed by St Thomas at Canterbury. As Benedicta Ward has noted, "the rivalry between the cult of St Thomas and that of St Frideswide was open and obvious."[135] Thus the Becket miracles, by shaping competition over 'home-grown' saints' shrines within England, also fit into part of a larger tradition that reinforced links between local pilgrimage sites and pilgrimage to major shrines like Jerusalem.[136]

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[133] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 42–3. On FitzOsbert (also called William Longbeard), see Alan Cooper, "1190, William Longbeard and the Crisis of Angevin England," in *Christians and Jews in Angevin England: The York Massacre of 1190, Narratives and Contexts*, ed. Sarah Rees Jones and Sethina Watson (York: York Medieval Press, 2013): 91–105.
[134] Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 84, 87.
[135] In particular, St Frideswide's cult claimed water-related miracles similar to those performed at Becket's shrine. Ward, *Miracles and the Medieaval Mind*, 87, 107 (quote), 108.
[136] See Robertson, Introduction to *Materials*, i: xxix.

Penance and Penitents

A small and rather unassuming manuscript in the British Library contains a number of poems written by Robert Partes of Reading Abbey. Composed sometime between 1167 and 1173,[137] the collection includes ten epitaphs, written in couplets, dedicated to the memory of Henry I (r. 1100–1135), founder of Robert's abbey. Interwoven with these couplets are poems that celebrate Becket: "May the island of Brutus flourish on earth through you, father, / may your servants gain the blessed realms."[138] Robert's poems and their arrangement within the manuscript draw together the blessings of St Thomas and the legacy of the Norman king Henry I. Together, Robert believed, these two figures had the potential to shape England's future into a bright and hopeful one. The Reading monk envisioned a kingdom in which Crown and Canterbury functioned as one, united under the common cause of making England great.

Yet Robert Partes's juxtaposition of Becket with Henry I does not acknowledge the king who was much more directly connected to Thomas's death and its legacy, Henry II. A very different view of the present and future state of relations between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* in England can be found in a letter from William, archbishop of Sens, to pope Alexander III (r. 1159–81), after Becket's death: "It is therefore in your interest, most merciful father, keeper of the walls of Jerusalem, to apply a remedy to past things, and to employ foresight to those things to come. For what place can be safe, if tyrannical

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[137] The manuscript itself dates to after 1181.
[138] BL MS Egerton 2951, f. 17v: "Floreat in terris per te pater insula bruti / Percipiant famuli regna beata tui."

madness stains with blood the Holy of Holies?"[139] Even though Henry II was in

Normandy when Becket was killed, many contemporaries believed that the murder had

been carried out on his orders, or at least as a result of words intemperately spoken. It is

likely that we will never know exactly how culpable the king was. What we do know,

however, is how Henry was expected to publicly atone for the death of the archbishop of

Canterbury.

Alexander III imposed a strict program of penance upon the king of England. The

cardinal legates Theodwin of S. Vitale and Albert of S. Lorenzo (the future Pope Gregory

VIII) delivered the pope's decree, *Ne in dubium*, to Henry at Avranches in May 1172. As

Anne Duggan has shown, this decree is a problematic document, both because there is

"no extant official record" of the act and because of difficulties in establishing the

chronology surrounding it. Nevertheless, Duggan stresses that the bull, which reconciled

Henry II with the papacy, is "almost as important in its context as Innocent III's

acceptance of King John's submission in 1214."[140] The pope stipulated that Henry must

remain loyal to Alexander and his successors, a clear sign that the pope was still afraid

that Henry might shift his allegiance to the antipope, Calixtus III. Alexander also

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[139] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 19: "Vestra ergo interest, pater clementissime, custos murorum Jerusalem, remedium adhibere praeteritis, et providentiam futuris. Quis enim locus poterit esse tutus, si rabies tyrannica sancta sanctorum cruentat?"

[140] Anne Duggan, "*Ne in dubium*: The Official Record of Henry II's Reconciliation at Avranches, 21 May 1172," *EHR* 115 (June 2000): 643–58, at 644–5; reprinted in Anne Duggan, *Thomas Becket: Friends, Networks, Texts and Cults*, Variorum Collected Studies Series (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007): 643–58 (quote at 644–5), no. viii. See also Anne Duggan, "Diplomacy, Status, and Conscience: Henry II's Penance for Becket's Murder," *Forschungen zur Reichs-, Papst- und Landesgeschichte. Peter Herde zum 65. Geburtstag von Freunden, Schülern und Kollegen dargebracht*, ed. Karl Borchardt and Enno Bünz (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1998), 265–90, at 265–6, reprinted in Duggan, *Becket: Friends, Networks, Texts, and Cult*, 265–290 (reference at 265–6), no. vii. Future references will only refer to the original printings of these articles, as the page numbers are the same in the reprint.

commanded that Henry should provide the Knights Templar with monetary support.[141]

Specifically, within a year after Pentecost 1172 the king was to provide enough money to

support two hundred knights Templar "for the defense of the land of Jerusalem for the

space of one year."[142] Roger of Howden adds that Henry the Young King also took these

vows.[143]

Henry II did indeed provide financial assistance to the Holy Land, although it is

difficult to know which payments directly resulted from *Ne in dubium*. The king had

already levied a Holy Land tax throughout England in 1166, four years before Becket's

death.[144] Later, he made bequests of 5,000 marks each for the kingdom of Jerusalem, the

Templars, the Hospitallers, and the religious houses of Jerusalem in his will of February

1182.[145] That same year, Henry granted forty marks annually in perpetuity to the lepers of

Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, citing his own health and that of his predecessors and

successors as motivation.[146] The Norman exchequer rolls further record a payment of a

hundred solidi for the Hospitallers in 1184.[147] Such payments and allocations suggest that

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[141] Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 261.

[142] Duggan (ed), Appendix, "*Ne in dubium*," 658: "unde ad arbitrium fratrum Templi ducenti milites ualeant ad defensionem terre Ierosolimitane spatio unius anni teneri." See also Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 36.

[143] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 36.

[144] Eddé, *Saladin*, 238; Hans Eberhard Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans. by John Gillingham (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 135.

[145] *Recueil des actes d'Henri II concernant les provinces françaises et les affaires de France*, ed. Léopold Delisle and Elie Berger, 4 vols. (Paris, 1909–27), ii: 220, doc. 612; Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works: The Chronicle of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I, by Gervase, the Monk of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs, RS, 2 vols. (London: Longman & Co.: 1879–80), i: 298. See also Alan Forey, "Henry II's Crusading Penances for Becket's Murder," *Crusades* 7 (2008): 153–64, at 161.

[146] *Recueil des actes d'Henri II*, ii: 218–9: "Sciatis me dedisse et presenti carta confirmasse, pro salute mea et antecessorum et successorum meorum, leprosis Sancti Lazari de Jerusalem XL. m[arcas] in perpetuam elemosinam annuatim habendas."

[147] *Recueil des actes d'Henri II*, i: 334: "Hospitali Jerusalem, c solidos, de elemosina statuta."

the king sent aid to the Holy Land fairly regularly throughout his reign, even if the amounts and recipients varied.

Alan Forey has further noted that Latin chroniclers in the Levant recorded "that the English king sent contributions each year, and that Henry's money was used in 1187 to engage troops who are said to have fought under an English flag."[148] Ralph de Diceto mentioned the "alms of the king of England" playing a role during the Muslim siege of Tyre in 1187–8.[149] This money, according to the canon Richard, author of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum*, "was usefully employed in the defence of Tyre and the rest of the kingdom's business." Indeed, the chronicler added, "With pious and necessary forethought the magnificent king had sent this money to Jerusalem over a period of many years for the support of the Holy Land. It is said that the sum amounted to 30,000 marks."[150]

Forey emphasizes that it is difficult to know when many of these funds were dispersed, or whether payments were made with any established regularity. He notes, moreover, that Henry's contributions to the defense of the Holy Land in the aftermath of Thomas's death should not all be understood "as expiation for Becket's murder."[151] Christopher Tyerman similarly acknowledges that Henry's monetary support of the Holy Land "may lack clarity," but he points out that Henry's actions were not unusual or

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[148] Forey, "Henry II's Crusading Penances," 161. Henry's contributions and the "baniere des armes le roi d'Engletiere" are decribed by Ernoul in *Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Tresorier*, ed. L. de Mas Latrie (Paris, 1871), 157. See also Eddé, *Saladin*, 209, who suggests that the Templar Master, Gerard of Ridefort, put Henry II's money to use in 1187 by hiring mercenaries.
[149] Ralph de Diceto, *Radulphi de Diceto decani Lundoniensis Opera Historica: The Historical Works of Master Ralph de Diceto, Dean of London*, ed. William Stubbs, RS, 2 vols. (London, 1876), ii: 61: "elemosinam regis Angliae"
[150] *Itinerarium*, 42.
[151] Forey, "Henry II's Crusading Penances," 162.

surprising.[152] The king was concerned with maintaining his empire and political standing in the West without bankrupting his own lands. Rather, as Tyerman puts it, Henry's support "was honourable without being extravagant or risky."[153] Ultimately, whether Henry II contributed funds for the Templars and the defense of the Holy Land out of political astuteness or out of true regret for his role in Thomas Becket's death (or a combination of these motivations), the fact remains that English money, with the backing of the king, was sent to Palestine at semi-regular intervals throughout Henry's long reign.

In addition to requiring the king to provide monetary support to the Templars, Pope Alexander III also called for Henry to himself go to Jerusalem. *Ne in dubium* commanded that, "from the approaching Nativity of the Lord for three years [following that], you will take the cross, then in the following summer set out for there [Jerusalem] in person, with the Lord leading."[154] In other words, Henry must take the cross by Christmas 1172, departing for Jerusalem no later than the summer of 1173.[155] Alexander stressed that the only legitimate excuse Henry could make for not setting out on crusade to the Holy Land was if he instead fought the Muslims in Spain, and even then he would need papal permission. Furthermore, Alexander cautioned, fighting in Spain would not

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[152] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 47.
[153] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 47.
[154] Duggan (ed.), Appendix, "Ne in dubium," 658: Vos autem a sequenti Natiuitate Domini usque ad triennium, crucem accipietis, proxima tunc estate illuc in propria persona, ducente Domino, profecturi.
[155] There is debate amongst scholars as to whether Henry was supposed to take the cross *for* three years or *within* three years. Alan Forey's interprets the Latin (*usque ad triennium*) as meaning that Henry must take the cross *within* three years (i.e. by Christmas of 1175) and depart by the summer of 1176. See Forey, "Henry II's Crusading Penances," 153–7. For the purposes of my argument, the question of when Henry was supposed to depart is of less importance than the fact that the pope ordered him to go to Jerusalem in the first place.

free Henry from his crusading obligations in Jerusalem; it would only defer the time of his departure.[156]

Yet while his money made it to the Holy Land, Henry II did not. John Gillingham suggests that after leading a military expedition to Ireland in 1171–2, the king may have found "the rigours of campaigning" too difficult.[157] Alan Forey has concluded that Henry II never felt any "genuine penitence at any stage," and indeed never intended to lead a crusade.[158] Contemporary chroniclers, however, give us a different view of the king's emotions, describing in detail the king's grief at Becket's death.[159] Most likely the truth is somewhere between these extremes: the king regretted the circumstances of Becket's death, but also did not want to leave his vast territories unguarded.[160]

Whatever his reasons, the king continually prevaricated about carrying out his penance for Becket's death. Five years later, in 1177, Henry again vowed to lead a crusading army into Palestine. This was part of a peace agreement drawn up between the kings of England and France, guaranteeing mutual support for the undertaking: "Let it be known by all men… that we, by the inspiration of God, have promised and sworn that we will go together in the service of Christianity, and, assuming the cross, we will depart for Jerusalem."[161] The arrangement called for each king to protect the other's realm should

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[156] Duggan (ed.), Appendix, "*Ne in dubium*," 658; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 36. See also Forey, "Henry II's Crusading Penances," 153–7; Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 261.

[157] Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire*, 35.

[158] Forey, "Henry II's Crusading Penances," 164. Cf. Warren, *Henry II*, 135. See also Duggan, "Henry II's Penance for Becket's Murder," 265–6.

[159] See, e.g., Lansdowne Anonymous, *Materials*, iv: 159; Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, 345; Ralph Niger, *The Chronicles of Ralph Niger*, ed. Robert Anstruther (London: Caxton Society, 1851), 176.

[160] See, e.g. Paul, *To Follow in their Footsteps*, 228.

[161] For the full text of the agreement, dated 21 September 1177, see *Recueil des actes d'Henri II,* II: 60–2 (quote at 60–1): "Sciant omnes…quod ego Lodovicus, Dei gratia rex Francorum, et ego Henricus eadem gratia rex Anglie…, Deo inspirante, promise et jurasse quod simul ibimus in servitum Christianitatis et

one of them depart for the East before the other. Moreover, should one of the kings die upon the journey, his men had to swear to follow the one who still lived for as long as they remained in the "land of Jerusalem" (*terra Jerosolimitana*).[162] Gerald of Wales praised Henry for this mix of savvy diplomacy and support of the Holy Land. He described the Angevin king as "a most diligent maker of peace, and an observer of it; an incomparable, liberal giver of alms, and a particular supporter of the land of Palestine."[163] Gerald's praise, however, highlighted Henry's monetary contributions to Jerusalem, not his military ones. Indeed, once again Henry's crusading vows came to naught.

The peace negotiations of 1177 underscore the fact that Henry and Louis enacted a show of friendship, but neither fully trusted the other to leave his realm unharmed while he was abroad. Essentially, Henry used crusade planning as an excuse to keep Louis VII (and later Louis's son, Philip Augustus) from focusing their energies on attacking Angevin territories.[164] Henry's youngest son and eventual successor John later made similar political use of his own unfulfilled vow to fight for Jerusalem. The French kings could not openly contest this strategy, because to do so would imply that they were

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crucem suscipiemus ituri Jerosolimam." See also Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 145; [Roger of Howden], *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis. The chronicle of the Reigns of Henry II and Richard I, 1169–1192, known commonly under the name of Benedict of Peterborough*, ed. William Stubbs, 2 vols., RS (London, 1867), i: 192 (hereafter Roger of Howden, *Gesta*).

[162] *Recueil des actes d'Henri II*, II: 62; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 145, and *Gesta*, i: 192.

[163] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, v: 304: "Author pacis diligentissimus, et observator. Incomparabilis elemosinarum largitor, et praecipuus terrae Palestinae sustentator." Gerald's praise was not without a goal, as he was always looking for a patron who would support his writing, and it never hurt to praise the king. See, e.g. Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 58. Bartlett notes that Gerald was "one of the harshest and most hostile critics of the Angevin kings," yet relied upon their patronage for the dozen or so years that he was in their service, and he dedicated some of his most famous works to Henry II and Richard I, as well as to leading members of the royal court.

[164] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 40.

refusing to help Jerusalem.[165] Even papal exhortations were not enough to persuade the king of England to leave his hard-won empire open to attacks by Louis VII—or by his own sons, Henry the Young King, Geoffrey, Richard, and John.

Ultimately, Henry II was more concerned with maintaining his control over Angevin lands than with leading a crusade. Nevertheless, as Christopher Tyerman explains, Henry

> ensured its [crusading's] continued significance in England as elsewhere in his dominions, through his use of its diplomatic potential, his desire for information from the East, and his taxation for the Holy Land, which as surely as any preaching campaign brought the plight of Outremer to his people. Whatever else he may have done, Henry II did not—could not—forget Jerusalem.[166]

The negotiations between Crown and pope following Becket's murder, as outlined in *Ne in dubium*, further made Jerusalem's defense a direct part of England's political agenda, whether Henry wanted it there or not.

Nicholas Vincent has noted that around the same time that Henry reconciled with the papacy by agreeing to *Ne in dubium* at Avranches, he also began "to style himself king 'By God's grace' (*Dei gratia*)," in imitation of—and opposition to—Louis of France. Even authors critical of Henry, Vincent adds, like John of Salisbury and, later, Henry of Bracton (*d.* 1268), described the king as "*Vicarius Dei in terris, Imago Dei, Vicarius summi regis,* or *Magnus Dominus noster*, titles inherited from the theocratic emperors of Rome."[167] Thus following Becket's death, Henry II promoted an imperial

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[165] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 41.
[166] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 54.
[167] Nicholas Vincent, "The Pilgrimages of the Angevin kings of England, 1154–1272," in *Pilgrimage: The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan*, ed. by Colin Morris and Peter Roberts (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 12–45, at 37–8. For a discussion of the *Dei gratia* formula

image of his rule in West, while simultaneously making—but never carrying out—promises to fight in the East. It was to Henry's benefit to foster these two concepts of imperial rule and crusading ideology simultaneously, subtly invoking parallels with prophecies about a Last World Emperor who would unite East and West, an idea that I explore in Chapter Five.

Henry II did not officially take the cross until after Jerusalem fell to the Muslims in 1187.[168] But the political and religious climate of the 1180s was very different from that of the 1170s. As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, Baldwin IV, an impotent leper, had ruled Jerusalem since 1174; he was succeeded by his nephew Baldwin V, a child king who died before his tenth birthday. The threat posed by Saladin and his Muslim armies gave a greater sense of urgency to protecting Jerusalem. By the mid-1180s, just as Saladin was consolidating his hold on Syria and encircling the Frankish settlements in the East, there was no clear heir to the throne in Jerusalem. In the 1170s, by contrast, the extent of the Ayyubid threat was not yet clear, and the king of England's focus on sending aid to Palestine was more closely linked to his penance for his role in the death of Thomas Becket. Pope Alexander III, therefore, could do little before his death in 1181 to pressure Henry into going to Jerusalem.

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in specific charters issued by Henry from 1172 onward, see Delisle (ed.), *Recueil des actes d'Henri II*, I:12–6.

[168] The implications of Henry's failure to go on crusade, and his negotiations with the Patriarch of Jerusalem in the second half of the 1180s, will be dealt with in further detail in the next chapter.

Sentencing Becket's Murderers

The pope's leverage over Becket's murderers, however, was much greater than was his leverage over the king. On Maundy Thursday in 1171, Alexander excommunicated Reginald fitz Urse, Hugh de Morville, William de Tracy, and Richard Brito.[169] In his study of the murderers' fates, Nicholas Vincent suggests that their excommunication itself did not have a great immediate impact within England, but he shows that nevertheless there are clear signs that the four knights began to seek some sort of means to atone for their sins.[170] Like their king, they offered support to the military orders, and their penance would eventually lead them to the Holy Land itself.

Vincent identifies several charters that were issued by the guilty knights or their close relations, bestowing lands on English institutions (including Canterbury Cathedral) as well to the Templars.[171] Fitz Urse, de Morville, and Brito all made grants to the Templars sometime around the summer of 1171. Reginald Fitz Urse gave the Templars half the manor of Williton in England, as well as land at Sandouville in Normandy. Hugh de Morville and Richard Brito served as witnesses for the former of these charters.[172] In addition, de Morville gave the Templars land at Sowerby in Westmorland and also made a grant to the Lazarite order of Jerusalem. Richard Brito, too, gave the Templars lands at

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[169] Nicholas Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," William Urry Memorial Lecture (Canterbury: Friends of Canterbury Cathedral, 2004), 23; Nicholas Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," in *Bishofsmord im Mittelalter*: 211–72, at 252.

[170] Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 20–1, 23–5; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 248–9, 253–6.

[171] Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 21, 23; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 248, 253, the text of some of these charters is given in the appendix, 266–72.

[172] Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 21; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 250, 272.

Sampford Brett.[173] The three men issued these charters with the intention that their grants

would help support Templar endeavors in the Holy Land, and thereby serve as part of

their penance for Becket's murder.

As with Henry II's foundation of three monasteries, a few grants of land were not

enough to expiate the sin of so great a crime as the murder of an archbishop. The

murderers were also facing persecution in England—their lands confiscated by the

crown, few people willing to grant them shelter, and their heirs barred from receiving

their inheritances.[174] According to both Roger of Howden and the Lansdowne

Anonymous, the four accomplices, "whom conscience of their own actions was

accusing," soon set out for Rome, to seek further indulgence from the pope in person.[175]

William de Tracy left for Rome before the end of 1171; he returned to England in 1172,

having received indulgence for his penance from Pope Alexander III.[176] Within the next

year (Roger of Howden says it was "after much time"), all four conspirators were on the

road to Rome to place themselves at the pope's mercy.[177] Alexander III "examined them

rather harshly," and the murderers departed Rome for Jerusalem.[178] Herbert of Bosham

and the Lansdowne Anonymous support this claim, with the latter adding that the guilty

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[173] Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 21, 23; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 250, 253.
[174] Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 20–1, 23–5; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 250–62.
[175] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 17: "propria actionis conscientia accusabat"; Lansdowne Anonymous, *Materials*, iv: 162–3. See also Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 20–1; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 248–9.
[176] Lansdowne Anonymous, *Materials*, iv: 162.
[177] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 17: "post multum vero temporis"; Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 20–1, 24; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 253.
[178] Lansdowne Anonymous, *Materials*, iv: 163: "durius examinavit"; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 17.

men were sentenced to spend fourteen years fighting for the Templars in the Holy Land.[179]

The evidence indicates that the four knights left Rome and set out for Jerusalem, but before they could get there, all of them died, probably by 1174. Herbert of Bosham states that William de Tracy died at Cosenza, whereupon his bones broke, his nerves snapped, and his body decayed in a fitting punishment for his deeds. Within three years, Herbert adds, "indeed not a one of them had survived."[180] The other knights probably met their deaths at Montenegro near Antioch.[181] Their bodies were then taken to Jerusalem, where, Roger of Howden reports, they "were buried…before the doors of the Temple."[182] The Temple of Solomon, or al-Aqsa Mosque, was the headquarters for the Templar order in Jerusalem, and the killers' burial there suggests once again the close connection of their assigned penance with Templar endowments. Moreover, as Vincent notes, the very fact that their bodies were carried to Jerusalem after their deaths "implies that the murderers remained notorious even in death."[183] It also indicates a need for some sense of closure to the story of their atonement for Becket's death.

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[179] Herbert of Bosham, *Materials*, iii: 535–6; Lansdowne Anonymous, *Materials*, iv: 163; Vincent, "Becket's Murderers", 20–1; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 248–9. See also Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 43.

[180] Herbert of Bosham, *Materials*, iii: 538: "nec unus quidem ex eis superfuerit." See also Tancred Borenius, "The Murderers of St. Thomas Becket in Popular Tradition," *Folklore* 43:2 (June 1932): 175–92, at 190.

[181] Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 20; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 248–9. Cf. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 17.

[182] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 17: "sunt Jerosolimis sepulti ante ostium Templi."

[183] Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 21; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 250.

Roger of Howden visited Palestine with members of the Third Crusade in 1190–1,

and so it seems reasonable to believe his report that Becket's killers were buried near the

Temple.[184] Roger also recorded the inscription on their tomb, which read:

> Here lie the wretches who martyred the blessed Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury. It was in the year one thousand one hundred and seventy-one that the primate Thomas was killed by the sword.[185]

We can see here that even in death, there were close ties between Becket, Canterbury, the

military orders in the Holy Land, and Jerusalem. The inscription also suggests that

Becket's fate was famous enough in the East to need no further explanation. Pilgrims

from all parts of the Christian world, as well as settlers in Jerusalem, would have

recognized the reference to England and the murder of the archbishop of Canterbury.

Becket's killers' deaths thus helped to preserve the martyr's association with the Holy

Land long after the murder itself.

Thomas Becket in the Holy Land

Two decades after his death, the cult of Thomas Becket was actively promoted by

Englishmen voyaging to and fighting in the Holy Land. During the Third Crusade

Becket's cult came to be particularly connected to the city of Acre. The combined armies

of England, France, Germany, and Jerusalem besieged Acre for nearly two years between

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[184] Roger of Howden went as far as Acre before returning West with Philip Augustus in 1191, so he did not personally visit Jerusalem. David Corner, "Roger of Howden," *ODNB*.
[185] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 17: "Hic jacent miseri, qui martyrizaverunt beatum Thomam archiepiscopum Cantuariensum. Annus millenus, centus, septuagenus, / Primus erat, primas quo ruit ense Thomas." See also Vincent, "Becket's Murderers," 21; Vincent, "The Murderers of Thomas Becket," 249–50. The English began the year at Christmas, which is why Roger dates Becket's death to 1171. The dating of Becket's death was so important that Gervase of Canterbury devoted a lengthy discussion to it, and decided himself to assign the martyrdom to the previous year (1170). Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, i: 231–2.

1189 and 1191, trying to drive out the Muslim forces holding it. Philip Augustus arrived at the siege in April 1191, while Richard I, who had succeeded his father Henry II as king of England in 1189, remained for some time consolidating his control over Sicily.[186] Although the English king delayed his journey to Palestine, however, a portion of his army continued ahead without him and arrived at Acre in October 1190. This advance guard of the English army included a number of English clergymen, led by Baldwin, the archbishop of Canterbury, and by Hubert Walter, bishop of Salisbury, both of whom would make important contributions to the promotion of Becket's cult in the East.[187]

The elderly Baldwin made an unlikely hero. According to the author of the *Itinerarium*, the archbishop of Canterbury

> was old and infirm, so that military action was difficult for him… He had a banner carried high in front of his troops on which was depicted the glorious martyr Thomas. He had procured for the martyr a seemly and worthy following: 200 knights and 300 men-at-arms followed his banner and fought in that holy man's pay.[188]

Christopher Tyerman has further noted that the Londoners in the English army looked to Becket as their patron while on crusade.[189] We thus see English soldiers and clergy fighting together under the leadership of the archbishop of Canterbury, gathered around the banner of St Thomas, to defend the Holy Land from the Muslims.

Archbishop Baldwin died at Acre, but the English crusaders continued to promote Becket's cult in the region after Baldwin's death. Ralph de Diceto, dean of St Paul's in London, recorded that one of his own chaplains, an Englishman named William,

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[186] Richard did not arrive at Acre until June of 1191.
[187] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 15; *Itinerarium*, 98; Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 79.
[188] *Itinerarium*, 118.
[189] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 55.

dedicated a chapel and cemetery to Becket at Acre, in thanks for the Christians'

victory.[190] Later chroniclers credited Hubert Walter, who succeeded Baldwin as

archbishop of Canterbury, with founding an order of canons to tend a hospital in Acre,

again dedicated to Becket. Others gave the credit to King Richard himself.[191] What is

clear is that some member or members of the English crusading army established the

Order of St Thomas of Acre, which was officially turned into a military order by the pope

in the thirteenth century. It maintained a distinctly English character for several

centuries.[192] This tells us both that there was a regular influx of English soldiers and

monies to the East, and that they fostered a connection to England even while living

abroad.[193] The order eventually died out, but in more recent times has been revived. The

modern order's aims still preserve the focus on an English identity centered around

Thomas Becket.[194]

By the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, Becket's legend and miracles had

become fully intertwined with the idea of the Holy Land and crusading ideology. The

early thirteenth-century anonymous continuator of Benedict of Peterborough's *Miracula*

told two long stories about eastern Christians who, freed from captivity by the

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[190] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 80–1. This is the earliest reference to the establishment of an order dedicated to Becket in the Holy Land. See Alan J. Forey, "The Military Order of St. Thomas of Acre," *EHR* 92 (July 1977): 418–503, at 481.

[191] Forey, "The Military Order of St. Thomas of Acre," 481–2. The episcopal seat of Canterbury was empty for nearly three years; Hubert Walter's promotion to archbishop did not happen until 1193.

[192] Forey, "The Military Order of St. Thomas of Acre," 481–503.

[193] See, e.g., Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 55.

[194] I would like to thank Allan Sterling, Grand Master and Australian Bailiff for the Order of St Thomas of Acre, for sending me the Order's preliminary newsletters (personal correspondence, 1 February 2014). For the Order's website, listing its aims, see http://www.osta.org.au.

intervention of St. Thomas, made their way to Canterbury.[195] The first of these tales follows the fate of three men and a young woman, taken captive by Muslims at Damascus. The author places the story in a firm historical context: "at the time when Saladin the impious, having captured the Cross from the Christians, triumphed, and with the Lord permitting he possessed the holy city of Jerusalem" (i.e. 1187). After fourteen years in captivity, the captives had learned the language and customs of the "barbaric people" (*gentis barbaricae*), yet they wished to return to the "land of their birth and of their faith."[196]

After two failed attempts to escape their captors, they began to implore the aid of St Thomas, vowing that if he should free them, they would visit his tomb. Answering their prayers, Thomas appeared to them in their prison. As was common in such tales, the captives asked him who he was, and he replied, "I am Thomas the archbishop of Canterbury," then promised to help set them free.[197] The prisoners, finding their chains loosened and the doors to both prison and city open and unguarded, were able to walk free.[198] After a number of trials and delays, two of the men (the third having died of illness) and the woman arrived in Canterbury in February 1202. There, at the shrine of St. Thomas they prayed for three days and offered their thanks, before returning to "their

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[195] The anonymous additions to Benedict's work are found in Trinity College Cambridge MS B.14.37, and printed in *Materials*, ii: 267–81. C.R. Dodwell dated the manuscript to the period 1170–1200, but as one of the miracle stories takes place in the year 1202, the later date of the manuscript should probably be revised forward into the first decade of the thirteenth century. See C. R. Dodwell, *The Canterbury School of Illumination 1066–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), 123.

[196] Benedict of Peterborough continuator, *Materials*, ii: 270–1: "tempore quo Saladinus impius capta cruce de Christianis triumphavit, et civitatem sanctam Jerusalem Domino permittente possedit… ad nativitatis terram et suae fidei gentes quocunque modo remeare."

[197] Benedict of Peterborough continuator, *Materials*, ii: 271: "'Tu quis es, domine?' Et ille, 'Ego sum Thomas Cantuariensis archiepiscopus.'"

[198] Benedict of Peterborough continuator, *Materials*, ii: 272–3.

region of Jerusalem," and "glorifying and praising God in all things that they heard and saw."[199] This story demonstrates the importance of the pilgrimage to Canterbury in exchange for the martyr's aid. More strikingly, it suggests that Becket's reputation as an intercessor and miracle worker had taken root in the East by this time, and portrays Becket taking an active interest in the fate of crusaders and directly involving himself in near eastern affairs.

This sort of reverse pilgrimage from the East to Canterbury was also told in another story of escape from the Muslims. In this miracle, Gregory, the Armenian bishop of Tarsus, was captured by Saracens, again "at the time of prince Saladin, under whom Jerusalem was both captured and reduced to servitude."[200] Two years later a man appeared to Gregory in a vision while he was in prison, saying only that he came from beyond the sea, where he was a Christian archbishop, and alerting Gregory that God would free him on the following day. The man's words came true, and Gregory escaped, making it home to Tarsus. Once free, however, and desiring to show his gratitude to the mysterious saintly archbishop who had aided him, Gregory vowed to make a pilgrimage to Rome and Santiago de Compostela.[201] He visited Innocent III in Rome, then, just as he was about to set out for Santiago, St Thomas appeared to him inquiring what he planned to do. When the martyr learned of Gregory's plans, he said, "And is it possible that you will visit my house?" When Gregory professed ignorance of Thomas's identity and home, Thomas gently reminded him that he had freed him from his Saracen captor. Then

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[199] Benedict of Peterborough continuator, *Materials*, ii: 273: "glorificantes et laudantes Deum in omnibus quae audierant et viderant."

[200] Benedict of Peterborough continuator, *Materials*, ii: 274. "Tempore igitur principis Saladini, sub quo et Iherusalem capta et in servitutem redacta est."

[201] Benedict of Peterborough continuator, *Materials*, ii: 275–6.

he continued, "I am Thomas the archbishop of Canterbury. If you have heard the name of king Richard, seek his land; for in it my home is situated; there you will be able to find me."[202]

Importantly, this description directly associates England with the rule of the crusader king Richard I, while also linking Canterbury to the identity of the kingdom. England is the king's land, and Thomas dwells within it. The story concludes with the saint's exhortations, finally convincing the bishop of Tarsus to come to England in order to fulfill his obligations to the archbishop of Canterbury.[203] Ultimately, this miracle tale paints an unexpectedly exotic image of Canterbury as a place where Armenian dignitaries from the land of the Apostle Paul voyage to visit Becket's shrine, while simultaneously reinforcing Canterbury's identity as the heart of England.

Perhaps the most striking combination of Becket's story with the history of English crusaders in the Holy Land can be found in a version of the saint's life dating to the first half of the thirteenth century.[204] The text, known as Quadrilogus I, merges four

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[202] Benedict of Peterborough continuator, *Materials*, ii: 277: "'Numquid et domum meam visitabis?'… Et ille, 'Ego sum Thomas Cantuariensis archiepiscopus. Si nomen regis Ricardi audisti, quaere terram ejus; in ea enim sita est domus mea; ibi poteris me invenire.'"

[203] Benedict of Peterborough continuator, *Materials*, ii: 278–9.

[204] The history of the texts called Quadrilogus I and II is rather confusing. Quadrilogus I (also called the First, Later, or Paris Quadrilogus) is a later compilation than Quadrilogus II (also called the Second, Earlier, or Brussels Quadrilogus), but was printed first, hence its name. Quadrilogus II is attributed to Henry, abbot of Croyland, and was probably written c. 1198–9, revised in 1213–13, and dedicated to Archbishop Stephen Langton in honor of the translation of Becket's relics in 1220. Quadrilogus II was not printed until 1682 (in Brussels). Quadrilogus I was printed in Paris in 1495, but drew upon the sources and textual traditions of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, with several additions not found in Quadrilogus II (see note ff.). The manuscripts containing the text about Becket's Syrian mother include Harley MS. 978 (ff. 114v–116r, c. 1260–70) and Cotton MS Julius D 6 (first quarter of the fourteenth century). See Lewis B. Radford, *Thomas of London before his Consecration* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1894), 9–11; Robertson, *Materials*, iv: ixx–xxi; Paul Alonzo Brown, *The Development of the Legend of Thomas Becket* (Philadelphia: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1930), 11, 28–9 and 28n1–5; Thomas Duffus Hardy, *Descriptive catalogue of materials relating to the history of Great Britain and*

main *vitae* of Thomas, with some distinct alterations regarding Thomas's ancestry.[205]

Heavily influenced by romantic literary tropes, the Quadrilogus begins by narrating the

story of Thomas's father, Gilbert Becket, whom the author turns into a youthful crusader,

captured by a "pagan" (i.e., Muslim) emir while visiting the holy sites around

Jerusalem.[206] Like a good literary hero, Gilbert serves the emir for a year, earning his

favor and the love of the emir's only daughter. The girl finds the opportunity to speak

with the captive, who teaches her "about the faith and religion and the way of life of the

Christians."[207] He also tells her that he is an Englishman and a citizen of London.[208]

Eventually, Gilbert and his companions escape their captivity and make their way back to

England.

Meanwhile the emir's daughter, lamenting the loss of the man she loves, decides

to go after him.[209] Seeking passage with "certain pilgrims and merchants returning home,

whose language she did not know, she sailed to England."[210] In a scene not unlike

Tolkien's later description of the Ringwraiths searching for "Baggins" and "Shire," the

girl finds her way by repeating the only thing she knows about Gilbert: his name and

Ireland: to the end of the reign of Henry VII, RS, 3 vols. (London: Longman, 1862–71), ii: 345–8; Guy, *Thomas Becket,* 5.

[205] Namely the *vitae* by John of Salisbury, Alan of Tewkesbury, William of Canterbury, and Herbert of Bosham. The First Quadrilogus also contains passages from the *Vitae* by William FitzStephen and Edward Grim, along with unattributed texts. Robertson, *Materials*, iv: ixx–xxi. See also Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 8; Brown, *Legend of Thomas Becket*, 11. Roberston reproduces the Latin text of the story about Becket's parents in *Materials*, 453–8. Brown prints a translation in *Legend of Thomas Becket*, 29–32.

[206] There is no evidence that Gilbert Becket ever visited the Holy Land.

[207] First Quadrilogus, *Materials*, ii, 453–4: "Quadam autem die nacta opportunitatem puella cum eo loquendi liberius inquisivit ab eo de quanam terra et civitate exstiterit oriundus, de fide etiam, de religione et conversatione Christianorum" (454).

[208] First Quadrilogus, *Materials*, ii: 454: "Anglicus esset et Londinarium incola civitatis."

[209] First Quadrilogus, *Materials*, ii: 455.

[210] First Quadrilogus, *Materials*, ii: 455: "cum quibusdam peregrinis et mercatoribus repatriantibus, qui linguam ejus noverant, versus Angliam navigabat."

"London, London."[211] After wandering the streets of the city, she is at last recognized by

his servant, and, after some delay on Gilbert's part (he is hesitant about marrying a non-

Christian) and with the approval of six bishops, the girl is baptized and they are wed. She

soon gives birth to a baby boy, Thomas Becket. Gilbert, meanwhile, sets out again for

Jerusalem; when he returns three years later, he finds "his son Thomas very beautiful in

form and agreeable in the eyes of all beholding [him]."[212] This fictional young Thomas

Becket, son of a crusading Englishman and a Muslim princess, reflects the graces that

would one day make him a saint, and also reflects the intimate connection Becket's

legacy had developed with the Holy Land by the thirteenth century.

Historians, from the Victorian period to the present day, have rejected this story

of Becket's background as pure invention, with little to no grounding in reality. Indeed,

few historians even mention the tale, and those who do tend to cast it aside in passing as

nothing but "the outcome of popular imagination, which loved to cast a halo of Christian

chivalry and Saracen splendour round the birth of its hero-saint."[213] Yet the story of

Gilbert Becket and the emir's daughter in Quadrilogus I is grounded more firmly in

history than at first seems evident, emerging from the events of the Third Crusade that

established Becket's cult in the Holy Land.

In the decades between his death in 1170 and the translation of his relics in 1220,

Thomas Becket had shifted from being a controversial—and very human—man into

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[211] First Quadrilogus, *Materials*, ii: 455.
[212] First Quadrilogus, *Materials*, ii: 456–8: "invenitque Thomam filium suum admodum forma decorum et cunctorum oculis intuentium gratiosum."
[213] Radford, *Thomas of London*, 9–11. See also Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, 8. John Guy, *Thomas Becket*, 5, has recently called it "one of the most enduring and tantalizingly romantic myths about Thomas," but does not discuss the story at length. The exception to this relative scholarly neglect is Brown, *Legend of Thomas Becket*, esp. 28–74, and appendices A, B, C, and D, 262–277.

becoming a hero of spiritual and literary imagination. Becket, in both life and death, functioned as a focal point for drawing together the political, spiritual, and physical landscapes of England and the Holy Land. The late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century miracle tales about St Thomas were shaped by English politics, yet they are also clearly products of the crusading era and ethos. Their tropes are similar to those found in romances and epics of the same era, suggesting the harsh conditions to which the Muslims subjected their prisoners. Yet even as there is a certain level of voyeurism and fantasy surrounding these descriptions, the author never fails to draw the reader back to England. The hero of these stories is Thomas Becket, who actively brings England and the Holy Land together into a single imaginative, geographic space. Those people whom he rescues always find their way back from the East, directing their attention, resources, and devotions to Becket, Canterbury, England, and the English king.

CHAPTER 2
England's Kings and the Call for Crusade

The theologian and scholar Herbert of Bosham served as chancery clerk and

ambassador for Henry II before transferring his loyalty—as well as his rhetorical and

diplomatic skills—to the archiepiscopal household of Thomas Becket in 1163. A staunch

supporter of Becket's cause, Herbert nevertheless acknowledged the king of England's

greatness in his *Liber Melorum* (Book of Songs), which he placed at the end of his *Life* of

Becket.[214] For Herbert, Becket's death was the black mark in the otherwise great reign of

the "illustrious king of the English" (*illustris rex Anglorum*). If only Henry had been free

of guilt in the archbishop's death, "both the present and future ages would have praised

him forever." Nevertheless, Henry remained a mighty ruler, and Herbert elaborated upon

how God "has caused him to grow like the dust of the earth, and to raise his seed like

stars and to grant them inheritance from sea to sea." Even the martyred Thomas had

originally been loved by "this lofty emperor, [and] in the office of court chancellor he

reigned with Augustus as if a co-Augustus."[215] Yet in spite of such celebrations of Henry

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[214] Frank Barlow, "Bosham, Herbert of (*d. c.*1194)," *ODNB*.

[215] Herbert of Bosham, *Materials*, iii: 539–40: "Quae profecto potestas mundo tam clara ne silentio meo obumbretur duitius, haec tanta et tam magna potestas, palam et tam fructuose quam gloriose, triumphata, Henricus illustris rex Anglorum est, magni illius Henrici quondam Anglorum regis nepos. Quem quidem et praesens et saecula post futura perpetuo jubilarent, et in orbe Britannico regem quasi unicum et singularem et caeteris qui ante ipsum incomparabilem conclamarent, si non tamen, nescio quo Dei judicio, ira pessima consultrice et pravis instigantibus sic, ex profano illo facto patrato in martyrem maculam dedisse judicaretur in hanc tantam gloriam suam. Iste quippe Henricus, gentis firmamentum, stabilimentum populi, fulcimentum infirmorum, pauperum tutor, superborum baculus, malleus tyrannorum, rex pacis et columna justitiae; quem crescere fecit Excelsus quasi terrae pulverem, et ut stellas exaltare semen ejus et haereditari illos a mari usque ad mare; cujus profecto, ut novit mundus et contestatur adhuc, his Imperatoris excelsi singulariter miles et martyr, dum adhuc in carne in floridis juventutis suae annis militaret, tantam, sicut in libello historico supra satis ostendimus, adeptus fuerat familiaris dilectionis gratiam, ut in aulico cancellariae officio quasi co-Augustus coregnaret Augusto. Sic erat inter duos quasi regnum unum, quia cor unum et anima una."

II's imperial reputation and the expansion of his realm, circumstances including rebellion, war, and illness prevented the Angevin king from ever following through with his repeated promises to travel to the Holy Land. Of Henry's four legitimate sons, moreover, three—Henry the Young King, Richard, and John—took crusading vows, yet only Richard ever set foot in the Levant.

This chapter examines how Angevin writers viewed their kings' crusading vows, and how they responded when those kings failed to free Jerusalem from Muslim control. For these authors, there was more at stake than just the liberation of the Holy Land. The role that the Angevin kings played in the crusading process reflected on their rule in England, as well. Indeed, court writers interpreted their rulers' responses to Jerusalem's troubles as indications of those kings' broader ability to govern their realm. Contemporary observers frequently measured the successes of the English kings against the responses of their Capetian rivals Louis VII and Philip II Augustus in France. Taking the cross provided the Angevins with a chance to rival, or even outshine, their continental neighbors. Similarly, Richard I's strengths on the Third Crusade were largely measured in relation to the weaknesses of Philip Augustus. Thus royal crusading vows, both fulfilled and unfulfilled, reflected contemporary perceptions about the political fate of both England and the larger Angevin empire, as well as that of Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

Henry II and Heraclius: Competing Views

For some English writers, Henry II's failure to travel to the Holy Land proved a convenient theme for critiques of Henry's rule in England. Gerald of Wales, in particular,

used the topic as an anchoring point for his criticism of the Angevins.[216] Gerald had

served as a royal clerk for about twelve years, beginning in 1184. Yet his service to

Henry and Richard did not win him appointments to either an English bishopric or, later,

to the coveted archbishopric of St David's in Wales and, disgruntled, he eventually left

the court.[217]

Gerald's frustration with Angevin rule is particularly evident in his *De Principis
Instructione*, which he revised several times between the mid-1190s and his death in *c.*

1220/3. In this work, Gerald looked back at Henry's reign, attributing all of England's

troubles to Henry's failure to go to the Holy Land as penance for Becket's death. He

exclaimed over the foolishness and obstinacy by which Henry attempted to replace his

crusading obligations by founding three monasteries in England, including the Carthusian

priory of Witham, over which the king appointed the future Saint Hugh of Lincoln.[218]

While in general the practice of founding monasteries was good, Gerald suggested that

such foundations were not enough to expiate so great a sin as complicity in the murder of

the archbishop of Canterbury, which called for a more special form of penance. Indeed,

Gerald suggested, the premature death of Henry the Young King in 1183 was part of the

divine punishment for the Old King's repeated failure to go to Jerusalem.[219]

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[216] On contemporary chroniclers' views of Henry II's reign, see John Gillingham, "Conquering Kings: Some Twelfth-Century Reflections on Henry II and Richard I," *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Karl Leyser*, ed. Timothy Reuter (London and Rio Grande: Hambledon Press, 1992): 63–78, esp. 174–5.

[217] Robert Bartlett, "Gerald of Wales (*c.* 1146–1220x23)," *ODNB*.

[218] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 171, and *DIP*, 28: "O stultas igitur, o fatuas, o pertinaces ineptias et obstinatas!"; Adam of Eynsham, *Magna Vita Sanci Hugonis*/The *Life of St Hugh of Lincoln*, ed. Decima L. Douie and Hugh Farmer, 2 vols., Medieval Texts (London and New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1961), i: 47–8; Henry Mayr-Harting, "Hugh of Lincoln (1140?–1200)," *ODNB*.

[219] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 172, and *DIP*, 30.

Admittedly, Jerusalem's need for help at this time was acute. In 1184, three years before Saladin captured Jerusalem, the growing Ayyubid threat to the Holy Land was evident. Jerusalem's leaders feared that the leper Baldwin IV was not strong enough to defend the Holy Land without assistance. Aleppo had fallen into Muslim hands in June 1183, and later that summer Baldwin developed a fever, leading to fears of his death and the appointment of Guy of Lusignan as regent. By the start of 1185, Baldwin IV's leprosy had worsened, and his death was imminent (he died that May).[220] The threat to the survival of the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem therefore seemed very great indeed.

In 1184, the lords and leaders of the military orders in Jerusalem decided to send a delegation to seek aid from the Christian princes of the West. Led by Heraclius, the patriarch of Jerusalem, and the masters of the Temple and Hospital, this group was charged with bringing western aid to the East. They brought with them the keys to the Holy Sepulchre and the Tower of David, as well as the banner of the kingdom of Jerusalem. In Italy in October 1184 they met with Pope Lucius III and the German emperor Frederick Barbarossa before crossing the Alps. In France Heraclius offered the royal insignia of Jerusalem to Philip Augustus, asking him to lead a crusade, but the French king refused, not wishing to leave his kingdom at that time. The embassy from Jerusalem then continued to England, arriving at Canterbury on 29 January 1185.[221]

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[220] Guy was removed from the regency as soon as Baldwin recovered from his fever, but as the king's health was still unstable, his nephew Baldwin V was crowned as co-king on 20 November 1183. Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs*, 188–9, 194, 205. Guy of Lusignan later ruled the kingdom of Jerusalem from 1192–4.

[221] Philip Augustus did, however, order a campaign of crusade preaching throughout France, and sent military aid to Jerusalem. Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs*, 212; John Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion: Chivalry and War in the Twelfth Century* (London and Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon Press, 1994), 143.

Although the embassy had sought aid from the rulers of Germany and France, Bernard Hamilton notes that "there is little doubt that the mission was directed chiefly to Henry II…, the grandson of King Fulk of Jerusalem."[222] During their visit the patriarch sanctified London's new rotunda-style Temple Church and, as we have seen, reported to the crowds at court that he had learned of Thomas Becket's martyrdom through the miraculous vision of a monk in Jerusalem. As he had already done to the kings of Germany and France, Heraclius also offered Henry II the keys to Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre in return for the king's promise to undertake military action in the Holy Land.

In Roger of Howden's account of events, Henry, "rejoicing greatly" (*plurimum gaudens*) when he learned of the delegation's arrival in England, rushed to meet them.[223] Roger notes that Henry received the keys and standard from Heraclius, and then hastened to summon a council at London to discuss the matter. There, he weighed the possibility of crusade with "the bishops and abbots, counts and barons of the realm." They decided to consult with the king of France, and many nobles took the cross.[224] Roger's account of Heraclius's visit to England portrays Henry II in a largely positive light—although with a few reservations, as we will see in Chapter Five. Even though Henry did not go on crusade, Roger shifts the blame for this decision onto Philip Augustus. Moreover, Roger shows Henry acting wisely, in consultation with the leading men of the realm, many of whom then pledged their help to Palestine.

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[222] Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs*, 213.

[223] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 335. Cp. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 299: "Rex Angliae…eos cum gaudio suscepit."

[224] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 336–7 (quote at 336): "episcopi et abates, comites et barones regni." Cp. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 301–2. Ralph de Diceto similarly reports that Henry treated the keys and standard "with the greatest veneration" (*maximam venerationem exhibuit*). Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 33.

Roger of Howden's interpretation of events is very different from the version presented by Gerald of Wales. Gerald describes how the delegation from Jerusalem had prepared to set out "from eastern Asia to the extreme ends of Europe," seeking the "most remote recess of the western ocean, not without labor and great danger."[225] Coming to Henry at Winchester, Heraclius and the leaders of the military orders implored him with tears, on bended knee, to help preserve Jerusalem from the Saracens and Saladin.[226] They produced a letter from Pope Lucius III, supporting their cause. Gerald also states that Heraclius offered "the complete dominion and submission of the kingdom" of Jerusalem to Henry.[227] Yet, Gerald recorded, the king showed little sympathy for the plight of the Holy Land and its messengers: he immediately handed back the keys to Jerusalem, the Tower of David, and the Sepulchre, and constantly delayed giving a response to the patriarch.

Gerald uses Heraclius's visit, and Henry's refusal to go on crusade, to great narrative effect, as an opportunity to draw an unflattering portrait of England's ruler. Rather than showing the king in conference with his barons and church leaders, as Roger of Howden had done, Gerald turned the occasion into a series of public debates between himself and Henry. The chronicler devoted an entire chapter of *De Principis Instructione* to recording this argument. Gerald clearly saw himself as arguing for reason and right,

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[225] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 203, and *DIP*, 59: "ab orientali Asia ad extremos tendens Europae fines… angulum occidentalis oceani remotissimum, non absque labore et periculo magno." For a discussion of Gerald's views of geography and his use of the language of East and West as rhetorical tool, see Natalia Petrovskaia, "East and West in *De Principis Instructione* of Giraldus Cambrensis," *Quastio Insularis* 10 (2009), 45–59.

[226] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 203, and *DIP*, 59–60.

[227] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 203: "cum regno universo suo dominatui submittentes eidem porrexit"; *DIP*, 59: "dominioque regni toto et subjectione"; 60–63.

while Henry was irrational and selfish. Noting that they spoke in front of an audience, the chronicler describes how he admonished Henry that the patriarch's suit was "not only for your greatest honor, but also for that of the whole kingdom." The king's reply, Gerald claims, was "mocking," and he spoke "neither kindly… nor courteously," retorting, "If the patriarch or anyone else should come to us, they seek [this] more for their own convenience than for ours."[228] Henry was essentially correct in this analysis, but Gerald interpreted the king's hesitations as a sign of the Henry's selfish concern with the costs to himself. In other words, in Gerald's presentation, Henry could only think of the proposed crusade in terms of monetary expense, rather than its greater spiritual good.

Importantly, Gerald implies that Henry did not believe that the salvation of the Holy Land would benefit the people of England as well as the people of Jerusalem. He concludes this passage with an explanation of why the issue was so important:

> For I was hoping that Israel itself would be redeemed in our times, and I invoke the Lord as witness since, as much on account of the retention of the Holy Land, and its liberation from the hands of the impious, as for the sake of the honor of our realm and people, I was desiring that great labor [i.e. the crusade]. The entire populace of the English also wanted it with the greatest desire.[229]

In Gerald's analysis, Henry is thus presented as irrational (even if his excuses, from our modern perspective, seem reasonable). Unlike Roger of Howden, who showed Henry acting as a king ought, Gerald strives to present Henry as someone unfit to rule England.

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[228] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 207, and *DIP*, 64: "non solum ad vestri verum etiam regni totius honorem maximum'… Respondit rex, quasi subsannans verbumque in tanta audientia dictum nec benevole suscipiens nec benigne: 'Si patriarcha,' inquit 'vel alii ad nos veniunt, magis hic sua quam nostra commoda quaerunt.'"

[229] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 208, and *DIP*, 64: "Speravam enim quod ipse diebus nostris redempturus esset Israel, et Dominum testem invoco quoniam tam propter terrae sacrae retentionem, et ab impiorum manibus liberationem, quam ob regni quoque nostri et gentis honorem, illud magno opere concupieram. Id ipsum quoque totus Anglorum populus cum summa voluntate desiderabat."

The king acts contrary to the wishes of his subjects and of God. Gerald, by contrast, sees himself coming across as the voice of reason and rationality.

Gerald emphasizes that Heraclius did not give up his quest to convince the Angevin king to come to Jerusalem's aid, even as Henry repeatedly prevaricated. The patriarch appealed to the public, joining Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury in preaching about the dangers posed by Saladin's armies.[230] The more Henry delayed giving Heraclius a concrete answer, Gerald writes, the more frustrated the patriarch became. He suggested that, if Henry would not go to Jerusalem, perhaps his son John would be able to go in his place. Indeed, Gerald emphasizes that John wished to answer Heraclius's call, and begged his father to allow him to go, but Henry instead sent him to Ireland.[231] In a rare instance of a chronicler praising John, Gerald comments that the young prince acted "laudably" (*laudabiliter*)—it was his father who was at fault.[232]

Gerald waxes eloquent in his critique of Henry's decision. In a rhetorical aside, the chronicler accuses Henry of deserting God, and warns him of the consequences he will face on Judgment Day:

> And let me warn you, King, with true words: Can it be, wretched man, that you have struck a contract with death, and have made a pact with the damned? Do not delay, I beg you, to come to the Lord, and do not put it off from day to day. For at short notice and in the time of vengeance His wrath shall utterly destroy you.[233]

Gerald places a similar admonition in the mouth of Heraclius:

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[230] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 208, and *DIP*, 64.

[231] On Henry's plans for John in Ireland, see chapter two of Church, *King John*, 27–39.

[232] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 209, and *DIP*, 65–6.

[233] Gerald of Wales, *Opera,* viii: 209, and *DIP*, 65−6: "Et ut verbis authenticis te, Rex, conveniam; numquid percussisti, miser, foedus cum morte, et cum inferno pactum fecisti? Ne tardes, quaeso, venire ad Dominum, et ne differas de die in diem. Subito enim ira illius et in tempore vindictae disperdet te."

Thus far among the princes of the world, King, you have reigned gloriously with incomparable favor; and until now your honor has increased more and more to the apex of the celestial court. But without a doubt, having been held to this trial in which you are left wanting, and having been abandoned on account of this by the Lord whom you are forsaking, and thoroughly destitute of grace, concerning the rest glory will be turned into air, and to your last breath honor will be turned to ignominy.[234]

The patriarch, Gerald writes, spoke these words "as though with a prophetic spirit" (*quasi prophetico spiritu*).[235] Heraclius's speech here almost certainly reflects Gerald's own viewpoint more than that of Heraclius, although one can certainly imagine the patriarch's frustration at having come so far only to be unsuccessful.

Heraclius, Gerald continues, confronted the king with his transgressions: Henry had never sworn service as required to his lord Louis VII of France, he had carried off Louis's wife (Eleanor of Aquitaine), and had been responsible for the death of Thomas Becket. Henry retorted that if he were to leave his lands unprotected, his sons would rise up in rebellion against him—a reasonable assumption, given their rebellions in the past. Finally, in a dramatic moment of showmanship, Heraclius presented his head and neck to Henry, daring him (so Gerald of Wales claims) to "do to me what you did to the blessed Thomas. For indeed I desire that my head be amputated by you in England, as if by the Saracens in Palestine, because without a doubt you are worse than any Saracen."[236]

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[234] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 210, and *DIP*, 66: "Hactenus inter mundi principes incomparabili gratia, Rex gloriose regnasti; et tuus usque nunc honor ad regiae celsitudinis apicem magis ac magis accrevit. Sed proculdubio ad hanc experientiam, in qua deficis, reservato, et ob hoc a Domino quem deseris derelicto, gratiaque penitus destituto, de cetero gloria in aerumnem et usque ad finalem halitum honor in ignominiam convertetur."

[235] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 210, and *DIP*, 66

[236] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 211, and *DIP*, 67: "'Fac,' inquit, 'de me, quod de beato Thoma fecisti. Adeo namque cupio quod a te mihi caput amputetur in Anglia, sicut a Saracenis in Palaestina, quia tu omni Sarraceno proculdubio pejor es.'"

Gerald of Wales's description of Heraclius's visit to England in 1185 reveals the continued and complex interconnection between the legacy of the Becket Affair and England's role in providing protection for the Holy Land. Indeed, for Gerald, all of England's troubles sprang from one point: Henry's decision to not go on crusade as penance for Becket's death. The prophetic curses that Gerald and Heraclius (according to Gerald) pronounced upon Henry reflect this idea. Henry's action—or, rather, inaction—had brought a curse down not only upon him, but upon England. Henry was worse than the Muslims, Gerald suggested, for he was betraying his own people by refusing to come in person to free Jerusalem.

Roger of Howden's interpretation of Heraclius's response, by contrast, is much less bombastic. Rather than presenting the patriarch as a wrathful man pronouncing a curse upon the kingdom, Roger's Heraclius returns to Jerusalem "very upset that he had accomplished so little on his journey."[237] On the whole, however, Roger's criticism of Henry and English crusaders in general is more subtle. In his *Gesta*, for example, written before 1191, the chronicler notes that Heraclius had hoped to return to the Holy Land with "the aforesaid king of England, or one of his sons." In his *Chronica*, revised after the Third Crusade, Roger adds to this statement, "or some other man of great authority" – surely a muted commentary on the unreliability of the Angevin king.[238]

In Roger's account, Henry II's failure to lead a crusade to the Levant is followed by the narrative of Jerusalem's betrayal by an Englishman. In both the *Gesta* and the

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[237] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 338: "multum quidem confusus quod tam parum profecit in itinere suo."
[238] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 338: "praedictum regem Angliae, vel aliquem de filiis suis"; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 304.

Chronica, Roger followed his story of Heraclius's empty-handed return with the tale of the renegade Templar Robert of St Albans, "by birth and nation English."[239] Having converted to Islam, Roger writes, Robert promised Saladin that "he would hand over to him the land of Jerusalem, and the city of Jerusalem," whereupon Saladin gave Robert his niece in marriage and placed him in charge of lands and soldiers.[240] While the bulk of his army laid waste to various surrounding regions, Robert attacked Jerusalem. The city's Christian inhabitants, however, drove him to flight, supported by God and by the "wood of the Dominical Cross (*lignum crucis Dominicae*)."[241] Robert's story offers an example of the harm done by an Englishman who has gone astray, and serves as a sort of warning of what dangers Jerusalem might face when an Englishman fails to act as he ought.

Ultimately, Roger of Howden portrays Henry II as a strong, proper king, but also criticizes the English response to Heraclius's call for aid to the Holy Land. Henry might have treated Heraclius well, Roger suggests, but one way or another an Englishman betrayed the kingdom of Jerusalem. For Gerald of Wales, the indecision of the king brought ruin upon England itself. Gerald believed that English aid for the Holy Land was good for Christendom, and it was good for England. Henry, by refusing to go on crusade, was good for neither.

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[239] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 341: "genere et natione Anglicus"; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 307: "natione Anglicus."

[240] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 341: "promisit ei se traditurum illam terram Jerosolimitanem, et civitatem Jerusalem"; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 307: "promisit ei se traditurum illi civitatem Jerusalem." In the *Chronica* (ii: 303), Roger prefaces the story of this betrayal with an anecdote about a pregnant woman whose baby was delivered by the Devil. After a priest drove away the devil and the child, the woman explained that the Devil had informed her that there was currently great sorrow in hell, but the "iniquities and sins of the crusaders" (cruciatorum iniquitas et peccatum) would soon turn that suffering to joy, and "many of them, having forsaken the religion of the cross, will become persecutors of the cross and the name of Christ" (*multi eorum, relicta crucis religion, fient crucis et nominis Christi persecutores*).

[241] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 307, and *Gesta*, i: 341.

One Family, Two Kingdoms

When Heraclius and the masters of the Temple and Hospital arrived in England they presented Henry with a letter from Pope Lucius III. In this letter, which Roger of Howden recorded in both his *Gesta* and *Chronica*, the pope asked the Angevin king to "follow closely in the footsteps of your predecessors," and reminded him that the Holy Land was "without the protection of a king."[242] Hans Eberhard Mayer has argued that the goal of the Jerusalem delegation in 1185 was to bring Jerusalem a new king to replace the leper king Baldwin IV.[243] Gerald of Wales promoted this belief when he wrote, as noted above, that the leaders of Jerusalem were willing to grant Henry all of their lands and castles along with the submission the kingdom of Jerusalem itself.[244] However, John Gillingham argues that this idea originated some time after Heraclius's delegation had left England. Gillingham's interpretation seems more likely.[245] The idea that Heraclius offered Henry II lordship over Jerusalem is almost certainly an English invention.

The origins of this belief that Pope Lucius, Heraclius, and the nobles of Jerusalem intended to have the king of England replace Baldwin IV as king of Jerusalem in 1184/5 can be found in the arguments put forward by both Gerald of Wales and Roger of Howden. The basis for Henry's claims to the throne of Jerusalem came from his family ties to Jerusalem's rulers. Gerald reminds his readers that Henry and Baldwin, as

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[242] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 333 and *Chronica*, ii: 301: "praedecessorum tuorum vestigia subsecutus… terram ipsam regis intelligis praesidio destitutam." On the terminology here, see Paul, *To Follow In Their Footsteps*, 2.

[243] Hans Eberhard Mayer, "Kaiserrecht und Heiliges Land," *Aus Reichsgeschichte und Nordischer Geschichte: Festschrift Karl Jordan*, Kieler Historische Studien, 16 (Kiel, 1972), 193–208. See also John Gillingham, "Roger of Howden on Crusade," in *Medieval Historical Writing in the Christian and Islamic Worlds*, ed. D. O. Morgan (London: University of London School of Oriental and African Studies, 1982): 60–75, at 62–3, and Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 144.

[244] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 203, and *DIP*, 59: "dominioque regni toto et subjectione."

[245] Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 146.

grandsons of Fulk V, were both from the "royal stock of that land [Jerusalem]," which originated in Anjou.[246] Roger similarly comments in the *Gesta* that Baldwin and his advisors turned to Henry because he had a claim to the kingdom "by hereditary right of his predecessors." In the *Chronica*, Roger adds that, "It must be understood, that Fulk the brother [*sic*] of Geoffrey count of Anjou, the father of this Henry [II], was king of Jerusalem."[247]

Both Roger and Gerald emphasize that this idea of Henry's right to Jerusalem's throne originated in the Holy Land, and that the Levantine nobles were therefore inspired to seek out English aid. The two authors thereby downplay the actual facts of the delegation, which had first visited Frederick Barbarossa and then Philip Augustus, and only came to Henry after the German emperor and French king declined to help. By emphasizing the importance of Henry's familial ties to the royal family of Jerusalem, Gerald and Roger give England greater prominence in the story of Jerusalem's salvation. This rhetorical strategy also makes Henry's refusal to help the Holy Land all the more damning.

John Gillingham, in his 1982 article on "Roger of Howden on Crusade," importantly noted that the chronicler also used references to Henry II's Norman and Angevin crusading ancestors as a means of obliquely critiquing Henry's response to Heraclius.[248] Following his first reference to Heraclius, in his entry for 1184, for

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[246] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 203, and *DIP*, 59: "ipse quoque de stirpe regia terrae illius, quam Andegavia peperit originaliter propagatus."

[247] Roger (or his scribe) mistakenly refers to Fulk as Geoffrey's brother (*frater*), rather than father (*pater*). Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 299: "Est enim sciendum, quod Fulco frater Gaufridi comitis Andegaviae, patris quoque istius Henrici, fuit rex Jerusalem."

[248] Gillingham, "Roger of Howden on Crusade," 60–75, esp. 69.

example, Roger related the history of Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy (d. 1134).

Robert, who was the eldest son of William the Conqueror, had taken part in the First

Crusade. In Roger's version of the story, Robert killed a "pagan" (*paganus*) prince named

Curbarand in a duel, which allowed the crusade's Christian leaders to liberate Antioch

and Jerusalem. In thanks, the Christian army elected Robert of Normandy as their king,

but he turned down the crown. According to Roger of Howden, Robert's motivation was

news that his younger brother, William Rufus, had died. Hoping to become king of

England, Robert rejected the crown of Jerusalem. He arrived home too late, however, and

his younger brother Henry had already been crowned Henry I. Fearing his brother's

claims to England, Henry I had Robert blinded and imprisoned for the remainder of his

life.[249] As Gillingham has shown, Roger of Howden intended this tale as a warning. Like

Robert Curthose, Henry II "was a man who turned his back on Jerusalem."[250] This story

of one brother usurping the English throne while the brother was on crusade also had

resonance for Richard I, whose brother John attempted to seize his throne while Richard

was abroad.

This emphasis on the Angevins' lineage and its connections to the crusades also

reveals the tensions between Henry's Norman and Angevin ancestry. In these accounts,

the Norman crusading legacy represented by Robert Curthose was cautionary at best, and

subversive at worst. The duke's fate served as a warning to a king like Henry II—or

Richard I—of the dangers inherent in declining the crown of Jerusalem out of concern for

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[249] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 328–30. For a discussion of when Roger of Howden wrote this passage, see Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 145.
[250] Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 144.

one's lands in the West. It also carried with it the implication that Henry I's accession to the English throne had not been honestly obtained, which also called into question the rights of his descendants, including Matilda and her son Henry, to inherit England's crown. The story further implied that Duke Robert might have rightly have become king of both England and Jerusalem, if only he had not misguidedly rejected Jerusalem's crown after the First Crusade. The Angevin legacy of Fulk V, by contrast, was triumphal, a model to be emulated. Fulk, unlike Robert, had accepted kingship of Jerusalem, and his descendants now ruled in both England and Jerusalem. The message was clear: there was only one proper action for Henry to take, and that was to follow Fulk's example and to fulfill his own destiny by becoming king of Jerusalem.

Ralph de Diceto's account of Heraclius's 1185 embassy offers further insight into the tensions implicit in the idea of an Angevin legacy split between England and Jerusalem. Both Roger of Howden and Gerald of Wales had imagined an English populace united in its support of the crusading endeavor. Ralph, too, explains that Henry convened a council to discuss whether to aid the Holy Land, but his interpretation of the decision differs dramatically:

> Therefore it was given under deliberation what might be more prudent, either that the king in his own person should go to the aid of the Jerusalemites, or that he should by no account leave the realm of the English, whose governance he had previously undertaken in the presence of the mother church, and which he was still in charge of… Therefore it seemed preferable to all, and much more beneficial for the soul of the king, that he should govern his realm with due moderation, and protect it from the assaults of foreigners (*barbarorum*) and outsiders (*gentibus externis*), than that he should look after the safety of the Easterners in person.[251]

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[251] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 33–4: "Datum est igitur sub deliberatione quid esset consultius, vel quod rex in propria sua persona Jerosolimitanis succurreret, vel Anglorum regno, cujus gubernationem

Here there is no mention of Henry's ancestral crusading legacy, or of his potential inheritance of the crown of Jerusalem. Instead, the leading nobles and clergy of the kingdom vote universally in favor of England's rights and privileges, which supersede those of the Holy Land. The English magnates in Ralph's account imply that England has no obligations at all to help the Holy Land. They understandably feared that the king's departure for the East would harm the kingdom, leaving it open to attacks from beyond its borders. Moreover, Ralph explains that the council reached their decision by rational reasoning grounded in the vows Henry had taken at his coronation. In 1154, he had pledged himself to defend and nurture England, and he had faithfully carried out these duties for thirty years. For Ralph de Diceto, the English king's obligations were to England and its peoples, and not to foreign easterners in a far-off land.

The Next Generation

Where Henry II hesitated to follow in his ancestor's footsteps, his son Richard did not. As the news spread of the Christian defeat at the battle of Hattin in 1187 (see Chapter Three), it became clear that an organized crusade was inevitable. The first of the Western Christian princes to take the cross was Richard, the "great-hearted count of Poitou."[252] He was not, however, the first of Henry's sons to take crusading vows, nor would he be the

in facie matris ecclesiae dudum susceperat, adhuc praeesse nulla ratione desisteret… Satius ergo visum est universis, et animae regis multo salubrious, quod regnum suum debita cum moderation gubernet, et a barbarorum irruptionibus et a gentibus exteris tueatur, quam saluti consulat Orientalium in propria sua persona."
[252] *Itinerarium*, 47.

last.[253] Richard's older brother, Henry the Young King, had taken the cross in 1183. The crusading enterprise, Nicholas Paul explains, offered the Young King an opportunity to bolster his support in the Limousin, "a region where the memory of the crusades and commitment to the continued crusading enterprise had not waned since the time when so many of the region's knights and lords had headed for Jerusalem in 1096."[254]

Roger of Howden explained that Henry II did not believe his eldest son had made these vows out of true piety, but rather out of political expediency. The Young King protested this accusation, replying that his intention had been to undo the sins that he had committed against his father.[255] Henry, mollified, then promised to give his support to the plan. The Young King, however, died not long after this meeting, leaving his companion, William Marshal, to fulfill his vows to visit Jerusalem on his behalf.[256] Nevertheless, the Young King's actions seem to have taken hold in the imagination of Angevin courtiers, allowing chroniclers to hold him up in opposition to his father as a model of how to act on behalf of the Holy Land and, more generally, of how to be a good ruler.[257] Where the older Henry had failed, contemporaries hoped that his namesake would prevail. Yet

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[253] I examine John's crusading vows in the Conclusion.

[254] Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 132.

[255] In his biography of William Marshal, David Crouch suggests that on his deathbed the Young King was "troubled by the lightness with which he had taken the vows." David Crouch, *William Marshal: Knighthood, War and Chivalry, 1147–1219* (London and New York: Pearson Education Ltd., 2002), 53. On the lack of information about William Marshal's time in the Holy Land, see ibid, 55–6, and Nicholas 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," *Journal of Medieval History* 40 (2014): 292–310.

[256] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 276–7. See also Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 50. On the lack of details about William Marshal's experiences in the Holy Land, see Paul, "In Search of the Marshal's lost crusade," 292–310.

[257] See, e.g., Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium/Courtiers' Trifles*, ed. M. R. James, revised by C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 278.

whatever the hopes that contemporaries may have had for the Young King, his premature

death prevented him from either leading a crusade or becoming sole king of England.

Richard, perhaps learning from Young Henry's example, made the decision to aid

the Holy Land before he became king. The catalyst for his decision was the Christian

defeat at Hattin, although personal piety and a desire to act independently of his father

also motivated him.[258] In imitation of his great-grandfather, Fulk V, Richard made his

crusading vows in the cathedral of Tours.[259] The symbolism was clear: Richard was

casting himself as the successor to Fulk's legacy in the Holy Land, something that Henry

II had not done. It was a legacy that, as we have seen, had culminated with an Angevin

on the throne of Jerusalem. Richard could only hope that history would repeat itself.

The Occitan troubadour Bertran de Born praised Richard's vow, asserting that

"He who is count and duke and will be king has stepped forward, and by that his worth

has doubled."[260] Similarly, the poet Giraut de Borneil proclaimed that "Count Richard is

well equipped; for with his circle, whether or not anyone follows his example, he has

undertaken such a business as is great indeed; and God be praised for it!"[261] Giraut need

not have worried, for Richard's unhesitating quickness in offering aid to Jerusalem was

the catalyst for others to join the crusading cause. Henry II and by Philip Augustus soon

followed Richard's lead at Gisors in January 1188. A cross reportedly appeared in the sky

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[258] For Henry II's sons, going on crusade was a way to differential themselves from their father, and offered the potential to earn glory in their own right, without having to rely on his goodwill.

[259] Gillingham, *Richard I*, 87; Paul, *To Follow in their Footsteps*, 249.

[260] Bertran de Born, "*Nostre Seigner somonis el meteis,*" ed. Gouiran; trans. Paterson, *Troubadours, Trouvères and the Crusades* [Online: <http://www.rialto.unina.it/BtBorn/80.30%29Gouiran%29.htm>, accessed 28 October, 2014]. See also Gillingham, *Richard I*, 87.

[261] Giraut de Borneil, "A l'honor Dieu torn en mon chan," ed. Sharman; trans. Paterson, *Troubadours, Trouvères and the Crusades* [Online: <http://www.rialto.unina.it/GrBorn/242.6%29Sharman%29.htm>, accessed 28 October, 2014].

as the archbishop of Tyre delivered a sermon to the surrounding crowd.[262] The author of

the *Itinerarium* added that "an innumerable number of men from the ecclesiastical and

secular militias" added their names to the growing ranks of crusaders.[263] Such was their

eagerness, he added, that

> it was not a question of who had received the cross but of who had not yet done
> so. A great many men sent each other wool and distaff, hinting that if anyone
> failed to join this military undertaking they were only fit for women's work.
> Brides urged their husbands and mothers incited their sons to go, their only
> sorrow being that they were not able to set out with them because of the weakness
> of their sex.[264]

This scene is a far cry from the scene surrounding Heraclius's embassy to France and

England a few years earlier, which had met with a lukewarm response in both kingdoms.

Now crusading fervor swept through England and France, drawing support from all

genders and ages, and at its head was the son of the king of England.

For the aging Henry II, reeling from his sons' repeated rebellions and constant

unrest in his continental territories, the prospect of a military excursion to the Holy Land

must have seemed particularly daunting. He was not to be outdone by the younger

generation, however, and began to set the wheels in motion for organizing such an

expedition. Even for Richard, however, it was not so easy to set aside politics at home.

Most difficult was reaching an arrangement whereby Richard—who became king of

England in the fall of 1189—could go on crusade without leaving Angevin lands open to

the predations of Philip Augustus. Bertran de Born, in a poem addressed to Conrad of

Montferrat, wrote, "I know of two kings who hold back from assisting you… King Philip

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[262] See also Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 29–30, 58–9; Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, i: 406. See also
Gillingham, *Richard I*, 88.
[263] *Itinerarium*, 47.
[264] *Itinerarium*, 48.

is one, because he fears King Richard who in turn fears him. Would they were now both in Sir Saladin's chains, for they are cheating God: they have taken the cross and do nothing about leaving." The poet, however, goes on to offer reassurance: "King Richard has so much worth (even if, when I want to, I speak very badly of him) that he will make the crossing this year with the greatest force he can muster."[265]

The author of the *Itinerarium*, looking back at the preparations for crusade, acknowledged that Henry was growing old and that Richard was likely to soon inherit England and the Angevin empire (as he did when Henry died in 1189). Yet rather than using these points to critique Richard for abandoning his realm at a fragile moment, the chronicler emphasized that Richard's resolve to help Jerusalem remained steadfast. Thus God had marked the count of Poitou's "constancy as worthy of reward… And when all the other princes had either died or retreated, He retained him as executor of His affairs."[266] By putting Jerusalem above all other things, including the governance of England, Richard had earned divine approval.

England and France, the Sun and the Moon

Even as the Angevin kings turned their sights to defeating the Muslims in the Holy Land, a key element of their court's crusading ideology in the 1180s and 1190s focused upon defining Englishness in opposition to Frenchness. Driven largely by the Angevin kings' prolonged competition with Louis VII and his son Philip II Augustus,

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[265] Bertran de Born, "*Ara sai eu de pretz qals l'a plus gran*," ed. Gouiran; trans. Paterson, *Troubadours, Trouvères and the Crusades* [Online: <http://www.rialto.unina.it/BtBorn/80.4%28Gouiran%29.htm>, accessed 28 October, 2014]. On this poem and Bertran's critique of Richard and Philip, see Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 131–2.
[266] *Itinerarium*, 47.

English authors emphasized the superiority of the English response to the troubles in the East. Indeed, in many ways this emphasis on the inferiority of the French in Eastern affairs overshadows the same authors' depictions of the Muslims.

The Third Crusade's departure was initially delayed, the canon Richard explains in the *Itinerarium*, due to the "relentless and almost constant rivalry" between Henry II and Philip Augustus.[267] In a somewhat confused account of Henry II's meeting with Philip Augustus and Joscius, bishop of Tyre, in 1188, Walter Map describes how the bishop asked these two kings to establish a tax in support of the Holy Land (the famous Saladin Tithe).[268] Overcome by the moment, Philip Augustus, "because he was only a boy," (*quia tunc puer*) deferred to the older and—Map implies—wiser Henry, allowing him to reply first.[269] Henry thereupon announced, "I propose, when I should have the opportunity, to visit the holy places and the sepulchre of Christ."[270] In the meantime, he would make immediate moves to send sixty thousand marks as evidence of his concern— a promise which, Walter assures his reader, Henry carried out within the space of only a month.

The king of England's proclamation, Walter elaborates, overwhelmed the assembled French nobles: "The king of France, as though suddenly struck by an arrow, and all his nobles fell silent, nor did the king himself nor any of the others, having heard

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[267] *Itinerarium*, 142.
[268] Map mistakenly says that the bishop was the bishop of Acre, not of Tyre, and that the meeting took place at Senlis.
[269] Philip was 22 years old in the winter of 1188.
[270] Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 240–1: "Proposui cum oportunitatem habuero loca sancta Christique sepulchrum visitare."

so great a climax of words, dare to promise anything."[271] Walter Map thus deftly uses the

crusade negotiations as an illustrative example of the differences between the kings of

England and France, to England's advantage. This story is much less about the actual

salvation of Jerusalem than it is about portraying the English king as superior to the

French king in age, speaking talent, largesse and fundraising skills, and, finally, in

concern for the Holy Land.

The rivalry between England and France became a defining element of the Third

Crusade, as the open hostility between Richard of England and Philip of France turned

their military leadership in the Holy Land into a competition over resources and

victories.[272] Their tense personal relationship, in turn, spilled over into the ranks of their

followers, as soldiers gave their allegiance to one king or the other. By reinforcing the

already-present tensions between the kings and their followers, the Third Crusade helped

to solidify ideas about French and English identity. No longer were the crusaders simply

"Franks," but rather representatives of distinct kingdoms and ideologies. Indeed, in the

mind of many Angevin chroniclers, the French, more than the Muslims, were the real

enemies of the crusade.

The first sign of trouble between the leaders of the Third Crusade occurred when

Richard reached the Sicilian city of Messina in September 1190.[273] Philip had arrived the

previous week. According to Richard of Devizes, "people of all ages, a crowd without

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[271] Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 241: "autem Francie, quasi sagitta subita percussus, et omnes principes eius obmutuerunt; nec ipse rex nec aliorum aliquis tanto verborum audito culmine quicquam promittere sunt ausi."

[272] Pope Innocent III summarized many of the kings' complaints against one another in a letter to Richard dated 31 May, 1198. C. R. Cheney and W. H. Semple (eds.), *Selected Letters of Pope Innocent III Concerning England, 1198–1216* (London and New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953), 5–7.

[273] Richard arrived in port on 22 September and entered the city the following day.

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number, came to meet the king, marvelling and declaring how much more gloriously and impressively this king had landed than had the king of France."[274] Where Philip Augustus had arrived "secretly" in the Sicilian port with only a single ship, Richard's fleet of painted galleys, decked out with flying pennants and heralded by trumpets, filled the harbor with color and sound. The king of England was decked out in finery, and rode through the town so that the commoners could see him.[275]

At Christmas that year, Richard hosted a grand feast which was served in vessels of gold and silver, which he afterwards distributed as treasures to everyone present. Richard's seemingly endless generosity even extended to "Noble Palestinian women, widows and virgins," as well as to "the infantry and lesser men-at-arms."[276] The Norman poet Ambroise, a member of the Angevin army, often emphasized the connections between Richard's incredible wealth and his position as king of England. It was not necessary to describe Richard's feasts in detail, Ambroise wrote, because everyone knows "what a great court can be held by him who holds England." Similarly, Richard, "to whom England belonged," was the only man worthy to control the great fleet at Messina.[277]

Richard again outspent Philip at the siege of Acre in 1191. The English king's arrival at the siege marked a turning point in the morale of the Christian army. Philip had

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[274] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 16: "uenitque contra regem omnis etas, populus sine numero, mirantes et predicantes quanto rex iste gloriosius et terribilius applicuerat rege Francie." According to the Old French Continuation of William of Tyre, Philip and Richard were pleased to see each other, and greeted each other joyfully. *The Conquest of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade: Sources in Translation*, ed. Peter W. Edbury, Crusade Texts in Translation (Ashgate, 2004), 93.
[275] *Itinerarium*, 157.
[276] *Itinerarium*, 170 (quotes), 171.
[277] Ambroise, *History of the Holy War: Ambroise's Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*, trans. Marianne Ailes (Boydell, Reprint Edition, 2011), 32 (quote 1), 38 (quote 2).

arrived in Acre in late April, while Richard reached it on 8 June 1191. The Christian army's relative lack of success at breaking down the resistance of the city's Muslim occupants month after month left the soldiers disheartened. They therefore greeted Richard's arrival with great enthusiasm. According to the *Itinerarium*, "the land shook with the Christians' rejoicing" when they saw the Angevin fleet, "because 'the treasure of all nations' had come."[278] To further win the loyalty of the soldiers, Richard famously offered each man four gold bezants—one bezant more than "poor" (*paupere*) Philip paid his men—to fight under England's banner.[279] Richard's displays of wealth, however, humiliated the French king, and Philip's jealousy of the English king, Ambroise tells us, "was to last all his life."[280] Although Philip and Richard outwardly treated each other with respect at Acre, "just like their fathers they revered each other with tender enmity cloaked in love."[281] Richard of Devizes waxed yet more poetic, describing how with Richard's arrival at Acre, "the king of the French was extinguished and made nameless, even as the moon loses its light at sunrise."[282]

Philip's departure from the crusade in August 1191, shortly after the surrender of Acre, left Richard in charge of the campaign, but also meant that the French king, and the French army by extension, became the scapegoats for any problems that the crusaders faced in the Holy Land after Acre. On November 6, the Muslims attacked a Christian foraging party. Robert de Breteuil, the earl of Leicester, did not hesitate to enter the fight;

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[278] *Itinerarium*, 202. Cp. Haggai 2:7.
[279] Ambroise, *History of the Holy War*, 95; Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 43 (quote). For a discussion of Richard's largesse in the context of contemporary chivalric ideology, see Jean Flori, *Richard the Lionheart: King and Knight*, (Praeger, 2007), 332–47.
[280] Ambroise, *History of the Holy War*, 42.
[281] *Itinerarium*, 224.
[282] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 43: "ut solet ad solis ortum suum luna lumen amittere."

he was later joined by Richard. These two Englishmen, the author of the *Itinerarium* tells us, fought "with no help at all from the French."[283] Similarly, after the crusaders recaptured Ascalon in the spring of 1192, Richard's men rebuilt the city's walls "without any trouble to the French, who had withdrawn but who ought by right to have taken on an equal share of the toil."[284] The French forces returned to Tyre where, the *Itinerarium*'s author (writing some years afterwards) asserts, they gave themselves up to a life of pleasure, indulging in dancing-girls and drunken parties. Moreover, the chronicler continues, the French solders scandalously dressed in effeminate clothing and wore their cloaks in reverse, "so things which were originally designed to cover the rear parts were forced to serve other parts of the body."[285] Against such reports of the French, the heroic deeds of Richard and his men stood out as models of proper crusading behavior. Indeed, Richard's prowess even surpassed that of the famous hero of French epic, Roland, whose strength "would be reckoned weak" if compared to that of Richard.[286]

Imagining Victory

An insight into the contemporary English view of Richard's outstanding leadership during the Third Crusade comes from Roger of Howden. Roger had departed the Holy Land with Philip Augustus in August 1191, so his information for the remainder of the crusade came from reports he received from others. Near the end of his *Gesta*, Roger wrote of a great Christian victory over the Muslims at Ramla, just before

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[283] *Itinerarium*, 271–2 (quote at 272).
[284] *Itinerarium*, 298.
[285] *Itinerarium*, 299.
[286] *Itinerarium*, 367.

Christmas 1191, and described the events that followed:

> Meanwile, Richard king of England, delaying in the land of Jerusalem, in the week right before the Lord's Nativity, engaged in battle with Saladin and his people on the plain of Ramis, and the army of the Christians prevailed, and Saladin with his people fled defeated, and the Christians made a great slaughter of the pagans. Then Richard king of England, the *magnificus triumphator*, came to Jerusalem, and the pagans who were within it sallied out against him, and they engaged in battle with him, and many of them were slain in that battle. Other pagans, fleeing from the field, shut themselves up within the city of Jerusalem, and the king of England besieged it on all sides. On the fourth day, the pagans who were in the city of Jerusalem, seeing that they would have neither reinforcement nor assistance from Saladin, offered the city of Jerusaem to the king of England if he would grant them licence to depart with life and limb, but the king of England did not want to receive the city of Jerusalem on that condition.[287]

Roger gives a stirring account of the siege of the holy city by the crusaders. In this passage, he dwells upon the heroic leadership of Richard, whom he twice refers to as the *rex Angliae,* and praises as a *magnificus triumphator*. Roger explains that Richard nearly captured Jerusalem, but chose not to accept a surrender that allowed the Muslim populace of the city to go free. Ultimately, his account of Richard's attack on Jerusalem shows the king of England as a triumphant general who had brought the Muslims to heel and now lay camped at the doorstep of Jerusalem. The only problem was, none of these events that Roger recorded ever took place.

The reality of the situation was much less glorious. Richard and the crusading

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[287] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 230–1: "Interim Ricardus rex Angliae moram faciens in terra Jerusalem, in hebdomada proxima ante Natale Domini commisit praelium cum Saladino et gente sua in planitie Ramis, et praevaluit exercitus Christianorum: et Saladinus cum gente sua victus fugit, et Christiani fecerunt stagem magnam ex paganis. Deinde Ricardus rex Angliae magnificus triumphator venit Jerosolimam, et pagani qui in ea erant, exierunt contra eum, et commiserunt cum eo praelium, et multi illorum ceciderunt in praelio illo. Caeteri autem pagani fugientes a campo incluserunt se infra civitatem Jerusalem, et rex Angliae obsedit eam per circuitum. Quarta die sequenti pagani, qui in civitate Jerusalem erant, videntes quod non haberent auxilium vel succursum a Saladino, obtulerunt regi Angliae civitatem Jerusalem si ipse dedisset eis licentiam abeundi cum vita et membris, sed rex Angliae noluit civitatem Jerusalem illa conditione recipere." See also Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 149.

army came within a few miles of Jerusalem, but never laid siege to the city. Nor did the

Muslims ever promise to turn the city over to the Christians. In his *Chronica*—a revision

of the *Gesta* composed after the Third Crusade—Roger left this entire episode out. But

this passage about the (imagined) siege of Jersualem remains a testament of, in John

Gillingham's words, "the kind of news which Howden *expected* to hear."[288] As such, it

offers an insight into the confident perspective on the crusade's progress as seen from

England in early 1192. Roger's language, with its emphasis on Richard, also suggests that

the chronicler felt it was important to emphasize the king's connections to England in the

context of his (supposed) victory at Jerusalem.

The Treaty of Ramla, drawn up between the Christian and Muslim armies in June

1192, officially ended the hostilities of the Third Crusade, although the agreement only

offered a three-year reprieve from fighting. Nevertheless, Saladin granted select members

of the Christian army permission to make a supervised visit to the holy sites in Jerusalem.

Notably, the French were explicitly excluded from this agreement.[289] A number of

crusaders, however, took Saladin up on his offer. Hubert, bishop of Salisbury,

accompanied by Richard's nephew, Henry of Champagne, prayed at various holy places

within the city, including the Holy Sepulcher, and even met in person with Saladin.[290]

Yet although he allowed his men to visit the city, the king of England refused to set foot

inside Jerusalem.

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[288] Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 149.
[289] See, e.g., *Itinerarium*, 373, which attributes the exclusion of the French to Richard.
[290] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 84. While in Jerusalem, Saladin reportedly offered to grant Hubert a favor, so the bishop (and future archbishop of Canterbury) requested that two priests be established to say prayers at the Holy Sepulchre, with full protection and access for pilgrims to the site. Saladin agreed. See Ambroise, *History of the Holy War*, 190–1.

Sixty years later, in 1253, the sultan of Damascus offered King Louis IX of France free passage as a pilgrim from Jaffa to Jerusalem, but the crusader king rejected this offer. Specifically, Louis's men had reminded him of the example set in 1192 by the king of England, who would not enter Jerusalem if he could not restore it to Christian hands.[291] If Richard would not do it, neither would Louis. Richard's decision to not visit Jerusalem has continued to capture the imagination of writers up to the present day. The dramatic tension of David Eldridge's play *Holy Warriors*, which premiered at the Globe Theatre in London in July 2014, centers upon the question of why Richard never entered Jerusalem in 1192, and how history would have unfolded if he had in fact visited the city.

Angevin authors, too, struggled with this question, and sources from the period offer a glimpse into the variety of ways his contemporaries strove to define Richard's— and, by extension, England's—crusading legacy. Many Angevin authors dealt with the unsatisfactory resolution of the Third Crusade by attempting to spin events in favor of Richard and the Christian army. In his *Chronica* (now revised to reflect a more accurate series of events), for example, Roger of Howden stressed that it was Saladin who first sued for peace (*Saladinus mandavit regi Angliae*). Only then did Richard, having conferred with the Templars and assessed the crusaders' dwindling supplies, agree to a truce.[292] Richard of Devizes, by contrast, portrayed the king's decision as an example of his religious piety, giving this interpretation added emphasis by making it the final line of his chronicle: "but the worthy indignation of his great heart was unable to assent that he

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[291] John of Joinville, *Chronicles of the Crusades*, trans. Caroline Smith (New York, Penguin, 2008), 283.
[292] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 184. For an assessment of Richard's reasoning, see Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 224.

should aquire from the grace of the pagans what he could not have as a gift from God."[293]

This assessment of Richard's actions contrasts with Richard of Devizes's scathing review of other crusaders who left the Holy Land without accomplishing their goal. Such was the case with Walter of Coutances, archbishop of Rouen and a native of Cornwall, who returned home after the siege of Acre. Richard of Devizes accused Walter of being "fainthearted and fearful," and scoffed that Walter believed the clergy "ought rather preach than to fight; it was not fitting for a bishop to bear any arms other than those of the virtues."[294] Granted, this was more a critique of the secular clergy by a regular monk than it was a comment on Walter and the crusade, and one can imagine Richard of Devizes longing for a Turpin-like warrior bishop. Nevertheless, it provides a stark contrast to how the chronicler portrayed the king of England's decision to leave the Holy Land.

Richard of Devizes also blamed England's leaders for their failure to properly support their ruler. While Richard was fighting in the Holy Land, "no help from any of his lands had followed him. Neither his only full brother John… nor his justiciars, nor the rest of the magnates appeared to think of sending him anything from their revenues, nor think of his return. Only the Church prayed without intermission to God for him."[295] Thus the overall picture that one gets from Richard of Devizes' chronicle is one in which

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[293] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 84: "sed adquiescere non potuit digna magni cordis indignatio, ut (quod) de Dei dono non poterat, de gratia gentilium consequeretur."
[294] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 27–8: "pusillanimis erat et pauidis… pastores ecclesie debere potuis predicare quam preliari; non decere episcopum arma portare nisi uirtutum."
[295] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 73: "de nulla terrarium suarum quicquid se iuuaminis fuerat subsecutum. Nec ipse frater eius unicus et uterinus Iohannes comes Moretonii, nec iusticiarii eius, nec magnates reliqui quicquam uisi sunt de transmittendis illi suis reditibus sed neque de reditu illius cogitare. Oratio tantum fiebat sine intermissione ab ecclesia ad Deum pro eo."

England's king emerges as the persevering hero despite the many failures of his own subjects and even his own family to support him. The narrative becomes a critique of those leaders back home in England, while maintaining its praise for the crusading king.

Shortly before the end of the crusade, Richard I fell ill at Jaffa. According to Richard of Devizes, Saladin's brother Al-Adil (known to the Europeans as Safadin), came to visit the king while he was convalescing. Denied entrance to Richard's tent, Safadin addressed the king's servants: "I feel that you are in great pain, nor am I ignorant of the cause. My friend (*meus amicus*), your king, is ill."[296] Safadin continued to address the men assembled outside of Richard's tent, highlighting the failures of Philip Augustus and praising the king of England's accomplishments in the Holy Land:

> Did we [i.e. the Muslims] fear that powerful king of France, who was conquered before he even entered battle, whose strength, such as he had gathered over three years, was squandered in the brief time of three months?... But this king [Richard], whom among all the princes of Christian name the circle of the whole world embraces, is alone worthy of the honor of a leader and the name of a king.[297]

This speech is, of course, a complete invention on the part of Richard of Devizes. Yet it serves an important function within his chronicle. Placing the highest praise of England and its king—and criticism of France—in the mouth of a Muslim prince gave greater rhetorical force to the speech, and thus to the chronicler's emphasis upon English superiority. If the Muslim enemy could so praise Richard, Richard of Devizes implied, then surely that king's greatness was beyond a doubt.

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[296] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 75: "'Ego,' inquid per interpretem, 'uos altum dolere sentio, nec causam nescio. Meus amicus rex uester infirmus est.'"

[297] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 75–6: "Numquid metuemus illum ualidum regem Francie, qui priusquam ueniret in aciem uictus est, cuius quicquid uirium tres anni contulerant, trium mensium (breue) tempus absumpsit?... Sed rex iste inter omnes Christiani nominis principes quos totius mundi teres circulus ambit, solus honore ducis et regis nomine dignus."

Nor was the speech wholly unbelievable, as Safadin and Richard I did enjoy a unique camaraderie during the crusade. The two men had discussed a union between Safadin and Richard's widowed sister, Joan, which would have seen Jerusalem ruled by an English Christian queen and an Ayyubid Muslim king. John Gillingham casts this discussion as a series of jokes, with the proposal put forward in jest by Richard, and Safadin replying to it, equally in jest.[298] Nevertheless, Gillingham emphasizes that the two men undoubtedly did discuss this proposed alliance, and Saladin agreed to it with surprising speed.[299] Whether meant as a joke or more seriously intended, this agreement had ultimately failed under emphatic resistance from Joan and Richard's ministers. Indeed, Richard most likely never expected this plan to succeed, as it required Safadin's to convert to Christianity; Saladin believed the whole proposal to be a trick.[300] At another time, according to the Arab chronicler Ibn al-Athīr, Richard wished to "hear some Muslim music, so he [Safadin] summoned a female singer, who played the harp."[301] Ibn al-Athīr also praised Richard's leadership, commenting that "the king of England... was the outstanding man of his time for bravery, cunning, steadfastness and endurance. In him the Muslims were tried by an unparalleled disaster."[302] It was not, therefore, inconceivable that Safadin might have praised Richard was the king lay ill in Jaffa.

Interestingly, Richard of Devizes was not content with allowing Safadin to serve

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[298] Gillingham, *Richard I*, 22, 185.
[299] Gillingham, *Richard I*, 184.
[300] Eddé, *Saladin*, 264.
[301] Ibn al-Athīr, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'lta'rīkh, Part 2: The Years 541–589/1146–1193, The Age of Nur al-Din and Saladin*, trans. D. S. Richards, Crusade Texts in Translation (Burlington, VT, 2007), 392. Ibn al-Athīr attributed the failure to reach an accord to Richard's "skilful [sic] stratagem[s]."
[302] Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle*, 387.

as his mouthpiece for praise of England's king. Instead, the chronicler used Safadin's speech as a venue in which to also imagine what would have happened if Richard's father, Henry II, had been able to fulfill his own crusading vows:

> It is not novel that we fear the English, since even this man's father had such a reputation among us, that if he had come unarmed into our lands we all would have fled, though armed, nor would it seem dishonorable to us to flee from him. That dread of ours, a man remarkable in his time, has died, but, like a phoenix, he has renewed himself a thousand time better in his son.[303]

This wistful rhetoric imagined what the older king would have done for the Holy Land, had death not prevented him. Similarly, just as Osbert of Clare had imagined Babylon and Damascus falling before Henry II, Ambroise imagined the Old King preserving the Holy Land and aiding Tyre. In his account of the crusade, the Norman poet lamented that the Holy Land had suffered due to the death of "the king of England, good King Henry, who knew so much and had so much."[304]

Richard of Devizes (via his foil Safadin) imagined Richard I as, in essence, an improved reincarnation of his father. He described Richard as the ultimate warrior king:

> "I swear to you by the great God, that if after he had become master of Acre he had immediately led his army to Jerusalem, within all the bounds of the lands of the Christians he would not have a single one of us. Rather, we would have given him inestimable treasures, so that he would not advance and so that he would not persecute us any further. But, thank God, he was burdened by the king of the French and delayed by him, like a cat with a hammer hanging from its tail…" He [Safadin] wished to say more, but his tongue, failing and faltering out of sorrow, could not carry on to a conclusion.[305]

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[303] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 75–6: "Non est de nouo quod timemus Angligenas, quoniam et patrem istius talem fecerat nobis fama, ut si uel inermis nostras uenisset in partes omnes fugissemus armati, quibus nec ab eo fugari uideretur inglorium. Ille timor noster, uir suo tempore singularis, occubuit, sed more fenicis se milies meliorum reparauit in filio."

[304] Osbert of Clare, *Letters*, 131; Ambroise, *History of the Holy War*, 50. Cf. *Itinerarium*, 179.

[305] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 78: "Ego iuro uobis per Deum maximum, quoniam si postquam Accarone potitus est continio Ierosolimam duxisset exercitum, imfra totos terre Christianorum terminos nec unum reperisset ex nostris, immo dedissemus ei gazas inestimabiles, ut non progrederetur, ut nos non

In this speech, Richard of Devizes (through Safadin) emphatically insists that the French were directly responsible for the Christians' inability to capture Jerusalem. The English king received no blame. The speech also reiterated the Angevin dynasty's greatness in the Holy Land across generations, imagining the Muslims fleeing Jerusalem at the mere approach of an Angevin king from England.

To Kill Jerusalem's King

One of the debates between Richard and Philip Augustus while in the Holy Land centered upon the election of a new king of Jerusalem to replace the ineffectual Guy of Lusignan. Richard initially gave his support to Guy, who was married to Baldwin IV's sister Sibylla. Philip, by contrast, supported Conrad, marquis of Montferrat, who had married Baldwin and Sibylla's half-sister Isabella. The two kings finally reached an agreement that Conrad would be crowned king of Jerusalem. At Tyre on the night of 28 April, 1192, however, Conrad was set upon and killed by two Shi'i Assassins sent by Rashid al-Din Sinān, the Old Man of the Mountain.[306] As Walter Map reported, "The French say that Richard had this done because of envy."[307]

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persequeretur ulterius. Sed, Deo gratia, oneratus fuit rege Francorum et (per eum) retardatus, sicut murilegus cui malleus pendet ad caudam… Eloqui plura uoluit, sed perorare non pertulit lingua languens et pre dolore deficiens."

[306] On the origin and politics of the Assassins and their leader, the Old Man of the Mountain, see Bernard Lewis, *The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam* (New York: Basic Books, 1967).

[307] Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 241: "Dicunt Franci quod ipse Ricardus fecit hoc fieri per inuidiam."

Historians today generally agree that Richard was innocent of the marquis's death.[308] The Arab chronicler Ibn al-Athīr wrote that the Old Man of the Mountain himself had chosed Conrad as the target of the attack. The chronicler further explained that Saladin had originally hired Sinān to kill Richard, but Sinān had worried that without the English king to oppose him, Saladin might grow too powerful. Al-Athīr's statement reflects his partisan support of Saladin more than it does actual events. Saladin would not have hired Sinān, as the Old Man's men had twice attempted to assassinate the Sunni sultan, who was, in turn, planning war upon the Old Man's Shi'ite Assassins.[309] The shady circumstances of Conrad of Montferrat's death, however, made it eay to point fingers. The French blamed the marquis's murder on Richard because "he wished to become the sole ruler of the Syrian littoral."[310] Philip Augustus's biographer Rigord further asserted that the king of England later hired the Old Man of the Mountain to send Assassins all the way to France to kill Philip, too.[311]

Although Richard was likely innocent, these charges continued to plague the English king for several years. After all, it would have been hard to resist the draw of so sensational a story: the Christian king of England, hero of the Third Crusade, hiring Shi'ite Assassins to murder the kings of Jerusalem and France. Rigord's tale should thus be seen as a counter to the pro-English, anti-French propaganda of the Angevin chroniclers. Yet even though the charges against Richard are products of invention, they played a central role in diplomatic negotiations between the kings of England and France

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[308] See, e.g. Jonathan Phillips, *Holy Warriors: A Modern History of the Crusades* (London: Vintage Books, 2010), 159, and Gillingham, *Richard I*, 200–1.
[309] Eddé, *Saladin*, 392–5.
[310] Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle*, 396–7 (quote at 397).
[311] Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 120.

particularly in 1194–5.

Again, the accounts of each side differ slightly. Rigord asserted that Philip Augustus, fearing for his life, took refuge in one of his castles while he sent messengers to learn the truth of the matter from Sinān himself. The messengers returned in 1195 with letters stating that the rumors were false and assuring Philip that he need have no worries.[312] The English chronicler William of Newburgh, by contrast, suggested that Sinān, not wanting to see "Richard, the illustrious king of the English" (*illustri Anglorum regi Ricardo*) falsely accused of Conrad's death, took it upon himself to send letters of exoneration to the princes of Europe. These letters, written in "Hebrew, Greek, and Latin," were presented to Philip in Paris.[313] In them, the Old Man explained that Richard had played no role in the assassination, and emphasized that any claims that the English king was responsible for hiring the Assassins were wholly false. Only then, William says, did Philip announce that he considered the king of England clear of any suspicion.[314]

This scene of the exchange of messengers and letters took place against the backdrop of peace negotiations in 1195. For as long as the French accused Richard of using the Assassins to kill the king of Jerusalem and plotting to kill Philip, a peace accord was impossible. Yet as the differing accounts of Rigord and William of Newburgh make clear, even in arranging for peace, the Anglo-French rivalries of the Third Crusade remained present. Rigord placed the initiative in Philip's hands, showing the king to be

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[312] Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 120–1.
[313] The language William of Newburgh employs here is reminiscent of the Biblical description of the sign that Pilate attached to the True Cross, which was also written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. See Luke 23:38, John 19:20.
[314] William of Newburgh, *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, RS, 4 vols. (London, 1884–1890), ii: 457–9 (hereafter William of Newburgh, *Historia*).

proactive in seeking the truth from the master of the Assassins. William, by contrast, portrayed the letters as a spontaneous gesture of goodwill from Sinān on behalf of Richard.[315] These negotiations also show the lasting political effects in western Europe of events in the Holy Land during the Third Crusade. Although the matter was resolved in 1195, the allegations against Richard had undermined his authority in England and on the Continent.[316] They had also bolstered Philip Augustus's cause and gave the French a chance to redeem themselves for their early departure from the crusade.

Epitaph: England and the Third Crusade in the Context of Richard's Death

Richard has long been criticized for spending only a few months of his ten-year-long reign in England. He left England on crusade only a few months after his coronation, was a prisoner in Germany, and then spent much of the rest of his life campaigning in France, where he was buried; his wife, Berengaria, was the only English queen to never set foot on English soil.[317] The modern memory of this absentee king has led scholars, as well as popular memory, to condemn Richard as negligent, particularly in relation to ruling England. In the nineteenth century, William Stubbs commented that Richard "was no Englishman that we should be concerned to defend him on national grounds."[318] More recently, Michael Markowski has asserted that Richard's "self-centered, puerile interests in personal adventures destroyed the chance for success of the

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[315] For further discussion of these two depictions, see John Gillingham, *Richard I*, 200–1, 295.
[316] See Gillingham, *Richard I*, 201.
[317] For scholarly criticisms of Richard, see, e.g., A. E. Dick Howard, *Magna Carta: Text and Commentary* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1964), 5.
[318] William Stubbs, *Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series*, ed. Arthur Hassall (London and New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1902), 316.

Third Crusade."[319]

In recent decades, however, historians—largely thanks to the work of John Gillingham—have begun to give greater consideration to Richard's relationship with England.[320] For Angevin authors of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, Richard's crusading legacy remained a key element of his career as England's king. Yet these same authors had to contend with the fact that Richard had ultimately fallen short in his goal to recapture Jerusalem from Saladin. Richard's near-contemporaries were therefore presented with a delicate balancing act, treading a line between celebrating their king's victories and downplaying his failures—no easy task when those failures were known throughout Christendom and the Islamic world.

On the frontis page of Cotton Faustina A VII, an early thirteenth-century manuscript now at the British Library, a scribe recorded the short verse epitaph reportedly carved on Richard's tomb at Fontevraud:

> This is written in gold, Golden King, your glory secure
> Noted all in gold of fitting material
> Your first glory was Sicily, Cyprus another,
> The dromond the third, the caravan the fourth, Jaffa the last.
> The Sicilians driven back, Cyprus cast down, the dromond sunk,
> The caravan captured, Jaffa held fast.[321]

This epitaph remembers the king of England's greatest conquests of the Third Crusade, against both Greeks (in Sicily and Cyprus) and Muslims (in Palestine). Of the five glories

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[319] Michael Markowski, "Richard Lionheart: Bad King, Bad Crusader?" *Journal of Medieval History* 23 (1997): 351–65, at 351.

[320] See Gillingham, *Richard I*, 1–14 and *passim*.

[321] BL Cotton MS Faustina A VII, f. 2r: "Epitaphium Regis Ricardi apud fontem ebraldi / Scribitur hoc auro, rex auree, Laus tuta tota. / Aurea. materiae conueniente nota / Laus tua p(ri)ma fuit. siculi. cyp(ru)s alt(er)a dromo; / Tertia. caruanna quarta suprema Jope. / Retrusi siculi. cypros pessundata. dromo; / Mersus. carvanna capta. retenta Jope."

that the author attributed to Richard, noticeably absent is Acre, which surrendered to the

crusaders in July 1191. Acre, however, presented a problematic legacy for Richard.

Although his arrival at the city was widely celebrated by the army, credit for the conquest

of Acre did not belong to Richard alone, but also to Philip Augustus. Moreover,

Richard's execution of some 2,700 Muslim prisoners from Acre's garrison was difficult

for even his most avid supporters to fully explain.[322] By contrast, credit for the victories

remembered in Richard's epitaph belonged to his leadership alone. The king's inability to

save Jerusalem, of course, did not bear mentioning.

Cotton Faustina A VII represents a very English remembrance of Richard and the

Third Crusade. The majority of the manuscript is taken up by a copy of the *Itinerarium*,

the celebrated chronicle of Richard's exploits on the Third Crusade written *c*. 1216–22,

based on Ambroise's *History of the Holy War* and often attributed to Richard de

Templo.[323] The pro-English bias of the author has long been recognized. The text of the

crusading chronicle is immediately followed in the same scribal hand by a short excerpt

from the early twelfth-century *Dialogi contra Iudaeos* by Petrus Alfonsi. Specifically, the

passage copied in the manuscript details the "Customs and Laws of the Saracens" (*Mores*

et leges Sarrecenorum).[324] Alfonsi, an Aragonese Jew who had converted to Christianity,

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[322] For a discussion of some of the various contemporary viewpoints about this events, see Phillips, *Holy Warriors*, 153. John Gillingham suggests that Richard's anger "was part of the standard repertory of kingship," and thus concludes that the king acted justly when he gave the order to kill the prisoners. See Gillingham, *Richard I*, 169.

[323] The *Itinerarium* was written by an Augustian canon named Richard, who is generally, although not certainly, identified as Richard de Templo. Tyerman, 'Richard (*fl*. 1216–1222)', *ODNB*.

[324] BL Cotton MS Faustina A VII, ff. 149v–156v. There is clearly at least one quire missing, as the text breaks off in mid-sentence, and resumes again with a different hand and text.

had moved to England during the reign of Henry I.[325] The final text in the manuscript is Bede's *De Locis Sanctis*, copied in a different but cotemporaneous scribal hand, and almost certainly included as part of the manuscript either originally or very soon after it was compiled.[326]

These texts suggest that the compilers of Cotton Faustina A VII turned to authoritative texts from England in order to describe the peoples and places that Richard and the English crusaders had encountered in 1191–2. Indeed, rather than using one of the many contemporary descriptions of Jerusalem that had been written in the century since the First Crusade, the compilers turned to Bede, the ultimate historical authority in England. The inclusion of texts about Muslims from the English transplant Petrus Alfonsi, as well as Bede's eighth-century description of Jerusalem, itself derived from a seventh-century description by the Irish monk Adomnan, grounded Faustina A VII thoroughly in an English literary culture, even as it celebrated Richard I's conquests in the Mediterranean. Indeed, the overwhelmingly pro-Ricardian, pro-English message of the manuscript was so evident to its late sixteenth-century owner, William Howards, that he drew a lion rampant—the symbol of both Richard and the kingdom of England—in the blank space below the king's epitaph.[327]

The English grammarian and poet Geoffrey of Vinsauf (*fl.* 1208–1213) also celebrated the close links between Richard, England, and the Third Crusade. Geoffrey's *Poetria Nova* was, in the words of Martin Camargo, "the single most successful textbook

[325] Charles Burnett, 'Alfonsi, Petrus (*fl.* 1106–1126)', *ODNB*.
[326] BL Cotton MS Faustina A VII, ff. 157r–160v.
[327] BL Cotton MS Faustina A VII, f. 2r.

on rhetorical composition written during the Middle Ages."[328] It consists of a series of

lessons on grammar and poetry, accompanied by practice passages illustrative of the

elements taught in each lesson, which students would copy into their notebooks. Two of

these practice passages were laments over the death of Richard I. Both function also as

laments for England.

"Queen of kingdoms while King Richard lives," Geoffrey writes, "England,

whose glory spreads afar a mighty name, you to whom is left the world's dominion...

Your king is the mirror in which, seeing yourself, you take pride." This is an important

rhetorical tool, for Geoffrey here equates king and kingdom. Thus Richard's glories

become England's glories, and England's greatness reflects the king's greatness. Through

Richard, England "almost attain[s] the height of the gods."[329] The death of Richard, the

sun, brings darkness to the kingdom: "Your whole being dies in his death; the death was

not his but yours."[330] Geoffrey then turns his address from England to God, asking why

the Lord would take away such a great man:

> If you recall, your own Joppa gives evidence for the king—alone he defended it,
> opposed by so many thousands. Acre, too, gives evidence—his power restored it
> to you. The enemies of the cross add their witness—all of them Richard, in life,
> inspired with such terror that he is still feared now he is dead.[331]

This passage, like Richard's epitaph recalls the king's achievements during the Third

Crusade. Significantly, Geoffrey directly links these accomplishments to England. Just as

Richard's enemies the world over continue to fear him even in death, so too is England's

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[328] Nearly 200 manuscripts of the *Poetria* from across Europe survive today. Martin Camargo, 'Vinsauf, Geoffrey of (*fl.* 1208–1213)', *ODNB*.

[329] Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova*, Revised Edition, trans. Margaret F. Nims, Medieval Sources in Translation (Toronto: PIMS, 2010), 29.

[330] Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova*, 31.

[331] Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova*, 31.

might recognized throughout the world. Richard's successes in the Holy Land ultimately belong to England, the kingdom favored by God. This lesson is important not only for its rhetorical equation of Richard with England, but also because the wide dissemination of the *Poetria Nova* guaranteed that generations of clerical students throughout Europe copied and recopied these lessons, inscribing Geoffrey's message into the wider public memory of the Third Crusade.

All four Angevin kings—Henry II, Henry the Young King, Richard I, and John—took the cross at least once in their lives. Each man had his own reasons for doing so, and each was judged by his contemporaries for his abilities to see those vows through. Henry II's crusading vows were intimately connected to the Becket Affair. Although the king sent countless payments of money and men to aid the Christians' cause in Palestine, his ultimate failure to go there himself led contemporary chroniclers to claim that the first Angevin king had doomed England to domestic unrest and threats from abroad. By contrast, his son Henry the Young King's unfulfilled crusading potential held a promise of a better future, if only the young king had survived long enough to fulfill his vows. Richard's crusading legacy is, unsurprisingly, the most famous, as he was the only member of his immediate family to actually lead an army to the Holy Land. As we have seen, the Third Crusade helped to cement the increasing political as well as cultural differences between England and France. Moreover, contemporary authors found ways to celebrate Richard's crusade conquests while downplaying his failures, particularly his failure to capture the holy city itself. In the process, Richard's time in the Mediterranean and the Levant became closely associated with his identity as king of England.

CHAPTER 3
Roman Britain and the Relics of Christ

English interest in the Holy Land, whether through crusading or otherwise, was intimately linked to the dynastic claims, grounded in historical memory, of the Angevin kings. As historians and hagiographers writing in the shadow of the Angevin court shaped a narrative of Angevin rule, they deliberately laid claim not only to the recent legacies of England's twelfth-century rulers and their relatives in Anjou and Jerusalem, but also to the imperial legacy of Rome. In particular, these writers reimagined legends about the Roman emperor Constantine the Great (r. 306–337) and his mother, Helena Augusta (d. 328/9), in ways that turned them into exemplary twelfth-century English monarchs.

As I argue in this chapter, this process of reimagining had two distinct phases. In the middle decades of the twelfth century, Anglo-Norman authors drew upon Helena's and Constantine's legacies in Britain to legitimize Henry II's right to rule England. By the beginning of the thirteenth century, in turn, Angevin depictions of Britain's fourth-century Roman rulers began to show influences from the memory of events surrounding the Third Crusade (in particular the Muslims' capture of the True Cross and Jerusalem in 1187) and of English participation in the crusading movement. While a Christian longing to protect the sacred sites and relics of the Holy Land from the Muslims was felt throughout Europe, in England that longing took the shape of a distinctive crusading ideology built upon the Angevins' appropriation of England's Romano-British past—a past to which the Angevin kings sought to connect themselves through genealogy and cultural inheritance.

Helena Augusta and the *Inventio Crucis*

While Angevin interest in Roman Britain took many forms, the legends about

Helena and Constantine proved especially adaptable to twelfth-century events. Little is

known about Helena's origins. Most sources for her life date from the late fourth century

onward, and her historic connection to Britain was tenuous at best. She was probably

born somewhere in Asia Minor, and may have been an innkeeper (*stabularia*) or a

prostitute before she became the wife (or, more likely, the consort) of the Roman tetrarch

Constantius Chlorus (r. 293–306). Their son, the future emperor Constantine the Great,

was born in Naissus (present-day Niš, Serbia) around 272. Constantius later separated

from Helena in 298 so that he could marry Theodora, the daughter of his senior emperor

Maximian.

It was through Constantius, however, that Helena's story first became linked with

the history of Roman Britain. Under the Tetrarchy, Constantius was responsible for ruling

the provinces of Gaul and Britannia. He waged campaigns against the Picts in northern

Britain, and died at York in 306. Constantine was subsequently proclaimed Augustus by

the Roman legion in York upon his father's death. Contemporary sources say nothing

about what Helena was doing or where she was from 298 to 306. Most likely she was in

Trier, only reuniting with her son after he had returned east from Britain. There is no

evidence that Helena herself ever set foot on the island.[332]

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[332] Jan Willem Drijvers, He*lena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of Her Finding of the True Cross* (Leiden and New York, 1992), 5–16, 21. Antonina Harbus, *Helena of Britain in Medieval Legend* (Cambridge, UK, 2002), 14; Marios Costambeys, "Helena (c. 248–328/9)," ODNB. On the possible dates of Constantine's birth, see David Potter, *Constantine the Emperor* (Oxford and New York, 2012), 318n14. See also Colin Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West: From the Beginning to 1600* (Oxford, 2005), 18, 39–40.

Constantine appointed his mother Augusta in 324, and from 326 until her death in 328/9, she oversaw the construction of new churches in the eastern Roman provinces on his behalf.[333] One of the locations for these building projects was the city of Aelia Capitolina, the Roman outpost built in the second century over the ruins of Jerusalem.[334] In the three centuries between Christ's death in 33 and Helena's arrival there in 326, the physical landscape of the city had been greatly transformed. Indeed, the biblical city of Jerusalem had all but vanished. The (Second) Temple had burned to the ground in 70, a casualty of Emperor Titus's attack on the city while putting down the great Jewish revolt.[335] While the Bar Kokhba revolt of 132–6 is not as well remembered as the revolt of 70, it resulted in Jerusalem's complete destruction: Hadrian had the entire city razed to the ground in 135.[336]

The Romans then built a new city, Aelia Capitolina, atop the ruins of the old Jerusalem. In the process, the sites of Christ's Passion and entombment were buried under rubble, re-graded, and partially turned into a quarry. A pagan temple dedicated to Venus was also built upon the site.[337] Golgotha/Calvary (site of the Crucifixion) and Christ's tomb (located nearby on land donated by Joseph of Arimathea) were therefore largely neglected, if not forgotten, when Emperor Constantine sent his aging mother and

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[333] Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, 21; Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 14; Costambeys, "Helena," *ODNB*; Morris, *Sepulchre of Christ*, 18, 39–40. Morris suggests that Helena's tour of the provinces probably happened in 326.
[334] Morris, *Sepulchre of Christ*, 5, 6, 18; Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, 5, 36.
[335] Morris, *Sepulchre of Christ*, 5; Michael Grant, *The Jews in the Roman World* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 201.
[336] As Colin Morris has noted, it is unclear whether Hadrian was reacting to the Jewish revolt, or whether the revolt was a response to the emperor's leveling of the city. Morris, *Sepulchre of Christ*, 5.
[337] Morris, *Sepulchre of Christ*, 6, 18.

Macarius, bishop of Aelia/Jerusalem (314–33), to supervise the construction of a number of churches around the city.[338]

It was in Aelia Capitolina that Helena, according to legend, aided either by the bishop Macarius or by a Jew named Judas, reportedly discovered the True Cross, lost for nearly three centuries.[339] In some versions of the story (the Judas Cyriacus or Quiriacus variants), Helena (without Macarius) instructed the local Jewish community to show her the location of Golgatha.[340] When the Jews refused to do so, Helena threatened them with prison and torture until at last one of them, named Judas, relented, explaining that his father had told him that the Jews had killed Jesus. Therefore, Judas's father had warned him, "this nation of Jews will not reign again but from henceforth the victory will belong to the worshippers of Christ."[341] After assuring Helena that his own Jewish ancestors had never condoned the behavior of their fellow Jews who crucified Christ, Judas showed her where to find the site of Jesus' death.[342] Soon the excavations revealed a cave tomb, along with three crosses and several iron nails.[343] Nearby they also came across a tablet

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[338] Biddle, *The Tomb of Christ*, 1, 56, 65.

[339] H. A. Drake, 'Eusebius on the True Cross', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36.1 (Jan., 1985): 1–22; Morris, *Sepulchre of Christ*, 17, 20–2; Susan Grace Larkin, 'Transitions in the Medieval Legends of Saint Helena," PhD Dissertation (Indiana University, 1995), 28–9; Costambeys, "Helena," *ODNB*.

[340] For a discussion of the Judas Cyriacus legend, see Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, 165–80. Drijvers includes a translation of a fifth- or sixth-century Syriac version of the story, pp. 165–171.

[341] BL Add. 14644, quoted by Drijvers, in *Helena Augusta*, 167. On the Judas legend, see also Anthony Bale, *Feeling Persecuted: Christians, Jews and Images of Violence in the Middle Ages* (London: Reaktion Books, 2010), 144.

[342] BL Add. 14644, quoted by Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, 167–9. The account of Judas's role in the *Inventio* was repeated by Gregory of Tours, *The History of the Franks*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (London and New York: Penguin, 1974), 90 (I.25), and became the primary version of the *Inventio crucis* legend available in the medieval West. See Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 22–3.

[343] Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ, 21.*

that in "Greek and Latin and Hebrew letters" read, "Jesus Nazarenus rex Judæorum" (Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews).[344]

According to the fifth-century *Inventio* legend, Helena and Macarius had the pieces brought to the bedside of a sick woman. Macarius placed each cross in its turn next to the woman; when the first two touched her, nothing happened, but at the touch of the third cross, the woman was miraculously healed.[345] In the Judas version of the tale, Helena and Judas placed the True Cross upon a corpse, which then came back to life.[346] By these tests, Helena and her companions thereby affirmed the discovery of the True Cross and publicly demonstrated its curative powers. In thanks for her prayers being answered, Helena

> with royal ambition constructed a wonderful temple on that place in which she had discovered the cross. The nails, also, by which the Lord's body had been fixed [to the cross], she brought to her son [Constantine]. From some of these he constructed a bridle that he might use in war; and from the others he is said to have armed himself with a helmet no less apt for use in battle. Indeed part of that healing wood she bore to her son, but part, preserved in silver reliquaries, she left in that place, which even now is preserved with attentive veneration as a memorial.[347]

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[344] Pontius Pilate had labeled Christ's cross with these words. Rufinus, "Eusebius Caesariensis secundum translationem quam fecit Rufinus," ed. Theodore Mommsen, in *Eusebius Werke*, 9 vols. (Liepzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1903) ii: bk. 10.7 (first quote): "Graecis et Latinis atque Hebraeicis litteris." Cf. John 19:19–20, Matthew 27:37, Mark 15:26, Luke, 23:38. Ambrose of Milan emphasized that Helena and her companions were not worshipping the wood of the cross, "because that is the error of the pagans" (*quia hic gentilis est error*), but rather worshipping the one whom the words on the tablet represented (i.e., Christ/God), thereby turning the tale into a lesson about proper Christian worship. Ambrose, *De Obitu Theodosii*, CSEL 73 (O. Faller, 1955), 46; Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ*, 32.

[345] Rufinus, *"Eusebius Caesariensis,"* 10.7–8.

[346] BL Add. 14644, quoted by Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, 169; Larkin, "Transitions," 45.

[347] Rufinus, *"Eusebius Caesariensis,"* 10.8: "Sic evidenti indicio regina voti compos effecta templum mirificum in eo loco, in quo crucem reppererat, regia ambitione construxit. Clavos quoque, quibus corpus dominicum fuerat adfixum, portat ad filium. Ex quibus ille frenos conposuit, quibus uteretur ad bellum, et ex aliis galeam nihilominus belli usibus aptam fertur armasse. Ligni vero ipsius salutaris partem detulit filio, partem vero thecis argenteis conditam dereliquit in loco, quae etiam nunc ad memorian sollicita veneratione servatur." Helena also oversaw the construction of churches in Bethlehem and on the Mount of Olives. Sozomen, "Historia Ecclesiastica," ed. J. Bidez and G. C. Hansen, *Sozomenus: Kirchengestchichte* [*Die griechischen christlichen Schriftseller*] 50 (Berlin, 1960), 2.2.1.

After she had done this, Helena went on to provide a meal for the virgins who had been consecrated to God, serving them with her own hands. Thus, Rufinus wrote, "the Queen of the world and mother of the empire regarded herself the servant of the servants of Christ."[348] The miracles of the Cross also persuaded Judas to convert to Christianity. He took the name Cyriacus (Quiriacus), and Helena made him bishop of Jerusalem.[349]

The Origins of "Helena of Britain"

It was through her consort Constantius Chlorus and her son Constantine that Helena's story first became linked with the history of Roman Britain. In England, Constantine's brief association with York left a particularly enduring legacy. Antonina Harbus identifies the seventh-century Anglo-Saxon bishop Aldhelm (d. 709) as the first author to claim that Helena gave birth to Constantine in Britain.[350] This invented story of the emperor's British birth took root in the tenth century and gained further strength in the early twelfth.[351] Implied in these tales, of course, was the understanding that Helena was living in Britain when she gave birth to her son. Anglo-Saxon litanies of the saints included Helena alongside the Anglo-Saxon queens Bathildis (d. 680), Sexburgha (c. 635–99), and Osith (c. 700) in their lists of holy women, while Cynewulf celebrated Helena's life in his eighth-century Old English poem *Elene*.[352]

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[348] Rufinus, *"Eusebius Caesariensis,"* 10.8: "Regina orbis ac mater imperii, famularum Christi se famulam deputaret." Cf. Sozomen, "Historia Ecclesiastica," 2.2.1.
[349] Larkin, "Transitions," 45.
[350] Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 38.
[351] Larkin, "Transitions," 60–1, 65; Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 3, 39–40.
[352] On the Anglo-Saxon cult of the Cross and literature celebrating Helena, see Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 30–7.

The invented story of Constantine's British birth was repeated in the Old English version of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* from c. 890, and was generally accepted from the tenth century onward.[353] There were a number of Anglo-Saxon churches dedicated to Helena, and others that claimed fragments of the True Cross as part of their relic collections.[354] A genealogy of the Welsh chieftain Owain Dyfed from c. 954 traced his descent "from Constantine the Great, from Constantius and Helen Luitdauc, who travelled from Britain as far as Jerusalem seeking the cross of Christ and carried it with her from there as far as Constantinople where it is today."[355] In the Welsh and Anglo-Saxon traditions, she became the daughter of King Coel of Colchester (memorialized in nursery rhymes as 'Old King Cole'). Her mythical origins as a British princess thereby complimented her historical promotion to the rank of Augusta.[356]

In the first half of the twelfth century, as Helena's legend grew in popularity, she and her son Constantine became model British rulers in the works of several Anglo-Norman authors who wrote during the reigns of Henry I and Stephen. William of Malmesbury (*c.* 1090–*c.* 1142) wrote his *Gesta Regum Anglorum* around 1125/6, revising it until 1134/5; Henry of Huntingdon (*c.* 1088–*c.* 1157) wrote and revised his *Historia Anglorum* between 1130 and 1154, the year of Henry II's ascension to the throne; and Geoffrey of Monmouth (d. 1154/5) composed his *Historia Regum Britanniae* from 1136–

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[353] Harbus notes that Bede himself did not suggest that Helena and Constantine were British. Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 3, 39–40.
[354] Larkin, "Transitions," 60–1, 65.
[355] BL MS Harley 3859, quoted by Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 53.
[356] Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 1.

8.[357] Based on manuscript survivals, these works—especially the *Historia Regum Britanniae*—were the bestsellers of their day. Forty-five manuscripts of Henry's *Historia Anglorum* survive, almost all from England or former Angevin territories, at least eight of which were copied in the Angevin period. Perhaps as many as a third of the 217 extant manuscripts of Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britanniae* date from the lifetimes of Henry II and Richard I.[358] Importantly, each of them was concerned with explaining the history of their people and their leaders, and how that history connected to the kingdom of England.

There was some competition between the three men, as is evident in Geoffrey's injunction at the end of his book for William and Henry. Those two authors, he argues, should write about the Saxon kings, and leave the matter of the British for himself.[359] All of these historians also had connections to members of the Anglo-Norman court. William was inspired to write after Henry II's mother, Matilda, visited Malmesbury. Geoffrey dedicated his history to Henry I's bastard son (Henry II's uncle) Robert, earl of Gloucester, and to Robert Waleran de Beaumont, count of Meulan, who was later a leader in the Second Crusade. Henry of Huntingdon, for his part, visited Rome with

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[357] Although these authors were writing at the same time, it is difficult to know just how much influence each had upon the others, since all three revised their texts multiple times. Geoffrey of Monmouth, at least, made use of an early recension of Henry of Huntingdon's history, while Henry in turn then used Geoffrey's material in later revisions of his own work. See Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 67.

[358] Of the twenty-seven extant manuscripts of William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum*, six date to the twelfth century and twelve to the thirteenth; forty-five copies of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* survive, with 13 (or 17) from the twelfth century and 7 (or 8) from the thirteenth. By contrast, 215 manuscripts of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* survive today, of which 61 (or 79) are from the twelfth century, and thirty-five from the thirteenth. Hans-Werner Goetz, *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewußtsein im hohen Mittelalter* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1999), 129; Michael D. Reeve (ed.), Introduction to Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Geoffrey of Monmouth: The History of the Kings of Britain*, ed. Michael D. Reeve, Arthurian Studies LXIX (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007), vii; D. E. Greenway, "Henry (*c*.1088–*c*.1157)," *ODNB*; Thomas Arnold (ed.), Introduction to Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum: The History of the English, by Henry, archdeacon of Huntingdon, from A.C. 55 to A.D. 1154, in eight books*, ed. Thomas Arnold (London: Longman & Co., 1879), xxxvii–xxxviii.

[359] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 281.

Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury, whose household included Thomas Becket and John of Salisbury.[360] Whatever their differences and rivalries, William of Malmesbury, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Henry of Huntingdon together solidified the association of Helena and Constantine with Britain.

William of Malmesbury noted that Constantius, at his death, left behind as his heir Constantine, his son by Helena. Although William does not explicitly link Helena to Britain, the context of the passage, which describes how the Romans came to the island, implies as much. William also twice mentions the association of Helena with the *Inventio crucis*.[361] Henry of Huntingdon was more explicit about Helena's origins, calling her "the daughter of the British king from Colchester, whose name was Coel."[362] The placement of Helena and Constantine in Henry's *Historia Anglorum* is also noteworthy: the passages directly follow Henry's description of the martyrdom of Saint Alban, which occurred at approximately the same time as the beginning of Constantius's political ascent.[363]

Alban, a citizen of Verulamium (later St Albans) in Britain, was a victim of Diocletian's persecution of Christians *c*. 303, and the monastic community at St Albans Abbey actively promoted his cult during Henry II's reign. Pope Adrian IV (Nicholas Breakspear, r. 1154–9), the only English pope, recognized the institution as "the premier

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[360] R. M. Thomson, "Malmesbury, William of (*b. c.*1090, *d.* in or after 1142)," *ODNB*; J. C. Crick, "Monmouth, Geoffrey of (*d.* 1154/5)," *ODNB*; Greenway, "Henry (*c.*1088–*c.*1157)," *ODNB*; David Crouch, "Waleran, count of Meulan and earl of Worcester (1104–1166)," *ODNB*. See also Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 67.

[361] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. Thomas Duffy Hardy, 2 vols. (London: Sumptibus Societas, 1840), i: 5–6; iv: 375, 385.

[362] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. Arnold, 29. See also Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 66.

[363] Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* has a similar organization.

abbey of England," while the remains of Alban's companions were discovered in nearby Redbourn in 1178 and translated to St Albans.[364] Henry of Huntingdon therefore juxtaposed the story of England's first martyr with his history of the deeds of a Christianized Helena and her son Constantine, reinforcing in the process their historical connections to Britain.

Henry of Huntingdon called Constantine "the flower of Britain" (*flos Brittannie*) because he was "British by birth and by his native land: neither before him nor after did an equal come from Britain."[365] He described Helena, "the noble alumna of Britain," as a good British ruler who built fortified walls around London and Colchester. "But above all the other many things," Henry added, "she restored Jerusalem, and having cleansed it of idols, she adorned numerous basilicas."[366] Helena, in Henry's mind, had left a lasting imprint of herself upon the physical and spiritual landscape of both western and eastern kingdoms, and her contributions were still visible in Henry's day. By referring to Helena as Britain's 'noble alumna', moreover, Henry emphasized Britain's (and, by extension, England's) importance in establishing this legacy.

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[364] Martin Biddle, "Alban (*d. c.*303?)," *ODNB*. Nicholas Breakspear's family has close ties to St. Alban's, and his father became a monk there. See Jane E. Sayers, "Adrian IV (*d.* 1159)," *ODNB*. Geoffrey of Monmouth also placed the history of Alban's martyrdom just before his narrative about Coel, Helena, and Constantine, but mentioned the saint only briefly. Alban and his fellow martyrs Julius and Aaron, from Caerleon, Geoffrey added, "together without delay flew to Jerusalem's distinguished gates with the trophy of martyrdom." Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 95: "ad egregias Ierusalem portas absque cunctamine cum martyrii trophaeo conuolauerunt."

[365] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum: The History of the English People*, ed. Diana Greenway, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 1996), 60: "Britannicus genere et patria: ante quem nec post similis egressus est de Brittannia."

[366] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia*, ed. Greenway, 62: "Helena uero Britannie nobilis alumpna, Lundoniam muro quod adhuc superest cinxisse fertur, et Colecestriam menibus adornasse. Sed et inter alia multa Ierosolim instaurauit, mundatamque idolis, basilicis pluribus adornauit." See also Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 75.

As Antonina Harbus points out, Henry of Huntingdon did not mention Helena's discovery of the True Cross, being more focused on his "nationalistic agenda." Rather, Harbus suggests, "the sacred theme is divorced" from Henry's portrayal of British kingship.[367] This statement echoes Nancy Partner's assessment that Henry focused on secular, rather than ecclesiastical, themes and events.[368] Susan Grace Larkin has pushed this point farther, arguing that the attempts by the twelfth-century Church to assert its authority over secular lords led authors of that period to downplay Helena's religious life because it posed a threat to Church authority.[369] This argument is not wholly convincing. While it is true that the Anglo-Norman chroniclers did not go into great depth about Helena's connection to the *Inventio crucis* legend, we should not take this silence as evidence that people in twelfth-century England did not know or care about Helena's spiritual accomplishments. Henry's phrasing very clearly places Helena's contributions to the fortification of Britain (the task of a good ruler) in partnership with her restoration of the holy sites in Jerusalem (the task of a good Christian). Henry of Huntingdon's emphasis on Helena's British origins does not completely sever her from her religious reputation; rather, it compliments it. Helena was, for Henry, the very model of a good (English) ruler, contributing to the welfare and continuance of both the nation and Christianity.

Geoffrey of Monmouth (d. 1154/5), in turn, integrated Helena's legend into the larger narrative of British history, while also setting her up as the epitome of noble

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[367] Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 78, see also 49–51. Cf. Larkin, "Transitions," 16.
[368] Nancy F. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 25.
[369] Larkin, "Transitions," 95, 97.

feminine accomplishment. Helena's beauty, he wrote, "surpassed the girls of the land, nor could another be found anywhere who might be judged more skilled than her in musical instruments or in the liberal arts."[370] Geoffrey likely sought to create parallels between Helena and Henry II's mother, Matilda (1102–1167). Fiona Tolhurst has suggested that Geoffrey was here presenting Helena as a feminine figure who, like Matilda, had been trained to govern the kingdom.[371] Both women, moreover, were rightful heirs to the throne of England, but neither was able to rule in her own right—Constantius was crowned in Helena's place, while Stephen ruled England instead of Matilda.[372]

Like Matilda, who held the title of Holy Roman empress, Helena also served as the conduit through whom Britain's future Roman rulers could make their claims upon the kingdom.[373] According to Geoffrey, for example, Helena's three uncles, Loelinus, Trahern, and Marius, accompanied Constantine to Rome, where, after obtaining "absolute rule over the whole world," Constantine promoted them to the rank of senator.[374] In the following years, Britain was torn by war between Octavius, duke of the Gewissei, and

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[370] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 97: "Pulchritudo eius prouinciales puellas superabat, nec uspiam reperiebatur altera quae in musicis instrumentis siue in liberalibus artibus doctor illa censeretur"; Fiona Tolhurst, *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Translation of Female Kingship*, Arthurian and Courtly Cultures (New York, 2013), 118–9; Fiona Tolhurst, *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Feminist Origins of the Arthurian Legend*, Arthurian and Courtly Studies (New York, 2012), 122; Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 3, 79.

[371] Fiona Tolhurst, *Feminist Origins*, 2 (quote), 122; and Tolhurst, *Female Kingship*, 118–9, 127. See also Larkin, 'Transitions', 112.

[372] Tolhurst argues that Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and his *Vita Merlini* (Life of Merlin) were influenced largely by the author's support of Matilda in her fight against her cousin Stephen of Blois for control of England. As Tolhurst effectively demonstrates through her "feminist-historicist reading" of his works, Geoffrey's interest in promoting Matilda's claims led him to emphasize the political power and learning of the historical and semi-historical women about whom he wrote. Tolhurst takes this argument farther in her second book, arguing that Geoffrey's feminist approach to history led him to create and promote historical models of female kingship over Britain. Fiona Tolhurst, *Feminist Origins*, 2 (quote); Tolhurst, *Female Kingship*, 119, 127.

[373] See, e.g., Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 99, 101, 105. See also Tolhurst, *Female Kingship*, 108, 120–1; Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 1, 4.

[374] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 99: "monarchium totius mundi optinuit."

Trahern's Roman armies. Octavius at last triumphed, but, having only one daughter, was faced with a question of royal succession. The man he ultimately selected to marry his daughter was Helena's cousin, Maximianus. An Angevin-era list of the kings of Britain and England up through John lists him as "Maximus son of Leoninus the uncle of Helena."[375] Indeed, Geoffrey stresses that Octavius and his advisors chose Maximianus to rule precisely because he could claim Britain through both his imperial connections and his British descent from Helena's family.[376] In Geoffrey of Monmouth's version of the legend, therefore, Helena's importance lay not so much in her own deeds, but rather in her role as unifier of Roman imperial and British royal power. She reprised this role later in the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, when Geoffrey turned her into an ancestor of King Arthur—a topic I shall discuss in the next chapter.

Helena of Britain in the *Roman de Brut*

Not long after Henry II inherited the English throne in 1154, the Jersey poet and historian Wace (*c*. 1100/10–1174/83) completed a translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's history from Latin into Anglo-Norman. Wace's *Roman de Brut*, written in 1155, drew primarily from Geoffrey's text, although Wace also incorporated other oral and written traditions into the narrative.[377] Wace was known at Henry's court: the king commissioned him to write the first vernacular history of the Norman rulers (the *Roman de Rou*) in 1160 and granted him a prebend in Rouen *c*. 1165–1169, although the poet fell out of favor a

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[375] BL Cotton MS Julius A XI, f. 26v: "Maximus filius leonini auunculi helene."
[376] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 99, 101, 105: "ex genere imperatorum et ex origine Britonum ius in Britanniam habere" (101); "ex genere Romanorum et ex regali prosapia Britonum creatum" (105). See also Fiona Tolhurst, *Female Kingship*, 108, 120–1.
[377] Jean Blacker, "Wace (*b*. after 1100, *d*. 1174x83)," *ODNB*.

few years later.[378] The *Roman de Brut* shows Wace's early response to the rise of

Angevin dynastic power in England.

Following Geoffrey, Wace's portrayal of Helena centered around her identity as

the sole heir of her father Coel, whom the poet called the king of England (*Engleterre*).[379]

Wace drew parallels between Helena and Matilda, and by extension between Constantine

and Henry II. Matilda, as the sole heir of Henry I, provided Henry II with his claim to the

English crown.[380] Indeed, Matilda regularly broadcast her right to rule through the use of

the title "Matildis imperatrix Henrici regis filia" (Empress Matilda, daughter of King

Henry [I]), while her son regularly referred to himself as Henry fitzEmpress.[381]

Constantine's right to rule Britain similarly derived from his mother, who also bore the

title of Empress (Augusta). The question of legitimate rule was integral for Henry II, who

devoted great amounts of energy to establishing both the legality and the stability of his

new dynasty.[382] Wace therefore presented Constantine as the just and rightfully elected

ruler of Britain. After his "barons" (*barnage*) and "knights" (*chevaliers*) proclaimed him

king (i.e. emperor), Wace explained, Constantine ruled wisely, upholding justice

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[378] By the 1170s the monarch's patronage favored the poet Benoît de Ste Maure over Wace. Urbanksi, *Writing History,* 83–147, at 83; Blacker, "Wace," *ODNB*.

[379] Wace, *Wace's Roman de Brut: A History of the British*, ed. Judith Weiss, Exeter Medieval English Texts and Studies (Exeter, UK: University of Exeter Press, 1999), 142.

[380] Wace's successor in royal favor, Benoît de Ste Maure, similarly emphasized that Matilda's position as Henry I's sole heir gave Henry II his right to the English throne. See Urbanksi, *Writing History*, 184–5.

[381] Urbanksi, *Writing History*, 79–80.

[382] Urbanksi, *Writing History*, 387–1, esp. 401. For a discussion of how the Norman historian Dudo of St Quentin used Constantine as a model of legitimate rule for the Normans, see Benjamin Pohl, '*Translatio imperii Constantini ad Normannos*: Constantine the Great as a possible model for the depiction of Rollo in Dudo of St. Quentin's *Historia Normannorum*', *Millennium: Yearbook on the Culture and History of the First Millennium* 9 (2012): 297–339, esp. 306, 311, 313. See also Benjamin Pohl, 'Constantine and the Normans: Legitimising myths of Roman imperial heritage in (Anglo) Norman historiography, *c*.1000–1154', P*roceedings of the Conference Figures of History: The Exemplary Past in Nordic, Norman and German Historiography c. 1050–1200*, ed. Sigbjørn Sønnesyn (2015), forthcoming.

throughout his lands.[383] Constantine thus became the model of legitimate succession, through the female line, to the British/English throne.

Wace's Helena also functioned as a mirror for Henry's queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine. According to Layamon, an English monk who some fifty years later translated Wace's *Roman de Brut* into early Middle English, Wace dedicated his *Roman de Brut* to "Eleanor, who was Henry the high king's queen."[384] There is no reason to disbelieve that Eleanor, a famous patron of the arts, at least would have been familiar with the poem. Helena's name, generally rendered in Old French as Heléne or Eleine, sounded similar to the Provençal name Aliénor. As Geoffrey of Monmouth had done, Wace emphasized Helena's learning and other accomplishments. Like Eleanor, Helena was well lettered, wealthy, and esteemed for her beauty. Indeed, the poet suggested that Constantius was a lucky man for marrying Coel's daughter, for no woman of that time was her equal in worthiness or intelligence.[385]

Just as Helena had supposedly inherited Britain from her father Coel, moreover, so had Eleanor inherited Aquitaine from her father, Duke William X. Eleanor had even been to Jerusalem for eleven months in 1148–9, although the visit never granted her the same reputation for piety that Helena had achieved. Eleanor and Henry II were married in 1152, and in February 1155—the same year that Wace completed the *Roman de Brut*—Eleanor gave birth to their son Henry, named after his father the king. It is tempting to think that Eleanor and Henry II would have recognized themselves in Wace's

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[383] Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed, Weiss, 143–4, at 143.
[384] Layamon, *Brut*, ed. Frederic Madden, 3 vols. (London, 1847), i: 3: "Aelienor þe wes Henries quene; / þes heȝes kinges."
[385] Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 142. See also Tolhurst, *Female Kingship*, 186.

descriptions of the heiress Helena's marriage to the great warrior-emperor Constantius and the subsequent birth of their son Constantine. The similarities would likely not have been lost on contemporary readers.

Wace's *Roman de Brut* reflects the Angevins' reception of the Helena legend in the first years of their dynasty. Coupled with the many Angevin copies of Geoffrey of Monmouth's popular history, the *Roman de Brut* serves as a reminder that the Angevin rulers and members of their court took an active interest in patronizing histories about Roman Britain and its rulers. Helena and Constantine were among the most prominent and celebrated figures in these histories. Importantly, where Geoffrey of Monmouth and Henry of Huntingdon had left Helena's discovery of the True Cross out of their histories, Wace restored it. As Fiona Tolhurst has observed, Wace gives Helena "a place in Christian history that she does not possess" in Geoffrey of Monmouth's text.[386] After Constantine became emperor, Wace wrote, his "good mother, Helena, traveled to Jerusalem."[387] Wace focused on the Judas version of the story, describing how Helena had demanded that the Jews reveal to her the place where Christ had died. He noted how one of the Jews showed her the site, and concluded by stating simply that Helena thus found the Cross, "which had long been concealed."[388]

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[386] Tolhurst, *Female Kingship*, 185.
[387] Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 144.
[388] Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 144: "Qui lonc tans ot esté celée." On iconography of Judas and his role in the *Inventio crucis* story, see Sara Lipton, *Dark Mirror: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Semitic Iconography* (New York, 2014), 86–90.

Relics of the True Cross

On the whole, Wace and the other Anglo-Norman historians showed only a limited interest in Helena and Constantine's activities in the Holy Land. Indeed, up through the middle of the twelfth century, England had played—to quote Christopher Tyerman—only a "minimal and peripheral" role in the crusades, with the greatest English military success occurring at the capture of Lisbon in 1147, rather than in Jerusalem.[389] The growing popularity of the crusading movement meant that by the 1130s English authors were devoting more attention to affairs in the Holy Land, but Jerusalem still played a background role in English narratives about Helena and Constantine.[390]

Contemporary events in the Holy Land, however, brought a new sense of relevance to legends about Helena's and Constantine's actions in Jerusalem. On July 4, 1187, Ayyubid Muslim forces soundly defeated the Christian army at the Horns of Hattin in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. Guy of Lusignan, king of Jerusalem (r. 1186–92), was taken captive, along with Reginald of Chatillon, William III of Montferrat, and Humphrey IV of Toron. The Muslim army also seized a fragment of the True Cross— famously discovered by the First Crusaders after their capture of Jerusalem but before the battle of Ascalon in 1099—from the Franks (see Appendix, Figure 1).[391] Saladin subsequently sent the Cross on to Damascus with the prisoners. Word of the defeat spread rapidly throughout Europe, ultimately spurring some—including Richard Plantagenet, count of Poitou and future king of England—to take crusader's vows.

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[389] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 15.
[390] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 223, 25, 32.
[391] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 331; Eddé, *Saladin*, 210–1; Jay Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven: The First Crusade and the Quest for Apocalypse* (New York, 2011), 306, 308–9.

The True Cross had been an important Christian relic since Helena's legendary

fourth-century discovery of it, but it had acquired particular importance after the crusader

capture of Jerusalem in 1099, and had gradually replaced the Holy Sepulchre as the focal

point of crusader devotion over the course of the twelfth century. Sylvia Schein points to

the growing interest in Christocentric relics as part of "the broader twelfth-century

spiritual interest in Christ's humanity and the idea of *Imitatio Christi*."[392] Islamic sources

similarly understood the Cross's importance. The Arab historian Ibn al-Athīr (1160–

1233) wrote that the capture of the Cross represented one of the "greatest misfortunes"

suffered by the Frankish army, while the Persian scholar Imad al-Din (1125–1201) noted

that "In their [the Christians'] eyes, its capture was more important than the loss of the

king [of Jerusalem]; it was the worst thing that happened to them on the field of

battle."[393] Word of this defeat spread rapidly throughout Christendom. From one end of

Europe to the other, Christians lamented the loss of the True Cross, seeing it as

representative of the larger threat hanging over Jerusalem and the Holy Land. The French

chronicler Rigord claimed that the Cross's capture caused children born that year to have

fewer teeth; in Rome Pope Urban III reportedly died of shock upon hearing the news.[394]

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[392] Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 83.
[393] Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle*, 323 (first quote); Cf. Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes*, trans. Jon Rothschild (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), 192; Imad al-Din, quoted in Jonathan Phillips, *Holy Warriors*, 130 (second quote).
[394] Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 82–3: "Et nota quod ab eodem anno Domini quando crux Dominica in transmarinis partibus eodem Saladino capta fuit, infantes qui ab eo tempore nati sunt, non habent nisi xx duos dentes aut tantum xx, cum antea xxx aut xxx duos habere consueverant." See also Eddé, *Saladin*, 212; Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 109.

After the Muslims captured the True Cross at Hattin in 1187, a call went out across Christendom to rescue it and restore it to its rightful home in Jerusalem.[395] Christians could not suffer for the very wood sanctified by Christ's dying body to now be defiled by its Muslim captors. While Christians everywhere longed to free the True Cross and Jerusalem, England's Angevin rulers believed that the relic and the holy city were specifically part of their own family's dynastic heritage. Henry II's grandfather, Fulk V of Anjou, had visited the Holy Land in 1120 and in 1129, and he donated a fragment of the True Cross to the monastery of Saint-Laud in Angers. Henry later provided a new reliquary case for it.[396] This may very well have looked like a True Cross reliquary made *c*. 1180 in Limoges, a city that had been brought under Angevin control by Eleanor of Aquitaine's marriage to Henry II (Figure 2).[397]

On September 14, 1131—the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross—Fulk was crowned King Fulk I of Jerusalem at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, rebuilt on the site of Constantine's original church. Before this, Jerusalem's Frankish kings had been crowned on Christmas day in Bethlehem.[398] The coronation ceremony for Fulk and his second wife, Melisende, thus began a new tradition in the Holy Land, one that linked an Angevin ruler of Jerusalem to the True Cross and the Holy Sepulchre in both ritual and

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[395] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 514.
[396] Paul, *To Follow in their Footsteps*, 117, 126, 216–7; Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 84; Jaroslav Folda, *Crusader Art: The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1099–1291* (Burlington, VT, 2008), 71.
[397] Henry and Eleanor's sons Henry the Younger and Richard both relied on Limoges and the Limousin region more broadly to help support their rebellions against their father. See Bernadette Barrière, "The Limousin and Limoges in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," in *Enamels of Limoges: 1100–1350*, ed. John Philip O'Neill (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996: 22–8, at 27–8. The cross is now part of the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Many of the famous Becket reliquaries, like that now in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, were also made in Limoges.
[398] Folda, *Crusader Art*, 31.

space.[399] Saladin's capture of the Cross in 1187 and the fall of Jerusalem later that year, together with the subsequent Angevin participation in the Third Crusade, led within England to increased interest in the stories of Helena's and Constantine's activities in the Holy Land. The Angevin kings had a stake in the fate of the relic—and, more broadly, the fate of Jerusalem—not just because they were Christians, but also because they believed, as Angevins and as Englishmen, that protecting the True Cross and the holy city was part of their royal prerogative inherited from Helena and Constantine as well as from Fulk.

The chronicler Roger of Howden dwelt on the Angevin kings' relationship to Fulk V of Anjou in both his *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi* and his *Chronica*. As we saw in Chapter Two, Roger described the arrival of Heraclius, the patriarch of Jerusalem, who came to England in 1185 to request military aid for the Holy Land from Henry II and his court. In his description of the patriarch's plea, Roger inserted a reminder that England's kings were directly related to the royal families of both England and Jerusalem. Roger (or his scribe) mistakenly wrote that Fulk was the brother (rather than the father) of Geoffrey Plantagenet, thus collapsing two generations into one. Geoffrey, in turn, "begot Henry [II] king of England, from she who was the empress of Rome [Matilda], daughter of King Henry [I] the elder, son of William the Bastard, who subdued England and conquered it."[400] Then, just in case his descriptions of these connections had not been clear enough, Roger began his next paragraph with a reference "to this Henry, the son of Matilda the

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[399] The Angevin kings of England were descended from Fulk by his first marriage to Ermengarde of Maine (d. 1126).
[400] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 331. Cf. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 299.

empress, the son of Geoffrey the brother [*sic*] of Fulk the king of Jerusalem."[401] Roger's

account of Jerusalem's patriarch beseeching England's king for aid thus contained this

repeated reminder that the Angevin royal family was heir (in theory, if not always in

reality) to England and Rome through Henry I and his daughter Matilda, and to Jerusalem

through the Angevin counts Geoffrey and Fulk. These statements neatly parallel the

Angevin interest in Helena and Constantine, whose British legends helped to reinforce

Angevin claims to the triad of England, Rome, and Jerusalem. It was no coincidence that

Roger chose to insert this reminder of these familial connections into his narrative about

Heraclius's journey to seek the aid of a Western prince to come to Jerusalem's aid. The

overall effect was to present the current Angevin king (Henry II or his son, Richard I) as

the true heir to, and future liberator of, Jerusalem.

Helena and Jerusalem in Layamon's *Brut*

Roger wrote in the early 1190s, simultaneous with the events of the Third

Crusade. A decade or so after the crusade, a new group of English writers further sought

to link Helena's and Constantine's British stories to their spiritual and physical

accomplishments in Jerusalem. The monk Layamon, writing in Ernley (modern Arley

Kings) near Worcester around the beginning of the thirteenth century, embellished upon

Helena's achievements in the Near East in his *Brut*, an early Middle English translation

of Wace's *Roman de Brut*.[402] Layamon's *Brut* was more than a simple translation,

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[401] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 331. Cf. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 299.
[402] Scholars debate the dating of Layamon's text, with most estimates concluding it was written in the early thirteenth century, but possibly any time between 1180 and 1224. E. G. Stanley, "Layamon (*fl.* 13th cent.),"

however. The poem had Wace's *Roman de Brut* as its core, but greatly expanded upon Wace's text.[403] The author himself claimed that his sources were Wace's book, along with "the English book that Saint Bede made" (probably the Old English translation of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*) and the works of saints "Albin" and "Austin."[404] Françoise Le Saux has demonstrated that Layamon also drew on French and Welsh traditions, although his focus remained English.[405] Layamon's *Brut* is, moreover, "the earliest existing vernacular account of the British Helena legend."[406] In the space of about fifty years, Helena's history (and the British histories more broadly) had been translated from Geoffrey of Monmouth's Latin into Wace's Anglo-Norman, and then into Layamon's English. As a result, the stories of Roman Britain were made accessible for an ever-increasing audience during the Angevin period.

In Layamon's rendition of British history, Helena's relationship with Jerusalem became much more important than it had been in the *Brut's* sources. Indeed, Layamon repeatedly emphasized that Helena ruled both Britain (after Coel's death) and Jerusalem. Where Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace had introduced her simply as King Coel's daughter, Layamon wrote, "The maid was called Helena; / subsequently she was queen /

in the land of Jerusalem, / to the joy of the people."[407] But Layamon reminded his

audience that Helena also "was this land's [i.e. Britain's] queen… / she descended from

Britons."[408] When Layamon's narrative reached Helena's arrival in Jerusalem in 326, he

praised her as "the lady Helena, / the holy queen."[409] This statement served as a reminder

to Layamon's audience that Helena's influence extended over both the secular and

spiritual realms.[410]

Layamon then elaborated on Wace's version of the Jerusalem story. He described

how Helena sought the assistance of the Jews, asking their help to locate the Cross. In

this version, rather than frightening the Jews with threats of prison, Helena simply

offered them money, and they brought the Cross to her.[411] This version of the story

reflects the stereotypes about greedy Jews that were developing in England (and in

Europe more broadly) during the late twelfth and early thirteenth century—a topic that I

will explore in greater depth in Chapter Five.[412] Helena, in Layamon's retelling, took

advantage of this greed in order to find the Cross. Then, Layamon wrote, she was glad,

"as she never was before in her life," and settled in Jerusalem, living near the Cross for

many years.[413] Thus the British Helena of Layamon's *Brut* ended her life as the queen of

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[407] Layamon, *Brut*, ii: 30: "Þ[e] mæide hehte Elene / seoððen heo wes quene / i þan londe of Jeruſalem / leoden to bliſſen." See also Tolhurst, *Female Kingship*, 239–40.

[408] Layamon, *Brut*, ii: 36: "Elene; / wæs þiſſes londes quene… / icomen heo wes of Brutten."

[409] Layamon, *Brut*, ii: 40: "þa læuedi Ælene; þa halie quene.*"*

[410] Tolhurst argues that Layamon's emphasis on Helena's deeds in Jerusalem 'displaces Geoffrey of Monmouth's theme of female kingship with that of queenly service to God'. Tolhurst, *Female Kingship*, 241.

[411] Layamon, *Brut*, ii: 401.

[412] See, e.g., Gavin I. Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1990), 10; Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christian-Jewish Relations, 1000–1300: Jews in the Service of Medieval Christendom* (Harlow, UK, 2011), 88–92. See also Larkin, "Transitions," 121.

[413] Layamon, *Brut*, ii: 41: "swa heo nes neuere ær on liue." See also Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 84.

Jerusalem. These descriptions ultimately reinforced the message that Helena had been a powerful figure in Jerusalem, but her power originally derived from the land of Britain—the geographic extremes of East and West united under Helena's leadership.

Helena and the True Cross in Angevin Spirituality

Helena's importance to the Angevins cannot be understood as simply a product of fanciful historical imaginations. Celebrated for her connection to the Cross and Jerusalem, she, along with her son, also played a significant role in Angevin spirituality. Many churches, like Holy Cross at Ely, bore reminders of the True Cross in their names.[414] The twelfth-century liturgical calendar, moreover, would have ensured not only that people venerated Christ and the Cross, but also that they remembered the major historical or pseudo-historical characters involved in the *Inventio crucis* story. The calendar included three major celebrations of the Cross during the course of the year: the feast of the Adoration of the Cross, commemorating Christ's Passion, fell on Good Friday; the feast of the Invention of the Cross was on May 3. September 14 was the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, which celebrated both the dedication of Constantine's Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 335 (see below), and the return of the True Cross to Jerusalem by the Byzantine emperor Heraclius in 631. These days marked important points on the Christian calendar, and were regularly celebrated throughout twelfth-century Europe.[415]

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[414] Richard W. Pfaff, *The Liturgy in Medieval England: A History* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 189.
[415] Francis Wormald, *English Benedictine Kalendars after 1100*, Henry Bradshaw Society LXXVII, Vol. 1: Abbotsbury-Durham (London: Harrison and Sons, Ltd., 1939), 38, 42, 70, 72, 76, 104, 108, 121, 125, 172,

During the liturgical year priests told their congregations the story of Christ's

death upon Calvary, explaining the role that Helena and Constantine played in finding the

relic of the True Cross and their contribution to restoring the sites of Christ's Passion and

entombment in Jerusalem. This would have helped to solidify the story in the minds not

only of members of the Angevin court, but of the English populace more broadly.[416]

Reading Abbey, for example, claimed several True Cross relics, and the abbey's

cartulary, compiled in the 1190s, listed relics of Constantine and Helena directly after

those of Nicodemus and Mary Magdalen, respectively.[417]

Not surprisingly, Helena's cult was especially popular in northern England,

particularly around York, one of the towns most closely linked to the legends about her

and Constantine. The cult of the Cross, by contrast, was more popular in the southern part

of the kingdom. Indeed, churches in the north were dedicated to Helena two to three

times more often than churches in the south, but the north only had about a quarter as

many churches dedicated to the Cross or the Rood (the tree from which the Cross was

fashioned). In Yorkshire, some thirty churches were dedicated to Helena, and about the

same number in Lincolnshire.[418] There were at least three such churches in twelfth-

century York: St Helen-on-the-Walls, Aldwark; St Helen's Fishergate, and St Helens,

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176; and LXXXI, Vol. II: Ely-St. Neots (London: Harrison and Sons, Ltd, 1946), 12, 16, 48, 52; Ammon Linder, "The Liturgy of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem," in *Knights of the Holy Land: The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem*, ed. Silvia Rozenberg (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1999): 96–9, at 97.

[416] In addition to these major holy days, the liturgical calendar also marked saints' days, including those of Macarius (March 10), Judas/Cyriac (May 4), Constantine (May 21), and Helena (August 18). These saints' days were more commonly recognized in the eastern Christian realms than they were in England, but it is possible that Angevin pilgrims and crusaders would have taken part in their celebrations in the Holy Land or in Constantinople.

[417] BL Egerton MS 3031, fols. 6v, 7v–8r.

[418] Frances Arnold-Forster, *Studies in Church Dedications, or England's Patron Saints*, 3 vols. (London, 1899), i: 188–9.

Stonegate.[419] York was, of course, the city where Constantine had been proclaimed

emperor in 306, and the church of St Helen-on-the-Walls, expanded twice in the Angevin

period, proudly touted itself as the site of his father Constantius' tomb.[420] Farther south,

in Essex, a late twelfth-century inclusion in the foundation charter (*c.* 1120–30) for the

Abbey of St. John in Colchester claimed that "Helena…[was] born and educated in this

city."[421]

Helena's and Constantine's spiritual legacies in Jerusalem were further

memorialized in northern England through the iconography of the Kelloe Cross. This

historiated monumental stone cross found set into the wall of the twelfth-century parish

church of St Helen's in Kelloe, near Durham, in 1854. Measuring some two meters high,

the cross has been dated to *c.* 1200.[422] The three scenes carved into the stone depict

recognizable moments in the *Inventio crucis* legend. The reliefs are topped by a wheel

style cross head bearing the inscription from Constantine's famous vision of the cross

before the battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312, "*in hoc vinces*" (Figure 3).[423] The cross-

head is carved in an Anglo-Norman style.[424] The topmost image shows a crowned figure,

reclining on a couch with hand raised, while from above an angel makes the sign of

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[419] St Helen's Stonegate was probably pre-Conquest in origin, but the earliest surviving part of the church—its baptismal font—dates to the mid-twelfth century.

[420] Arnold-Forster, *Church Dedications*, 188; John Cherry, Review of J. R. Magilton "The Church of St Helen-on-the-Walls, Aldwark," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 33 (Apr. 1982), 328.

[421] *Cartae ad Colecestrense Coenobium in agro Esseriense spectantes*, quoted in Larkin, "Transitions," 108: "Traditur tamen Helena…ex hac civitate natam et educatam"; Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 67–9.

[422] James T. Lang, "The St. Helena Cross, Church Kelloe, Co. Durham," in *Archaeologia Aeliana: or, Miscellaneous relating to Antiquities*, 5th ser. 5 (1977): 105–19, at 105. I would like to thank Diane Reed, Church Warden for St Helen's Parish, for generously showing me around the church in July 2014, and Gabriel Fidler for his assistance and company on the visit.

[423] James Lang argues that the imagery of the Kelloe Cross should be read from bottom to top. See Lang, "The St. Helena Cross," 110.

[424] Lang, "The St. Helena Cross," 115.

blessing (Figure 4). Barbara Baert identifies this scene as depicting Constantine's vision.[425]

The middle scene on the Kelloe Cross is of two facing figures, both crowned, who most likely represent Constantine and Helena. The figure of Helena holds a cross in her hands (Figure 5).[426] The bottom carving again depicts two standing figures—a woman holding a sword, and "a bearded man with a Jewish cap" and a shovel—flanking a cross topped with an inscribed tablet like the one commissioned by Pilate to identify the cross on which Christ died (Figure 6).[427] This panel is quite clearly representative of the Judas variant of the Helena legend.[428] At their feet are people cured by the power of the Cross.

The Kelloe Cross clearly presents a sculptural representation of the *Inventio crucis* legend. It would have helped to further cement the associations between Jerusalem, the True Cross, and the British origin legends of Helena and Constantine. The monumental stone cross gave these legends a tangible presence in Kelloe. The images could have been recognized by all members of the parish, clerical and lay alike, and the towering presence of the cross, coupled with liturgical celebrations centered around it,

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[425] Barbara Baert, "*In Hoc Vinces*: Iconography of the Stone Cross in the Parish Church of Kelloe (Durham, ca. 1200)," *Archaeological and Historical Aspects of West-European Societies: Album Amicorum Andre van Doorselaer*, ed. Marc Lodewijckx, Acta Archaeologica Lovaniensia Monographiae 8 (Leuven, Belgium, 1996): 341–362, at 341, 343; cf. "Appendix 1: The *Vita sancte Helene* of Jocelin of Furness (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 252)," in Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, Appendix 1, 158 (hereafter Jocelin, *VSH*).
[426] On the various interpretations of the middle panel, see Lang, "The St. Helena Cross," 109, 112–4.
[427] Baert, "*In Hoc Vinces*," 341–6 (quote at 341). On the *Inventio crucis* iconography and the tradition of depicting Jews as bearded and wearing hats, see Lipton, *Dark Mirror*, 13–54, 87–90, esp. 88–9.
[428] The iconography on the lower panel of the Kelloe Cross is comparable to that found on a True Cross reliquary chasse from Limoges, dating *c*. 1178–98. The chasse bears an inscription on one side that reads "S[ANCTA] [H]ELE/NA//IVDAS" (Saint Helena, Judas) and has an enamel inlay depicting Helena ordering Judas to dig with a pickax on Golgotha. See "Reliquary of the True Cross," in *Enamels of Limoges: 1100–1350*, ed. John Philip O'Neill (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 165–6, no. 40; Bernadette Barrière, "The Limousin and Limoges," in ibid, 27–8.

would have reminded Angevin viewers that the person responsible for finding the symbol of Christ's Passion had (they believed) been born just down the road.[429]

Jocelin of Furness's *Vita Sancte Helene*

Religious texts also served as reminders of Helena's importance in the twelfth-century Anglicized history of the finding of the True Cross. Although on the Continent she had long been the subject of hagiographical works (derived from a ninth-century *vita* by the German hagiographer Altmann[430]), the first life of Helena to be written in England was the *Vita Sancte Helene*, composed sometime around 1198–1207 by the Cistercian monk Jocelin of Furness (*fl.* 1199–1214).[431] Jocelin's residence at Furness Abbey, on the Lancashire coast, placed him in that northern part of England that was so thoroughly steeped in the stories of Helena and Constantine. Jocelin claimed as the sources for his *vita* "diverse ecclesiastical histories and catholic chronicles," as well as "a certain little book dictated in English, the author of which testifies that he himself had translated it from a British [Welsh] sermon into English."[432] In essence, the monk was grounding his claims to authority not only in canonical texts, but also local traditions.

Jocelin's *vita* presents a late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century synthesis of

[429] Cf. Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 87, 93. See also Carl Watkins, "'Folklore' and 'Popular Religion' in Britain during the Middle Ages," *Folklore* 115 (Aug. 2004), 145–6.
[430] Helen Birkett, *The Saints' Lives of Jocelin of Furness: Hagiography, Patronage and Ecclesiastical Politics* (Woodbridge, UK, 2010), 72.
[431] Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 96–7, see also 46–7, 66.
[432] Jocelin of Furness, *VSH*, 153: "in diuersis historiis ecclesiasticis et cronicis catholicis… In quodam eciam libello anglice dictato eius uita seriatim dicatur cuius auctor illum de Britannico sermone in anglicum transtulisse se testator." Helen Birkett has shown that Jocelin also drew from the works of William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Geoffrey of Monmouth. For a detailed analysis of Jocelin's sources, see chapter two, "Compiling Female Sanctity: The Sources for the Vita S. Helenae," in Birkett, *The Saints' Lives of Jocelin of Furness*, 59–84. Birkett provides a list of Jocelin's sources on p. 84.

Helena's eastern Roman history with her British legend, resulting in a portrait of an English saint who earned her holy reputation in both Britain and Jerusalem. Jocelin depicted Helena as an ideal ruler who combined wisdom, learning, and piety. She was the "propagator of the Christian faith and the defender of the church of the saints."[433] Her father was the British king Coel, and her mother (who is not mentioned in the early twelfth-century histories) was "by birth and in appearance most illustrious." More uniquely, Jocelin emphasized that Helena was "the sister of three magnates of Britain."[434] Here, even more than in the earlier accounts of Helena's life, the stress is on her parentage, derived from both her paternal and her maternal ancestry. Jocelin was not leaving room for anyone to dispute the reality of Helena's British ancestry.

Jocelin's Helena, like Geoffrey of Monmouth's and Wace's, possesses the personal traits that were valued in elite women of the twelfth century. She excels at the study of letters, and is reputed to be "incomparable in composing refrains and in singing," surpassing both "her countrymen and foreigners." She is "humble and modest, prudent, unaffected and calm, liberal and clever, altogether lovable and precious."[435] She also acts like a good twelfth-century Christian ruler ought. Jocelin repeats Henry of Huntingdon's story that Helena was responsible for building fortified walls around London and Colchester. Moreover, he adds, upon Constantius's death, she "governed the realm of

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[433] Jocelin, *VSH,* 153: "Christiane fidei propagatricem et propugnatricem ecclesia sanctorum."
[434] Jocelin, *VSH,* 154: "Puellam quoque genere ac specie clarissimam sororem trium magnatum Britannie."
[435] Jocelin, *VSH,* 154: "proficiebat in studiis litterarum… In musicis eciam instrumentis et cantilenis componendis et canendis supra omnes patriotas et peregrinos magistra dicebatur inconperabilis… Fuit humilis et pudica, prudens, simplex et pacifica, liberalis atque faceta, cunctis amabilis ac preciosa."

Britain, and administered justice and law in the land."[436] She upheld the Christian faith,

exalted the Church, spurned idolatry, suppressed Judaism, and strove to eliminate

heresies of all kinds.[437]

Importantly, in this list of attributes, Jocelin refers to his subject as "our Helena"

(*Helene nostre*).[438] He assumes that his audience will associate themselves with Helena,

presumably by virtue of a shared Anglo-British heritage.[439] Calling her "our" further

reinforces a personal and communal connection to Helena, bringing her out of distant

history and placing her within a modern Angevin context. At the same time, treating

Helena in this fashion collapsed the temporal barrier between Roman Britain and

Angevin England, helping to co-opt a contested historical legacy.[440]

Jocelin's depiction of Helena's husband Constantius further emphasizes the

centrality of Britain in relation to the western Roman Empire. The Furness monk

describes how Constantius often had to travel throughout the many territories that he

governed west of the Alps, yet "he loved Britain above all the realms of the world."[441]

This statement needs only slight alteration to apply to the Angevin kings, who governed

not only England but also extensive western territories on the Continent. Jocelin's

Constantius served as a reminder that England was the heart of the Angevin realm,

legitimizing the rule of the Angevin kings as heirs to the Roman legacy in England and

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[436] Jocelin, *VSH,* 157: "regnum Britannie gubernabat, faciensque iudicium et iusiciam in terra." See also
Birkett, *The Saints' Lives of Jocelin of Furness*, 75.
[437] Jocelin, *VSH,* 155: "Helene nostre decor occasionem prebuit promocioni Christiane fidei, ecclesie Dei
exaltacioni, ydolatrie euacuacioni, Iudaice secte depression, plurimarum heresium <elininacioni>."
[438] Jocelin, *VSH,* 155.
[439] Cf. Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 103.
[440] Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*, 146–7, 149, 153.
[441] Jocelin, *VSH,* 157: "Super omnia regna terrarum Britanniam dilexit."

directing royal devotion toward the island kingdom.

Jocelin goes on to describe how Pope Sylvester baptized Helena, who had earlier been tempted by Judaism but wholeheartedly devoted herself to upholding Christian doctrine after baptism.[442] She helped Constantine build Constantinople, served as a judge in debates between Jews and Christians, and supported her son at the Council of Nicaea in 325.[443] It is not difficult to imagine thirteenth-century readers recognizing contemporary parallels to Late Antique history. In particular, Jocelin was likely drawing on Eleanor of Aquitaine as a model of the powerful queen who actively supported her sons' causes, particularly that of Richard while he was on crusade.[444] Jocelin then describes Helena's arrival in Jerusalem. Accompanied by soldiers and backed by the wealth of the imperial treasury, Helena took the journey "for the sake of visiting and repairing the holy places and of investigating and discovering the symbols of the dominical Passion."[445] Jocelin recounts how Helena and Judas the Jew discovered the True Cross, whereupon Judas converted to Christianity.[446]

After detailing the discovery of the Cross, Jocelin praises Helena's construction of churches in Jerusalem. In particular, he emphasizes the construction of a temple on Golgotha and "another around the sepulchre of the Lord."[447] Helena, he added, also repaired and built churches at the Mount of Olives and other locations in Jerusalem, as well as in Nazareth, Bethlehem, and throughout Judea more broadly. Moreover, she

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[442] Jocelin, *VSH,* 160–1.
[443] Jocelin, *VSH,* 164–9.
[444] Also like Helena, Eleanor of Aquitaine lived to a ripe old age.
[445] Jocelin, *VSH,* 169: "uenit Ierosolimam causa uisitandi ac reparandi loca sancta atque inuestigandi et reperiendi dominice passionis insignia."
[446] Jocelin, *VSH,* 169–72.
[447] Jocelin, *VSH,* 172.

"eliminated" the Jews and "pagans" from all of Judea.[448] These achievements would have resonated with Jocelin's post-Third Crusade English audience. These were, after all, the same people who responded to news of the loss of the True Cross by massacring the Jews in England, notably at York in 1190 (see Chapter Five).[449] Helena, Jocelin tells us—with the support of her son Constantine—successfully Christianized the Holy Land, driving the Jews and "pagans" from the land and thereby restoring it to its former glory.

Ultimately, for Jocelin, Helena's accomplishments in Jerusalem were her most important. He drives this point home, explaining how he had read in an ecclesiastical history (probably that of Rufinus) that Helena had acquired grain from Egypt to help feed the Jerusalemites in times of famine: "But," Jocelin concludes,

> as it seems to me, our Helena is worthily judged with greater praise in respect to Jerusalem, by whose earnest solicitude and work that entire city was restored inwardly and outwardly, [and] the wood of life, having been found, was exalted as a vine for the sustenance of the faithful, as a fruit of life-giving nourishment.[450]

Much of Jocelin's *Vita Sancte Helene* was derived from other sources, but here his own voice sounds clearly as he offers his opinion about the sanctity of his subject.[451] Right away, he reiterates that she is "our Helena," reminding his audience that the saint belongs to England, even when she is in Jerusalem. Jocelin used these reminders about Helena's connection to England to emphasize certain points in his narrative. In all, he called her

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[448] Jocelin, *VSH,* 172–3, at 173: "Iudeos quoque et Gentiles in Christum credere contempnentes non solum ab Ierosolima sed eciam a Iudee finibus eliminauit."

[449] Sethina Watson, "Introduction: The Moment and Memory of the York Massacre of 1190," in *Christians and Jews in Angevin England:* 1–14; Joe Hillaby, 'Prelude and Postscript to the York Massacre: Attacks in East Anglia and Lincolnshire, 1190', in ibid.: 43–56, at 54; Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christian Jewish Relations, 1000–1300: Jews in the Service of Medieval Christendom*, The Medieval World (Harlow, UK: Longman, 2011), 93–5.

[450] Jocelin, *VSH,* 173: "Sed, ut michi uidetur, ampliori preconio nostra Helena erga Ierosolimitas digniter iudicatur cuius instancia sollitudine [sollicitudine?] et opere tota ciuitas illa interius et exterius restaurabatur, lignum uite ad sustenacionem fidelium, fructum uitalis alimonie, inuentum exaltabatur."

[451] Birkett, *The Saints' Lives of Jocelin of Furness*, 59.

"our Helena" five times: once in reference to her attributes as a good ruler in Britain; once as praise for her impact on Jerusalem; twice to compare her with the Queen of Sheba; and once to state that no daughter of Eve was her equal, other than the Virgin Mary.[452]

Ultimately, Jocelin crafted an image of Helena that showed her as a model in battles against Jewish and pagan error. He took care to emphasize that the restoration of Jerusalem and the discovery of the True Cross were Helena's most important contributions to history. At the time he wrote, of course, at the end of the twelfth century, arguably the most celebrated fragment of the True Cross had been again lost, this time not buried but captured by the Muslim armies of Saladin. In much the same way as the second-century Roman emperor Hadrian had built pagan temples atop the biblical Jerusalem, Saladin had leveled many of the Christian buildings in Jerusalem and replaced them with "pagan"—i.e., Muslim—temples.[453] Jocelin's *Vita Sancte Helene* reminded the Angevins that it was their duty and their obligation to imitate Helena, rescue Jerusalem from the "pagan" easterners, and restore the True Cross to its proper glory.

Constantine, England, and the Holy Sepulchre

Antonina Harbus has observed that Helena is relatively neglected by scholars because she is seen as "an auxiliary rather than the centre of attention," while "her fame relies on her relationship with Constantine and his conversion to Christianity, topics

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[452] Jocelin, *VSH,* 155, 173, 175, 177. See also Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 103.
[453] Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle*, 334. See also Eddé, *Saladin*, 218–27; and Folda, *Crusader Art*, 67.

which have received far more critical attention."[454] In the medieval English legends, by contrast, writers emphasizing Constantine's fame often focused on his relationship to Helena and her (supposed) British ancestry. As they had done with Helena, twelfth-century English authors created a British Constantine, building upon his acclamation as emperor at York in 306 and suggesting that he and his future deeds owed their success to his British origins. Indeed, Constantine's brief association with York left a legacy that endures today: one of the modern city's famous landmarks is a statue of the emperor (Figure 6), and the University of York's newest educational institution, which opened to students in 2014, is Constantine College.[455] We have seen how Henry of Huntingdon called Constantine "the flower of Britain" (*flos Brittanniae*)."[456] In Layamon's *Brut*, King Arthur states that Constantine "was Helena's son, descended fully from Britons."[457] Thus, as with Helena, twelfth-century English authors sought to reinforce Constantine's connections to English soil and bloodlines.

Nor did Constantine's Roman connections necessarily undermine his association with Britain: Susan Larkin suggests that the emperor's "dual ancestry" from Britain and Rome would have appealed to twelfth-century audiences, who were themselves often of mixed heritage.[458] If the Romano-British Constantine could be English, so could an

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[454] Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 2.
[455] The university's website explains the new college's name: "Emperor Constantine, the most important international figure to be associated with York in its entire history, was proclaimed Augustus here in York in 306. Our ninth college bears his name, not just as a celebration of York's Romanitas, but also to define Constantine as a college with great character and vision." Online: www.york.ac.uk/colleges/constantine/about, accessed Nov. 30, 2013.
[456] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. Arnold, 30: "Brittannicus genere et patria: ante quem nec post similis est egressus de Brittannia."
[457] Layamon, *Brut*, 631: "he wes Helene sune; / al of Brutten icume." See also Harbus, *Helena of Britain*, 85–6.
[458] Larkin, "Transitions," 110.

Anglo-Norman or Anglo-Angevin. As Wace put it, Constantine "loved the Britons for his mother, / and the Romans for his father."[459] This statement can also be seen as a reminder to Henry II, son of an Anglo-Norman mother and an Angevin father, to love all of his subjects equally.

Constantine, like Helena, played an important role in shaping Jerusalem's physical landscape. A few years after Helena's discovery of the True Cross on Calvary, Constantine oversaw the construction of the Martyrion basilica, along with the Anastasis (Resurrection) rotunda with its Edicule encompassing Christ's empty tomb (the cave donated by Joseph of Arimathea) and the Triportico atrium. Dedicated in 335, these buildings collectively formed the first iteration of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.[460] Indeed, Colin Morris has argued that Jerusalem's central importance in medieval Christianity owed much to Constantine's construction of the Holy Sepulchre complex, and to the holy relics—including the True Cross—found during excavations for it.[461]

The church complex erected by Constantine in Jerusalem stood until 1009, when the Fatimid caliph al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah (996–1021) ordered its destruction. The Holy Sepulchre was then partially rebuilt between 1012 and 1023, although not on the same scale as Constantine's original church had been.[462] The present Church of the Holy Sepulchre was constructed following the Franks' capture of Jerusalem during the First Crusade. The twelfth-century Anastasis rotunda, still standing today, was modeled upon

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[459] Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 144: "Les Bretuns ama pur sa mere / E cels de Rome pur sun pere."
[460] Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, 85; Martin Biddle, *The Tomb of Christ* , 67–70; Drake, "Eusebius on the True Cross," 6–7, 11–14. For a description of the architectural plan of this first Holy Sepulchre, see Morris, *Sepulchre of Christ*, 31–8, also 318, 501.
[461] Morris, *Sepulchre of Christ*, 50–1.
[462] Biddle, *The Tomb of Christ*, 75; Morris, *Sepulchre of Christ*, 34–5.

that originally built during Constantine's reign. Historians generally point to the 1149 dedication of the new Holy Sepulchre as signaling the end of its construction, but Martin Biddle has shown that it continued to be expanded and decorated up through the 1160s.[463] Joseph of Arimathea, who removed Christ's body from the Cross and donated his tomb for Jesus' burial, is supposedly buried below the western apse, near the back of the rotunda. By the early thirteenth century, Joseph's story, too, became associated with England, as I shall discuss in the next chapter.

At the other end of the twelfth-century church, a flight of stairs descends from the eastern ambulatory into the subterranean Chapel of St. Helena, the walls of which are covered by crosses carved into the bedrock by medieval visitors.[464] Passing through the chapel and down another flight of stairs, one enters the Chapel of the Finding of the Cross, built on the site where, according to legend, Helena had carried out her excavations in 326.[465] Archaeological excavations have revealed that these chapels were part of Constantine's original church complex. From the second quarter of the twelfth century onward, pilgrims and crusaders entering the renovated tomb of Christ in Jerusalem would have been able to visit these various parts of the Holy Sepulchre, taking part in a physical as well as spiritual remembrance of Jerusalem's history. The Holy Sepulchre, the destination of countless pilgrims and crusaders, therefore had a history that

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[463] Biddle, *The Tomb of Christ*, 92–8.
[464] Yvonne Friedman, "Pilgrims in the Shadow of the Crusader Kingdom," in *Knights of the Holy Land*: 100–9, at 101–2.
[465] The Franciscan community in Jerusalem maintains a website with an interactive plan of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, allowing the virtual pilgrim to explore the various sections of the church and to read about their architectural history and biblical, historical, and modern significance. St. Saviour's Monastery, "Sanctuary Holy Sepulchre," Jerusalem (2011). Online at http://www.holysepulchre.custodia.org. Accessed 4 November 2013.

linked the activities of Helena and Constantine both broadly to Jerusalem, and more specifically to the places and relics of Christ's crucifixion and entombment. The architectural history of the building owed its origins to Helena and her son, and represented the triumph of Christianity over pagan, Jewish, and, later, Muslim destruction.

In the century following the Christian victory in the First Crusade, a number of new churches, modeled on the Anastasis rotunda in the newly renovated Church of the Holy Sepulchre, were constructed throughout Europe. While such churches were not unique to England, they nevertheless formed an important part of English religious architecture during this period.[466] Often built by the military orders, these churches were usually dedicated to New Testament saints, reinforcing their associations with Jerusalem and Christ. The Templar Order erected several such round churches in England: in Bristol, Dover, Garway, and Hereford in Herefordshire; Aslackby and Temple Bruer in Lincolnshire; and in London. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Northampton—today affectionately called St Seps—was constructed by Simon de Senlis, who participated in the First Crusade, around 1120.[467] Four additional surviving twelfth-century churches in England reflect the shape of the Holy Sepulchre's rotunda. The oldest of these, the Cambridge Round Church, stands on land granted by the Fraternity of the Holy Sepulchre

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[466] Round churches modeled on the Anastasis were built, for example, in Bologna, Milan, Pisa, Brindisi, and Augsburg, to name a few cities. There were also round churches in Navarre and Denmark. See Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 82–3.

[467] See the church's web page, "Holy Sepulchre 'St Seps' Northampton," online at http://www.stseps.org (accessed November 7, 2013); J. Charles Cox and R. M. Serjeantson, *A History of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Northampton* (Northampton: William Mark, 1897), 22–3; Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 82.

between 1114 and 1130.[468] The Round Chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene at Ludlow

Castle, Shropshire, was probably built for William de Lacy, a member of Henry II's

court.[469] And in 1186, the Knights Hospitaller built a round church dedicated to Saint

John the Baptist on the manor of Little Maplestead, Essex, which Juliana Adhelin had

donated to the order the previous year; her husband, William Fitz-Adhelin de Burgo,

confirmed the grant.[470]

The most famous of these twelfth-century English round churches is London's

Temple Church. Its round nave, completed in 1185, was consecrated by none other than

Heraclius, the patriarch of Jerusalem.[471] Heraclius, as we have already seen, came to

England to convince Henry and his court to undertake a crusade to protect the Holy Land

from the growing Muslim threat. He offered Henry the keys to the holy city, presented

him with a banner of the True Cross, and dedicated the Temple Church, which came to

serve as the Angevin royal treasury and seat of the Exchequer. Heraclius was also

Herbert of Bosham's (alleged) source for the story about Thomas Becket's death being

known immediately in Jerusalem. Indeed, Temple Church's relic collection included one

of the swords used to kill Becket, as well as some of Christ's blood and a fragment of the

True Cross.[472] These round churches thus bridged geography as well as time—recreating

[468] Simon Brighton, *In Search of the Knights Templar: A Guide to the Sites in Britain* (New York: Metro Books, 2006), 45, 124–7 (quote at 124).
[469] Brighton, *In Search of the Knights Templar*, 45; "Round Chapel," Ludlow Castle, Online at www.ludlowcastle.com, accessed Nov. 2, 2013.
[470] William Wallen, *The History and Antiquities of the Round Church at Little Maplestead* (London, J. Weale, 1836), 151; Brighton, *In Search of the Knights Templar*, 45
[471] Brighton, *In Search of the Knights Templar*, 56–7.
[472] Brighton, *In Search of the Knights Templar*, 58; Herbert of Bosham, *Materials*, iii: 514–6; Virginia Jansen, "Light and Pure: The Templars' New Choir," *The Temple Church in London: History, Architecture, Art*, ed. Robin Griffith-Jones and David Park (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010): 45–66, at 58,

Constantine's fourth-century Church of the Holy Sepulchre on twelfth-century English soil, and allowing England's saints to share this sacred space with the relics of Christ himself.

Constantine, a Model Crusader

While Constantine is responsible for shaping much of medieval Jerusalem's religious landscape, he is more famously remembered for his association with the symbolism of the cross. Indeed, the emperor's vision of a cross in the sky at the Milvian Bridge in 312 and his subsequent conversion to Christianity inspired legions of artists to have the sign of the cross depicted in artistic representations of his victories.[473] Henry of Huntingdon directly attributed Constantine's victory over Maxentius to his acceptance of the cross and Christ, concluding that, "Therefore Constantine, having obtained the empire (*imperio*)…, singly held the realm of the world."[474] In his *vita* of Helena, Jocelin of Furness similarly praised the "banner of the Holy Cross" (*uexillum Sancte Crucis*) that Constantine had carried with him into battle at the Milvian Bridge.[475]

This banner and its symbolic cross also helped to reinforce the parallels between Constantine and twelfth-century crusaders. When Heraclius, the patriarch of Jerusalem, visited Henry II's court in 1185 in an attempt to convince the English king to undertake a crusade, he presented Henry with a "banner of the Holy Cross" (*vexillum sanctae crucis*),

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65n66; Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Historical Memorials of Canterbury*, Fifth Edition (London: John Murray, 1868), 196.

[473] Drake, "Eusebius on the True Cross," 17.

[474] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. Arnold, 30: "Constantinus igitur potitus imperio… solusque regnum mundi tenuit."

[475] Jocelin, *VSH*, 159.

the standard of the kingdom of Jerusalem.[476] The same terminology was used to describe

Constantine's fourth-century banner. The standard that Henry II received from Heraclius

thus not only symbolized the power of Jerusalem, but specifically invoked Constantine's

victory, seen by later generations as a victory for Christianity. Those members of the

Angevin court who were familiar with the eleventh- and twelfth-century legends of

Charlemagne, which described how an earlier patriarch of Jerusalem had presented the

Frankish emperor with Christological relics and gifts, might also have read an imperial

message into this offering.[477] An Angevin king carrying such a standard could have

imagined himself as a new Constantine, coming to Jerusalem's rescue.

In Jocelin of Furness's hands, Constantine also became a model for English

crusader kings to emulate. Geoffrey of Monmouth (who praised Constantine's lion-like

pursuit of justice) and Henry of Huntingdon had already set Constantine up as a hero in

opposition to the persecutor emperors Diocletian, Maximian, and Maxentius.[478] For

Jocelin, Constantine's defeat of these pagan emperors took on an even greater

significance: the Emperor Constantine became a pseudo-crusader, protecting

Christendom from oppression at the hands of pagan tyrants. While Constantius and then

Helena and Constantine were ruling peacefully in the west (*orbis occidui*), in the east

(*orbe orientali*) people were suffering the "darkness of persecutions, proscriptions, [and]

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[476] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 33.
[477] See Matthew Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 27–8, 34.
[478] See, e.g., Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 94–7; Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. Greenway, 56–61.

every sort of torture and death" at the hands of Constantine's pagan predecessors and contemporaries.[479]

By highlighting the evil actions of the pagan tetrarchs—and emphasizing their oriental identity—Jocelin justified Constantine's departure from the idyllic island of Britain. The western, Christian ruler was morally obligated to stamp out oriental threats to a nascent Christendom. Indeed, Jocelin emphasized that God had sent Constantine "from Britain to the eastern parts" of the world in order to spread Christianity throughout the empire.[480] The west, Jocelin implied, was prosperous and peaceful; England's king therefore ought to travel to the eastern part of the world, where Christianity was under threat. Constantine thus became a model for the Angevin kings, who ought similarly to lead armies into the east, both to expand their own empire and to save Christendom from the oriental threats to its survival.

These ideas undoubtedly represent a post-Third Crusade ideology, but it is possible to suggest that a writer like Jocelin also would have been thinking about England's role in the next round of crusades. Pope Innocent III, after all, had wanted Richard I to take part in what became the Fourth Crusade, and later pressured John to do the same.[481] John did eventually take the cross in 1215, although he did so out of political

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[479] Jocelin seems to have conflated Maximian and his son Maxentius into one person. Jocelin, *VSH,* 164: "In orbe orientali, principantibus, Dyocliciano uel Maximiano siue Maxencio, inualuerunt tenebre persecucionis, proscripcionis, suppliciorum et mortium genera multimoda."
[480] Jocelin, *VSH,* 164: "Confitebatur crebro quod dominus a Britannia ad orientales partes adduxerit illum qualemcumque famulum suum ut eius diebus properetur Christianissimus per uniuersum Romanum imperium."
[481] Vincent Ryan, "Richard I and the Early Evolution of the Fourth Crusade," in *The Fourth Crusade: Event, Aftermath, and Perceptions*, ed. Thomas F. Madden, Crusades Subsidia 2 (Burlington, VT, 2008): 3–13. For examples of Innocent's letters to John about crusading, see *Selected Letters of Pope Innocent III Concerning England, 1198–1216*, ed. C. R. Cheney and W. H. Semple (London and New York, 1953), nos. 4, 19, 51, 68, 72, and 78.

expediency more than anything else (see Conclusion). Nevertheless, there remained the potential possibility that John might go on crusade. It is in this context, then, that we should understand the increasing popularity of the Anglo-British version of Helena's and Constantine's legends. Writers like Layamon and Jocelin of Furness dreamed of an Angevin ruler whose responsibilities were to both England and the Holy Land. Following their model, a king like John could imagine himself as a new Constantine, riding out from England to rescue Jerusalem and restore Christendom.

Helena and Constantine had, over the course of the twelfth century, become increasingly part of the narrative of England's royal and imperial history. Their popularity as important figures from England's British past developed in tandem with the Angevins' increasing interest in events in the Holy Land. As Anglicized hero-saints, these fourth-century Romans came to reflect modern Angevin ideals of English kingship rooted in dynastic heritage, alongside a responsibility to the land where Christ had suffered and died. In the twelfth century, the Muslims posed a very real threat to both the salvific history of the Cross and the fate of the Holy Land. Saladin's armies had captured the most famous fragment of the True Cross at Hattin in July 1187, occupied Ascalon in September, and conquered Jerusalem by November.

After 1187, it was therefore impossible to retell the story of Helena and Constantine's activities in the Levant without calling to mind violent and shocking memories of these recent events. Indeed, events in Palestine, especially in 1187, transformed what had been a long-established and relatively innocuous set of hagiographic ideas and made them all at once extraordinarily relevant to current events. By the early years of the thirteenth century, the recovery of Jerusalem and the True Cross

from the Muslims formed a vital part of the triumphal narrative of England's Romano-British past and Angevin present. If Helena and Constantine could rule and protect both Britain and Jerusalem, then surely the Angevin kings could—and should—do the same.

CHAPTER 4
A Bridge Perilous from Avalon to Zion

Helena and Constantine served the Angevins as powerful symbols of imperial and, equally important, Christian triumph. Yet while their legends became increasingly Anglicized over the course of the twelfth century, they remained in many ways an outside influence, something foreign that English authors adopted and adapted for their own purposes. At the same time as writers in the Angevin court sought to connect Jerusalem's Roman history to the history of Britain, they also turned to subjects closer to home, most notably, to the legendary British king, Arthur Pendragon. Importantly, in the Brut tradition Arthur's right to rule derived largely from his familial relationship with Helena and Constantine: "These were my close kinsmen," Arthur declares in Wace's *Roman de Brut*, "and each [of them] had Rome in his hand!"[482] Arthur's Anglicized claims to a Romano-British inheritance also appear in Stephen of Rouen's *Draco Normannicus* (*c*. 1167-70). "Constantine, and his mother, possessed you," Arthur told the Romans, "Our mighty England brought forth these two. / Imitating them, I claim by arms the authority of the English, / I who wear the crown of the English realm."[483]

It is difficult to study Arthur because our imaginations are still dominated by Victorian myth-making that envisioned Arthur's reign as a golden age of chivalry.

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[482] Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 272: "Cil furent mi parent procain; / E chescuns out Rome en sa main!"

[483] Stephen of Rouen, *Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ii: 702−3: "Te Constantinus possedit, mater et ejus; Protulit hos ambos Anglia nostra potens. / Hos imitans, armis Anglorum jura reposco, / Angligeni regni qui diadema gero."

Setting aside the occasional fanciful search for a historical Arthur,[484] this chapter examines how the early Arthurian tradition connected Angevin England and the Holy Land through literary innovation as well as historical memory. The Arthurian story served as both a cradle of imperial ambition and as a source of potential instability for the Angevin kings and their followers. Whether set in a broad context of holy war against the pagans, or a more specific setting of war against Muslims in the Holy Land, the Arthurian literature of the Angevin period reflects the cultural and political climate in which it was composed. Over the course of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, the legend's emphasis on holy war became increasingly shaped by the influence of the crusades. As a model of crusading kingship and imperial authority, Arthur provided the Angevins with a hero to rival Charlemagne in France. But the Welsh and Bretons, who sought independence from Angevin control, also looked to Arthur as a messianic leader. And in 1191, Arthur moved from myth to reality when the monks at Glastonbury Abbey discovered his body buried in their cemetery.

The Legacy of Geoffrey of Monmouth

The earliest reference to a British leader named Arthur occurs in the early ninth-century *Historia Britonnum* (History of the Britons) of Pseudo-Nennius, which mentions an Arthur participating in the battle of Badon Hill.[485] The legendary British king did not gain an immediate cult following, however. That development would not occur until

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[484] See, e.g. Rodney Castleden, *King Arthur: The Truth behind the Legend* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).
[485] On Arthur in Pseudo-Nennius, see Richard Barber, *King Arthur in Legend and History* (Ipswich: Boydell; Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1974), 15; Judith Weiss (ed.), Introduction to Wace, *Roman de Brut* , xv.

Arthur became the hero at the climax of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, written 1136–8. This highly inventive history focuses on the Britons, descendants of Brutus, the grandson of Aeneas, and their settlement and rule of Britain from the period two generations after the Trojan War until the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons. Geoffrey portrays Brutus as a new Moses, leading his people from exile to a new Promised Land.[486] Brutus, Geoffrey explains, sought the aid of the goddess Diana, who instructed:

> Brutus, under the setting sun [i.e. to the West], across the realms of Gaul,
> There is an island in the ocean, completely enclosed by the sea;
> An island in the ocean, once inhabited by giants,
> Now indeed deserted, suitable for your people.
> Seek it; for it will be your everlasting home.
> It will become another Troy for your children.
> Here from your descendants kings will be born, and
> The world will be wholly subdued to them.[487]

This prophecy forms the backbone of Geoffrey's narrative, emphasizing England as the new homeland of the exiled Trojans, and laying the groundwork for the subsequent British conquests, culminating in Arthur's triumphs on the battlefield many centuries later.

The establishment of a sacred homeland, based on a shared origin with a traceable relationship between the people and a land—what Anthony Smith terms the "ethnoscape" or "ethnoregion"—is a key component in the construction of national identity. In Smith's model, the "promised land" and the "ancestral homeland" form two overlapping

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[486] See R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends: Joseph of Arimathea, The Holy Grail and King Arthur* (London: The Cresset Press, 1967), 50.
[487] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 21: "Brute, sub occasu solis trans Gallica regna / insula in occeano est undique clausa mari; / insula in occeano est habitata gigantibus olim, / nunc deserta quidem, gentibus apta tuis. / Hanc pete; namque tibi sedes erit illa perhennis. / Hic fiet natis altera Troia tuis. / Hic de prole tua reges nascentur, et ipsis / tocius terrae subditus orbis erit."

expressions of this identity.[488] Diana's prophecy in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*

clearly expresses these concepts: the island of Britain is the promised land for Brutus and

his Trojan followers, but is also the future ancestral homeland of their British

descendants—including, as we have seen, Helena and Constantine. Britain serves as the

springboard for future expansion and conquest, but always remains the origin and focal

point of its rulers' power, however expansive their subject domains become. In the same

way, the Angevin kings received their royal power from the crown of England, even as

they controlled numerous territories on the Continent.

Nearly a third of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (books IX–

XI) is devoted to the story of King Arthur and his conquests at home and abroad. Arthur

represents, for Geoffrey, the apex of British rule that began with Brutus. Geoffrey's

Arthur is a warrior king, and the *Historia* follows his accumulation of lands and followers

from his accession to the throne at the age of fifteen to his death, which Geoffrey dates to

542. Within the British Isles, Arthur battles the Saxons, Scots, Picts, and Irish. He then

moves outward to subdue the Orkneys, Iceland, Norway, and Denmark, and finally

conquers France and directs his military might against Rome. Arthur's ultimate defeat

comes at the hand of his nephew Mordred, by whom he is mortally wounded. Geoffrey of

Monmouth concludes Arthur's story by stating that the king was carried off to the "Isle of

Avalon" (*insulam Auallonis*) so that his wounds might be tended.[489] This is the first

explicit reference to Avalon as Arthur's final resting place. This association would have

significant consequences for the development of Arthurian legend, for Avalon, as I will

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[488] Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 131–65, esp. 134, 137 (quotes).
[489] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 253.

discuss later in this chapter, was soon associated with Glastonbury, eventually identified as the resting place of the Holy Grail.

Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* was an instant success: between 61 and 79 of the 217 surviving manuscripts date to the twelfth century, and another 35 are from the thirteenth century – more than survive for almost any other medieval text.[490] Geoffrey dedicated his work to Robert of Gloucester (d. 1147), under whose care his (Robert's) nine-year-old nephew Henry Plantagenet was placed in 1142. The young prince spent several formative years being educated by this *miles literatus*— an educated knight—where he would have been exposed to the literary culture of Robert's household.[491]

Although Geoffrey wrote his history when Henry II was only a toddler living in Anjou and Normandy, Stephen of Blois's reign (1135–54) and especially the period of Angevin rule that followed it saw an outpouring of literary and chivalric expression inspired by the *Historia*, and Arthur's fame owed much to his popularity with England's Angevin rulers and members of their court. As we saw in the previous chapter, in 1155 the court poet Wace presented the recently-crowned Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine with the *Roman de Brut*, his Old French translation of Geoffrey's text, and by the end of the twelfth century the monk Layamon had translated this French version into English

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[490] Goetz, *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewußtsein im hohen Mittelalter*, 129; Michael D. Reeve (ed.), Introduction to Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, vii.
[491] Martin Aurell, "Henry II and Arthurian Legend," trans. Nicholas Vincent, *Henry II: New Interpretations. Actes du colloque de l'East Anglia University (Norwich), septembre 2004*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (Woodbridge, 2007): 362–394, at 366–8.

under the title *Brut*.[492] The Norman Benedictine poet Stephen of Rouen (d. c. 1169)

famously imagined a correspondence between Arthur and none other than Henry II

himself in the *Draco Normannicus*, a poem celebrating the deeds of the Norman dukes.

In Arthur's letter to Henry, the mythical British king rehearses passages from the *Historia*

Regem Britanniae.[493]

With fame also came criticism, and Geoffrey of Monmouth's popularity is visible

even in the works of his later Angevin detractors. The chronicler William of Newburgh

devoted the opening pages of his *Historia Rerum Anglicarum* (History of English

Matters) to a lengthy diatribe against Geoffrey, whom he called "that fabulist" (*fabulator*

ille) whose works were "ridiculous… figments" (*ridicula…figmenta*) of invention strung

together by his "impudent vanity" (*impudenti vanitate*).[494] Similarly, Gerald of Wales

tells the story of a madman who, tormented by demons, only found relief when the

Gospel of John was placed upon his chest. The demons, however, returned in even

greater force if the "History of the Britons, by Geoffrey Arthur" (i.e. Geoffrey of

Monmouth) was instead placed upon him.[495]

In spite of such opposition, Arthur's popularity rapidly spread beyond the beyond

the borders of Angevin-controlled territories. Between 1163 and 1165, for instance, the

Italian monk Pantaleone oversaw the construction of a massive (700 sq. ft.) mosaic Tree

of Life covering the floor of Otranto's Cattedrale di Santa Maria Annunciata. Near the

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[492] Some thirty-two manuscripts and manuscript fragments of Wace's *Roman de Brut* are extant. Judith Weiss (ed.), Introduction to Wace, *Roman de Brut*, xxv. I discuss these translations at greater length in chapter three.
[493] Stephen of Rouen, *Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ii: 699.
[494] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 11 (second and third quotes), 16 (first quote).
[495] Gerald of Wales, *Opera,* vi: 58: "Historia Britonum a Galfrido Arthuro."

top of the tree, between Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden and the

figures of Cain and Abel, Pantaleone placed King Arthur. He rides a horned goat, and is

conveniently identified as "Rex Arturus."[496] This mosaic is evidence that less than two

decades after Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote the *Historia*, Arthur had gained a following

in Norman Italy. Indeed, Arthur's popularity was such that at about the same time as the

Becket Affair was reaching its dramatic climax, a scribe in France[497] could ask:

> For where has flying fame not spread and popularized the name of Arthur of
> Britain: even as far as the empire of Christians reaches? Who, I ask, does not
> speak of Arthur the Briton, who is almost considered more famous by the people
> of Asia than by the Britons; just as our palmers, returning from the eastern
> regions, inform us? The eastern peoples speak of him, as do the western, though
> divided by the whole globe. Egypt speaks of him, the remote Bosphorus is not
> silent. Rome, and mistress of cities, sings his deeds, nor are Arthur's battles
> hidden from her former rival Carthage. Antioch, Armenia, and Palestine celebrate
> his deeds.[498]

This passage is clearly hyperbolic, yet it nevertheless highlights the popularity of

Arthurian legend in the twelfth century. In only a few short decades between the 1130s

and *c*. 1170, when the above passage was written, Arthur's name—and his close

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[496] Grazio Gianfreda suggests that Arthur's inclusion alongside the Fall of Adam and Eve in the mosaic is a
symbolic reminder of Arthur's sin, which prevented him from being able to get the Holy Grail (which I
discuss at greater length later in this chapter). Gianfreda, *Il Mosaico di Otranto: Biblioteca Medioevale in
immagini,* Second edition (Lecce: Edizioni del Grifo, 1990), 62–4, 67, 78–9.

[497] Often identified as Alan of Lille, but this attribution is probably incorrect. Richard Barber suggests Alan
of Tewkesbury as the possible author. Barber, *King Arthur*, 38.

[498] [Pseudo-]Alan of Lille, *Prophetia Anglicana Merlini Ambrosii Britanni. Septem Libris Explanationum
in Eandem Prophetiam* (Frankfurt: Joachim Brathering, 1603), 22–3 (hereafter [Pseudo-]Alan of Lille,
Explanationum): "Quo enim Arturi Britonis nomen fama volans non pertulit & vulgavit: quousque
Christianum pertingit imperium? Quis, inquam Arturum Britonem no[n] loquatur, eum pene notior
habeatur, Asiaticis gentibus, quam Britannis; sicut nobis referunt Palmigeri nostri de orientis partibus
redeuntes? Loquuntur illum orientales, loquuntur occidui, toto terrarum orbe diuisi. Loquitur illum
Aegyptus Bosforus exclusa non tacet. Cantat gesta ejus domina civitatem Roma, nec emulam quondam ejus
Carthaginem, Arturi praelia latent. Celebrat actus ejus Antiochia, Armenia, Palaestina." See also James P.
Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey: The Holy House at the head of the Moors Adventurous* (New York: St.
Martin's Press, 1988), 156.

association with Britain—was known and celebrated throughout Christendom, even in the Frankish kingdoms of the Levant.

Arthur and an Orientalized Rome

Throughout the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Geoffrey of Monmouth emphasizes the pagan nature of many of Arthur's defeated enemies, particularly the Saxons.[499] His theme of Christian victory over a pagan foe was reiterated in later versions and translations of the *Historia*.[500] Ultimately, the image of Christian warfare against nonbelievers is a recurring motif in Geoffrey's history and its later derivatives. Yet the most striking instance of this religiously-charged warfare is not directed against the heathen Saxons, but rather against a much more powerful enemy: the Romans. Indeed, Geoffrey's description of the Roman army, and his blow-by-blow account of the battles between Arthur's followers and the Romans, echo *chansons de geste* and, importantly, show the influence of crusading ideology upon Arthurian legend in the decades following the First Crusade—themes that became even more immediate and real for Angevin audiences during and after England's participation in the Third Crusade.

This war with Rome, to which Geoffrey devoted the end of book IX and all of book X of the *Historia*, came about because Arthur refused to pay the tribute demanded by the Roman emperor. As Arthur argues in a speech to his followers, Julius Caesar "and other Roman kings" (*ceterique Romani reges*) may have formerly subjected Britain to the Empire, but that does not now give Rome the right to impose tribute upon the kingdom.

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[499] See, e.g. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 196–9, and *passim*.
[500] See, e.g. Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 232, 278, and *passim*.

Arthur cites the precedent of his forebears, specifically King Belius and his brother Brennius, two British descendants of Brutus who had (in Geoffrey's invented history) conquered Rome.[501] Importantly, as we saw in the opening to this chapter, Arthur also invokes the legacies of Constantine the Great, Constantine's mother Helena, and Helena's nephew Maximianus—ancestors of his, Arthur claims, who also had imperial connections to Rome.[502] Hoel, king of Brittany, further reminds Arthur of the sibyl's prophecy to Brutus, namely that three kings from Britain should rule Rome. Belius was the first, then Constantine, and certainly, Hoel says, Arthur will be the third.[503]

In these speeches from the *Historia* and its early Angevin-era adaptations, Arthur and Hoel emphasize Britain's independence from foreign domination, while also asserting the British king's ancestral right—indeed, his destiny—to expand British rule into the East. This is a significant assertion of British (or, when seen from an Angevin perspective, English) power and authority. As a descendant of these famous British rulers, Arthur asserts his right to refuse to pay tribute to Rome and justifies his declaration of war upon the mighty empire. It seems likely that Geoffrey of Monmouth intended Arthur's speech to be, at least in part, an assertion of the independence of the Anglo-Norman kings of England from the Capetian kings in France, to whom they owed allegiance as dukes of Normandy. These themes of independence and expansion would certainly have resonated with the Angevin kings and their subjects. Henry II spent most of his life fighting in Ireland, Wales, and France to amass the territories of the Angevin

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[501] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 56–9. Cf. Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 272.
[502] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 219; Cf. Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 125.
[503] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 219; Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 274.

empire, while Richard I fought abroad in France, Sicily, Cyprus, and the Levant. By contrast, John was forced to once more make England a subject of Rome when he granted the kingdom as a fief to Pope Innocent III (see Conclusion).

Notably, in this section of the *Historia* Geoffrey presents a highly orientalized— even Islamized—version of Rome. Led by Lucius Hiberius, the imperial army includes many "eastern kings" (*orientalibus…regibus*) as vassals of Rome:

> Epistrophus, king of the Greeks; Mustensar, king of the Africans; Aliphatima, king of Spain; Hirtacius, king of the Parthians; Boccus, king of the Medes; Sertorius, king of Libya; Serses, king of the Itureans; Pandrasus, king of Egypt; Micipsa, king of Babylon; Politetes, duke of Bithynia; Teucer, duke of Phrygia; Evander of Syria; Echion of Boetia; [and] Ypolitus of Crete.[504]

These eastern kings rule over lands that were, in the twelfth century, largely under Islamic control. Such an identification of these regions as subject to Muslim rule is further reinforced by the thirteenth-century chanson de geste *Vivien de Monbranc*, in which the eponymous hero is a Muslim convert to Christianity whose former colleagues had included the kings of Persia, Nubia, and Barbary, as well as the sultan of Babylon.[505]

In his analysis of Geoffrey's list of Rome's vassals, John Tatlock notes that two of the kings, Mustensar of Africa and Aliphatima of Spain, bear distinctly Arabic

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[504] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 224: "Convenerunt ocius Epistrophus rex Graecorum; Mustensar, rex Africanorum; Aliphatima, rex Hispaniae; Hirtacius, rex Parthorum; Boccus, rex Medorum; Sertorius, rex Libiae; Serses, rex Itureorum; Pandrasus, rex Egipti; Micipsa, rex Babiloniae; Politetes, dux Bithiniae; Teucer, dux Frigiae; Evander, Siriae; Echion, Boetiae; Ypolitus, Cretae; cum ducibus et proceribus sibi subditis. Ex senatorio quoque ordine Lucius Catellus, Marius Lepidus, etc." Wace and Stephen of Rouen both provide similar, if slightly altered, lists. Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 278; Stephen of Rouen, *Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ii: 699.
[505] *Vivien de Monbranc: Chanson de geste du XIIIe siècle*, ed. Wolfgang van Emden, Textes Littéraires Français (Geneva: Librairie Droz S.A., 1987), 61: "Si comme l'amirals, qui iert roi de Persie, / Sodant de Babiloine et le roi de Nubie / Et le roi Machabré, le roi de Barbarie."

names.[506] Tatlock argues that in Mustensar Geoffrey deliberately invoked the memory of the Fatimid caliph Abū Tamīm Ma'add al-Mustansir bi-llāh (1036–1094), who had died only a short time before the First Crusade. Aliphatima's name, by contrast, Tatlock attributes to a combination of the names of Muhammad's son-in-law, Ali, and the Prophet's wife, Fatima—another reference to the Fatimid dynasty.[507] The Fatimids, whom the First Crusaders fought for control of Jerusalem, continued to war with the Latin settlers in the Holy Land up until the collapse of their dynasty in 1171.[508] This made them a recognizable foe, and the grab-bag assortment of pseudo-Fatimids and other eastern kings of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* thus made fitting enemies for a Christianized Arthur going to war against an eastern enemy.

Surprisingly, since Tatlock's work in the 1930s, few historians have discussed the implications of this Muslim presence in the early Arthurian corpus. Yet a courtly Angevin audience, some of them veterans (or descendants of veterans) of Levantine campaigns, would likely have recognized these allusions to the First Crusade in Geoffrey's *Historia*. Nor would it have been difficult for them to imagine the story set in their own times, with a heroic English king like Henry II or Richard I going abroad to fight an eastern enemy who threatened Western Christian hegemony. So, too, could the Angevin nobility picture themselves taking part in such an expedition. In the *Historia*, Arthur grants the lordships of Anjou and Normandy—the two French territories most closely linked with England in the second half of the twelfth century—to his steward,

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[506] John S. P. Tatlock, "Certain Contemporaneous Matters in Geoffrey of Monmouth," *Speculum* 6 (Apr. 1931): 206–24, at 206.
[507] Tatlock, "Certain Contemporaneous Matters," 206–7.
[508] On the decline of the Fatimid dynasty, see Eddé, *Saladin*, 47–55.

Kaius (Kay), and his butler, Beduerus (Bedevere), respectively.[509] Later, in battle against

the Romans, these two favorites of Arthur lose their lives in combat with the Medes and

the Libyans.[510] "O how many," Geoffrey exclaims, "were the laments of the Neustrians

[i.e. Normans] when they beheld the body of their duke Beduerus completely torn to

pieces by wounds! O how many also were the lamentations of the Angevins when they

treated their count Kaius for wounds of all sorts!"[511] It would not have been difficult for a

Norman or Angevin member of the court to envision himself in this role, lamenting a

fallen leader or comrade who had been killed at the hands of an eastern Muslim enemy.

Geoffrey of Monmouth's bellicose Arthur and his knights thus provided a model

for later English kings and their court to follow, a model that included fighting to protect

English rights to self-governance unimpeded by foreign oversight. This image of Arthur,

however, was a mixed blessing for the Angevin rulers, as it emphasized the heroics of

Arthur's lords, who held French lands, more than those of the king himself. The idea of

an orientalized Rome may also have gained further popularity in certain courtly circles as

the Becket Affair heightened England's tensions with the papacy during Henry II's reign.

Nor did the fact that Arthur had to abandon his war with Rome due to Mordred's

usurpation of the throne necessarily problematize this position. Indeed, Arthur's failure

meant that, according to prophecy, there was still a third king from England who was

destined to conquer Rome—and, by implication, defeat an eastern, non-Christian enemy.

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[509] Geoffrey de Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 209.
[510] Geoffrey de Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 241, 243.
[511] Geoffrey de Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 243: "O quanta lamenta Neustriensium dum corpus Bedueri sui ducis tot uulneribus dilaniatum aspicerent! O quantos etiam Andegauensium planctus dum Kaii consulis sui uulnera pluribus modis tractarent!"

Evidence that Angevin audiences interpreted Geoffrey's narrative in a crusading context can be found in the writings of Joseph of Exeter, a clerk and poet at the Angevin court. Joseph was a member of the Angevin army during the Third Crusade, accompanying his uncle—none other than Baldwin, the archbishop of Canterbury who had ridden into battle at Acre in 1189 under the standard of Thomas Becket. That Joseph of Exeter felt a personal connection to England and its history is evident throughout his poetry. In the *Iliad of Darius of Phrygia* (1180–1189), for example, Joseph wrote about "our Britain" (*nostra Britannia*), a phrase that denotes his sense of communal attachment to the kingdom.[512]

In 1192, having returned to court from the Holy Land, Joseph composed the *Antiocheis*, a celebration of Richard I's participation in the Third Crusade. Only two short fragments (22 verses) of the poem survive today.[513] Notably, one of the surviving fragments praises Arthur, along with Constantine and Brennius:

> ----- Illustrious posterity shone
> In such leaders, so many riches in its native sons,
> So many fertile things in men, who overwhelmed the world with strength
> And old men with fame. Hence Constantine, having won
> the Empire [*Imperium*], held Rome, exalted Byzantium.
> Hence Brennius, the leader of the Senones, having captured the city [Rome],
> Subdued the Romulan citadel [the Capitoline] with conquering flames…
> Hence Arthur, the flower of kings, flourished
> With celebrated fate, with happy ancestry,
> Whose deeds shine no less than wonder in him:
> All favor that you desire in hearing,

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[512] Joseph of Exeter, *Trojan War I–III*, ed. A. K. Bate (England: Aris & Phillips, 1986), 44.

[513] Reto R. Bezzola, *Les Origines et la Formation de la Littérature Courtoise en Occident (500–1200): Troisième Partie: La Société Courtoise: Littérature de Cour et Littérature Courtoise, Vol. 1: La Cour d'Angleterre comme Centre Littéraire sous les Rois Angevins (1154–1199)*, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Étures, IV Section: Sciences Historiques et Philologiques (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1963), 146; Aurell, *La Legende Du Roi Arthur*, 201–2; Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*, 160; A. K. Bate, Introduction to Joseph of Exeter, *Trojan War I–III*, 13.

With the people applauding. See whatever of earlier men
Rumor declares [to be] a Pellaean tyranny,
The Roman page speaks of Caesar's triumphs.
Glory raises Alcides [Hercules] when the monsters are mastered,
But the hazel trees do not equal the pine, nor the stars [equal] the sun.
Unroll the annals of the Greeks and Latins:
The old day does not know an equal, the later day will show no equal,
Only one better than those who have passed
And greater than those to come will surpass all kings.[514]

This passage echoes Arthur's and Hoel's speeches against Rome in the *Historia Regum*

Britanniae. Following Geoffrey of Monmouth, for example, Joseph of Exeter emphasized

Arthur's familial ties to Britain as well as his ancestral claims to Roman power, here

made explicit through the use of the word *imperium*. The poem also brought Arthur's

legend into the larger context of the Third Crusade, linking praise of Arthur to crusading

panegyric. Indeed, although we do not know this passage's exact context within the

poem, the poem's larger purpose of praising Richard's feats in the Holy Land suggests

that Joseph of Exeter envisioned Richard as the "one better than those who have passed /

And greater than those to come." As such, the crusading English king Richard would,

Joseph implied, "surpass all kings," even the renowned Arthur. Similarly, for the Norman

crusader-poet Ambroise, the true events of the Christian siege of Acre (1189–91) far

outshone the "lies or truth" of legendary tales about Alexander, Tristan, Paris and Helen,

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[514] Joseph of Exeter, *Antiocheis*, quoted by George Oliver, *The History of Exeter* (Exeter: R. Cullum, 1821), lxxi–lxxii: "Inclyta fulsit / Posteritas ducibus tantis, tot dives alumnis, / Tot foecunda viris, premerent qui viribus orbem / Et fama veteres. Hinc Constantinus adeptus / Imperium, Romam tenuit, Byzantion auxit. / Hinc, Senonum ductor, captiva Brennius urbe / Romuleas domuit flammis victricibus arces. / … / Hinc celebri fato, felici floruit ortu, / Flos regum Arthurus, cujus tamen acta stupori / Non micuere minus: totus quod in aure voluptas / Et populo plaudente favor. Quaecunque priorem / Inspice: Pellaeum commendat fama tyrannum, / Pagina Caesareos loquitur Romana triumphos: / Alciden domitis attollit gloria monstris; / Sed nec pinetum coryli, nec sydera solem / Aequant. Annales Graios Latiosque revolve, / Prisca parem nescit, aequalem postera nullum / Exhibitura dies. Reges supereminet omnes: / Solus praeteritis melior, majorque futuris." A shorter portion of this fragment is also printed in Bezzola, *La Littérature Courtoise en Occident*, i: 146n2, with several textual variants. Future references will be to the version printed by Oliver.

Charlemagne, and others, including "the deeds of Arthur of Britain and his bold company."[515]

Arthur and Charlemagne in Jerusalem

One of the sources for Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* was the *Historia Brittonum*, misattributed to Nennius (fl. *c*. 770–*c*. 810). Between 1160 and 1175, three Cistercian scribes working at Sawley Abbey in Yorkshire compiled a copy of the *Historia Brittonum* from two different recensions of the text, expanding the narrative through interlinear and marginal annotations. Additional passages were probably added up until the end of the century.[516] One of the most heavily annotated pages in this manuscript details Arthur's twelve famous battles in Britain (Figure 8). The main text notes that at Gurnion castle, in his eighth battle against the Saxons, Arthur carried the image of the Virgin Mary upon his arm (i.e. on his shield). The main text explains that through her aid and that of her son Jesus, the "pagans were turned to flight."[517] Here another scribe has added a marginal elaboration of this passage:

> For Arthur proceeded to Jerusalem and there he made a cross to the size of the Saving Cross, and there it was consecrated, and for three successive days he fasted, and held vigil, and prayed before the Dominical Cross, so that the Lord might give him victory over the pagans through this sign: and this was done; and

[515] Ambroise, *The History of the Holy War*, 89–90 (quote at 89).
[516] David Thornton dates the text and annotations to 1160–4; Paul Hayward proposes a date of 1161–75 for most of the manuscript, but notes that the gathering with the *Historia Brittonum* was probably not part of the original compilation. He suggests it was added to the manuscript at some point between 1161 and 1200. Martin Aurell, following Mommson, gives a thirteenth-century date to the annotations. David E. Thornton, "Nennius (fl. *c*.770–*c*.810)," *ODNB*; Paul Hayward, "Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 139," *Medieval Primary Sources: Genre, Rhetoric and Transmission* (Department of History, Lancaster University, 2014), Online at http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/staff/haywardp/hist424/seminars/Corpus139.htm, accessed 6 Mar., 2014; Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 492.
[517] Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 139, f. 175r: "pagani uersi sunt in fugam."

he took with him an image of Saint Mary, fragments of which are still preserved at Wedale in great veneration.[518]

Arthur, following in the footsteps of his ancestors Helena and Constantine, thus traveled from Britain to Jerusalem, where, like them, he focused his devotions on the True Cross, and used its image to help defeat pagan threats to his realm.

This interpolation is, as far as I know, the earliest reference to Arthur making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Notably, it is roughly contemporary with the *Voyage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem et à Constantinople* (Voyage of Charlemagne to Jerusalem and Constantinople), also known as the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* (Charlemagne's Pilgrimage), a comic Anglo-Norman *chanson de geste* composed in France in the third quarter of the twelfth century, but drawing on legends dating back at least a century earlier.[519] In the *Voyage*, Charlemagne vows to visit Jerusalem "the land of God's Lady

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[518] Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 139, f. 175r: "Nam Artur Ierosolimam perrexit, et ibi crucem ad quantitatem Salutiferae Crucis fecit, et ibi consecrata est, et per tres continues dies jejunavit, vigilavit, et oravit coram Cruce Dominica, ut ei Dominus victoriam daret per hoc signum de Paganis; quod et factum est; atque secum imaginem sanctae Mariae detulit, cujus fracturae adhuc apud Wedale servatur in magna veneratione." A different scribe added after this a statement that Wedale is a village not far from Melrose Abbey in Scotland. On the same page, the first annotator has added in the lower margin an extended explanation of how Saint Patrick's life parallels that of Moses. I woud like to thank Christopher Berard for first making me aware of this passage.

[519] Michael A. H. Newth (ed.), Introduction to "Charlemagne's Pilgrimage (c. 1150–1175)," in *Heroes of the French Epic: A Selection of* Chansons de Geste, trans. Michael A. H. Newth (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 145. See also Paul Aebischer, Introduction to *Le Voyage de Charlemagne a Jérusalem et à Constantinople,* ed. P. Aebischer (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1965), 26–9. Heath dates the *Voyage* text to between 1150 and 1175, while Aebischer outlines arguments for a date anywhere between 1060 and 1175. An earlier, more serious version of the story, the *Descriptio qualiter Karolus Magnus clavum et coronam Domini a Constantinopoli Aquisgrani detulerit qualiterque Karolus Calvus hec ad sanctum Dionysium retulerit*, was written in the late eleventh century, and influenced the later *Voyage* narrative. See Anne Latowsky, "Charlemagne as Pilgrim? Requests for Relics in the *Descriptio Qualiter* and the *Voyage of Charlemagne*," in *The Legend of Charlemagne in the Middle Ages: Power, Faith, and Crusade*, ed. Matthew Gabriele and Jace Stuckey, The New Middle Ages (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008): 153–67, at 153, 156.

Mother. / I wish to go worship the Cross and the Sepulcher."[520] He concludes his visit to

the holy city by taking home many relics and promises the Patriarch that he will "guard

us from the Saracens and the pagans / Who wish to destroy us and holy Christianity!"[521]

Like Charlemagne in these passages, the Arthur of the pseudo-Nennian interpolation

quoted above visited Jerusalem, and also focused his devotion upon Mary and the Cross.

Both Charlemagne and Arthur then turn this devotion to the task of protecting

Christendom from the Muslim and pagan threats at its borders. The parallels between the

two figures are surely no accident—this twelfth-century, pseudo-Nennian Arthur was

almost certainly modeled upon the story of Charlemagne's pilgrimage.

In the eleventh century, the Ottonians in Germany had sought to tap into

Charlemagne's legend to bolster their imperial claims.[522] So, too, as Anne Latowsky has

recently argued, was the *Voyage de Charlemagne* was part of the Capetian kings'

attempts to claim an imperial identity for their dynasty in France.[523] Indeed, the Capetians

actively promoted links between crusading culture and Charlemagne's legendary voyage

to the East. As Elizabeth Brown and Michael W. Cothren have shown, for example, Odo

of Deuil, abbot of St. Denis (1151–62), oversaw the installation of a fourteen-panel

stained glass window in the abbey church, probably around 1158. Two of the panels

depicted general scenes of kings leading soldiers, another two panels had scenes of

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[520] *Le Voyage de Charlemagne*, 34: "Jerusalem requere e la mere danne deu. La croiz e le sepulcre uoil aler aurer"; cf. 35. This refrain of visiting the Cross and Sepulchre is repeated on pp. 38–9. See also "Charlemagne's Pilgrimage," in *Heroes of the French Epic*, 155.
[521] *Le Voyage de Charlemagne*, 44: "Mais que de sarazins e de paiens uus gardet / Qui nus uolent destrure e sainte christientez"; cf. 45. See also "Charlemagne's Pilgrimage," in *Heroes of the French Epic*, 159.
[522] Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, 120–33.
[523] Anne A. Latowsky, *Emperor of the World: Charlemagne and the Construction of Imperial Authority, 800–1229* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 5–6.

Charlemagne's adventures in the East, and the remaining ten were images of the First Crusade.[524] It is in this context, then, that the anonymous annotator of pseudo-Nennius's *Historia Brittonum* penned the story of Arthur's pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Arthur was an equal match for Charlemagne in both the historical and literary imagination of Angevin England. Just as Charlemagne was said to have visited Jerusalem, so too had Arthur. And like Charlemagne, Arthur used his trip to the East for spiritual purposes, but also used the relics he brought home to strengthen his empire in the West.

The Round Table, the Bleeding Lance, and the Holy Grail

In these stories about the voyages of Arthur and Charlemagne to Jerusalem, the focus is upon the relics associated with the Holy Land: Arthur prays before the True Cross, brings home relics, and paints the image of Mary upon his shield. Indeed, one of the recurring elements of the Arthurian corpus is its emphasis upon physical objects associated with Arthur's reign. Three of the most famous of these object are the Round Table, the Bleeding Lance, and the Holy Grail. Their legends were added to the story as Arthur's legend was disseminated throughout Europe during the court of the twelfth century. As the success and influence of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* attests, Arthur became almost overnight a household name among the military classes of England, and his fame spread rapidly throughout Christendom. Authors like Marie de France, Chrétien de Troyes, and Robert de Boron in France, and Wolfram von

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[524] Elizabeth A. R. Brown and Michael W. Cothren, "The Twelfth–Century Crusading Window of the Abbey of Saint-Denis: Praeteritorum Enim Recordatio Futurorum est Exhibitio," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 49 (1986): 1–40, at 3, 8.

Eschenbach in Germany, along with countless continuators, translators, troubadours, and other artists—many of them anonymous—turned Geoffrey's pseudo-historical Arthur and his court into the subjects of romance and Christian morality.

Although many of the most famous and influential Arthurian writers lived in French- and German-controlled territories, and wrote in those languages, it is important not to dismiss their contributions as unrelated to the Angevins and English identity.[525] As Laura Ashe has argued, differences in language, particularly among the elite and educated, did not present the same barriers between twelfth-century societies as they do in modern societies. Additionally, she stresses that many of the texts written in France, in particular, were produced specifically with an eye for being consumed by an audience within England, adding that the English language was not "a pre-requisite for the expression of national identity."[526] Indeed, Ashe stresses that the strength of English identity is attested by its presence in and power over continental texts, particularly Arthurian romances.[527]

The frequent campaigns of England's kings within their continental lands, moreover, along with shared undertakings such as the Third Crusade, brought English soldiers and diplomats into close proximity with the peoples of France, Germany, Italy, and Sicily, where the universal appeal of Arthur and his knights would have guaranteed the sharing of such stories as a common point of interest. When Richard I arrived at Acre on June 8, 1191, for example, the Christian armies camped outside the city's walls

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[525] Elaine Treharne argues, for example, that during the twelfth century only English language texts could truly convey English national ideology. Treharne, *Living through Conquest*, esp. 8, 187.

[526] Ashe, *Fiction and History in England*, 3, 7, 9 (quote), 10.

[527] Ashe, *Fiction and History in England*, 10.

celebrated "by singing popular songs, [while] others recited 'epic tales of ancient heroes'
deeds', as an incitement to modern people to imitate them."[528]

Kinship ties further reinforced the connections between England's noble families
and their relations on the Continent. In a lament for Ferdinand, prince of Castile (d.
1211), for example, the poet Giraut de Calanson compared the recently deceased prince
to King Arthur, as well as to his Plantagenet uncles (John being noticeably absent): "the
Young King [Henry], the accomplished Richard and count Geoffrey, the three valiant
brothers, whom he resembled in body, conduct and generous heart."[529] In Wolfram's
Parzival, the hero's family claimed descent from the Angevin comital house.[530]
Importantly, even as these stories took on new forms outside of England, Arthur's
identity as a British king, and the centrality of Britain as the backdrop of the stories, was
always a central part of the narrative. It was impossible to forget that Arthur belonged to
England and the Angevins, even when his legends were being elaborated abroad for a
largely foreign audience.[531]

The first major addition to the legend of Arthur was added by Wace in his 1155
Roman de Brut, the Old French translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum
Britanniae*. In his description of Arthur's court, Wace included the earliest reference to
the Round Table. According to Wace, Arthur had the table built because each of the

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[528] *Itinerarium*, 202.
[529] Guiraut de Calanson, quoted in Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*, 88 (quote); Caroline Jewers, "Another Arthur among the Troubadours," *Tenso* 24 (2009): 20–46, at 32.
[530] Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Parzival and Titural*, trans. Cyril Edwards, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5. See also Willem Snelleman, "Das Haus Anjou und der Orient in Wolframs 'Parzival'", Thesis (University of Amsterdam, 1941), and Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 395.
[531] Caroline Jewers, for example, notes that in late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century Occitania, Arthur's "politicized image becomes synonymous with members of the Plantagenet dynasty." Jewers, "Another Arthur among the Troubadours," 21.

nobles at his court claimed superiority over the others, which led to discord among them. At the Round Table, by contrast, "There sat the vassals / All as chiefs and all equal; / At the table equally they sat / And equally they were served."[532] Everyone flocked to Arthur's court, Wace adds, and "neither Scot nor Breton nor Frenchman, / Norman, Angevin, or Fleming, / neither Burgundian nor Lorrainer" wanted to stay away from court.[533] This portrait of Arthur's court presented an idealized model of Arthur's empire, in which the British king presided peacefully over the lords of all surrounding lands. At the Round Table, these lords sat as equals, and yet their very eagerness to come to Britain enhanced and upheld Arthur's status as their overlord. As a model for Henry II's recently inaugurated reign in England, Wace offered the image of a king in England presiding peacefully over the lords of Scotland and France—equals, yet subject to him.

The Round Table represents the first of three important objects associated with King Arthur and his court. The second and third of these, namely the Bleeding Lance and the Grail, were introduced to the Arthurian corpus by Chrétien de Troyes, whose five Arthurian romances are some of the most important works of Arthurian literature from the Middle Ages.[534] As William Kibler notes, Chrétien "was the first to speak of Queen Guinevere's affair with Lancelot of the Lake, the first to mention Camelot, and the first to write of the adventures of the Grail… He may even have been the first to sing of the

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[532] Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 244: "Illuec seeient li vassal / Tuit chevalement e tuit egal; / A la table egalment seeient / E egalment servi esteient."

[533] Wace, *Roman de Brut*, , ed. Weiss, 246: "Escot ne Bretun ne Franceis, / Normant, Angevin ne Flamenc / Ne Burguinun ne Loherenc."

[534] Wace's *Roman de Brut* was often bound together in manuscripts with Chrétien's romances. See, e.g., Édouard Frère, "Description des Manuscripts qui contiennent Le Roman de Brut," in Wace, *Le Roman De Brut*, ed. Édouard Frère, 2 vols (Rouen, 1838), i: xvii–lxviii.

tragic love of Tristan and Isolde."[535] Details about Chrétien's life are sparse, but he was

certainly connected with the households of the noble families of Champagne and

Flanders, both of which had political and familial ties to the Angevins. Chrétien wrote

The Knight of the Cart, about Lancelot's quest to rescue Guinevere, for Marie de

Champagne, Eleanor of Aquitaine's daughter by her first marriage to Louis VII of

France. Marie's husband, Henri the Liberal, was the nephew of Henry of Blois, abbot of

Glastonbury Abbey (1126–71) and bishop of Winchester (1129–71). Moreover, it is

likely that Chrétien also visited Henry II's court in England at some point in his career.[536]

Sometime after 1181, Chrétien moved to the Flemish court, where Philip of

Alsace (*c.* 1142–91), count of Flanders, became his new patron.[537] Philip's mother was

Henry II's aunt, Sibylla of Anjou, the daughter of Fulk V of Anjou, king of Jerusalem.

Philip's father, Thierry of Flanders, was a frequent crusader, going to the Holy Land in

1139, 1146, 1158, and 1164. It was while in Jerusalem that Thierry had first met Sibylla.

Their son Philip, in turn, fought in the Holy Land in the service of his cousin, Baldwin IV

of Jerusalem, from 1177–8; in 1190 he departed with the French army on the Third

Crusade, and died the following year at Acre.[538] During his life, Philip also had been a

companion of Henry the Young King of England, and was an avid supporter of Thomas

Becket. Walter Map recalled a young man who, "left our mother and his, England," to

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[535] William W. Kibler (ed.), Introduction to Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*, ed. and trans. William W. Kibler (New York and London: Penguin, 1991), 1. Chrétien's romances are *Erec and Enide*, *Cligés*, *The Knight of the Cart* (*Lancelot*), *The Knight with the Lion* (*Yvain*), and the unfinished *Story of the Grail* (*Perceval*).
[536] Kibler (ed.), Introduction to Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*, 4–6; Richard Barber, *The Holy Grail: Imagination and Belief* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 10.
[537] Kibler (ed.), Introduction to Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*, 4–5.
[538] Martín de Riquer (ed.), Introduction to *El Cuento del Graal de Chrétien de Troyes y sus Continuaciones*, Selección de lecturas medievales 31 (Madrid: Ediciones Siruela, First Edition 1989, Second Edition 1993), xvi–ii.

join Philip of Flanders, "since of all the princes of this age, excepting ours, this man is the strongest in arms and in governing, now that young King Henry, the son of Henry [II] our king, has died, to whom (thank God!) no one today is an equal."[539] The count of Flanders thus had numerous family and friendship ties to the royal families of both England and Jerusalem. Philip's influence over men like the Young Henry and Thomas Becket, moreover, not only linked him to the Angevin court in England, but frequently posed a direct threat to Henry II.[540]

As Nicholas Paul has demonstrated, many of the great noble families of twelfth-century Europe could boast multiple generations of crusaders, and those same warriors were often also patrons of increasingly elaborate stories about Arthur.[541] The counts of Flanders are a fine example of this practice. It was under the patronage of Philip of Flanders that Chrétien de Troyes wrote his final (and unfinished) romance, the *Histoire du Sant Graal* (*Story of the Grail*), which tells the story of the knights Perceval and Gawain, and their quest to learn the significance of the mysterious grail and lance and the identity of their owner, the Fisher King.[542] The narrative follows young, naïve Perceval, who initially imagines that knights are angels, and merges chivalric tournament scenes with more contemplative scenes of penance, abstinence, and spiritual retreat from court. Perceval's journey of self-discovery leads him to the home of the Fisher King. There, as

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[539] Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 278: "matrem nostrum et suam Angliam exiuit, seque Philippo Flandrensium comiti solum alienigenam dedit, quatinus armis instrui mereretur ab ipso, ipsumque preelegit dominum; nec iniunste, quoniam omnium huius temporis principum, excepto nostro, strenuissimus est armis et regimine, postquam Henricus rex iunior decessit, nostril filius Henrici regis, cui nemo (Deo gracias!) hodie par est."
[540] See Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 48.
[541] See, e.g., Paul, *To Follow in their Footsteps*, 69, 83–8, 174.
[542] Nineteen manuscript copies of the text survive, of which fifteen are relatively complete and four are more fragementary. Barber, *The Holy Grail*, 25

part of a formal procession, he encounters the grail and lance, objects clearly laden with divine power. The rest of this unfinished tale describes Perceval's and Gawain's quests to learn more about these objects. In spite of its ambiguities, this is Chrétien's most spiritual work, and the one most strikingly connected to crusading ideals.

Chrétien most likely wrote the *Graal* in the decade between Philip of Flanders' return from the Holy Land in 1178 and his again taking the cross in 1188.[543] Martín de Riquer and Martin Aurell have both argued that Chrétien's final work was probably intended to reflect Philip's relationships to Jerusalem and to Baldwin IV, the Leper King, in whose service Philip had fought. Riquer notes that the Frankish nobles in Jerusalem had even offered Philip the regency in return for his military services in Egypt, but this only resulted in "a disastrous campaign in Tripoli and Antioch."[544] It is likely that prior to departing for Jerusalem in 1188, Philip commissioned Chrétien to write the Grail story to show the potential for redemption, and to justify the count's earlier failures defending the kingdom of Jerusalem.[545]

Riquer and Aurell also highlight very specific parallels between Philip of Flanders's family tree and the familial relationship between Chrétien's Perceval and the Fisher King. Perceval discovers that the Grail King is in fact his maternal uncle, and the crippled Fisher King is his first cousin.[546] In just the same way, Amaury I of Jerusalem was Philip of Flanders' maternal uncle, and the leper king Baldwin IV was his first cousin. Notably, both the Fisher King and Baldwin IV suffered from crippling diseases,

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[543] Riquer, Introduction to *El Cuento del Graal*, xv.

[544] Riquer, Introduction to *El Cuento del Graal*, xvi–ii (quote xvii).

[545] Riquer, Introduction to *El Cuento del Graal*, xvii–iii, xix. See also Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 357–8.

[546] Chrétien de Troyes, "The Story of the Grail," in *Arthurian Romances*, 460.

which, as Aurell points out, left their lands in need of protection.[547] These family ties served as an important reminder of Philip's personal affiliation with the royal family of Jerusalem, and even his potential to rule in Baldwin's place.

This relationship between the count of Flanders and the king of Jerusalem, however, also posed a threat to Henry II's imperial ambitions. As we have seen in earlier chapters, Henry never undertook a crusade of his own. He was nevertheless aware of the possibility that Philip could potentially claim the throne of Jerusalem for himself, at England's expense.[548] Indeed, as grandsons of Fulk V of Anjou—and thus first cousins of Baldwin IV—both Philip and Henry II had equal claims to the inheritance of Jerusalem should Baldwin's line fail—and given his leprosy, failure seemed most likely. Chrétien's *Histoire du Sant Graal* was thus intimately caught up in the greater dynastic political struggles between rival branches of the Angevin comital and royal lines, both of which had legitimate claims to the kingdom of Jerusalem.

In Chrétien's narrative, the young Perceval finds himself the guest of the mysterious Fisher King. At his host's castle, he witnesses a strange procession:

> A squire came forth from a chamber carrying a white lance by the middle of its shaft… Everyone in the hall saw the white lance with its white point from whose tip there issued a drop of blood, and this red drop flowed down to the squire's hand… Then two other squires entered holding in their hands candelabra of pure gold, crafted with enamel inlays… A maiden accompanying the two young men was carrying a grail with her two hands… After she had entered the hall carrying the grail the room was so brightly illuminated that the candles lost their brilliance like stars and the moon when the sun rises.[549]

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[547] Riquer, Introduction to *El Cuento del Graal*, xxi, xxxvi (a genealogy of Philip of Flanders and Perceval); Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 294.
[548] Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 48.
[549] Chrétien de Troyes, "The Story of the Grail," in *Arthurian Romances*, 420.

Perceval fails to ask his host about these objects, and Chrétien never explicitly identifies them as representing any specific lance or grail, nor does he ever refer to the grail as "holy." It is likely that the author intended to reveal the true identity of these objects at the end of the story, as the plot revolves around Perceval's and Gawain's attempts to learn more about them. Gawain, for instance, vows to find the "lance whose point weeps with the clear blood it sheds."[550] Unfortunately, Chrétien never completed the *Histoire du Sant Graal*, so his intended resolution to the plot remains a mystery.

Chrétien ultimately left the identity of the lance and grail ambiguous. According to Richard Barber, "In 1180, as far as we can tell, no one would have known anything of the 'holy thing' called the Grail."[551] Yet for a noble audience steeped in Biblical and crusading culture, and often descended from veterans of the First Crusade, it is hard to imagine that Chrétien's audience would not have understood these items as relics related to Christ's Passion. According to the Gospel of John, while Jesus hung upon the Cross "a soldier opened his side with a lance, and continuously there flowed out [from it] blood and water."[552] The hermit Peter Bartholomew had famously rediscovered the Holy Lance at Antioch in 1098. He and the leaders of the First Crusade used the Lance to rally the Frankish troops to victory over their Muslim foes.[553] Another, competing, Holy Lance relic was housed at the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Philip of Flanders visited this

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[550] Chrétien de Troyes, "The Story of the Grail," in *Arthurian Romances*, 456.
[551] Barber, *The Holy Grail*, 27.
[552] John 19:34: "sed unus militum lancea latus eius aperuit et continuo exivit sanguis et aqua."
[553] *Anonymi Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolymitanorum*, ed. Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1890), 341–5.

version of the lance, supposedly a gift to Constantine the Great from his mother Helena, while passing through the Byzantine capital in 1178.[554]

A twelfth-century audience would undoubtedly have made the connection between the Fisher King's lance dripping with "clear blood" and the Holy Lance dripping with blood and water.[555] Moreover, in the procession witnessed by Perceval, the mysterious lance was always accompanied by the grail. Chrétien referred to this latter relic simply as "a grail" (*un graal*), and described it as a large gold, jewel-encrusted dish.[556] This description to the grail could also be applied to many twelfth-century reliquaries, most notably the jeweled and enameled reliquaries made in Limoges. Indeed, the mystery surrounding the grail, its ornate gilding and decoration reminiscent of reliquaries, the fact that it held the Host, and its constant association with the lance, were more than enough to identify it as another relic of the Passion.[557]

Robert de Boron and Joseph of Arimathea

Chrétien de Troyes' romances almost immediately inspired other authors, and the unfinished Grail story, in particular, served as a sort of narrative challenge.[558] One of the

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[554] Colin Morris, "Policy and Visions: The Case of the Holy Lance at Antioch," in *War and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of J. O. Prestwich*, ed. J. Gillingham and J. C. Holt (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1984): 33–45; Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 294.

[555] Nigel Bryant writes that it is "inconceivable" that people would not have "instantly" recognized this connection. Nigel Robert Bryant (ed.), Introduction to *Merlin and the Grail: Joseph of Arimathea, Merlin, Perceval: the Trilogy of Prose Romances Attributed to Robert De Boron* (D. S. Brewer, 2008), 4. See also Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 294.

[556] Nigel Robert Bryant, Introduction to *Merlin and the Grail*, 4; Chrétien de Troyes, "The Story of the Grail," in *Arthurian Romances*, 421.

[557] Bryant, Introduction to *Merlin and the Grail*, 4–5; Chrétien de Troyes, "The Story of the Grail," in *Arthurian Romances*, 460.

[558] Among the various continuations of the Arthur story are the anonymous *Perlesvaus* or the *Haut livre du Graal* (c. 1201–1210); the Lancelot-Grail cycle consisting of the prose *Lancelot* (1215–1225), the *Quête du*

earliest continuations was Robert de Boron's trilogy *Joseph d'Arimathie, Merlin*, and

Perceval (also called the *Didot-Perceval*), generally dated to *c*. 1200.[559] Robert wrote for

his patron, Gautier de Montbéliard, lord of Montfaucon in the Franche-Comté.[560] Like

Philip of Flanders, Gautier was a crusader with family connections to the royal family of

Jerusalem. He married the daughter of Amaury II of Lusignan (d. 1205), king of

Jerusalem and Cyprus, and served Amaury's successors, Hugh I of Cyprus (d. 1218) and

Jean de Brienne (d. 1237), in the Holy Land and Egypt until his death in 1212.[561]

 In contrast to the patron, not much is known about the author Robert de Boron.[562]

His *Joseph* and *Merlin*, in French verse, survive in only one manuscript, and the latter is

only a fragment. The complete trilogy is preserved in a prose translation made a decade

or so later (probably *c*. 1210).[563] Robert's great contribution to Arthurian legend was to

provide a thoroughly Christian history, focused on Jerusalem, for the Grail.[564] Richard

O'Gorman has called Robert de Boron's work "one of the boldest attempts to achieve a

broad synthesis of sacred history and secular literary narrative to survive from the French

Middle Ages."[565]

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saint Graal (1225–1230) and the *Mort du roi Arthur* (1230); the *Histoire du saint Graal*; and the *Histoire de Merlin* (1230–1235). See Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 369–70, 384.

[559] Riquer gives as a possible range of composition the period from 1183–1201. Riquer, *El Cuento del Graal*, xxxi.

[560] Richard O'Gorman, Preface to Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie: A Critical Edition of the Verse and Prose Versions*, ed. Richard O'Gorman (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1995), ix.

[561] Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 399–400.

[562] Martin Aurell argues against the claim that Robert was from an Anglo-Norman family in England. See Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 400.

[563] It is possible that *Perceval* was not written by Robert de Boron. See Bryant, Introduction to *Merlin and the Grail*, 2; Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 369; O'Gorman, Preface to Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, x, 6. The prose *Joseph* survives in seventeen manuscripts.

[564] Bryant, Introduction to *Merlin and the Grail*, 4, 6.

[565] O'Gorman, Preface to Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, ix.

Robert de Boron's *Joseph* represents the first intersection of Arthur's history with the legend of Joseph of Arimathea.[566] Joseph appears in all four Gospels as a disciple of Christ. The Evangelists describe how Joseph, a wealthy man from Arimathea, asked Pilate for permission to take Jesus' body down from the Cross and give it a proper burial. Joseph (helped in John's Gospel by Nicodemus) then wrapped the body in a shroud and placed it in the cave tomb originally intended for himself.[567] Robert de Boron's *Joseph* picks up where the Gospel writers stopped. The poem takes as its foundation the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, the *Cura Sanitatis Tiberii*, *Veronica*, the *Acta Pilati*, and the *Vindicta Salvatoris* (also known as the *Vengeance of Our Lord*).[568] These apocryphal texts focused on events in the Holy Land following Jesus' death, tracing what happened to Christ's followers and detractors in the decades after the Crucifixion in 33.

In Robert de Boron's retelling of the story, the Jews bring Pilate the "vessel" (*veissel*) from the Last Supper. Thus when Joseph of Arimathea comes to Pilate, the governor asks him if he knew Jesus, and then offers to give him the vessel as a remembrance of Christ.[569] Joseph then goes to wash Jesus' body, taking with him this vessel, in which he catches the "clear blood" (*cler sanc*) running down Christ's limbs.[570] Joseph is later imprisoned at the will of the other Jews, and loses the vessel, but Christ appears to him in prison and returns it, urging Joseph to guard it and to think of the

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[566] See, e.g., Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 89–90; Valerie M. Lagorio, "The Evolving Legend of St Joseph of Glastonbury," in *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, ed. James. P. Carley (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001): 55–81, at 62 (Originally published in *Speculum* 46 (1971), 209–31); Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 369.

[567] Matthew 27:57–60; Mark 15:43–6; Luke 23:50–3; John 19:38–41.

[568] Riquer, *El Cuento del Graal*, xxxi; Martín de Riquer, *La Leyenda del graal y temas épicos medievales* (Madrid: Editorial Prense Española, 1968), 65.

[569] Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, 72 and 74 (verse version), 73 and 75 (prose version).

[570] Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, 76 (verse version), 77 and 79 (prose version).

Trinity. Joseph calls the cup "the precious vessel" (*le veissel precïeus*).[571] A few pages later, Robert de Boron himself interjects into the story to comment that he has thus recounted the story of Joseph that he had found written in various histories. Importantly, he specifically refers to the "Grail" (*Graal*), making explicit the Grail's identity as the vessel given to Joseph of Arimathea first by Pilate and then by Christ.[572]

This first part of Robert de Boron's *Joseph* focuses on the story of how he received the Grail. In the second half of the story, Robert describes how the Grail serves as a reminder of the Trinity and Christian salvation, and details the future of the vessel, most notably its voyage to Avalon. As Robert explains, Joseph's followers include his sister Enigeus, her husband Bron, and their twelve sons. Christ instructs Joseph to ask each of his nephews whether he wants to marry, and the twelfth, Alain li Gros, says no. Joseph thus chooses Alain to be the next Grail guardian, and explains to him the Grail's secrets.[573] He tells Alain that he must take the Grail and lead his followers "toward the West" (*vers Occident*) until they arrive at the Vail of Avalon (*Vaus d'Avaron*), and there they should stay.[574] Joseph's disciple Peter, who is to meet them there, reaffirms these instructions, repeating Joseph's directions to find "a solitary place," (*un solitaire leu*) to the West, called the Vail of Avalon.[575]

And so Joseph of Arimathea remained in Judea, while Alain, Bron, and the others sailed "toward the setting sun—into the West."[576] In Avalon, Alain guarded the secrets of

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[571] Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, 104 and 106 (verse version), 105 and 107 (prose version).
[572] Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, 112 (verse version), 113 (prose version).
[573] Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, 286–305.
[574] Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, 306 and 308 (verse version), 307 and 309 (prose version).
[575] Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, 314 (verse version), 315 (prose version).
[576] Robert de Boron, "Joseph of Arimathea," in *Merlin and the Grail*, 43.

the Grail, and Bron became known as the "Rich Fisher" King (*le Riche Pescheeur*).[577]

Robert de Boron never explicitly states that Avalon is in England, but the instructions to

sail into the setting sun in the West are reminiscent of the goddess Diana's instructions to

Brutus at the beginning of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*—the remote place at the

Western edge of the world was surely Britain.[578]

The associations between Joseph of Arimathea's story, the Grail, and England

become more explicit in Robert's *Merlin*, which is set in Britain during the reigns of

Uther Pendragon and his son Arthur. Just as he provided a Christian history for the Grail

in *Joseph*, in both that story and *Merlin* Robert de Boron gave a new Christian symbolism

to the Round Table. In *Joseph*, Christ tells Joseph of Arimathea that "several tables will

be established in my service, to make the sacrament in my name, which will be a

reminder of the cross."[579] Later, when Joseph and his family and followers are living in

exile, the people give in to sin and suffer a famine. Joseph thus prays before the Grail,

asking for a solution to their troubles. The Lord tells him to remember how He had been

betrayed at the Last Supper, and instructs Joseph to build another table as a physical and

spiritual replica of the table from the Last Supper—rather like how medieval Europeans

built copies of the Holy Selupchre. Just as Judas betrayed Jesus, Robert adds, so will no

one sit in the seat to the right hand of Joseph at this new table.[580] One day a man named

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[577] Robert de Boron, *Joseph d'Arimathie*, 322 and 324 (verse version), 323 and 325 (prose version).
[578] Indeed, later continuators made this connection between England and Avalon. See Lagorio, "The Evolving Legend of St Joseph of Glastonbury," 62. Richard Barber, by contrast, suggests that Robert de Boron intended the Vaus d'Avaron to represent Avallon in Burgundy, overlooking "two ravines" near Montfaucon, which, Barber suggests, are "perhaps a better match for the vale or valley of Avalon." Barber, *The Holy Grail*, 132.
[579] Robert de Boron, "Joseph of Arimathea," in *Merlin and the Grail*, 22.
[580] Robert de Boron, "Joseph of Arimathea," in *Merlin and the Grail*, 35.

Moyse, falsely promising that he had repented of his sins, sat in this empty seat, and immediately vanished "as if he had never been."[581] Thus the Grail Table punished the unjust and unworthy, while providing joy to those who were spiritually upright.

In Robert de Boron's *Merlin*, these two tables serve as the inspiration for a third table—the Round Table. Uther consults with Merlin about how to "win Christ's love." Merlin then recounts the story of the Last Supper and explains to Uther how the soldier who had taken Jesus' body down from the Cross (that is, Joseph of Arimathea) had built another table named after the Grail, which separated good people from the bad. Merlin instructs Uther to build a third table, "in the name of the Trinity, which these three tables will signify."[582] Uther's lords sit around the table, and the empty seat is not filled until the time of his son Arthur. Presumably, Perceval, the most innocent and spiritual of Arthur's knights, would ultimately be the one worthy to sit in this seat.

The Most Ancient Church at Glastonbury

As Robert Nigel Bryant has commented, either Robert de Boron or the prose redactor of his work "carefully connects apocryphal Biblical matter with the mythical–historical material about early Britain."[583] One aspect of this, which we have already seen above, was to connect the narratives about Joseph of Arimathea to British mythology. Another important component was the construction of a geographical association between the Holy Land and Britian. Nowhere was this more evident than at Glastonbury,

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[581] Robert de Boron, "Joseph of Arimathea," in *Merlin and the Grail*, 38.
[582] Robert de Boron, "Merlin," in *Merlin and the Grail*, 92.
[583] Bryant, Introduction to *Merlin and the Grail*, 10.

whose associations with the mythical Isle of Avalon led to its identification as the

ultimate home of the Grail. Glastonbury gave these legends and apocryphal tales a

physical manifestation on the English landscape.

Sometime between 1125 and 1135, William of Malmesbury arrived at

Glastonbury Abbey as a sort of scholar-in-residence. The monks had brought him to their

abbey with the task of writing about Glastonbury and its saints. Their new abbot, Henry

of Blois—the uncle of Henri the Liberal of Champagne whose wife Marie patronized

Chrétien de Troyes—commissioned William of Malmesbury's *De Antiquitate*

Glastoniensis Ecclesie as a means of enhancing the monastery's prestige. Essentially,

William's job was to write a verifiable history of Glastonbury, grounded in evidence

from documents in the abbey's archives.[584] William's work, by no means radical or

overly inventive in its depiction of history, nevertheless laid the foundation for the later

development of some of the best-known elements of the Arthurian legend: the eventual

linking of Glastonbury to the stories of King Arthur, the Holy Grail, Joseph of

Arimathea, and the history of Judea at the time of Christ's death.

William of Malmesbury's *De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesie* (On the

Antiquity of the Glastonbury Church) traced the abbey's history from its supposed

origins in the Romano-Celtic period up to his own day.[585] According to William, the

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[584] See, e.g., Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey*, xxiii, 18–21, 154; Antonia Treharne, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century," in *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, ed. James. P. Carley (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001): 29–53, at 35, 39; Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*, 151; R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 27–8.

[585] *De antiquitate Glastoniensis ecclesie* is a problematic text, as the earliest manuscript of it, dating to 1247, includes a large number of later interpolations. Where possible, I use John Scott's reconstruction of the original text, which he bases off of an examination of textual variations between manuscripts and a comparison to William of Malmesbury's account of Glastonbury's history in his *De Gestis Regum*

ancient annals that he consulted in the abbey's library told of how Lucius, king of the

Britons, had sent to Pope Eleutherius (c. 174–189) requesting him to send missionaries to

the island. The missionaries, whom William does not name, arrived in England, and at

Glastonbury they built a church dedicated to St Mary, the mother of Christ. William adds

that there are some who say that, "the Church of Glastonbury was not made by the hands

of other men, but that the very Disciples of Christ built it."[586] He is unable to verify this

assertion, but neither does he wholly dismiss it, for "if the Apostle Philip preached to the

Gauls," as the Carolingian author Freculf (d. 850/2) attested, then it is entirely possible

that his teachings could have crossed the Channel into Britain.[587] Ever the cautious

historian, however, William ultimately leaves open the question of who had first founded

the church at Glastonbury. He instead moves on to describing the sanctity and antiquity

of the abbey's Old Church, called in English the *Ealdechirche* and in Latin the *Vetusta*

Ecclesia. By giving the church's name in both Latin and Old English, the chronicler

emphasizes its English nature. This church, William concludes, is to the best of his

knowledge the "most ancient in England" (*antiquissima in Anglia*).[588]

Anglorum. See John Scott, Introduction to *The Early History of Glastonbury: An Edition, Translation and Study of William of Malmesbury's* De Antiquitate Glastonie Ecclesie, ed. and trans. John Scott (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1981), 34–9; for Scott's recreation of William of Malmesbury's original text, see 168–72 (Hereafter cited as William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate*). Cf. R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 29.

[586] William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate*, 168, and William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. Thomas Duffy Hardy, 2 vols. (London: Sumptibus Societas, 1840), i: 32: "Ecclesiam Glastonie non fecerunt aliorum hominum manus, sed ipsi discipuli Christi eam edificauerunt." Cf. Hebrews 9:2: "tabernaculum non manucactum, id est, non huius creationis." See also Aelred Watkin, "The Glastonbury Legends," in *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*: 13–27, at 23; R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 34–5, 37.

[587] William of Malmesbury*, De Antiquitate*, 168, and William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, i: 32: "quia si Philippus apostolus Gallis predicauit."

[588] William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate*, 168–9 (quote at 169). Cf. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, i: 33: "in Anglia vetustissima." See also R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 34–5.

This, then, was William of Malmesbury's account of Glastonbury's ancient history. It was a relatively simple and unadorned narrative, yet hinted at the possibility that the founders of the *Vetusta Ecclesia* may have had some connection to the Apostle Philip, and through him, to Christ himself. On its own, however, William's account did little but strongly suggest the antiquity of Glastonbury's foundation and its status as England's oldest church. Yet in the century that followed William's visit to Glastonbury, several generations of interpolators added extensively to William's history, fleshing out details of events, elaborating on the role of Jesus's Disciples in England's early conversion, and identifying Glastonbury with the fabled Isle of Avalon, the resting place of King Arthur and the Grail.

The interpolations to William's *De Antiquitate* are not always easy to date, but historians generally agree that they began shortly after he left the monastery. The majority of them were probably added between Abbot Henry of Blois's death in 1171 and 1247, the date of the earliest extant manuscript copy of the text.[589] The revised version of the *De Antiquitate* begins by expanding on William's brief mention of the Apostle Philip. The anonymous interpolator explains that the first church at Glastonbury was founded by twelve disciples of the Apostles Philip and James (Jacobus).[590] This statement is significant in two ways. First, it gives Glastonbury a near-contemporary link to Christ, establishing a direct chain a descent from the original twelve Disciples to this second generation who apocryphally founded Glastonbury. The addition of James to this

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[589] Watkin, "The Glastonbury Legends," 15; R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 29.
[590] [Pseudo-]William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate*, 43–5. I will use "Pseudo-William" to differentiate the texts written by William himself from those likely added by later interpolators.

pedigree made the connection doubly strong, while the number of them, twelve, further

emphasized their parallel to Christ's Disciples.

The second, and related, point of significance in this revision of the story is the

antiquity that it granted to Glastonbury. Instead of attributing England's Christianization

to the time of Pope Eleutherius, the interpolation moves this date back a full century to 63

CE.[591] This date far precedes the arrival of St. Augustine of Canterbury's delegation to

Kent, so celebrated by Bede, at the end of the sixth century; it also precedes the date

associated with Pope Eleutherius. The monks wanted no one to rival their church as the

oldest—and thus, by conclusion, most important—in the kingdom. Indeed, it is quite

likely that Glastonbury's claims to an Apostolic foundation were intended as a direct

challenge to Canterbury and its growing fame following the death of Thomas Becket in

1170. Notably, both monastic communities focused on their (Christian) English

heritage—and their claims to be new Jerusalems in England—as the best means of

asserting their authority and legitimacy within the kingdom.

The popularity of Becket's shrine, coupled with Canterbury's status as the leading

archdiocese in England, gave it a great deal of power and sway in the kingdom. The

Glastonbury community responded by attempting to usurp the cult of St Dunstan and by

emphasizing Glastonbury's position as the oldest church in England—a font of English

Christianity centuries before Canterbury, with a foundation linked (almost) directly to

Christ. In 1184, a fire destroyed Glastonbury's Church of St Mary; not long afterward,

the monks announced that they had found St. Dunstan's relics in the grounds of the

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[591] [Pseudo-]William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate*, 45.

ruined church. Dunstan had been abbot of Glastonbury from 940–957/60, then became

archbishop of Canterbury in 960. In the eleventh century the Canterbury community had

found his remains and buried him at Christ Church.[592]

According to the interpolated version of William of Malmesbury's *De

Antiquitate*, however, at King Edmund's orders Dunstan's remains had been moved from

Canterbury to Glastonbury in 1012, and the records of where he was buried kept secret

until the fire of 1184 necessitated his exhumation.[593] Then, in case that was not enough,

the interpolator also noted that the missionaries Phaganus and Deruvianus, sent to Britain

by Pope Eleutherius in 160, had refounded the abbey.[594] They knew the place was sacred

because they saw a cross (*figuram nostre redemcionis*) in the sky over it. Through this

sign and others, the Glastonbury interpolator claims, "the Lord specially elected that

place before others in Britain," in the "name of his glorious mother."[595]

Glastonbury as Avalon

William of Malmesbury wrote in the 1120s that "the sepulcher of Arthur is

nowhere known."[596] In the 1130s, Geoffrey of Monmouth had given Arthur's final

resting place a name –Avalon – but never specifically stated that Arthur was buried there,

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[592] Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey*, xxi, 10–12, 24, 117–8, 126.
[593] [Pseudo-]William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate*, 72–4, 77–8.
[594] Their names first appeared in the work of Geoffrey of Monmouth in 1136. See Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury*, 186n14.
[595] [Pseudo-]William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate*, 48: "Dominus ipsum locum pre ceteris Britannie specialiter elegerit ad nomen gloriose genetricis sue ibidem inuocandum."
[596] William of Malmesbury, quoted by R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Traditions*, 40. See also Carley (ed), "Introduction" to John of Glastonbury, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey: An Edition, Translation and Study of John of Glastonbury's Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie*, ed. James P. Carley, trans. David Townsend, revised and enlarged edition with translation (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1985), xlix.

noting only that he was taken to the mysterious isle for the tending of his wounds.[597]

Another version of the story, popular throughout twelfth-century Europe, suggested that Arthur had been taken to Mount Etna in Sicily.[598] This mystery surrounding Arthur's final resting place, and the lack of an identifiable grave, became the foundation for the Welsh and Breton belief that the British king would one day return and lead the British people to victory over the English.[599] The messianic hopes surrounding Arthur posed a problem for the Angevin kings, who sought to subjugate Wales to English control. The Welsh in turn looked to Arthur as a promise of their success in resisting Angevin power. As long as there was no specific place identified with Avalon, and no specific tomb identified with Arthur, the 'once and future king' posed a threat to Angevin hopes in Wales and Brittany.[600]

In the early versions of the Arthurian story Avalon remained a Celtic afterworld unassociated with any specific geographic location. But by the start of Richard I's reign, Avalon was identified with a specific place on the map: Glastonbury. The unique topography of the Somerset countryside helped to shape Glastonbury's identity as a former island. Glastonbury Tor, the model for the grassy hill that featured so prominently in the 2012 London Olympics Opening Ceremony, rises more than five hundred feet above the surrounding plain and is visible for twenty-five miles in every direction. The

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[597] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 253. See also R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 68; Carley (ed), "Introduction" to John of Glastonbury, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, xlix.
[598] Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*, 153. Amongst those authors whom Aurell identifies as believing Etna was Arthur's resting place were Gervase of Tilbury, Caesarius of Heisterbach, and the anonymous author of the Occitan romance *Jaufre* (c. 1160–90).
[599] The "sleeping king" was a recurring theme in Celtic mythology. See Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 157.
[600] For discussions of Arthur's messianic role in (Celtic) British nationalism and Anglo-Welsh relations, see Martin Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*, esp. 147; Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 158–9.

Glastonbury plains themselves were once an ancient swamp, with Celtic villages built on pilings around its edge. These raised villages, along with the Tor, likely gave the town its identification as an island surrounded by a lake.[601] As early as the 1120s or 1130s, Caradoc of Llancarvan had identified Glastonbury as the site of the glass island fortress to which Arthur's enemy Melwas (also known as Méléagant) abducted Guinevere.[602] Geoffrey of Monmouth had similarly identified Avalon as an island (*Insula Avalonia*), which, in his *Vita Merlini* (Life of Merlin) he called the *Insula pomorum*, or Isle of Apples.[603] All that remained was for someone to connect these various islands together as simply different toponyms for the same place within England.

It is impossible to know exactly when this connection was first made, but it had certainly happened by 1191. The earliest extant textual reference to this association is found in Gerald of Wales's *De Instructione Principis*, written *c*. 1192–6 following his visit to Glastonbury.[604] According to Gerald, "That [island] which now is called Glastonia, was in antiquity called the Isle of Avalon."[605] He then provides a linguistic explanation for the names, explaining that Avalon, the Isle of Apples, is called in Latin

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[601] Philip Rahtz and Lorna Watts, *Glastonbury: Myth & Archaeology* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: 2003), 11–36, 67. Rahtz and Watts note that the Tor is still believed by many people to be an entry into the Celtic otherworld, the home of fairies and other mythical beings (p. 69). Cf. Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 159.

[602] Carley (ed), Introduction to John of Glastonbury, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, xlix–1; James P. Carley, Introduction to *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, ed. James. P. Carley (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001), 1; Richard Barber, *Arthur*, 65; Antonia Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century," in *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*: 29–53, at 47.

[603] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 253; Geoffrey of Monmouth, "Vita Merlini," in *Die Sagen von Merlin: der Prophetia Merlini des Gottfried von Monmouth und der Vita Merlini*, ed. Albert Schulz (Germany: Berlag, 1853), 299. For an English translation of the *Vita*, see Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Geoffrey of Monmouth's Life of Merlin: A New Verse Translation*, trans. Mark Walker (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley, 2011), 93.

[604] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 192, and *Opera*, viii: 128: .

[605] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 192, and *Opera*, viii: 128: "Quae nunc autem Glastonia dicitur, antiquitus insula Avallonia dicebatur."

the *insula pomifera*, and in Welsh the word for apple is *aval*. Glastonbury is so-called

because it is also the Isle of Glass, in Latin *insula vitrea*, in Welsh *Inis-vitrin*, and in

Saxon (i.e. Old English) *glas* plus *bury* (Glass Town).[606] This etymology is also found in

the altered version of William of Malmesbury's history of the abbey, where the

interpolator explains that the area is called *Ynswytrin* by the Britons, but *Glastinbiry* or

Glasteing by the English.[607] This identity of Glastonbury with place names from

Arthurian legend is an excellent example of what Amaury Chauou terms the "imaginary

geography of the Arthurian world" (*géographie imaginaire du monde arthurien*).[608] As

Chauou argues, the specificity of place in the Arthurian corpus—in this instance, Avalon

and the Isle of Glass—helped to link the legend to the land, which in turn allowed future

generations within those landscapes to claim Arthur for themselves.

By the end of Henry II's reign, all that was lacking was some form of concrete

evidence to solidify Arthur's attachment to Glastonbury. That was remedied when, in

1191, the monks at Glastonbury, under the leadership of their abbot Henry de Sully,

announced the discovery of the remains of King Arthur in the churchyard of Glastonbury

Abbey. This discovery would intimately link Glastonbury, Arthurian legend, and the

Holy Land together in a complicated web of mythology, faith, and propaganda that

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[606] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 192, and *Opera*, viii: 128. Cf. Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, iv: 49–50. Gransden notes that Gerald began *De Instructione* in 1192, while both Carley and R. F. Treharne give a date of *c*. 1193 for at least the Glastonbury-related parts of the text. Watkin dates the text to 1194, and Barber to 1196. See Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions," 44; Carley (ed), *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, xlix; R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 93; Watkin, "The Glastonbury Legends," 16; Barber, *Arthur*, 79.
[607] Pseudo-William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate*, 52, ch. 5. For a discussion on why this section is probably interpolated, see Scott (ed.), *De Antiquitate*, 188n24. See also Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 40–1.
[608] Chauou, *Le Roi Arthur*, 22.

survives to this day.

The massive fire of 1184 had swept through the abbey, destroying Glastonbury's
Vetusta Ecclesia and the Church of St Mary. These churches were Glastonbury's physical
links to its status as the most ancient foundation in England, and their loss was
devastating for the monastic community. The discovery of St Dunstan's relics in the
fire's aftermath had provided the monks with one means of asserting the abbey's
continued claims to antiquity and prominence, particularly against the growing popularity
of Becket's cult at Canterbury. But Dunstan's relics were hotly contested, and the abbey
sought other means of attracting pilgrims to their abbey after 1184. A number of scholars,
including James Carley, Antonia Gransden, and Valerie Lagorio, have commented on the
monks' sudden, even desperate, need for new sources of income at this time. They focus,
in particular, upon Glastonbury's relationship with the Angevin kings, and in particular
with Henry II. The abbey reaped great benefits from this relationship, for Henry liberally
opened the royal coffers to help rebuild the abbey church.[609]

Henry's interest in the abbey – at least according to Gerald of Wales, who had
been working for the king since 1184 – went beyond mere monetary aid.[610] In 1189,
Gerald reports, "the King of England, Henry the Second," related to the Glastonbury
monks that he had learned from a certain British (Welsh) bard (*cantore*) the site of King
Arthur's tomb. Arthur's body, he told them, was located in an oaken casket within the
abbey's cemetery, buried at least sixteen feet deep between two "pyramids"

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[609] Carley (ed.), "Introduction" to John of Glastonbury, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, l; Gransden,
"The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions," 31; Valerie M. Lagorio, "The Evolving Legend of St Joseph
of Glastonbury," 57.
[610] Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions," 50.

(*pyramidibus*).[611] Gerald's account of the exhumation of Arthur in his *De Instructione*

Principis is the 'official' record of the event, as he was commissioned by the monks

themselves to come to the abbey and report on the relics.[612] He retold the story, with

slight variations, in his *Speculum Ecclesiae* (*c*. 1217). Antonia Gransden suggests that the

monks also issued "propaganda pamphlets," no longer extant, announcing the discovery,

but leaving out Henry II's role because they felt his strained relations with the Church

might make the find too controversial.[613] Two other surviving chronicles from the first

half of the thirteenth century also describe the finding of Arthur's tomb: Ralph of

Coggeshall's *Chronicon Anglicanum* (post 1193–1224), and the chronicle of the

Cistercian abbey of Margam in Glamorgan (*c*. 1234).[614]

  Whether or not Henry II directed the monks where to dig in 1189, the

Glastonbury monks did not unearth the famous mythical king Arthur until 1191, during

the reign of Henry's heir, Richard I. "In our day" (*nostris diebus*), Gerald of Wales

reports, Arthur's body was found "between two pyramidal stones" (*inter lapides*

pyramideos duos), perhaps the uprights of two monumental stone crosses from the

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[611] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 192, and *Opera*, viii: 127. Historians question whether Henry II really did hear some story about Arthur's tomb from a Welsh *conteur*, or if the monks (or Gerald of Wales) later made this story up to make their discovery seem more legitimate. It is not hard to imagine the Angevin king taking an interest connecting in Arthur's death to Glastonbury. Valerie Lagorio and Antonia Gransden emphasize Henry's role as patron of the abbey, and his concern in helping the abbey to recover following the fire. Both scholars also point to the king's frequent patronage of literature related to British history. As Gransden notes, Robert of Gloucester—the dedicatee of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*—was Henry's uncle and had helped raise him. Henry himself frequently patronized authors like Wace, who wrote about Arthur in the larger context of British, Norman, and Angevin history. Martin Aurell cautions against equating "dedication" to someone like Arthur with "patronage" of his cult, but agrees that Henry grew up surrounded by Arthurian literature." See Lagorio, "The Evolving Legend of St Joseph of Glastonbury," 57; Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions," 48–9; Aurell, "Henry II and Arthurian Legend," 365 (quotes), 366–7, 380.

[612] On whether Gerald can be trusted as an eyewitness, see Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 149. On the date of the *De Instructione*, see R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 93–4.

[613] Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions," 50.

[614] Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions," 44.

Anglo-Saxon period, or the remains of some other ancient monumental sculpture.[615]

Ralph of Coggeshall suggests that, rather than specifically looking for Arthur's tomb, the

monks were burying one of their comrades who had recently died, and happened across it

unplanned.[616] Both Ralph and Gerald agree, however, that the monks, digging between

these pyramids, found an ancient oaken casket, the contents of which they ascertained

from a lead cross that accompanied the burial and that identified the grave as that of "the

celebrated King Arthur" (*inclytus Rex Arthurus*) and the location as "the Isle of Avalon"

(*Insula Avalonia*).[617]

The monks exhumed the body and translated it to a new marble tomb, which they

placed in their church.[618] Gerald asserts that he saw this tomb and its contents for himself,

lending his story an air of eyewitness legitimacy.[619] The relics reinforced Arthur's larger-

than-life reputation: the bones were "so large" (*tam grandia*) that when the monks

compared the tibia bone to that of the tallest man present, they found that the bone

reached from the ground all the way to three fingers beyond the monk's knee. The skull,

moreover, had a full palm's width between the brow and the eyes.[620] This was indeed a

giant among men. Importantly, this story directly mirrors a similar tale told in the 1020s

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[615] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 191–2, and *Opera*, viii: 127. Cf. Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, iv: 47; Ralph of Coggeshall, *Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon anglicanum, De expugnatione Terrae Sanctae libellus; Thomas Agnellus De morte et sepultura Henrici regis Angliae junioris; Gesta Fulconis filii Warini; Excerpta ex Otiis imperialibus Gervasii Tilebutiensis*, ed. J. Stevenson, 3 vols. (London, 1875), i: 36.
[616] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, i: 36.
[617] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, i: 36; Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 192, and *Opera*, viii: 127. This cross, no longer extant, survived long enough for Camden to reproduce it in his *Britannia* (1607–10). Several modern histories reprint Camden's version. See, e.g., R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 95; Barber, *King Arthur*, 61.
[618] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 192, and *Opera*, viii: 127. Cf. Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, iv: 50–1.
[619] In the *Speculum Ecclesie*, Gerald adds that "we saw" the lead cross, "and we read these letters" (*prospeximus, et literas has legimus*). Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, iv: 50.
[620] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 193, and *Opera*, viii: 129.

by Ademar of Chabannes, concerning the bones of Charlemagne. Ademar described how the German emperor Otto III was instructed in a dream to exhume Charlemagne's body at Aachen. When Charlemagne was found seated in royal regalia upon a throne, "a canon of that church…who was enormous and tall of statute, put the crown on his head as if to take its measure, but found the top of his head too small for it… He also compared his leg to that of the king, and his was found to be smaller for it."[621]

As Valerie Lagorio notes, the discovery of Arthur acted as a counter to the Capetian rulers' more recent claims to be the heirs of Charlemagne.[622] These claims to Charlemagne's legacy, which had begun around the year 1000, had seen a revival during the reigns of the Capetian kings Louis VI and of Eleanor of Aquitaine's first husband, Louis VII.[623] For the Angevins, Arthur, king of the Britons, offered, in John Gillingham's words, a "potential imperial mythology" through which they could rival the Capetians.[624] Clearly, in describing the bones at Glastonbury, Gerald of Wales wanted to present Arthur as equal, if not superior to, Charlemagne. In so doing, he was simultaneously promoting Angevin England's status as an equal, rather than a subordinate, of Capetian France.

The Political Significance of Arthur's Tomb

Scholars have long recognized that the monks at Glastonbury staged the discovery of the remains of Arthur. James Carley cites the monks' "stratagems" for bringing in new revenues, and calls the discovery "a well timed piece of publicity"; Antonia Gransden

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[621] Ademar of Chabannes, *Chronicon*, quoted in Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, 121.
[622] Lagorio, "The Evolving Legend of St Joseph of Glastonbury," 57–8.
[623] Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, 21–2.
[624] Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire*, 118.

references the monastery's desire for "prestige," and notes that the exhumation "was a bogus, a spectacle put on for the credulous public."[625] While it is important to recognize the discovery for what it was, however, it is not entirely helpful to focus on the falsified nature of the find. Ultimately, whether real or fake, pragmatic or pious, the discovery had a genuine and lasting impact upon both Arthurian literature and Angevin politics.

Arthur represented legitimacy for the Angevin kings as well as for Glastonbury Abbey. As I discussed earlier in this chapter, Arthur's fabled war with Rome offered the Angevin kings a model of spiritually-infused imperial conquest, backed by genealogical right. The discovery of Arthur's bones on English soil helped to further reinforce the physical and historical connections between the British king and the Angevin royal family. The find, moreover, had revealed that Arthur was a giant, emphasizing even more specifically the potency of his line.

The assertion of Angevin royal strength, grounded in the history of their kingdom, the power of their crown, and perhaps even the blood in their veins, was vital for the Angevin kings in their ongoing rivalry with France. Valerie Lagorio suggests that the efforts to link Glastonbury to Arthur's cult were a calculated political move, beneficial to both the abbey and Henry II. She emphasizes Henry's attempts to assert the independence of the Angevin dynasty from papal and Capetian claims of sovereignty over England and England's continental territories. By enhancing Glastonbury's fame, England could present a rival to the powerful French abbeys of Cluny, St Denis, and Citeaux. Even more than Canterbury, Glastonbury could adopt the status of a "national monastic shrine"

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[625] Carley (ed.), "Introduction" to John of Glastonbury, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, l (first and second quotes); Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions," 30 (third quote), 46 (fourth quote).

patronized by the king.[626] It is also possible, of course, that the impetus for such claims originated not so much with Henry, but rather from within the Glastonbury community.

Martin Aurell has examined the extent of Henry's attempts to deliberately shape the royal image through the use of Arthurian legend, specifically through the use of propaganda, which Aurell defines as "any form of deliberately manipulated political communication," and of ideology, defined as "ideas intended to assist in the taking, or holding, or augmentation of power."[627] He is much more cautious than Lagorio or Gillingham are about assigning Henry any credit for making political use of Arthurian legend. Indeed, Aurell argues that historians ought to give more credit to the interests and abilities of individuals beyond the immediate context of the Angevin royal court, who were far more likely to directly compose and patronize Arthurian literature than Henry was.[628] On the whole, Aurell concludes, the evidence "does not suggest a deliberate deployment of ideology" on Henry's part.[629]

While Aurell's points about the broad popularity of the Arthurian legend beyond the royal household are important, Henry II's patronage of Glastonbury Abbey certainly linked him to the discovery of Arthur in the minds of contemporaries, if not in fact. Whether Henry II deliberately guided the monks at Glastonbury, or whether the monks and their abbot acted of their own accord, the political implications of identifying Arthur's tomb undoubtedly benefited the Angevin monarchy. Arthur's exhumation

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[626] Lagorio, "The Evolving Legend of St Joseph of Glastonbury," 57–8. Cf. Carley, Introduction to *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, 2.
[627] Aurell, "Henry II and Arthurian Legend," 381.
[628] Aurell does acknowledge, however, that Henry was interested in promoting positive images of his dynasty. See Aurell, "Henry II and Arthurian Legend," 365, 380, 393.
[629] Aurell, "Henry II and Arthurian Legend," 393.

became a political factor in the ongoing struggle of the English to assert sovereignty over Wales. The Welsh—along with the Bretons—believed that Arthur would one day return and help them defeat their enemies and reinstitute British rule in England. Naturally, such prophecies posed a potential problem for the Angevins, since Arthur became a rallying point for Celtic nationalism focused against the English. For as long as Arthur's final resting place remained a mystery, he posed a threat to Angevin domination in Wales and Britanny. If, however, Arthur could be proven to have actually died, his messianic potential would die with him.

Aurell argues that such attempts to quash Welsh and Breton nationalism were limited at best, because Arthur's legend was so firmly entrenched in British ideology.[630] Indeed, shortly after Geoffrey Plantagenet, duke of Brittany and older brother of Richard I, died in 1186, his wife Constance gave birth to a son named Arthur, whom poets praised as King Arthur reincarnate.[631] Yet Gerald of Wales, at least, recognized the potential significance of Glastonbury's discovery for Anglo-Welsh relations, and took care to emphasize the verifiability of Arthur's death. In the *Speculum Ecclesiae*, he writes that because "many doubts" (*dubio multa*) and "fables" (*fabulae*) surrounded the circumstances of Arthur's death, the Welsh are "foolishly contending that he still lives."[632] Indeed, Gerald scoffs, the Welsh believe that Arthur will return "strong and powerful" (*fortis et potens*) to rule them once more, and they therefore await him, "just as the Jews await their Messiah." However, Gerald explains, this will never happen, for

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[630] Aurell, "Henry II and Arthurian Legend," 388–9.
[631] Jewers, "Another Arthur among the Troubadours," esp. 24–6.
[632] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, iv: 49: "ipsum adhuc vivere fatue contendentibus."

Arthur was taken to Avalon/Glastonbury, where he died of his wounds and "was buried…in the said sacred cemetery."[633] Arthur was dead, and, importantly, buried in English, not Welsh, soil.

Excavating Guinevere: the Question of Royal Legitimacy

Both Gerald of Wales and Ralph of Coggeshall reproduced the inscription written upon the lead cross that the monks found alongside Arthur's tomb. Yet while Ralph and later Glastonbury writers only mention of the discovery of Arthur's remains, Gerald asserts that the inscription read that Arthur was buried "with Guinevere, his second wife" (*cum Wennevereia uxore sua secunda*).[634] He goes on, detailing how, upon opening the oaken casket, the monks discovered two sets of bones, one of which still had a lock of a woman's hair attached to it, "blonde with pristine integrity and color" (*flava cum integritate pristina et colore*).[635] One of the monks, overcome by the excitement of the discovery and the beauty of the golden hair, picked the lock up in his hands, whereupon it immediately crumbled into dust.[636] In the *Speculum Ecclesiae*, Gerald placed this story in a series of morality tales about foolish monks, and added that the overzealous monk was so eager to grab the beautiful hair that he overbalanced and tumbled into the excavated pit of the grave.[637]

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[633] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, iv: 49–50: "expectant… sicut Judaei Messiam suum… dicto coemeterio sacro… sepultum fuit." Cf. Carley, Introduction to *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, 2.
[634] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 192; *Opera*, viii: 127; *Opera*, iv: 50. See also R. F. Treharne, *The Glastonbury Legends*, 93–4, 103.
[635] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 192, and *Opera*, viii: 127.
[636] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 192, and *Opera*, viii: 127.
[637] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, iv: 47.

The discovery of Guinevere's remains is central to Gerald's narrative, yet the story is strikingly absent from other accounts of the find. Charles Wood has argued convincingly that Guinevere was deliberately written out of the story of the exhumation. Arthur's queen was, Wood asserts, too controversial a figure to be so publicly attached to the Plantagenet family.[638] In Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*, for instance, Arthur is forced to cut short his attack on Rome when he discovers that his nephew Mordred has usurped the crown of Britain, and that his own wife, Ganhumara (Guinevere) has joined with Mordred "in sinful intercourse" (*nefanda uenere copulatam fuisse*).[639] Indeed, a variant description of the exhumation noted that Mordred's remains had also been found during the excavations at Glastonbury, but this story, too, soon vanished from the record.[640] Wood suggests that the monks did not wish to remind Richard I of "the Mordred-like role" that he (and his brothers) had assumed by rebelling against his father Henry II.[641]

I would add another explanation for the monk's hesitations about Guinevere and Mordred: It would not have required much stretch of the imagination to equate Arthur's nephew Mordred with Richard's younger brother John, who between 1191 and 1194 did indeed attempt to usurp the throne while Richard was abroad. As David Crouch has shown, the law of primogeniture had not yet taken a firm hold in twelfth-century

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[638] Charles T. Wood, "Guenevere at Glastonbury: A Problem in Translation(s)," in *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*: 83–100, at 91.
[639] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 249.
[640] See Richard Barber, "Was Mordred Buried at Glastonbury?" in *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*: 145–159, esp. 157–8.
[641] Wood, "Guenevere at Glastonbury," 90.

England.[642] John could therefore feel justified, during his brother Richard's absence on crusade and in captivity in Germany, to make his own claims upon the crown of England. Indeed, texts like Stephen of Rouen's *Draco Normannicus*, in which Mordred "seized the crown of the English" (*Anglorum tunc diadema rapit*) helped to make the possibilities of usurpation easy to imagine in Angevin England.[643]

Later versions of the Arthur story maintain Guinevere's infidelity, although her affection shifts from Mordred to Lancelot. In Chrétien de Troyes's *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* (1177–1181)*, Lancelot rescues Queen Guinevere from the evil Méléagant, then sleeps with her.[644] Indeed, the love affair between the queen and Arthur's trusted knight is one of the recurring, central themes of the Arthurian story. In Chrétien's version, this adulterous affair is consequence-free, but in later retellings of the story Lancelot and Guinevere's betrayal of their lord is the action that makes possible the downfall of Arthur's court.

The potential problems embodied by the adulterous queen extended far beyond the fictional or pseudo-historical Guinevere, spilling over into the real world of twelfth-century genealogical politics. As a new dynasty basing its claims to the English throne upon descent through the female line, the Plantagenet family was always concerned about maintaining and promoting the legitimacy of its inheritance. A late twelfth-century genealogy derived from Ailred of Rievaulx's 1154 *Genealogia Regum Anglorum* (Genealogy of the Kings of the English), for example, completely bypassed the Norman

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[642] David Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900–1300* (London and New York: Pearson Longman, 2005), 116–8.
[643] Stephen of Rouen, *Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ii: 702–3.
[644] Chrétien de Troyes, "The Knight of the Cart (Lancelot)," in *Arthurian Romances*, 264–5.

kings, who had themselves usurped the English crown in 1066. Instead, it traced Henry

II's lineage through the "most glorious empress Matilda," to her mother, "the most

Christian and most excellent queen of the English, Matilda [of Scotland], daughter of the

most holy woman Margaret Queen of Scotland," and thence back to the Anglo-Saxon

kings of England.[645] Henry's direct lineage, in other words, included an empress

(Matilda), a saint (Margaret), and a host of English kings. Although it traced his lineage

through the female line, this genealogy reinforced the imperial power, the holiness, and

the Englishness of Henry's maternal forebears.

By contrast, the misogynistic aspersions of contemporary authors against the

character of England's twelfth-century queens played upon the widespread fear that the

noble lineage of the royal House of Anjou might somehow be tainted. These accusations

blended contemporary politics with the evolution of Arthurian legend, as well as with the

influence of the crusades. Opponents of Henry II's mother, Matilda, questioned the

legitimacy of her second marriage to Geoffrey of Anjou. Henry's own queen, Eleanor of

Aquitaine, was even more the victim of such slander. As Ian Short has noted, Walter Map

targeted multiple members of the Plantagenet family by suggesting that Geoffrey le Bel

of Anjou had not only been in a "so-called bigamous marriage" with Matilda, but had

also slept with his son's wife, Eleanor—herself (according to Map) a bigamist.[646] As Map

describes it, Stephen was succeeded by Henry,

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[645] BL Cotton MS Claudius A V, f. 234r: "uir filius est glorissime imperatricis maltidis / cuius fuit mater christianissima ex excellentissima an- / glorum regina maltildis. filia sanctissime femine margarete / regine scocie que nominis sui splendorem mox / sanctitate preferebat. Huius pater edwardus. qui fuit filius / edmundi regis inuictissimi."
[646] Ian Short, "Literary Culture at the Court of Henry II," in *Henry II: New Interpretations*: 335–61, at 345. See also Martin Aurell, "Aux Origines de la Légende Noir d'Aliénor d'Aquitaine," in *Royautés*

on whom Eleanor, queen of the Franks, wife of the most pious Louis, cast her incestuous eyes, and having contrived an unjust divorce, she married him, even though it was covertly rumored that she had shared Louis's bed with his [Henry's] father Geoffrey. It may be presumed, moreover, that it was for this that their offspring, cut off in their height, came to nothing.[647]

Nor did it help Eleanor's reputation that she helped her sons rebel against their father, and was placed under house arrest by Henry II for much of their marriage (1173–89). Significantly, the layers of adultery, bigamy, and incest attributed to Matilda and Eleanor culminated, according to these authors, in the failures of their offspring.

Eleanor's reputation as an adulteress was closely linked to her participation in the Second Crusade and her behavior while in the Holy Land. The Greek chronicler Niketas Choniatēs, for example, described how the women who accompanied the crusading army in 1148 dressed like men, carrying weapons and riding astride, "more mannish than the Amazons. One stood out from the rest as another Penthesilea and from the embroidered gold which ran around the hem and fringes of her garmnent was called Goldfoot."[648] This is generally accepted as a reference to the then-queen of France.[649] Chroniclers also questioned Eleanor's relationship with her uncle, Raymond of Poitiers, Prince of

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[647] Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 474, 476: "Cui successit Henricus Matildis filius, in quem iniecit oculos incestos Alienor Francorum regina, Lodouici piissimi coniux, et iniustum machinata diuorcium nupsit ei, cum tamen haberet(ur) in fama priuata quod Gaufrido patri suo lectum Lodouici participasset. Presumitur autem inde quod eorum soboles in excelsis suis intercepta deuenit ad nichilum." See also Short, "Literary Culture at the Court of Henry II," 345.

[648] Penthesilea was the queen of the Amazons, killed by Achilles. Niketas Choniatēs, *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniatēs*, trans. Harry J. Magoulias (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 35. See also Jane Martindale, "Eleanor, suo jure duchess of Aquitaine (*c*.1122–1204)," *ODNB*.

[649] Harry J. Magoulias (ed.), *Annals of Niketas Choniatēs*, 376n153.

Antioch.[650] Richard of Devizes, who chronicled Richard I's exploits on the Third

Crusade, hints at a rumored illicit, incestuous affair between Eleanor and Raymond:

"This very queen, in the time of her former husband, was in Jerusalem. Let no one speak

more thereupon. Even I know it well. Be silent!"[651]

In *De Prinicipis Instructione*, Gerald of Wales further expounds upon this 'black

legend' of Eleanor and her conduct while on crusade. He first invokes Eleanor's father,

Duke William X of Aquitaine, who, he claims, had "seized by force" *(vi rapuit)* the wife

of the viscount of Châtellerault. Thus, Gerald implies, Eleanor herself was the product of

an illicit union.[652] Like Richard of Devizes, Gerald then hints tantalizingly at Eleanor's

behavior "in the overseas regions of Palestine" (*in transmarinis Palestinae partibus*),

stating that this topic "has been sufficiently noted" (*satis est notum*) and leaving the rest

up to his reader's imagination.[653] Indeed, Eleanor's alleged rampant sexuality was so

firmly embedded in the backdrop of the crusades that the anonymous Minstrel of Rheims

later claimed, around 1260, that Eleanor had exchanged a romantic correspondence and

tried to elope with none other than Saladin himself.[654]

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[650] See Aurell, "Aux Origines de la Légende Noir d'Aliénor d'Aquitaine," 89–93.

[651] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 25–6 and 26n1: "Hec ipsa regina tempore prioris mariti fuit Ierosolimis. Nemo plus inde loquatur. Et ego bene noui. Silete!"

[652] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 151, and *Opera*, viii: 298. See also Short, "Literary Culture at the Court of Henry II," 345; Wood, "Guenevere at Glastonbury," 91.

[653] Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 152, and *Opera*, viii: 299.

[654] Saladin was only ten or eleven years old in 1148. *A Thirteenth-Century Minstrel's Chronicle (Récits D'un Ménestrel De Reims) A Translation and Introduction*, trans. Robert Levine, Studies in French Civilization 4 (Edwin Mellon Press, 1990), 12: "When queen Eleanor saw the king's [Louis VII's] weakness, and she heard men speak of the goodness and strength and understanding and generosity of Saladin, she conceived a great passion for him in her heart, and she sent him greetings through one of her interpreters. He understood that, if he could arrange for her escape, she would take him as her lord, and would give up her faith."

In his *Genealogia*, Aelred of Rievaulx wrote that "it is against the nature of things for a good root to produce bad fruit."[655] The same rationale could be applied in reverse, suggesting that a bad root—for example, an adulterous or incestuous queen—would produce bad fruit in the form of sons unfit to rule. Such a warning is repeatedly present in the aspersions against Matilda and Eleanor. Glastonbury Abbey's discovery of the remains of Guinevere served as an unpleasant reminder of this potential for a powerful queen to produce bad offspring through her own illicit behavior (whether real or imagined). It is also another reminder of how difficult it was for the Angevin kings to harness the Arthurian legends for their own propaganda. It therefore made sense for the Glastonbury monks, who hoped for royal patronage, to erase Arthur's wife and nephew from their history, focusing instead on the more heroic, positive image embodied by Arthur himself.

A Crusading Context for Arthur's Tomb?

Traditionally, scholars have discussed Arthur's tomb in the context of the financial difficulties facing Glastonbury Abbey following the fire in 1184. This view, as voiced by historians like Carley and Lagorio, is that Henry was interested in Arthur's cult and in Glastonbury, while Richard (and, later, John) showed little interest in either. Thus Lagorio notes that Richard stopped financially supporting the abbey, cutting it off from royal patronage. In her view, Henry had a romantic vision of the abbey's potential in

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[655] Ailred of Rievaulx, *Geneaologia regum Anglorum*, trans. and quoted by Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, 128. Cf. *The History of William Marshal*, ed. A. J. Holden, 3 vols, Anglo-Norman Text Society Occasional Publications Series 5 (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2004), ii: 248 ("de boen arbre vient bon fruit"), 460.

England, while Richard and John only cared about it as "a source of revenue."[656] Carley

similarly notes that Richard redirected royal funds to his crusading efforts, leaving

Glastonbury without a royal patron. Nor did Richard, Carley suggests, care about Arthur

as his father had.[657]

These arguments in favor of Henry II, however, are not wholly convincing.

Indeed, Charles Wood argues that, "the real target of Glastonbury's Arthurian campaign

remained at all times Richard the Lionheart."[658] Richard's direct contribution to the

discovery of Arthur at Glastonbury, of course, would have been difficult, as he was in

Sicily when Arthur was exhumed. That he showed at least some interest in Glastonbury,

however, is evident in his appointment of a new abbot, Henry de Sully, in 1189.[659] Four

years later, upon his return to England, Richard named Savaric Fitzgeldewin (1193–

1205), a veteran of the Third Crusade, as Henry de Sully's successor.[660] Richard would

certainly have benefited from the publicizing of the discovery of Arthur's mortal remains,

which would have helped to counter Welsh insurgency while he was abroad.[661]

Additionally, while in Sicily in November 1190, Richard named his nephew, Arthur of

Brittany, as his heir. News of this proclamation, which I discuss at greater length below,

would have reached England in 1191, just in time to spur Henry de Sully to dig in the

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[656] Lagorio, "The Evolving Legend of St Joseph of Glastonbury," 57.
[657] Carley, Introduction to *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, 2.
[658] Wood, "Guenevere at Glastonbury," 90.
[659] Richard appointed Henry de Sully (d. 1195) as abbot of Glastonbury in 1189, where he later oversaw the exhumation and translation of Arthur. Martin Aurell and others have mistakenly equated Abbot Henry with Henry de Soilli, prior of Fécamp (d. 1189), who is famous for discovering a relic of Christ's Blood at Fécamp in the 1170s. See Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*, 151; Philippa Hoskin, "Sully, Henry de (*d.* 1195)," *ODNB*; Cf. Barber, *The Holy Grail*, 129–30; Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, 24.
[660] Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, 25.
[661] Gransden, *Glastonbury Traditions*, 48–9.

abbey's cemetery.[662] By finding the historical Arthur's bones, the abbot thus helped to make room for the new Arthur, this one a member of the Plantagenet family.

Martin Aurell, who is so hesitant to grant Henry II any agency in the find, states that Richard "encouraged" the Glastonbury community, and adds that the new king's interest in Arthur is "undeniable" (*indéniable*).[663] Aurell argues that Richard and John, far more than their father, saw the political potential of the Arthurian legend.[664] Richard, for instance, was the first English king to be directly compared to Arthur in literature, and Gerald of Wales described him as "inclitus" (renowned, illustrious), the adjective traditionally used to describe Arthur.[665] Roger of Howden, moreover, asserted that Richard took with him on crusade Arthur's sword, Caliburn (Excalibur).[666] According to Wace this sword had been forged at Avalon, and Chrétien de Troyes had Gawain carry it on his Grail quest, because it was the most powerful sword in Christendom.[667] For Richard, Excalibur served as a "secular relic" with the ability to confer upon the English king not only Arthur's political authority, but also his charismatic power.[668]

According to contemporary sources, three of Henry II's four sons owned such legendary weapons. Henry the Young King was reputed to have possessed Durendal, the

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[662] Wood, "Guenevere at Glastonbury," 88.
[663] Aurell, "Henry II and Arthurian Legend," 393 (first quote); Aurell, *La Legende Du Roi Arthur*, 201 (second quote).
[664] Aurell, "Henry II and Arthurian Legend," 393.
[665] Aurell, *La Legende Du Roi Arthur*, 201; Gerald of Wales, *DIP*, 101.
[666] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 159, and *Chronica*, iii: 97.
[667] Wace, *Roman de Brut*, ed. Weiss, 232, 234; Chrétien de Troyes, "The Story of the Grail," in *Arthurian Romances*, 453.
[668] Emma Mason, "The Hero's Invincible Weapon: an Aspect of Angevin Propaganda," in *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood III: Papers from the fourth Strawberry Hill conference, 1988*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1990): 121–138, at 121 (quote), 124, 127–9. Mason suggests a possible link between the growing focus on Arthur's sword and Osbert of Clare's *Vita beati Edwardi regis Anglorum*, written in 1138 (p. 128).

sword of great hero of French epic, Roland.[669] Similarly, a royal inventory from 1207

recorded that John had carried Tristan's sword, which later thirteenth-century sources

named Curtana, at his coronation ceremony.[670] Emma Mason suggests that possession of

this sword would have helped John to assert his right to rule during his conflict with

Innocent III over the appointment of Stephen Langton as archbishop of Canterbury.[671]

John's lordship over Cornwall and Ireland, moreover, was fittingly represented by his

possession of the sword of Tristan, the Arthurian hero most closely linked to those two

regions. Richard's possession of Excalibur could be imagined as similarly representative

of the extent of his lordship, in this case—mirroring Arthur—understood as extending

across England, Rome, and the Muslim world. It is surely no coincidence that

Glastonbury's discovery of Arthur—whose greatest battle was against an army that

included the rulers of Egypt and Syria—occurred at the same time as England's king—

bearing Arthur's own sword—was embarking upon a war with Saladin, the sultan of

Egypt and Syria.

Excalibur Abroad

In March of 1190, the recently-crowned King Richard departed England at the

head of a large fleet of ships. Nearly six months later, the English crusaders arrived at the

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[669] The Young King looted Durendal from the shrine of St Martial at Rocamadour in 1183. Mason, "The Hero's Invincible Weapon," 121, 126. On the Young King's attack on the shrine, see Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, i: 299, and *Chronica*, ii: 277–8.
[670] Aurell, *La Legende du Roi Arthur*, 177 and 177n65; Aurell, "Henry II and Arthurian Legend," 373; Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire*, 153.
[671] Mason, "The Hero's Invincible Weapon," 131–2.

Sicilian port city of Messina, one week behind Philip Augustus's French army.[672]

Richard's younger sister, Joan, had married Sicily's king, William II, but William had died in 1189 and the kingdom was now under the control of Tancred of Lecce (r. 1189–94), the illegitimate grandson of the famous Norman ruler of Sicily, Roger II (r. 1130–54). Tensions soon flared up between Richard and Tancred over the distribution of Joan's dowry, as well as between the two crusading armies and the local inhabitants of Messina. According to the chronicler Richard of Devizes, Richard had carried before him into battle against the Giffons (Greek-speaking Sicilians) a "terrible standard of a dragon" (*uexillum terribile draconis*).[673] The image of the dragon was closely associated with the legendary house of Pendragon, whose most famous member was King Arthur. It is surely no coincidence that Richard chose this symbol for his battle flag.

Tensions were high between the English, the French, and the Sicilians. Philip Augustus sided with the Griffons against Richard, and Richard eventually made peace with both Philip and Tancred.[674] A central element of the treaty drawn up between the kings of England and Sicily was a proposed marriage between Tancred's daughter and Richard's four-year-old nephew, Arthur of Brittany. Moreover, Richard officially named Arthur as his heir—something he had neglected to do before setting out on crusade. Richard wrote to Pope Clement III (d. 1191) to confirm both the betrothal and Arthur's status as heir to the throne of England should the king fail to have children.[675] This treaty was significant in several ways. It not only resolved the immediate hostilities between

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[672] The French arrived in Messina on September 14, and the English on September 23.
[673] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 23.
[674] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 56–66; *Itinerarium*, 154–69; Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 17, 19–25.
[675] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 63, 65; *Itinerarium*, 168.

Richard and Tancred, but assured the future union of two royal houses that both claimed decent from the lords of Normandy. Provided the treaty's provisions come to fruition, moreover, a new King Arthur would potentially rule over an empire stretching from England to Sicily and—should Richard be successful on his crusade—extending even to Jerusalem.[676]

The significance of this agreement was not lost on either king. As we have seen above, Richard recognized the political potential of King Arthur's legacy. That potential was also recognized in Sicily. Only about thirty miles from Tancred's birthplace of Lecce in the Norman-controlled heel of southern Italy is the town of Otranto. The town's Cattedrale di Santa Maria Annunciata was where the monk Pantaleone had constructed his expansive Tree of Life mosaic, including its depiction of King Arthur riding a goat, in the 1160s. Moreover, local Sicilian legend held that Arthur was not at Avalon, but rather sleeping inside Mount Etna. The English writer Gervase of Tilbury (*c*. 1150–*c*. 1228) related that "the locals say that Arthur had appeared [there] in our day." He told the story of a boy who, chasing a runaway horse, followed it up the side of the mountain. When the boy reached the top, peering into the crater, he found a "spacious, flat plain happily full of all delights, and there in a palace constructed by wondrous work he found Arthur lying in state upon a kingly bed."[677] As this tale demonstrates, Tancred had spent his life in a

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[676] Tancred had sons who were his heirs to the throne, but Arthur's potential marriage to one of Tancred's daughters would at least have given him a potential claim to a Sicilian inheritance.

[677] Gervase of Tilbury, "Otia Imperialia," in *Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon anglicanum, De expugnatione Terrae Sanctae libellus; Thomas Agnellus De morte et sepultura Henrici regis Angliae junioris; Gesta Fulconis filii Warini; Excerpta ex Otiis imperialibus Gervasii Tilebutiensis*. Ed. by J Stevenson, 3 vols., RS (London, 1875), iii: 12: "In hujus deserto narrant indigenae Arturum magnum nostris temporibus apparuisse... puer in spatiosissimam planitiem jucundam omnibusque deliciis plenam

region where Arthur was not only known, but celebrated as part of local mythology. Richard's sister Joan, who was queen of Sicily from 1177 to 1189, may also have helped to promote Arthur's popularity in the kingdom.[678]

Richard and Tancred drew up their treaty in November of 1190. In the following March, the two kings met again, this time to visit the tomb of St Agatha in Catania. A few days later Tancred sent Richard gold, silver, horses, and silks. According to Roger of Howden, who was with the English army at the time, the king of England refused all but a small ring, sending the rest of the gifts back to Tancred. As a sign of his esteem, however, Richard also sent the Sicilian king a rare and priceless gift: "that best sword which the Britons call Caliburn, which was the sword of Arthur, the former noble king of England."[679]

That Richard should give away Excalibur seems shocking—after all, the sword was an irreplaceable symbol of Arthur's power and his rule over Britain. England's king had brought it with him on crusade as a reminder of Arthur's conquests in the East. Yet Richard knew exactly what he was doing in giving the sword to Tancred. For one thing, he may have believed that, once Tancred's daughter married Arthur of Brittany, the sword would again return to the Plantagenet family. Alternatively, Emma Mason suggests that the sword's potential for encouraging Breton resistance to Angevin power may have made it more trouble than it was worth. Most important, however, was Excalibur's aid in securing the immediate success of the Third Crusade itself. If Tancred

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venit, ibique in palatio miro opere constructo reperit Arturum in strato regii apparatus recumbantem." See also Mason, "The Hero's Invincible Weapon," 129–31.
[678] See Mason, "The Hero's Invincible Weapon," 130.
[679] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 97: "Haec contra rex Angliae dedit regi Tancredo gladium illum optimum quem Brittones Caliburne vocant, qui fuerat gladius Arturi, quondam nobilis regis Angliae."

was to be believed, Philip Augustus was openly plotting against Richard with Hugh III, duke of Burgundy, and they hoped to include Tancred in their plans.[680] By giving Arthur's sword to the Sicilian king, Richard guaranteed Tancred's continuing loyalty to his cause. Moreover, Tancred in return gave the king of England "four great ships" and fifteen galleys—vital reinforcements to bolster Richard's naval forces.[681]

The king of England was famous for his practicality. King Arthur's legendary sword had been a symbolic asset to him when he departed on crusade, but as a weapon Excalibur could only accomplish so much against the realities of twelfth-century international politics and siege warfare. By giving Excalibur to Tancred, however, Richard was able to guard himself from Philip's treachery, enlarge his crusading fleet, and reaffirm the treaty that he had concluded with the Sicilians. This alliance, of course, included the promise that a new, Angevin Arthur—Richard's nephew—would become king of England, unite the Plantagenet name with the Norman royalty of Sicily, and perhaps inherit the mythical Arthur's sword once again. As Richard departed Messina for Acre in April 1191, he could feel hopeful about the future of his realm. With England's future secured, it was now time to turn his thoughts eastward, to Jerusalem.

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[680] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 98.
[681] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 97: "quatuor magnas naves, quas vocant Ursers, et xv. galeas."

CHAPTER 5
Prophecy, Apocalypse, and the Third Crusade

In Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Prophecies of Merlin* (*c.* 1135), the famous wizard lays out for the British king Vortigern a cryptic divination concerning the past, present, and future of Britain's rulers. This text, which was copied both independently and in conjunction with Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britanniae* in manuscripts, inspired numerous commentaries and was frequently cited by medieval authors.[682] The chronicler Roger of Howden, for example, copied several quotations from the *Prophecies* into the margins of his *Chronica*.[683] Alongside his entry for Henry I's coronation, Roger quotes Merlin's description of the "lion of justice," whose "eagle will nest on mount Aravius."[684] Twelfth-century thinkers traditionally identified the lion of justice as Henry I, and the eagle as his daughter, Matilda.[685] Yet Roger made an intriguing change in wording. Rather than writing that the eagle would make her nest "super montem Arauium" as the original text read, the chronicler wrote "super montes arabum," (on the mountains of the Arabs).[686] It is possible that Roger, who had traveled as far as Acre with the Third Crusade armies, was used to writing "arabum" in other contexts, and simply made a mistake here. Yet this change in wording, whether a slip of the pen or a deliberate

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[682] Michael D. Reeve (ed.), Introduction to Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, viii–ix.

[683] The marginal notes in the manuscript BL Royal MS 14 C II are generally accepted to be in the author's own hand. On the evidence supporting this conclusion, see David Corner, "The Earliest Surviving Manuscripts of Roger of Howden's 'Chronica'," *EHR* 98 (Apr., 1983): 297–310, at 305–10.

[684] Mount Aravius is another name for Mount Snowden in Wales. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 146; BL Royal MS 14 C II, f. 73r.

[685] See, e.g., [Pseudo-]Alan of Lille, *Explanationum*, 75, 79, who also asserts that the reading of "Aravius" has misled many readers, and believes that the prophecy should refer to "montem morianum," in reference to a Mount Moriah in Italy. He further claims that "Aravius" refers to a mountain in the Italian Alps. (79–80).

[686] BL Royal 14 C II, f. 73r. I am grateful to Lauren Whitnah for confirming my reading of this passage.

alteration, rather fittingly reshapes Merlin's prophecy: Matilda, the eagle, now makes her nest upon the mountains of the Arabs, while in Roger's own time Matilda's grandson, Richard, leads English armies into battle against the Arab-controlled lands of the Near East.

This chapter examines the prophetic and apocalyptic aspects of events surrounding English participation in the Third Crusade. These can be broken into three roughly-divided categories: the attempts to rationalize the battle of Hattin in 1187, the events surrounding Richard I's coronation in 1189, and Richard's participation in the crusade itself. As I discussed in the introduction to this dissertation, Anthony Smith idenitifies four "sacred foundations" of national identity: "community, territory, history, and destiny."[687] I have examined the first three of these concepts in the preceding chapters; this chapter turns to the last of these themes, national destiny. I argue that members of the Angevin court were keenly aware of the prophetic implications of their times and the apocalyptic potential of their rulers. Specifically, Angevin authors, and even Richard I himself, understood England's participation in the Third Crusade as a key element in the larger unfolding of sacred history.

Evolutions in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Thought

In this chapter I follow the usage of apocalypticism as the term has been defined by Bernard McGinn and Anke Holdenried. McGinn defines apocalypticism as "a sense of the meaning of history that sees the present as inexorably tied to the approaching final

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[687] Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 31.

triple drama of crisis, judgment, and vindication—necessarily works through the use of symbols and the symbolic mentality."[688] Similarly, Holdenried defines the term as "a particular belief about the Last Things, namely the end of history and what lies beyond it. Apocalyptic writings generally apply traditional eschatological imagery directly to current historical events and emphasize the imminence of the End."[689] Both these definitions highlight the connections between past history, current events, and the approaching End Times.[690] The Muslim capture of Jerusalem, which had been in Christian hands since the Franks occupied the city in 1099, made these apocalyptic ideas immediately relevant in Europe, and both Christian and Muslim intellectuals strove to understand current events in relation to those of both the past and the future.

The physical relationships between Christian Europe and the Muslim-inhabited lands of the East had taken on a new meaning since the beginning of the twelfth century. The earliest example of what Sylvia Schein calls the "geographical-cartographical" privileging of Jerusalem is a T-O map drawn in a computistical miscellany written *c*. 1110 at Thorney Abbey, Cambridgeshire, and now at St John's College in Oxford. The T crossbar in this map contains, in large capitals interspersed with cross symbols, the word "H I E ☩ R U ✝ S AL E M."[691] Jay Rubenstein notes that there are a number of

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[688] Bernard McGinn, *Apocalypticism in the Western Tradition*, 4 vols. (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1994), ii: 266.

[689] Anke Holdenried, *The Sibyl and Her Scribes: Manuscripts and Interpretation of the Latin Sibylla Tiburtina, c. 1050–1500*, Church, Faith and Culture in the Medieval West (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), xxiii.

[690] Cf. Brett Edward Whalen, *Dominion of God: Christendom and Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 3, 75.

[691] Oxford, St John's College MS 17, f. 6r. A digital copy of the manscript is available at http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/ms-17/folio.php?p=6r.

puzzling and unusual elements to this map and Jerusalem's placement within it.[692]

Nevertheless, the map and its English origin are evidence that ideas about of Jerusalem's

centrality were present in the island kingdom quite early. On the Continent, twelfth-

century apocalyptic texts, as Schein points out, later reproduced this visual relationship in

their illustrations of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Thus for the first time "apocalyptic visions

of Jerusalem" mirrored "the topographical presentations of Earthly Jerusalem."[693]

Going hand-in-hand with the increasing emphasis on Jerusalem's centrality—both

geographical and spiritual—was an increased interest in apocalyptic material, which was,

in the words of Bernard McGinn, "remarkable even for this productive age."[694] As Jean

Flori has demonstrated, the twelfth century marks an important moment in the history of

"prophetic exegesis" (*exégèse prophétique*). Specifically, this period witnessed the

development of what Flori terms a "politico-theological" understanding of prophecy, in

which "contemporary personages" were understood to represent "apocalyptic concepts

and figures."[695] This shift brought apocalyptic thinking out of the theoretical realm, and

made it immediately relevant to the present. As twelfth-century thinkers endowed their

contemporary leaders with apocalyptic identities, prophetic ideas took on an increasingly

charged political role. The political power created by this "ideological propaganda"

(*propagande idéologique*), Flori emphasizes, was simultaneously "sincere and

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[692] Jay Rubenstein, personal correspondence, February 25, 2015.

[693] Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 143–4.

[694] Bernard McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the History of Western Thought* (New York: MacMillan, 1985), 87.

[695] Jean Flori, *L'Islam et la fin des temps: l'interprétation prophétique des invasions musulmanes dans la chrétienté médiévale* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2007), 300: "Le XIIe siècle voit donc se développer une nouvelle forme d'exégèse prophétique que l'on pourrait appeler politico-théologique, consistant à appliquer à des personnages contemporains les concepts et figures apocalyptiques dans un contexte de controverse idéologique à forte dominante politique."

opportunist" (*sincère et opportuniste*); in other words, whether prophetic and apocalyptic associations with contemporary persons were employed to one's political advantage or to the disadvantage of one's enemies, these ideas were grounded in a very real belief that the world was governed by the struggle between good and evil, which would culminate with the appearance of Antichrist and the end of the world.[696]

This new approach to prophecy sprang from much older traditions. By the eleventh century, for example, manuscripts of the late fourth-century Sybilline prophecies included the tradition of the Last World Emperor.[697] According to this tradition, a Last Roman Emperor will unite Christendom and oversee the conversion of the Jews and pagans, before laying down his crown in Jerusalem. In the Sybilline tradition, Antichrist will then appear, before he is slain by the Archangel Michael.[698] Anke Holdrenried has argued that scholars tend to overestimate the political nature of the Sibyl's popularity in the Middle Ages.[699] Nevertheless, over the course of the late tenth and eleventh century, the Sibylline prophecies were translated into Latin, and the surviving manuscripts from the period regularly incorporate lists the contemporary Lombard and German rulers.[700] The Sibyl's prophecies were also translated into Anglo-Norman verse c. 1140.[701] This is evidence not only that the text was available in the Anglo-Norman realm, but that it was

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[696] Flori, *L'Islam et la fin des temps*, 300–1.
[697] Holdenried, *The Sibyl and Her Scribes*, 6. The earliest extant manuscript of the Tiburtine Sibyl dates to 1047. The four major versions of the text were all established by the early twelfth century. Anke Holdenried, "Many Hands without Design: The Evolution of a Medieval Prophetic Text," *The Medieval Journal* 4 (2014): 23–42, at 23–4.
[698] McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 106–7; Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, 124.
[699] Holdenried, *The Sibyl and her Scribes*, xviii–xix.
[700] Holdenried, *The Sibyl and Her Scribes*, xxi, 6, 11–7. Holdenried argues that these regnal lists have allowed scholars to place too much emphasis upon the Last Emperor part of the Sibyl's prophecy. See also Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 40.
[701] McGinn, *Apocalypticism in the Western Tradition*, iv: 28.

considered popular enough to be translated into the French vernacular—one of the earliest datable examples of Anglo-Norman verse. The early medieval *Revelationes* of Pseudo-Methodius and the *De Ortu et Tempore Antichristi* of Adso of Montier-en-Der provided an additional and increasingly popular sources of apocalyptic material.[702]

I will return later in this chapter to these texts and the theme of the Last World Emperor. For now it is sufficient to note that while historians have examined how Richard I's contemporaries in Germany and France promoted such ideas, scholars have largely overlooked English participation in these larger discourses of historical and prophetic thought. This chapter aims to remedy that. Specifically, I argue that English chroniclers believed that England and its king would play a central role in bringing about the Second Coming of Christ and the End Times. It was, they believed, England's destiny—not France's or Germany's—to shape the very future of Christendom.

Heavenly Harbingers of the Apocalypse

For European observers, the events in Palestine in 1187 bore all the markers of the impending Apocalypse. Christian chroniclers of the late twelfth century struggled to make sense of Saladin's rapid conquest of Jerusalem and other cities in the Holy Land. Such a cataclysmic shift in the world order, they reasoned, must have a visible impact upon nature itself. Both Roger of Howden and Gerald of Wales in England, and Rigord, Philip Augustus's royal biographer at Saint-Denis in France, inserted into their chronicles the dire prognostications of contemporary astrologers, warning of a planetary conjunction

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[702] See, e.g., Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 17–18.

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that would occur in September 1186, exactly one year before Saladin's siege of Jerusalem.

Although these chroniclers attribute the prophecies to the years leading up to 1186, they are far more likely creations of the period immediately after Saladin's victories in 1187, which the chroniclers had then inserted into earlier sections of their narratives. None of these prophetic astronomical texts, for instance, were part of Roger of Howden's pre-Third Crusade work, the *Gesta*, but they do appear in his *Chronica*, which he began work on in 1192/3.[703] This suggests that, when Roger returned from the Third Crusade, he specifically sought out evidence for the apocalyptic implications of the events he had himself witnessed at Acre, and later heard about from others. This is an important point to bear in mind, for it helps to shed light upon how chroniclers wanted to shape the narrative of the years leading up to the fall of Christian Jerusalem. By projecting the warnings of impending doom back to before 1186/7, and highlighting events which might otherwise have seemed unremarkable at the time, these chroniclers constructed a narrative in which nature and the heavens repeatedly warned of the events to come in 1187.

Roger of Howden attributes the warnings to "astrologers both Spanish and Sicilian, and diviners of nearly the whole world, both Greeks and Latins," Gerald of Wales cites "philosophers and astronomers of our time, as much Toledans as also Apulians, and also many others." Rigord notes that the astrologers were "Eastern and

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[703] On the dating of the text, see David Corner, "The Earliest Surviving Manuscripts of Roger of Howden's 'Chronica,'" *EHR* 98 (1983): 297–310, at 303. On the authorship of the *Gesta*, see Doris M. Stenton, "Roger of Howden and Benedict," *EHR* 68 (1953): 574–82, esp. 579.

Western, Jews and Saracens and also Christians."[704] The letters likely derived from a

Hebrew prophecy by a certain Johannes Toletanus (John of Toledo), which was

translated into Latin and then "disseminated throughout the Latin West."[705] Robert Lerner

has described this "Toledo Letter" as a prophetic text "certainly as popular as the works

of Hildegard [of Bingen] or Joachim [of Fiore]."[706] Indicative of the spread of Arabic and

Hebrew scientific knowledge beyond the Mediterranean, the prophecies cited by Roger,

Gerald, and Rigord reflect the belief that the fall of Christian Jerusalem impacted people

the world over.

The prophecies themselves foretold great troubles. These would begin (the

astrologers claimed) in April 1186 with eclipses of the moon and the sun, the latter of

which would have the "color of fire" (*igneique coloris*).[707] These eclipses would be

followed by earthquakes, strong winds, and poisonous vapors.[708] Discord (*discordia*) in

the West would extend into the East, and "there will be one of them who shall assemble

infinite armies, and will wage war upon the shore of the waters." Ultimately, these

disasters and the subsequent battle would reinforce the "excellence of the Franks, the

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[704] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 290: "astrologi tam Hispanenses quam Siculi, et fere universi orbis conjectores tam Graeci quam Latini"; Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 242: "philosophi nostril temporis et astronomi, tam Toletani similiter quoque et Apuli, nec non et alii multi"; Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 72. For the most part, the text quoted by Roger agrees in wording with that of Rigord. For a discussion of the influence of Arabic astrological texts on Christian planetary calculations related to conjunction, see Godefroid Callatay, "Le Grande Conjonction de 1186," in *Occident et Proche-Orient: Contacts Scientifiques au Temps des Croisades: Actes du Colloque de Louvain-la-Neuve, 24 et 25 Mars 1197* (Brepols, 2000): 369–84.
[705] Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps*, 287.
[706] Robert Lerner, "Medieval Prophecy and Religious Dissent," *Past & Present* 72 (Aug. 1976): 3–24, at 10.
[707] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 291; Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 73.
[708] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 291; Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 73–4.

destructions of the Saracenic peoples, and the superior piety and greatest exaltation of the laws of Christ, and a longer life for those who are born thereafter."[709]

Gerald of Wales, writing *c*. 1196–1212, dismissed these prophecies as false, even "deceptive" (*deceptis*).[710] Other chroniclers, however, believed these prophecies were being fulfilled in the years leading up to the fall of Jerusalem and the start of the Third Crusade. Ralph de Diceto recorded both lunar and solar eclipses in April 1186.[711] He also described the death of the Englishman Herbert, a bishop at the Sicilian court, who was killed along with many others by an earthquake in Sicily in 1185; this was followed by a quake felt in northern parts of England.[712] Roger of Howden also noted this English earthquake, the sound of which was "such as had not been heard in that land since the beginning of the world."[713] The quake split rocks, felled stone houses, and damaged the metropolitan church of Lincoln. Two weeks later, there was a total eclipse of the sun, accompanied by a great storm with thunder and lightning, which killed men and animals, and caused many houses to catch fire.[714]

Importantly, Roger's wording is reminiscent of the text of Revelation 16:18, in which the seventh angel of the Apocalypse pours out its vial, causing "lightning and voices and thunder and a great earthquake such as had never happened since men were

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[709] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 291: "Et erit unus ex eis qui infinitos congregabit exercitus, facietque bellum secus littus aquarum… excellentiam Francorum, Sarracenicae gentis destructions, et Christi legis pietatem majorem et exaltationem maximam, et eorum qui postmodum nascentur prolixiorem vitam"; Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 74. Rigord's text is the same as Roger's with the exception of the additional phrase "dubietatem et ignorantiam inter Judeos," after "Francorum."

[710] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, viii: 242.

[711] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 40. Ralph also recorded a solar eclipse in May 1185: p. 37.

[712] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 37. This story hints at the close relationship between Sicily and England during this time. Richard I's sister, Joanna, was married to William II of Sicily.

[713] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 303: "qualis ab initio mundi in terra illa non erat auditus."

[714] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 303.

upon earth, such an earthquake, so great."[715] This wording is also similar to Ademar of

Chabannes' (989–1034) apocalyptic descripton of events around Limoges in 1010, the

year after the caliph al-Hakim destroyed the Holy Sepulchre: "In these times there

appeared signs in the stars, harmful droughts, excessive rains, great plagues, terrible

famines and numerous eclipses of sun and moon."[716] Now, in the 1180s and 1190s, the

messages was clear: the signs of the Apocalypse, predicted by the astrologers and

evidenced by these natural disasters, were manifesting themselves throughout England.

In both Ralph de Diceto's and Roger of Howden's accounts, there is a strong

correlation between events in the East (Sicily and the Holy Land, respectively) and those

in England. Howden, moreover, used these disasters as a framework for critiquing Henry

II's decision to not provide the kingdom of Jerusalem with military assistance in 1185.

Specifically, the chronicler interwove his account of these natural disasters with his

narrative about the patriarch Heraclius's visit to England. The day after the earthquake,

Roger states, Henry II and the patriarch sailed for Normandy. Then, after the eclipse and

a strong storm, Heraclius, disappointed in his quest to find a crusade leader in the West,

returned home to Jerusalem "grieving and confused" (*dolens et confusus*).[717] Roger thus

implied that Henry's failure to offer assistance to Jerusalem had consequences not only

on earth, but also in the heavens.

The French chronicler Rigord offered further warnings from "wise men of Egypt"

(*sapientes Egypti*), while Roger turned to a source closer to home: William, clerk to John,

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[715] Rev. 16:18: "et facta sunt fulgora et voces et tonitrua et terraemotus factus est magnus qualis numquam fuit ex quo homines fuerunt super terram talis terraemotus sic magnus." See also 6:12–3, 8:5, and 11:19.
[716] Ademar of Chabannes, *Historia*, quoted by Richard Landes, *Relics, Apocalypse, and the Deceits of History: Ademar of Chabannes, 989–1034* (Camridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 43.
[717] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 303, 304 (quote).

the constable of Chester.[718] This reference to a local authority on astrology importantly integrates England and its scholars in the greater intellectual culture of twelfth-century Mediterranean Europe.[719] William the Astrologer explained the significance of the planetary motions, describing how Saturn represented the "Pagans, and all others who oppose Christian law." He remarked that Saturn's celestial elevation had led "Saracen magi" to predict a Muslim victory.

Based on his own readings of the heavens, however, William offered reassurance for the Christians, whose great men were represented by the Sun in conjunction with Jupiter. Ultimately, William concluded, "Since the sun is preeminent in this reading, a man of great fame among us is arising, a Christian, whose name will be proclaimed by Aaron until the end ."[720] Aaron, of course, had famously preached for Moses, who led the Israelites to the Promised Land. William's astrological readings envisioned a new Moses arising to lead his people to Jerusalem and to victory over the Muslims. Given the fact that this letter was almost certainly the creation of the years after 1187, it seems reasonable to imagine Richard I as this new Moses, ready to lead "us" (*nos*), the Christian community of the English, to the Promised Land of Jerusalem.

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[718] Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 75–7.
[719] On English participation in "Arabum studia" during the twelfth century, see Metlitzki, *The Matter of Araby*, 8–10, 13–46.
[720] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 392–3: "Cum igitur Saturnus omnibus sit circulo altior, de eo primitus dicamus. Ipse est paganorum significator, et omnium legi Christianorum adversantium. Cum igitur in figura sphaerae sit in exaltatione sua, triplicate Tr. F. G. S. M. de victoria sua ipsi judicant: cum Sol sit in casu suo petens conjunctionem planetarum superiorem. Longe tamen aliter, et de figurae judicio sentimus. Sol enim significat magnates Christianorum, qui in hac figura petit conjunctionem Jovis. Jupiter eam impotens Veneri committit, et ipsa Saturno. Mercurius per retrogradationem eam rescindens retrogradando legis eorum elationem, et nostrae depressionem, natura indicaret. Mercurio eandem dispositionem Jovi transportante, Jove autem nulli committente, legis nostrae perseverantiam designat. Cum autem Sol in figura sit praepotens, vir inter nos magnae famae consurgit Christianus, cujus nomen usque ad finem Arin praedicabitur."

William's interpretation of the heavens bears other indications of its Englishness. Naturally, all astrology takes its basis in the movements of the stars and planets, but William's description is striking for its similarities to the final lines of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Prophecies of Merlin*. Most of that text concerns cryptic references to animals—lions, boars, eagles, etc.—that supposedly represent important figures in England's past, present, and future. In the final lines, however, the emphasis shifts, to a discussion of how "the stars will avert their gaze from them [mortal men] and alter their accustomed courses."[721] Geoffrey/Merlin then goes on to explain the various ways in which the planets will leave their paths, concluding with the pronouncement that "the waters will surge up and the dust of the ancients will be renewed. The winds will clash in a horrible break and cause a great sound among the stars."[722]

The author Pseudo-Alan of Lille, writing between 1167 and 1174, relegated these "most final and last" (*novissimas & extremas*) portions of the *Prophecies of Merlin* to the seventh and last book of his own commentary on the *Prophecies*.[723] This book was dedicated to unraveling the meanings of "those things, which after us, up to the imminent consummation of the world, are to come."[724] Merlin's prophecies, the commentator noted, correspond with the words of God as reported in the Apocalypse of John. As such,

[721] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 159: "Ab eis uultus auertent sydera et solitum cursum confundent."
[722] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 159: "exurgent aequora, et puluis ueterum renouabitur. Confligent uenti diro sufflamine et sonitm inter sidera conficient."
[723] [Pseudo-]Alan of Lille, *Explanationum*, 239. On the identity of the author, see G. Raynaud de Lage, *Alain de Lille: Poète du XIIe Siècle*, Publications de l'Institut d'Etudes Medievales XII (Montreal and Paris: University of Montreal, 1951), 13–5. De Lage suggests that the author could not have been the famous Alan of Lille, but was instead an anonymous contemporary of his, who showed an interest in England and its history.
[724] Pseudo-Alan of Lille, *Explanationum*, 238: "de illis, quae post nos, usque ad iminentem mundi consummationem… eventura."

they foretell the end of the world, which will be heralded by wild winds and tumultuous seas, and shall be reflected in the motions of the Sun, moon, planets, and stars.[725] This idea receives confirmation, he adds, through the testimony of the ancient Sybil, who similarly proclaimed that the Sun and moon would eventually perish.

Ultimately, the Sun's motions as described by Merlin's prophecy correspond, in Pseudo-Alan of Lille's reckoning, to the "persecution by Antichrist and to the end of the world."[726] Yet at the very end of his treatise the author offers reassurance, influenced by the Last Emperor prophecies, "that the consummation of the world is not yet upon us," as the Roman Empire (*Romani Imperii*) still endures. He cites from 2 Thessalonians 2:1–2, urging his readers to not give in to immediate fear, "as if the day of the Lord were threatening."[727] Before this happens, first, he explains, "a plentitude of people will enter into the faith of Christ."[728]

When Pseudo-Alan of Lille wrote, Saladin had not yet begun his conquest of the Holy Land. Less than a generation later, it was impossible to ignore the apocalyptic implications of these heavenly signals. At Worcester in 1184, for example, a "humble" (*humilis*) monk had a vision of the "fall of the human race, and the sudden ruin… of this world," which would begin when "the Sun touches the back of the lion of Hercules."[729] The monk's vision, Roger of Howden says, continued with a lengthy description in verse

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[725] Pseudo-Alan of Lille, *Explanationum*, 239. Cf. Rev. 6:12–3, 8:5, 11:19, and 16:18.
[726] Pseudo-Alan of Lille, *Explanationum*, 250.
[727] Pseudo-Alan of Lille, *Explanationum*, 269: "Rogamus vos… ut non cito moveamini a vestro sensu, neque per spiritum, neque per sermonem, neque per epistolam, tanquam per nos missa(m), quasi instet dies Domini."
[728] Pseudo-Alan of Lille, *Explanationum*, 269.
[729] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 294: "Humani generis casum, subitamque ruinam / … huic orbi… / simul Herculei Sol tanget terga leonis."

of the planetary motions through the Zodiac, sprinkled with Classical allusions.[730] Again, this English source predicted terrible things to come in the near future. Roger of Howden further quoted from a letter supposedly sent to John of Toledo by Pharamella, son of Abd-Allah (Abdelabi) of Cordoba. In this letter the Arab astrologer lays out his desire to reassure people that the Christians are mistaken in their interpretation of the stars, having been misled by "certain false astrologers from the West."[731] Citing these astrologers' ignorance, Pharamella explains how they have gotten their calculations wrong. Moreover, he adds, similar conjunctions in the past never led to any problems, and therefore this present one would not do so, either.

Theodore Otto Wedel suggests that Roger included this final letter as a reassurance than none of the foretold crises had in fact occurred.[732] Indeed, Rigord had done something similar, adding a disclaimer that later events had proved the astrologers wrong.[733] Yet Roger of Howden may not have intended for Pharamella's words to be quite as comforting as they first appear. The letter—and with it Roger's long aside on prophetic ideas—concludes with the exhortation for the Christian astrologers "either to relinquish their fanciful opinion, or be converted to our Ishmaelite religion."[734] Thus the Arab scholar's reassurance comes across in the end as a veiled threat, emphasizing the superiority of the Muslim religion and its scientific knowledge at the expense of the

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[730] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 294–6.
[731] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 297: "quidam falsi astrologi de Occidente."
[732] Theodore Otto Wedel, *Astrology in the Middle Ages* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920; reprinted by Dover, 2005), 93–4.
[733] Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 72. It may have been politic for Rigord to downplay the dangers of Saladin's conquest, in light of the fact that the subject of his text was Philip Augustus, who left the Third Crusade early.
[734] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 298: "aut relinquant opinionem suam fabulosam, aut convertantur ad Ysmaelitisam religionem nostrum."

Latins. They further imply that Jerusalem was in fact being threatened, and perhaps already ruled, by the Muslims at the time this letter was composed.

The Egyptian Day Massacre and the Jerusalem of the Jews

A recurring theme in these apocalyptic prophecies was the conversion, and sometimes destruction, of non-Christians, which would be an indication of the End Times. In England, as in other parts of Europe, Christians took these ideas to heart. In August 1189, nearly two years after Saladin captured Jerusalem, Richard, duke of Poitou, ordered the construction of a great fleet capable of carrying himself and his fellow *crucesignati* to the Holy Land.[735] He then traveled to London, where on September 3, at Westminster Abbey, he was crowned King Richard I of England by Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury—the same Baldwin who later died after carrying Thomas Becket's banner into battle in Acre. The chronicler Ralph de Diceto, dean of St Paul's, ministered the oil and chrism during the ceremony (a job usually performed by the bishop of London, whose see was currently vacant), and the leading members of the Angevin nobility and clergy gathered from across England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland to attend the festivities.[736] Outside the church, a diverse crowd made up of citizens of London, servants of visiting nobles, merchants, foreigners, and others assembled to catch a glimpse of the new king as he processed from the church to his coronation feast at Westminster Palace.[737]

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[735] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 8.
[736] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 68; Hillaby, "Prelude and Postscript to the York Massacre," 43.
[737] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 68–9; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 8–12; William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 293–4.

Many Jews, among them two powerful moneylenders from York named Josce and Benedict, had traveled to London for the coronation in the hopes of winning the new king's support and protection. Henry II had famously, if controversially, shown unprecedented favor to England's Jewry, and the Jewish community hoped that his son would continue this practice.[738] Richard, however, had banned Jews and women from entering the palace during the coronation feast.[739] As inside the palace the royal guests settled down to their meal, outside in the streets a riot began. According to William of Newburgh, the trouble started when the press of people swept some of the gathered Jews through the gates of the palace.[740] The people took advantage of the king's ban as an excuse to turn their pent-up energies against the Jews in the crowd. The violence escalated rapidly, sweeping through the city's streets. As Josce fled, the mob captured Benedict, wounding him and forcing him to accept baptism.[741] Soon a "most pleasing" (*gratissimus*) rumor sprang up that Richard had endorsed the attack and had called for all of London's Jews to be "exterminated" (*exterminari iussisset*).[742] The citizens of London thus began setting fire to Jewish houses around the city, killing any of their occupants whom they could find.

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[738] William of Newburgh criticized Henry for favoring the Jews "more than was just" (*plus justo fovit*). William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 280. John Hosler has traced a rising undercurrent of anti-Jewish sentiment in England during Henry II's reign: see John D. Hosler, "Henry II, William of Newburgh, and the Development of English Anti-Judaism," *Christian Attitudes toward the Jews in the Middle Ages: A Casebook*, ed. Michael Frassetto (New York and London: Routledge, 2007): 167–82. See also Paul Hyams, "Faith, Fealty and Jewish 'infideles' in Twelfth-Century England," in *Christians and Jews in Angevin England*: 125–47, at 130. On Jewish contributions to the royal treasury, see Joseph Jacobs, "Further Notes on the Jews of Angevin England (Continued)," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 5 (Oct., 1892): 51–77, esp. 61–4.

[739] Hillaby, "Prelude and Postscript," 43.

[740] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 295.

[741] Benedict later recanted this conversion and returned to York, where he died of his wounds a short time later. William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 295, 299; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 12.

[742] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 295.

The religious fervor of the Londoners, as Alan Cooper has demonstrated, was underlain by stresses brought on by famine and high taxation, which had reduced many people in the city to penury.[743] For the lower classes of the city, the massacre offered a tantalizing opportunity to seize wealth for themselves. Driven increasingly by desperation, London's Christians soon turned against their co-religionists as well as the Jews in their frenzied plundering.[744] Ultimately, the violence lasted so long that, according to Richard of Devizes, "the holocaust (*holocaustum*) was scarcely able to be completed on the following day."[745] This is, notably, an early use of the term "holocaust" to specifically refer to the mass slaughter of Jews.[746]

Importantly, the day also held portentous and prophetic implications that contemporaries believed were connected to these violent events. A marginal addition to Richard of Devizes' description of the massacre noted that a bat had been seen flying through Westminster at midday, circling the new king's throne.[747] More significantly, William of Newburgh, following Roger of Howden, recorded that September 3 was a so-called "evil" or "Egyptian" day.[748] The author of the *Itinerarium*, writing some years

[743] Cooper, "1190, William Longbeard and the Crisis of Angevin England," 95–8.
[744] According to William of Newburgh, the fire soon jumped to Christian houses. The Christians also directly targeted other Christians. William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 296.
[745] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 3: "vix altera die compleri potuerit holocausam."
[746] The Oxford English Dictionary lists an example from *c*. 1250 of "holocaust" being used to mean "a sacrifice wholly consumed by fire," but the earliest example that the OED gives of the word meaning "a great slaughter or massacre" comes from John Milton in 1671, while the first example of its use as a reference to the mass murder of Jews by the Nazis was in 1942. See "Holocaust, *n.*," *Oxford English Dictionary*. Richard of Devizes, however, clearly intended the term to refer to the mass slaughter of the Jews when he wrote at the end of the twelfth century.
[747] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 3.
[748] Roger of Howden, *Chronicle*, iii: 8; Newburgh, *Historia*, i, 294; Heather Blurton, "Egyptian Days: From Passion to Exodus in the Representation of Twelfth-Century Jewish-Christian Relations," in *Christians and Jews in Angevin England*: 222–37, at 228. On Newburgh's use of Howden, see Nicholas Vincent, "William of Newburgh, Josephus and the New Titus," in *Christians and Jews in Angevin England*: 57–90, at 59.

later, similarly explained that, "many people were forecasting many things then, because 'unlucky day' was written over that day in the calendar."[749] In the Roman calendar, every month had two such days, called "Egyptian," because of they were believed to have an origin in ancient Egyptian astrology. Certain observers in the Middle Ages considered these days unlucky, and thus tried to avoid beginning any new undertakings on them.[750] That Richard's coronation was held on such a day speaks perhaps to his disregard for this tradition, or to an oversight in planning.

William of Newburgh, as Heather Blurton has shown, believed that Egyptian days were a "key to providential history."[751] Specifically, these unlucky days evoked Exodus 1:9–10, which tells how Pharaoh, newly ascended to the throne of Egypt, proclaimed that "the people of the children of Israel are numerous and stronger than we. Come, let us wisely oppress them, lest they multiply." The gloss put on this passage by twelfth-century readers was that the Jews had become too numerous in Christian lands, and therefore must be once again driven into exile. Although it would be another century before the Jews were officially expelled from England, the impetus to remove them from the kingdom was not without precedent: the Capetian chronicler Rigord described the seizure of gold, silver, and cloth from the Jews in France shortly after Philip Augustus became king in 1180, and in 1182 Philip officially expelled the Jews from the Île de France.[752] The violence against the Jews on Richard's coronation day thereby signaled more than

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[749] *Itinerarium*, 145.
[750] Raymond Clemens and Timothy Graham, *Introduction to Manuscript Studies* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 199.
[751] Blurton, "Egyptian Days," 229.
[752] Rigord, *Oeuvres*, i: 14–16; Blurton, "Egyptian Days," 234.

mere civic unrest. It was part of a larger shift away from the toleration formerly granted by Christians to Europe's Jewish population.[753]

Underlying the language of exodus was a fear of Jews as outsiders who did not belong in England. Such concern was part of the coalescing Angevin understanding of Englishness and England at the end of the twelfth century. As Kathy Lavezzo writes, "Coterminous with the various fantasies of sameness, union and wholeness that nationalism entails are fantasies of difference, the construction of others whom the nation is 'not' and whom the nation surmounts."[754] As the Angevins increasingly defined themselves as English, it was necessary to place further restrictions upon those who did not qualify for that label.

Compared to other parts of Europe, the Jewish community in England was relatively new, and largely foreign by birth and language as well as by religion and ethnicity. The Norman kings had allowed Jewish moneylenders to settle in Norwich under royal protection, but Jews had only lived in York since the middle of the twelfth century.[755] Ivan Marcus notes that the late eleventh through the early thirteenth century

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[753] Abulafia, *Christian Jewish Relations*, on how the crusades influenced anti-Jewish violence, see 135–60, on anti-Jewish libels in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see 167–93; Robert Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 8; Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism*, 59–61; Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 151–2; Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 95.

[754] Kathy Lavezzo (ed), Introduction to *Imagining a Medieval English Nation*, Medieval Cultures 37 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), xvi. See also Suzanne Yeager, *Jerusalem in Medieval Narrative*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 9.

[755] Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, 119; Sarah Rees Jones, "Neighbours and Victims in Twelfth-Century York: a Royal Citadel, the Citizens and the Jews of York," in *Christians and Jews in Angevin England*: 15–42, at 31. On the status of Jews in England's archival records during the reign of Henry I, see Kathleen Biddick, "Arthur's Two Bodies and the Bare Life of the Archives," in *Cultural Diversity in the British Middle Ages: Archipelago, Island, England*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *The New Middle Ages* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2008): 117–34.

witnessed "a new awareness on the part of Jews and Christians of members of the other culture."[756] The scholar Herbert of Bosham, for example, learned Hebrew during his career working for Henry II, Thomas Becket, and William Longchamp.[757]

Nevertheless, the Jewish and Christian communities did not regularly mix. Paul Hyams argues that even in communities that had both Jews and Christians, the two religions kept largely to their own, attending their own churches or synagogues, speaking with their co-religionists, and rarely interacting with members of the other faith. What interactions they did have would have been limited, such as market transactions or drawing up loan argreements. Many of the recent Jewish settlers spoke only French and Hebrew. Thus even in mixed communities, Christians would generally have learned more about Jews from the Bible and Christian histories than from personal interactions with their Jewish neighbors.[758] The Jews therefore remained largely outsiders in England. As Hyams puts it, they were "*in* but never quite *of* England."[759] The crusade brought this distinction into sharp relief.

The fear that Jews represented not only a religious but also a national otherness is seen in a story told by Richard of Devizes.[760] A young French orphan in "extreme poverty" was advised by a Jewish friend of his to go to England, "a land flowing with milk and honey."[761] The friend advised the boy to seek out Winchester, which he said was superior to all the other cities in the kingdom, and gave him a letter of introduction to

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[756] Ivan Marcus, "Jews and Christians Imagining the Other in Medieval Europe" *Prooftexts* 15 (1995): 206–226, at 206.
[757] Barlow, "Bosham, Herbert of (*d. c.*1194)," *ODNB*.
[758] Hyams, "Faith, Fealty and Jewish 'infideles'," 133.
[759] Hyams, "Faith, Fealty and Jewish 'infideles'," 127.
[760] See Abulafia, *Christian-Jewish Relations*, 177–8.
[761] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 64: "terram lacte et mell manantem."

some Jews he knew there. Winchester, the friend stressed, was nothing less than "the Jerusalem of the Jews" (*Iudeorum Ierosolima*).[762] The boy therefore followed his friend's advice and went to work for an old Jewish woman in that city, until one day he mysteriously disappeared. The boy's bunkmate then accused the city's Jewry of crucifying the boy, and lamented that his companion had been led to his death by the advice of "a certain son of the devil, a French Jew."[763] This story plays upon the trope of ritual murder of Christians by Jews, famously exemplified by the death of William of Norwich in 1144, which sparked a martyr cult surrounding the boy and intensified Christian-Jewish tensions in the community.[764] Richard also stresses the Frenchness of the double-crossing Jewish friend, simultaneously casting the Jews and the French as villains. Ultimately, the false French Jew's advice brought the innocent Christian boy to his grave. Richard of Devizes' story, furthermore, emphasizes that England's Jewry maintained relationships with their foreign brethren, which posed a potential security risk for England.

William of Newburgh's description of the London massacre offers a somewhat more learned commentary about the Jews' unique relationship to England:

> For that day was deemed to have been deadly for the Jews, and more Egyptian than English; since England, in which they had been happy and celebrated under the previous king, by the judgment of God suddenly was turned into Egypt for them, where their fathers had endured hardships.[765]

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[762] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 67. See also Blurton, "Egyptian Days," 236.
[763] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 67–9 (quote at 69): "Filius quidam diaboli Iudeus Francigena."
[764] Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism*, 282–7, 307.
[765] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 294: "Dies enim ille Judaeis exitialis fuisse dignoscitur, et Aegyptiacus magis quam Anglicus; cum Anglia, in qua sub rege priore felices et incluti fuerant, repente illis in Aegyptum, ubi patres eorum dura perpessi sunt, Dei judicio verteretur." Cf. Blurton, "Egyptian Days," 222; Sethina Watson, "Introduction: The Moment and Memory of the York Massacre of 1190," in *Christians and Jews in Angevin England*, 1–14, at 9.

Newburgh places the massacre into a Biblical framework of Jewish persecution and exile, or what Blurton terms a "drama of destruction and exodus."[766] The chronicler's rhetoric casts the Jews as the ancient Israelites, a largely sympathetic position, and Richard as Pharaoh, the villain of biblical narrative. This interpretation of anti-Jewish violence recognizes that England had, under Henry II, been a safe home for the Jews.[767] Now, under its new king, the kingdom was no longer England for the Jews, but the Egypt of the Old Testament. In essence, England had, in a completely unprecedented way, lost its identity for the Jews. The England that remained behind was (in theory, at least) now purely Christian.

Crusaders and Jews

The London massacre of September 3–4, 1189 unleashed a torrent of anti-Jewish assaults throughout England. In spite of royal attempts to rein in the violence, over the following months the attacks spread across "the heartland of the late twelfth-century English provincial Jewry," first to King's Lynn (January 1190), and then to Norwich (6 February), Stamford (7 March), York (16 March), and Bury St Edmunds (18 March).[768] Richard, who had departed on crusade at the end of December, could do little to stem

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[766] Blurton, "Egyptian Days," 223–4, 229 (quote), 233. See also Watson, "The Moment and Memory of the York Massacre of 1190," 9.

[767] On William of Newburgh's emphasis on the novelty of this violence, see Jeffrey Cohen, "The Future of the Jews of York," in *Christians and Jews in Angevin England*: 278–93, at 288–9.

[768] Hillaby, "Prelude and Postscript," 43–4 (quote at 43), 49–50; William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 308–24; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 33–4; Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 3–4.

these outbursts, largely carried out by lesser knights and members of the lower classes.[769]

Notably, a significant number of crusaders also took part, a point highlighted by

contemporary chroniclers. William of Newburgh attributed the violence in Stamford to

young crusaders, while Ralph de Diceto stated that young crusaders participated in the

attacks not only in Stamford, but also in Norwich, Bury St Edmunds, and York.[770] So

linked did the participation of crusaders become with assaults on England's Jews that in

1218, when Henry III's Council of Regency appointed "custodians of our Jews" in

Gloucester, Bristol, Lincoln, and Oxford, they emphasized the need to protect the Jews,

"especially from crusaders" (*et maxime de crucesignatis*).[771]

      These crusaders were motivated by a variety of reasons to take up arms against

England's Jews. On a practical level, the Jews made an easy target for young men

seeking funds to support their upcoming voyage to the Holy Land. Alan Cooper points to

a *c.* 1196 list of would-be crusaders from Lincolnshire who were unable to fulfill their

vows. The document, which includes such occupations as "skinners and cobblers," lists a

total of twenty-nine men, of whom twenty are categorized as poor.[772] For such lower-

class men, the prospect of a crusade also meant the acceptance of great financial burdens.

William of Newburgh reported just such a motivation driving the crusaders who attacked

the Jews at the Stamford Lenten fair: "[They were] indignant that the enemies of the

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[769] Richard departed England on 30 December, 1189, and spent the spring and summer preparing for the crusade in France. See Hillaby, "Prelude and Postscript," 43; Watson, "The Moment and Memory of the York Massacre of 1190," 4; Abulafia, *Christian Jewish Relations*, 160, emphasizes that the absence of royal authority or other leadership was a comment element in twelfth-century pogroms. On crusaders from the lower classes, see Cooper, "William Longbeard," 95–6.

[770] Hillaby argues that crusaders probably did not take part in the violence in Norwich. Hillaby, "Prelude and Postscript," 46; William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 309–10; Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 75–6.

[771] Hillaby, "Prelude and Postscript," 55.

[772] Cooper, "William Longbeard," 95–6.

Cross of Christ who were living there should possess so much, when they had too little for the expenses of such a journey."[773] A similar motivation, Newburgh suggests, was at work in York, where, Anna Abulafia notes, anger over Jewish moneylending was a key element underlying the violence.[774] One of the Stamford assailants, a young pilgrim named John, was killed in Northampton while trying to deposit the money he had taken from the Jews. Almost immediately a new cult sprang up around him. The local populace revered him as a martyr and held vigils around his tomb. Word soon spread that John's body was performing miracles. Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, finally intervened, stamping out this ad hoc cult "of the false martyr."[775]

While money was certainly a factor in the uprisings, however, it is important to recognize that it was not the only one. As the popular cult surrounding the murdered would-be crusader John demonstrates, much greater ideological motivations underlay the attacks. The rhetoric of crusade brought these issues to the fore. Indeed, as Jay Rubenstein notes, a "profound historical and psychological connection" linked Christian animosity toward Europe's Jewish communities to the fate of the Holy Land. In the early eleventh century, the destruction of the Holy Sepulchre and other churches in the Holy Land in 1009 by the caliph al-Hakim had led Christians in southern France to take up arms against the Jews living amongst them. This was the first pogrom, motivated, as

[773] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i, 310: "indignans quod inimici crucis Christi ibidem habitantes tam multa possiderent, cum ipsi ad tanti itineris sumptus minus haberent." See also Hillaby, "Prelude and Postscript," 46–7. 55. See also Chazan, *European Jewry*, 188–91.
[774] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 313–4; Abulafia, *Christian-Jewish Relations*, 159–60. Cf. Hosler, "Henry II, William of Newburgh, and the Development of English Anti-Judaism," 167–82.
[775] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 311. See also Hillaby, "Prelude and Postscript," 47. On the decreasing popularity of miracle cults in England at the end of the twelfth century and beginning of the thirteenth, see Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate*, 201–10.

Rubenstein explains, "by rumors of events in Jerusalem."[776] Similar animosity surfaced

again during both the First and the Second Crusades, when the Rhineland Jews in

particular became the victims of further pogroms. The Norman Crusaders also targeted

the Jews of Rouen in 1096. More recent attacks on the Jewish communities had occurred

at Blois in 1171 and Mainz in 1188.[777] Given these precedents, it is not surprising to read

Ralph de Diceto's comment that in 1190 "many throughout England, hastening to reach

Jerusalem, first resolved to rise up against the Jews, then they invaded the Saracens."[778]

Anti-Jewish violence had become an established part of crusading behavior.

Most twelfth-century readings of the Gospel accepted that the Jews were

responsible for the death of Christ. The author of the *Chanson d'Antioche* (*c*. 1170–*c*.

1200), for example, conflating the Jews and Muslims, exhorted Christians to "take the

sign of the Cross for His [Christ's] sake and seek revenge on the descendants of the

Antichrist."[779] The poem urges Christians "to go to Jerusalem to kill and confound the

wicked pagans who refuse to believe in God," while Christ, hanging on the Cross,

[776] Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 6–7 (quotes at 7). See also Landes, *Relics, Apocalypse, and the Deceits of History*, 41–6.

[777] Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 49–53, 77; Chaviva Levin, "Constructing Memories of Martyrdom: Contrasting Portrayals of Martyrdom in the Hebrew Narratives of the First and Second Crusade," in *Remembering the Crusades:* 50–68, at 50; Ivan G. Marcus, "From Politics to Martyrdom: Shifting Paradigms in the Hebrew Narratives of the 1096 Crusade Riots," *Prooftexts* 2: Catastrophe in Jewish Literature (Jan. 1982): 40–52; Chazan, *European Jewry*, esp. 50–84; Biddick, "Arthur's Two Bodies," 122; Hyams, "Faith, Fealty and Jewish 'infideles'," 136; Watson, "The Moment and Memory of the York Massacre of 1190," 2l; Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 58–60. Ivan Marcus notes that the Second Crusade did not witness the saem level of anti-Jewish violence as the First Crusade, in Marcus, "Jews and Christians Imagining the Other," 212. For the Jewish perspective on these pogroms, see Israel Jacob Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb: Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 92–134.

[778] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 75: "Multi per Angliam, tendere Jerosolimam properantes, prius in Judaeos insurgere decreverunt quam invaderent Sarracenos."

[779] *Chanson d'Antioche: An Old French Account of the First Crusade*, trans. Susan B. Edgington and Carol Sweetenham, Crusade Texts in Translation 22 (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 104. On the complications of dating the text, see Edgington and Sweetenham, "The Textual History of the *Chanson d'Antioche*," in ibid., 9–15.

foretells that in a thousand years a new race of people will come to avenge His death.[780] It

did not matter that more than a millennium separated England's twelfth-century Jews

from the Jewish community in Jerusalem at the time of Christ. Rather, as Heather Blurton

has put it, the Jews were condemned by history and historiography to "ceaselessly and

timelessly re-enact their original role in the Christian drama of sacrifice and salvation."[781]

Stories circulated in which the Jews performed ritual murders of Christians,

perhaps most famously upon the child-martyr William of Norwich, whose death in 1144

was the first of its kind in England.[782] Anthony Bale notes that these Christian tales about

Jews were "suffused with images of disgust, violence, bloodiness and torture."[783] Richard

of Devizes, for instance, celebrated the assaults on the Jewish "bloodsuckers"

(*sanguisugas*) and "worms" (*uermibus*) at Richard's coronation, and Roger of Howden

decried Jewish "depravity" (*pravitatem*).[784] As we have seen, the legends of St Helena

and the *Inventio Crucis* also placed an emphasis on Christian triumph over the Jews. By

overcoming the opposition of the hostile Jewish community in Aelia Capitolina, and

effecting Judas's conversion, Helena represented this Christian victory over Christ's

killers.[785] Bale adds that "there are at least forty-three holy wells in the British Isles along

that are dedicated to St Helena (or Helen/Elen), clearly referring to the well in which

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[780] *Chanson d'Antioche*, 105 (quote), 106–7.
[781] Blurton, "Egyptian Days," 225.
[782] Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 68, 76; Ivan G. Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood: Jewish Acculturation in Medieval Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 100–1. See also Thomas of Monmouth, *The Life and Passion of William of Norwich*, trans. Miri Rubin (Penguin, 2014).
[783] Bale, *Feeling Persecuted*, 23.
[784] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 4; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 13. Cf. Hyams, "Faith, Fealty and Jewish 'infideles'," 147; William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 316.
[785] See Bale, *Feeling Persecuted*, 144–7.

Judas was tortured."[786] Like the round churches that transplanted the Holy Sepulchre to European soil, these wells served as physical reminders, deeply imbedded in the English landscape, of Helena's torture of the Jews.

The English chroniclers of the 1189/90 attacks struggled to reconcile their contempt for the Jews with Biblical directive. Both Ralph de Diceto and William of Newburgh cited Psalm 58:12: "Slay them not, lest my people forget."[787] According to medieval Christian interpretations of this passage, the Jews were a necessary evil, reminding Christians by their presence of the tribulations that Christ had endured. Both Saint Augustine in *Civitas Dei* and later Pope Calixtus II (1119–24) in his bull *Sicut Judaeis* had emphasized the need to protect the Jews and the importance of allowing them to live among Christians.[788] Newburgh likened the Jews to the symbolism of the cross, which similarly served as a reminder of Christ's Passion.[789] To destroy Judaism was therefore to remove that reminder. Yet the late twelfth-century chroniclers could not help but feel that some good must also come from the attacks on England's Jews. Richard of Devizes, for example, praised the people of Winchester for containing their disgust of the Jews and not acting upon it, thus casting their nonviolence as commendable in comparison with 'bad' Christian behavior.[790]

William of Newburgh linked the attacks in England directly to the Third Crusade.

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[786] Bale, *Feeling Persecuted*, 147.
[787] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 76; William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 316. See also Blurton, "Egyptian Days," 235; Yeager, *Jerusalem in Medieval Narrative*, 106; Vincent, "William of Newburgh, Josephus and the New Titus," 69.
[788] Hillaby, "Prelude and Postscript," 54; Blurton, "Egyptian Days," 234. See also Marcus, "Jews and Christians Imagining the Other," 213.
[789] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 316; Hyams, "Faith, Fealty and Jewish 'infideles'," 130.
[790] Winchester's citizen avoided taking part in the 1189–90 anti-Jewish violence. Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 4.

The chronicler reported that a cross was seen in the sky over the London road in

Dunstable around the time that Richard departed for the East and shortly before the

January assaults on the Jews at King's Lynn.[791] Roger of Howden had similarly recorded

a cross in the sky over Dunstable in August 1188, adding that those watching saw Christ

himself, affixed by nails, in its center.[792] Such portents were indications, in the

interpretive frameworks built up by contemporaries, that the deaths of England's Jews

served as part of some larger divine plan connected to Richard's accession to the throne

and his departure on crusade.

As Newburgh tried to reconcile the deaths of England's Jews with Psalm 58, he

reflected on how God at times has bad people do good deeds, and concluded that the

Jewish deaths must ultimately reflect well upon England's new crusader king:

> The first day of the reign of the most illustrious king Richard was marked by the
> destruction of the faithless race, and by a new courage of the Christians against
> the enemies of the cross of Christ… For what could it more aptly portend, if it
> portended anything, than that the destruction of the blaspheming people equally
> ennobled the day and the place of the king's consecration, than that at the very
> beginning of his reign the enemies of the Christian faith near him began to fall
> and be weakened?[793]

Through this logic, William reasoned, the bad actions of the Christians could be forgiven.

Even though individual Christians had acted against the orders of Psalm 58, the deaths of

the Jews in England could be read positively, as representative of Richard's larger

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[791] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 307–8. See also Hyams, "Faith, Fealty and Jewish 'infideles'," 131–2.
[792] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 354.
[793] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 299–8: "perfidae gentis exitio, et nova Christianorum contra inimicos crucis Christi fiducia, insignitus est regni illustrissimi regis Ricardi dies primus…. Quid enim aptius portendit, si quid portendit, quod regiae consecrationis ejus diem pariter et locum blasphemae gentis nobilitavit exitium, quod in ipso regni ejus exordio hostes Christianae fidei coeperunt juxta eum cadere et infirmari?"

crusading legacy.

The response of Ralph de Diceto further reveals the connections that contemporaries drew between the violence in England and past and present events in the Holy Land, and it indicates the apocalyptic undertone of the time. Diceto followed his comments on Psalm 58 with a list of eight historical and contemporary conquests and destructions of Jerusalem: by Pharaoh Necho, Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus, Pompey, Titus and Vespasian, the "Saracens" of the time of Mohammad, the Franks, and, most recently, Saladin.[794] English Christians, Ralph implied, were thus enacting part of God's greater plan for Jerusalem and Christendom, casting out the enemies of the faith both at home and abroad.

York, Jerusalem, and Masada

Crucially, from the Christian perspective, events both in the Holy Land and in England were bound together by history, prophecy, and apocalyptic imagery. York, the city famous for its connections to Constantine the Great, became the focus of such interpretations. The Norman kings, recognizing York's long association with "Christian *imperium*," cultivated a royal presence in the city.[795] When the violence erupted against York's Jews in spring of 1190, however, royal control of the city was less apparent, particularly as York's sheriff, Ranulf de Glanville, had departed with Richard on crusade.[796] Largely free from royal oversight, York's inhabitants felt free to unleash their

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[794] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 76–7. See also Blurton, "Egyptian Days," 233.
[795] Jones, "Neighbours and Victims," 19, 22 (quote), 25.
[796] Watson, "The Moment and Memory of the York Massacre of 1190," 7; Jones, "Neighbours and Victims," 38.

hatred and jealousy of the Jews in their community.

They began by targeting the homes of Benedict (whose widow had inherited it at his death) and Josce, the wealthy Jews who had already been attacked during the London massacre the previous fall. Josce led the city's other Jews to the royal tower (now Clifford's Castle), where they sought refuge from the mob. There the rabbi Yomtob of Joigny, who "had come from parts beyond the sea… to teach the English Jews," urged them to kill themselves and their families rather than fall victims to the Christian mob.[797] Others were killed by the city's Christians. In all some 150 "Jewish men, women and children committed suicide or were murdered" in York on March 16–17, 1190.[798]

Sethina Watson highlights the significance of the York Massacre, the most famous of the series of attacks on England's Jews, as "national in origin and reach." But the violence, she emphasizes, also reached beyond England: "it played out on an international (even cosmic) stage."[799] As a "cosmic" event, the York Massacre held eschatological implications. These were particularly embodied by the preaching of a certain Premonstratensian hermit, who addressed the Christians in York as they besieged the city's Jews. Clad in white (*veste alba*), the hermit admonished the besiegers, "frequently repeating with a powerful voice that the enemies of Christ should be crushed, and also stirring up the warriors by the example of his assistance."[800]

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[797] William of Newburgh, i: 312–27, quote at 318: "ad docendos Judaeos Anglicanos… ex partibus venerate transmarinis."

[798] Watson, "The Moment and Memory of the York Massacre of 1190," 1.

[799] Watson, "The Moment and Memory of the York Massacre of 1190," 8.

[800] The monk later died, crushed by a falling rock while assisting the besiegers set up their siege equipment. William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 317 (quote), 318: "Praemonstratensi heremita… arcemque oppugnantibus in veste alba sedulus aderat, hostes Christi proterendos saepius cum clamore valido repetens, et suae quoque cooperationis exemplo bellatores accendens."

Members of the Premonstratensian order traditionally wore white, but by emphasizing the hermit's white robes in the context of his preaching during the York Massacre, William of Newburgh gave this passage a distinctly prophetic tone. Roger of Howden, for instance, told the story of an abbot who, praying to know more about the fate of the English army that was fighting in France in 1188, "having the spirit of prophecy" (*spiritum prophetiae habens*), was visited in his dreams by a religious man dressed all in white.[801] Moreover, the Apocalypse of John repeatedly emphasizes white clothing as a sign of Christian triumph and salvation. Apocalypse 3:5, for example, proclaims, "He that shall overcome shall thus be clothed in white garments [*vestietur vestimentis albis*]: and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life."[802] This vision of a holy man in white, calling for the destruction of Christ's enemies, would thus easily have brought such apocalyptic images to the minds of the men laying siege to York's Jews.

William of Newburgh was more explicit in his use of apocalyptic language when presenting the attack at York as a reenactment of first-century events in the Holy Land. Specifically, William saw the York Massacre in 1190 as a reenactment of the siege of Jerusalem and the burning of the Second Temple by the Roman emperor Vespasian (r. 69–79) and his son Titus (r. 79–81) in 70 CE, followed by the siege of Masada in 72. Newburgh cited especially the *Bellum Judaicum* of Flavius Josephus (37–100), which had entered the Western canon through Rufinus's Latin translation.[803] Nicholas Vincent

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[801] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 55.
[802] Cf. Apoc. 3:4–5, 3:18, 4:4, 6:11, and 7:9.
[803] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 320; Vincent, "William of Newburgh, Josephus and the New Titus," 57, 63; Thomas N. Hall, "The *Euangelium Nichodemi* and *Vindicta saluatoris* in Anglo-Saxon England," in

has traced Newburgh's use of Josephus's language to describe the events in York. The chronicler uses the archaic word *arx*, for example, rather than the more common *castellum*, to refer to the royal tower in York. This usage, Vincent shows, draws from Josephus's description of Masada as an *arx*.[804] Just as the first-century Jews sought refuge from the Romans by retreating to the *arx* of Masada, so did York's Jews flee to their local *arx*. And like the Jews at Masada, the Jews of York ultimately turned to mass suicide to escape death at the hands of their besiegers.[805]

The implications of these stories for a crusading audience become even more pronounced when one considers the apocryphal Christianization of the historically pagan emperors Vespasian and Titus. Over the centuries, an accretion of tales—the legend of St Veronica, the *Nathanis Judaei Legatio*, the *Acta Pilati*, the *Euangelium Nichodemi*, the *Cura Sanitatis Tiberii*, and others, often grouped in medieval manuscripts as the *Gesta Salvatoris*—reimagined the historical accounts of first-century events.[806] By the eighth century, Titus's attack on Jerusalem was retold in the *Vindicta Salvatoris* (the Vengeance of the Lord), which made its way to England by the later Anglo-Saxon period, with at least three eleventh-and twelfth-century Old English versions of it surviving today. By the end of the twelfth century, it also appeared in French prose and verse versions as *La*

Two Old English Apocrypha and their Manuscript Source: The Gospel of Nichodemus and the Avenging of the Saviour, ed. J. E. Cross, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 19 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 36–81, at 59–60.

[804] Vincent, "William of Newburgh, Josephus and the New Titus," 76.

[805] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 320.

[806] On the medieval titles of these texts, see Hall, "The *Euangelium Nichodemi* and *Vindicta saluatoris* in Anglo-Saxon England," 46. Two of the three Old English copies of the Evangelium Nichodemi date from the middle of the twelfth century (ibid, 49, 52–3).

Vengeance de Nostre-Seigneur.[807] In these later versions, like the mid-thirteenth-century

Li Notsier from the abbey of Mont Saint-Michel, the story of the Roman siege of

Jerusalem in 70 rather ironically became a *chanson de geste* celebrating a chivalric

Christian victory in the Holy Land.[808]

The Angevins, as I have shown in earlier chapters, were particularly interested in

claiming Roman imperial legacies in the Holy Land. In this respect, Vespasian and Titus

offered fitting parallels to Henry II and Richard I. Vespasian and Henry were both

founders of new dynasties, the Flavian and the Angevin, respectively. Like Constantine

the Great, Vespasian had a connection to Britain, where, according to Geoffrey of

Monmouth (who drew from Josephus), he had campaigned before establishing peace with

the British king Arviragus.[809] Titus and Richard, for their parts, were both famous for

campaigns focused on Jerusalem, and their reigns were connected to anti-Jewish

movements.[810] Moreover, the Old English *Vindicta Salvatoris* described Titus as a

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[807] Alvin E. Ford, *La Vengeance de Nostre-Seigneur: The Old and Middle French Prose Versions: The Cura Sanitatis Tiberii (The Mission of Volusian), the Nathanis Judaei Legatio (Vindicta Salvatoris, and the Versions found in the Bible en francias of Roger d'Argenteuil or influenced by the Works of Flavius Josephus, Robert de Boron and Jacobus de Voragine*, Studies and Texts 115 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1993), 4–34; Thomas N. Hall, "The Cross as Green Tree in the *Vindicta Salvatoris* and the Green Rod of Moses in Exodus," *English Studies* 72:4 (1991): 297–307, at 297; Loyal A. T. Gryting, "The *Venjance Nostre Seigneur* as a Mediaeval Composite," *The Modern Language Journal* 38 (1954): 15–17, at 16; Malcolm Hebron, *The Medieval Siege: Theme and Image in Middle English Romance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 114. The Old English text and its Latin source is printed in *Two Old English Apocrypha*, ed. J. E. Cross, 248–293, see also 58–81. For a discussion of the extant manuscript of the prose version of the Old French *La Vengeance de Nostre-Seigneur*, see Ford, *La Vengeance de Nostre-Seigneur*, 1–4. For a tree diagram of the relationships between the various related apocryphal texts, see Bonnie Millar, *The Siege of Jerusalem in its Physical, Literary and Historical Contexts* (Portland, OR: Four Courts Press, 2000), 44.
[808] BL Additional MS 10289, ff. 82r–121r. As Malcolm Hebron puts it, "The subject of a Roman campaign in the Holy Land, culminating in a great siege against God's enemies, appealed to audiences at the time of the crusades, for whom the Romans…were the exemplars of chivalry." Hebron, *The Medieval Siege*, 114.
[809] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 84–5. See also Vincent, "William of Newburgh, Josephus and the New Titus," 82.
[810] Vincent, "William of Newburgh, Josephus and the New Titus," 79.

regulus from Aquitaine, while the author of the *Itinerarium* praised Richard on the day of

his coronation—the day of the Jewish massacre—as "another Titus."[811] It would be

difficult to ignore the parallels between Titus and Richard—the latter the son of Eleanor

of Aquitaine and Henry II, himself the founder of a new royal dynasty with imperial

ambitions. As Richard set his course to free Jerusalem from Christ's enemies, his subjects

in England could help their Angevin Titus in his quest to capture the holy city, acting out

their own role in this historical drama by laying siege to the Jews holed up on English

soil in the royal tower in York.

The Prophecy of the Golden Gate

In much the same way that the violence in York became a reenactment of the

historical siege of Jerusalem by Titus and Vespasian, so too did the Angevin courtier

Walter Map envision a direct correlation between historical events in the Levant and

those in England. In a unique interpretation of the crisis in Jerusalem, Walter explained

how the fates of Jerusalem and England were connected:

> After one thousand one hundred and seventy [years] were done
> The seventh after ten gave Jerusalem to Saladin.
>
> In the one thousand sixty and sixth year
> The bounds of England saw the comet's hair.
>
> In the one thousand and one hundredth year but one
> With courage the mighty Franks captured Jerusalem.[812]

[811] Hall, "The *Euangelium Nichodemi* and *Vindicta saluatoris* in Anglo-Saxon England," 74; *Itinerarium*, 145 (quote), 172. Nicholas Vincent lays out additional parallels between the two men, Vincent, "William of Newburgh, Josephus and the New Titus," 83–5.

[812] Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 410: "Actis / milleno centeno septuageno / Septimus a deno dat Ierusalem Saladeno. / Anno milleno sexagesimo quoque seno / Anglorum mete crinem sensere comete. / Anno milleno centeno quo minus uno / Ierusalem Franci capiunt uirtute potenti."

These couplets bookend the 1066 Norman conquest of England (heralded by a comet, just as the 1187 fall of Jerusalem was heralded by the planetary conjunction) with Saladin's conquest of the Holy Land in 1187 and with the Frankish capture of Jerusalem in 1099 during the First Crusade.

Walter also, and more confusingly, wrote that the "Saracens" had previously captured Jerusalem in 1054—a date that does not correspond to any major events in the Holy Land, which had already been under Mulsim control for some time.[813] M. R. James suggests that perhaps Walter (or his source for this information) intended to refer to 1056, when westerners were temporarily banned from entering the Holy Sepulchre.[814] Whatever event Walter meant to indicate by this reference, he went on to describe it as as a precursor to the Norman Conquest. This scenario, while making England's fate parallel to Jerusalem, casts the Normans as analogous to the Muslims. Map added a further a twist: these events in England and Jerusalem are linked to events in the Byzantine Empire. In more recent times, Walter explaines, Andronicus I Comnenus (r. 1183–5), whom Walter compares to the persecutor Nero, had become emperor in Byzantium. And thus, Walter concludes, "these two conquests [England by the Normans and Byzantium by Andronicus] were the prophetesses and heralds of those of Jerusalem."[815]

The unpopular Andronicus Comnenus was soon overthrown by Isaac II Angelus, who succeeded him as Byzantine emperor in 1185. Three years later, in 1188, a

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[813] Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 410: "Anno ab incarnatione Domini m.l.iiii capta est Sarracenis Ierusalem."
[814] M. R. James (ed.), in Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 410n2.
[815] Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 410: "Sic subuersionibus Ierusalem prophetisse fuerunt et prenuncie due predicte."

messenger of the Capetian king Philip Augustus reported on affairs in the East. After

noting the outcome of several skirmishes, and a marriage alliance between the children of

Saladin and the Sultan of Iconium, the anonymous messenger turned to a recitation of

prophecy. He began by relating the "true and indubitable" (*certa et indubitabilis*)

prophecy of a certain David of Constantinople.[816] This prophecy foretold that "in the year

in which the Annunciation of the Lord falls on Easter day, the Franks (*Franci*) will

restore the Promised Land, and will stable their horses in the *palmacia* of Baldac, and

they will pitch their tents beyond the dry tree, and the chaff (*lolium*) will be separated

from the wheat."[817] From the perspective of 1188, when this letter was supposedly

written, Easter would next fall on the feast of the Annunciation (March 25) in the year

1201. Although this date was still over a decade away, this prophecy hinted at the

ultimate victory of the Latin crusaders in the not-too-distant future.

Even more intriguing, from the point of view of the Angevins' imperial

ambitions, was the second prophecy that the messenger reported, concerning the Golden

Gate. This gate, which dates to the reign of Theodosius II in the fifth century, is the

southernmost gate built along Constantinople's ancient outer walls. Initially used as the

entry point for imperial triumphs, over the centuries the gate had gained an association

with victory, even as the portal itself fell into disuse.[818] The inscription above the gate

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[816] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, 59. Cf. Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 51; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 355.

[817] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, 59: "quod eo anno quo Annuntiatio Domini in die Paschae continget Franci restaurabunt Terram Promissionis, et stabulabunt equos suos in palmacia de Baldac, et figent tentoria sua ultra arborem siccam, et lolium separabitur a tritico." See also Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 51–2; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 355.

[818] Thomas F. Madden, "Triumph Re-Imagined: The Golden Gate and Popular Memory in Byzantine and Ottoman Constantinople," in *Shipping, Trade and Crusade in the Medieval Mediterranean: Studies in*

originally read "AUREA SAECLA GERIT QVI PORTAM CONSTRVIT AVRO" (He

who builds a gate with gold rules a golden age).[819] By the twelfth century, however, most

of this inscription had been lost.[820] According to the French envoy's letter, a prophecy

about the gate, supposedly told to "Walter the Templar lord" (presumably Walter de

Mesnil) by an old Greek man, "will now be fulfilled" (*nunc implebitur*): "the Latins will

rule (*imperabunt*) and be lords (*dominabuntur*) in the city of Constantinople, because it is

written on the Golden Gate, which has not been opened for two hundred years, 'When a

golden-haired king from the West comes, I will open of my own accord.'"[821]

Thomas Madden has suggested that in 1188, when Philip Augustus's envoy was

in Constantinople, the messenger mistook the words "Aurea saecla" (golden age) for

"Aurea saeta" (golden hair); an older theory suggests that he misread the Roman name

"Flavius" as "flavus" (blonde).[822] Whatever the wording that the envoy saw over the

Golden Gate, the versions of his letter quoted by Angevin chroniclers use the word

"flavus." While Madden's point about the surviving text of the inscription holds, it seems

unnecessary to presume that the messenger would change the wording from "aurea" to

"flavus," unless it helped to emphasize a point that he wished to make, reflected his

mistaken reading of "Flavius," or was more common usage. Another possibility is that

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Honour of John Pryor, ed. Ruthy Gertwagen and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012): 317–28, esp. 317–9.

[819] Madden, "Triumph Re-Imagined," 318.

[820] Madden, "Triumph Re-Imagined," 320. A digital humanities project, "Byzantium 1200," is dedicated to producing computer reconstructions of Constantinople in the year 1200. The project's reconstructions of the Golden Gate can be viewed at http://www.byzantium1200.com/p-aura.html.

[821] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, 60: "quod Latini imperabunt et dominabuntur in civitate Constantinopoli, quia scriptum est in porta aurea quae non fuit aperta ducentis annis retro, 'Quando veniet rex flavus occidentalis ego per me ipsam aperiar'"; Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 52; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 356.

[822] Madden, "Triumph Re-Imagined," 320.

the messenger presented the message in French, and it was then translated back into Latin differently.

This wording becomes suddenly important in the context of the chronicles in which the letter was quoted. Although this letter purports to come from a French envoy working on behalf of the French king, it is only preserved in the works of two English chroniclers. Ralph de Diceto and Roger of Howden give the full text of this letter, the latter quoting it in both his *Gesta* and his revised *Chronica*.[823] The text does not appear in the major Capetian chronicles. What purpose, then, did these Greek prophecies, reported by a Capetian messenger, serve in Ralph's and Roger's narratives? The answer, I believe, can be found in the text of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum*, written *c*. 1217–22. Although this particular account of Richard's crusading exploits was written some years after the Third Crusade, it contains a physical description of the English king, including the observation that Richard's hair was "between red and blonde" (*inter rufum et flavum*).[824] Similarly, as we saw in Chapter Two, the inscription on Richard's tomb at Fontevraud called him the "golden king"—the *rex auree*.[825]

It is, of course, possible that Philip Augustus's hair was also blonde. Unfortunately, as the Capetian king's biographer Jim Bradbury has noted, "Philip is not a king who attracted many vivid personal portraits, either of his looks or of his character," and I have been able to find no descriptions of the French king's hair color.[826] Whether or

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[823] Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historia*, 59–60; Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 51–3; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii: 355–6. The three versions agree almost completely in wording.
[824] *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi*, ed. M. T. Stead, Texts for Students 21 (New York: MacMillan, 1920), 13.
[825] BL Cotton MS Faustina A VII, f. 2r.
[826] Jim Bradbury, *Philip Augustus: King of France 1180–1223* (London and New York: Longman, 1998), 43.

not the anonymous messenger originally hoped that this prophecy would appeal to Philip

Augustus, however, it would not have been difficult for contemporaries to understand the

"golden-haired king from the West" as a direct reference to the golden-haired English

king, Richard I.

Constantinople was not, of course, Jerusalem, and this prophecy that a golden-

haired king would conquer Constantinople at first seems better suited to the time of the

Fourth Crusade. The fact that the messenger's letter is quoted in Roger of Howden's pre-

Third Crusade *Gesta*, however, proves that the prophecy was not a post-Third Crusade

invention. This has significant implications, beyond the scope of the present study, for

understanding the later Latin sack of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade (1202–4).

But even in the years leading up to the Third Crusade, the Byzantine capital city was

closely connected to Jerusalem in the Christian imagination.

I have already discussed the Angevin claims to the spiritual and imperial legacies

of the Roman emperor Constantine, the founder of Constantinople. The Byzantine capital

city also housed many relics originally from Jerusalem. Indeed, in twelfth-century

itineraries of the holy places of Christianity, there is often little textual differentiation

between Jerusalem and Constantinople. A short itinerary, for example, probably written

by an English pilgrim in the first half of the twelfth century, transitions seamlessly from

listing the holy sites around Jerusalem, to recounting the capture of Jerusalem by the

crusaders in 1099, to describing those relics that can be found in the imperial chapel in

Constantinople, including "The dominical Cross" (*Crux dominica*) and the nails with

which Christ was fixed to the Cross—traditionally said to have been brought to

Constantinople by Constantine's mother, Helena.[827] This transition happens within the

space of five tightly-written lines, with no visual indications of the transition between

geographical locations. So closely associated were Jerusalem and Constantinople in this

spiritual landscape that they needed no distinguishing from one another.

During the time of the Third Crusade, interpretors of Daniel of Constantinople's

prophecy concerning the golden-haired king from the West might also have confused or

deliberately merged Constantinople's Golden Gate with the Golden Gate of Jerusalem.

This gate in Jerusalem's eastern wall next to the Temple has since the seventh century

been identified as the one through which Christ had entered the city on Palm Sunday, and

through which the barefooted Byzantine emperor Heraclius had passed as he

triumphantly returned Jerusalem's relic of the True Cross (which had been captured by

the Persians) in 631. The Golden Gate's association with both these stories was known in

twelfth-century England.

Around 1165, moreover, John of Würzburg noted that the gate was only opened

twice per year, for the Palm Sunday procession and for the feast of the Exaltation of the

Holy Cross (September 14).[828] John also described a cemetery next to the gate, which

Denys Pringle notes is probably the place where Thomas Becket's murderers were

interred.[829] While this terrestrial Golden Gate remained shut for most of the year, the

Apocalypse of John describes how, at the Second Coming of Christ, the heavenly

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[827] BL Cotton MS Claudius A IV, f. 192r. The text, which only takes up on side of one folio, is inserted directly in front of a late twelfth-century series of letters and responses between pope Alexander III and the English clergy.

[828] Denys Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Corpus, Volume 3: The City of Jerusalem* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 103–4.

[829] Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem*, 105.

Jerusalem's twelve gates will be adorned, reliquary-like, in jewels and gold, and remain ever open.[830] It would not have been difficult to superimpose the prophecy of a golden-haired king from the West entering Constantinople's Golden Gate with the narrative of the golden-haired king of England's quest to liberate Jerusalem, the city whose own Golden Gate was linked in memory and scripture to Christ and the True Cross.

Jerusalem, England, and Empire

While it is quite possible that the Angevins saw the prophecy of the Golden Gate as applying to Richard and Jerusalem, the prospect of the prophetic golden-haired king of the West also conquering Byzantium was perhaps not as far-fetched as it initially seems. Indeed, there is evidence that Angevin chroniclers—and even Richard himself—saw the English king taking on an increasingly imperial role during the Third Crusade. In his work on Frankish claims to Charlemagne's imperial legacy, Matthew Gabriele emphasizes that in the high Middle Ages empire meant "not a geographical space but the power/authority that the ruler wielded."[831] Gabriele adds that for the French and Germans this authority extended over "one all-embracing *gens*, defined not by ethnicity but rather by common adherence to an ideal, by submission to a new, universal Frankish *imperium*."[832] This same idea appears in the Third Crusade texts, in reference to Richard I. The Norman crusader-poet Ambroise described how the men of Normandy, Poitou, Gascony, Maine, Anjou, and England all banded together under Richard's leadership in

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[830] Revelation 21:13–23.
[831] Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, 100.
[832] Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, 102.

Sicily, while the author of the *Itinerarium* later wrote that Richard "deserves to be set over peoples and kingdoms."[833] For Richard of Devizes, England's king attracted the loyalty of men "from every nation of Christian name under heaven… Only those French who had followed their lord remained with their poor [*paupere*] king of the French."[834]

This emphasis on Richard's universal appeal carried an obvious political message, and one not as fantastical as it might first seem. The king of England not only outshone the king of France, as we saw in Chapter Two, but he was worthy to be emperor of the whole world. This was facilitated by the fact that the powerful German emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, had drowned in June 1190, while on his way to join the crusade.[835] With this emperor dead, it was possible for Richard to step in and fill the imperial void in crusading leadership. Under the pens of the chroniclers, Richard thus became an imperial figure who commanded the loyalty of all nations, from England to Jerusalem.

The *Opuscula* of Ralph de Diceto contains further clues about the prophetic connections between Jerusalem, imperial power, and England's king. Ralph, as we have seen, played a central role in Richard's coronation, and one of his clerks became the founder of the Order of St Thomas Becket in Acre after the crusaders' victory there in 1191. In the *Opuscula*, Ralph relates a story about Richard's ancestor, Fulk II "the Good" of Anjou (*c*. 905–60). One day Fulk helped a leper, "horrible in appearance" (*aspectu horribilem*), get to the church of St Martin in Tours.[836] The following night, two men—

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[833] Ambroise, *History of the Holy War*, 41; *Itinerarium*, 157.
[834] Richard of Devizes, *Chronicle*, 42–3 "qui ex omni natione qui sub celo est nominis Christiani… Soli qui dominum suum secuti fuerant Franci resederunt cum suo paupere rege Francorum."
[835] Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 112.
[836] BL Add. MS 40007, f. 32r. For the printed edition of the *Opuscula*, see Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 267. See also "*Historia Comitum Andegavensium*," in Paul Marchegay and André Salmon

one clad in a white gown, and the other the leper—appeared to Fulk in a dream. The man

in white introduced himself as St Martin, and explained that the leper was Christ. Martin

praised Fulk for assisting the Christ-the-leper. Shortly after this, an angel appeared to the

count and proclaiming that "his successors up to the ninth generation of their domination

would always extend their lands immeasurably."[837]

In the pages following this prophecy, Ralph de Diceto relates the histories of Fulk

II's successors as counts of Anjou. Ralph drew much of this history of the Angevin

counts from John of Marmoutier's *Gesta Comitum Andegavorum*, which devotes several

paragraphs to each count of Anjou in turn; so, too, does the text of the *Historia Comitum

Andegavensium*.[838] Ralph's history of the counts in the *Opuscula*, by contrast, eliminates

almost all mention of the counts (except Fulk II) up to Fulk V. Fulk III Nerra, for

instance, is only granted his name in the list, with no commentary. With his description of

Fulk V we see the importance of Jerusalem in Ralph's text, as he explains how Fulk had

his son Geoffrey Plantagenet by his first wife, then later married Melisande, Queen of

Jerusalem, by whom he had two more sons. Ralph (likely copying from John of

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(eds.), *Chroniques d'Anjou; recueilliés et publiés pour la Société de l'histoire de France* 84 (Paris: J. Renouard, 1856), i: 321. The Latin text published in Marchegay and Salmon, attributed to Thomas of Loches, is in fact extracts from Ralph's own *Abbreviationes Chronicorum*.

[837] BL Add. MS 40007, f. 32r: "Successores suos ad nonam usque generationem dominationis sue fines semper in immensum extendere"; Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: 268. See also the "*Gesta Comitum Andegavensium*," in *Chroniques d'Anjou*, i: 322.

[838] "*Gesta Comitum Andegavensium*," in *Chroniques d'Anjou*, i: 25–73, and "Historia Comitum Andegavensium," in *Chroniques d'Anjou*, i: 319–347. The *Historia Comitum* has been misattributed to Thomas of Loches, but is in fact extracts from Ralph de Diceto's *Abbreviationes Chronicorum*, themselves copied from the *Gesta Comitum*. For the complications in determining the authorship of and relationships between these texts, see Norgate, *England under the Angevin Kings*, i: 126–7, and Louis Halphen and René Poupardin, *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou et des seigneurs d'Amboise*, Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire 48 (Paris: A. Picard, 1913), v–xxvi. William Stubbs termed to Ralph's work as an "abridgment" of the *Gesta Consulum Andegavensium*, adding that Ralph's work "does not so closely follow the wording of the original as the 'Gesta Normannorum,' now published among th Opuscula, follows the language of William of Jumieges. See Stubbs, Preface to Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ii: xxiii–iv.

Marmoutier) interweaves his account of Fulk V in Jerusalem with that of Geoffrey's

marriage to Matilda of England, emphasizing both her right to the English throne and her

first marriage to the Roman Emperor, and implying that Geoffrey might also have had

some (albeit indirect) claim to Jerusalem.[839] This history of the Angevin counts then

culminates with Henry II and his progeny. It was Henry, after all, who brought Angevin

control to England, and who had—however tenuous—legitimate claims to both

Jerusalem and the Roman imperium.

Ralph lists the counts of Anjou as follows (I have provided the dates of their

reigns):

> Fulk II the Good (r. 942–958)
> Geoffrey I Greymantle (r. 960–987)
> Maurice the Consul (d. 1012)
> Fulk III Nerra (r. 987–1040)
> Geoffrey II Martel (r. 1040–60)
> Fulk IV Rechin (r. 1067–1109)
> Fulk V, king of Jerusalem (r. 1106–29)
> Geoffrey V Plantagenet (r. 1129–51)
> Henry II of England (r. 1151–89)[840]

This list of Angevin counts is imperfect, leaving out both Geoffrey III (r. 1060–7) and

Geoffrey IV (r. 1103–6). These omissions are logical, as Fulk IV treated his brother

Geoffrey III's reign as illegitimate, and Geoffrey IV's reign was subsumed within Fulk

IV's. Importantly, however, the omission of these two counts placed Henry II's sons—

most notably Richard I—in the ninth generation of Angevin counts after Fulk II. In other

words, Richard represented the culmination of the angel's prophecy to Fulk the Good.

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[839] BL Add. MS 40007, f. 32r–32v.
[840] BL Add. MS 40007, f. 32r–32v.

Ralph de Diceto saw in the unfolding of history the blessings conferred upon Fulk II by Christ and St. Martin. An additional line in one of the surviving manuscripts of the *Opuscula* sheds further light on the chronicler's interpretation of the angel's prophecy and the roles it accorded to England's Angevin kings. Internal evidence suggests that British Library Additional MS 40007 was made for and owned by William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, Chief Justiciar (1189–1191), and Chancellor (1189–1197) of England. This high-end manuscript was probably produced *c.* 1194–5 at St. Paul's, where Ralph could have supervised its production. It later came to be housed at St Mary's in York, where the chancellor's brother became abbot in 1197.[841] Just after the angel's prophecy to Fulk II, Ralph (or his scribe) added his own interpretation of how events in his lifetime were fulfilling this prophecy:

> The one-time kingdom of Jerusalem has shown this. The kingdom of the English makes it clear now. The Roman Empire will declare it in its time.[842]

History had proven the first part of the prophecy true in the person of Fulk V, who ruled Jerusalem from 1131–1143. By the middle of the twelfth century, Henry II had extended Angevin rule to the English throne, and one day soon, this comment implied, an Angevin king would claim the imperial title.

William Stubbs, in his edition of Ralph's *Opuscula*, calls this addition "curious," and suggests that Ralph's (or the scribe's) comment about the Roman Empire must be in

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[841] The manuscript, which is still in its original binding and written on high quality vellum with decorated initials in blue, red, brown, and green, begins with the dedication "UVILLELMO:DE:LONGOCAMPO}} RAD:DE:DICETO," BL Add. MS 40007, f. 5r. The manuscript cannot date from later than 1197, when Longchamp died. Stubbs notes that it is "an unmistakable production of the Pauline scriptorium." See William Stubbs, Preface to Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, i: xcvii.
[842] BL Add. MS 40007, f. 32r: "Quod quondam probauit regnum ierosolimitanum. Quod adhuc ostendit regnum anglorum. Quod suo tempore declarabit; romanum imperium."

anticipation of the election of Otto IV as German emperor in 1198. Otto, the son of Richard I's sister Matilda and her husband, Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony, grew up in England, and Richard unsuccessfully nominated his nephew as earl of York in 1190 and count of Poitou in 1196.[843] It is possible, therefore, that the scribe had Otto in mind when he wrote the line about the Roman Empire. Otto, however, does not fit as tidily into the angel's prophecy of Angevin domination extending for nine generations from Fulk the Good. The future German emperor falls in the tenth generation (if Fulk II is not included in the count), or the eleventh (if Fulk II is included). Otto's uncle, Richard I, therefore seems a better fit for the prophecy. But whether the scribe intended Otto or Richard as his subject, his overall point about the trajectory of Angevin history remains: the Angevins were, he believed, destined claim Jerusalem, England, and the Roman Empire as their dynastic heritage.

Perhaps the most evident expression of Richard I's own embrace of this imperial ideology can be seen in the events at Limassol in 1191, following Richard's successful defeat of Isaac Comnenus, emperor of Cyprus and a relative of the imperial family in Byzantium. Ambroise, a member of Richard's army, described the crusaders plundering "rich and fine vessels of gold and silver… cloths of silk and of scarlet dye… good doublets and elegant, beautiful clothes" from Isaac's camp.[844] Some twenty-five years later, the author of the *Itinerarium* elaborated upon the scene at Limassol, describing how Richard, seated on a Spanish horse, rode through the town dressed in a rich cloak of

[843] See Stubbs (ed.), in Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, 268n1; Kate Norgate (*rev.* Timothy Reuter), "Matilda, duchess of Saxony (1156–1189)," *ODNB*.
[844] Ambroise, *The History of the Holy War*, 54.

samite embroidered with suns and silver half moons, topped by a scarlet hat embroidered

with animals in gold thread. He wore golden spurs on his boots, the chronicle adds, and

had a sword with a gold and silver hilt girded around his waist. His saddle, embroidered

with gold and red, was decorated with golden lions. The *Itinerarium*'s author concluded

that he was "a pleasure to the eyes."[845]

This splendid attire conveyed a pointed political message. Such fine clothing

invoked the distinctly multi-cultural dress of Mediterranean rulers like Roger II of Sicily

(d. 1154). Sicily's twelfth-century lords were descendants of the Norman Hauteville

family, and Richard's sister Joan had married Roger II's grandson, William the Good (d.

1189). Roger's coronation mantle, which survives today and which Richard very well

might have seen during his stay in Sicily, is deep red silk with Arabic text and images of

lions attacking camels embroidered upon it in gold (Figure 9). The red and gold animal-

embroidered clothing that Richard wore to celebrate his conquest of Cyprus would have

looked quite similar. The *Itinerarium* thus shows Richard, the king of England, following

the precedent set by the Norman kings of Sicily and the Angevin kings of Jerusalem

before him, by adopting the look and composure of an eastern ruler.

The Lionheart and the Apocalypticist

Richard had plenty of time in his six-and-a-half-month stay in Sicily to observe

such imperial trappings.[846] It was during this time that Richard gave Tancred the sword

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[845] *Itinerarium*, 190.
[846] Richard crossed the Straits of Messina on September 22, 1190, and departed from Sicily on April 10, 1191. See Gillingham, *Richard I*, 130, 143.

Excalibur. That winter, Richard also met with the Calabrian monk Joachim of Fiore

(1135–1202), abbot of Corazzo and the greatest apocalyptic thinker of the Middle

Ages.[847] Like Tancred, Joachim had an interest in Arthurian literature, and cited the

prophecies of "Merlinus britanicus" in his *Vita Sancti Benedicti*.[848] More famously,

Joachim was known for his unique exegetical interpretations of the end of the world.

According to Roger of Howden, who was with Richard in Sicily, Richard had heard

about Joachim's "prophetic spirit" (*spiritum… propheticum*) and, wishing to learn more

about his teachings, sent for the abbot (*misit pro eo*).[849] Joachim therefore met with

Richard, in the presence of Walter of Coutances archbishop of Rouen, Gerard of La

Barthe archbishop of Auch, John bishop of Evreux, Bernard bishop of Baon, and "many

other distinguished men, both clerics and lay."[850]

The French chronicler Robert of Auxerre (*c*. 1156–1212), in a rarely-cited

account of this meeting written *c*. 1210, presents a very different interpretation of the

encounter. According to Robert, it was Joachim, not Richard, who initiated the meeting.

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[847] See, e.g., Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 75–6, 102; McGinn, *Apocalypticism in the Western Tradition*, ii: 279, who compares the importance of Joachim's *Exposition on the Apocalypse* to Augustine's *City of God*. Jean Flori, in his description of this meeting, writes that Joachim was an old man of nearly eighty years, but Joachim, who was born in 1135, would only have been in his mid fifties when he met Richard I in 1190. See Flori, *Richard the Lionheart*, 101. On Joachim's birth date, see Marjorie Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore & the Prophetic Future: A Medieval Study in Historical Thinking*, Revised Edition (Sutton Publishing, 1999), iv; McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 3.

[848] Joachim of Fiore, *De vita Sancti Benedicti et de officio Divino secundum eius doctrinam*. Published as Cipriano Baraut, ed., "Un tratdo inédito de Joaquin de Fiore: De vita Sancti Benedicti et de officio Divino secundum eius doctrinam," *Analecta Sacra Tarracoensia* 24 (1951), p. 63/95, §29: "Manente Ecclesia Christi in pace, adversus reges quosdam qui erunt similes regum Persarum et Medorum, regnum aliud consurget, quod dictum est in spiritu hircus caprarum designatum in regno Alexandri regis, atque ex hoc in nichilo ledetur Ecclesia, sicut nec Alexander lesit Ierusalem, sed magis etsi in falsa fide, hostias tamen Domino in templo obtulit, et pacem illi stabilem firmamque servavit. De quo videlicet hirco caprarum, etiam Merlinus britanicus videtur facere mentionem, qui postquam locutus est de quodam rege, quem et satis commendat, adiecit et ait: 'sequetur hircus venerei casti."

[849] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 75. Cf. Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 151.

[850] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 153 (quote): "coram multis aliis honestis viris tam clericis quam laicis"; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 79. See also Gillingham, "Roger of Howden," 68.

Moreover, the Calabrian monk met, Robert writes, with both Richard *and* Philip

Augustus. The chronicler goes on to describe how Joachim explained to the two kings

"that they would cross the sea, but would accomplish either nothing or very little, nor had

the times yet come in which Jerusalem and Outremer (*regio transmarina*) were to be

liberated."[851] This account would seem to be a result of Robert of Auxerre's attempts to

explain the failures of the Third Crusade, as well as the French king's early departure

from the Holy Land in 1191. Also notable is Robert's emphasis that the kings of both

England and France met with Joachim. This is a far cry from Roger of Howden's version,

which makes no mention of the French king in this context, and which places the king of

England, surrounded by his spiritual advisors, at the center of the whole affair.[852]

Moreover, while Robert of Auxerre presents Joachim as almost dismissive of the kings'

crusading efforts, Roger emphasizes the king of England's intense interest in the latest

apocalyptic theories, and their potential application to his own role on the Third Crusade.

Roger of Howden describes the encounter between Joachim and Richard in both

his *Gesta* and, at greater length, in his *Chronica*. At this meeting, Joachim explained his

unique interpretation of Revelation 12, which says:

> And a great sign appeared in heaven: A woman clothed with the sun, and the
> moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. And being with
> child, she cried travailing in birth: and was in pain to be delivered. And there was
> seen another sign in heaven. And behold a great red dragon, having seven heads
> and ten horns and on his heads seven diadems. And his tail drew the third part of

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[851] Robert of Auxerre, *Chronologia Seriem Temporum et Historiam Rerum in orbe gestarum continens ab eius origine, usque ad annum a Christi ortu millesimum ducentesimum*, ed. Nicolas Camusat (Troyes, 1608), 93: "Venit ad eos Abbas Ioachim de suo ouocatus monasterio in Calabria consituto, qui ab eis de futuris sciscitatus respondit, quod mare transituri forent, sed aut nihil aut parum proficerent, nec dumque adesse tempora quibus liberanda foret Hierusalem & regio transmarina."

[852] Roger of Howden's presence in Sicily at the time lends credibility to his telling of the story, as do his details of Joachim's apocalyptic theories.

the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered: that, when she should be delivered, he might devour her son. (Rev. 12:1–4)

Joachim explained that the woman represented the Church led by Christ, and her crown the twelve apostles. The seven heads of the dragon, in turn, represent the seven great persecutors of the Church: Herod, Nero, Constantius, Maumet (Mohammad), Melsemutus (an African king), Saladin, and Antichrist; the dragon's tail represents Gog. Saladin, Joachim states, is currently persecuting the Church and oppressing Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre. Antichrist, meanwhile, has already been born.[853] Joachim probably used a visual aid—likely an early draft of his *Liber Figurarum*—to illustrate this point for the English king and his men.[854] One of the images in Joachim's book depicts the seven-headed dragon of the Apocalypse. Each head is labeled with the name of the persecutor to whom it corresponds. Upon the sixth head, labeled as Saladin, sits a crown, indicating that he is the reigning persecutor of the Church (Figure 10).[855]

Brett Whalen and Sylvia Schein have noted that Joachim gave only limited support to the crusading cause. Indeed, the crusades did not fit neatly into Joachim's model of concordances between the Old and New Testaments, Babylon and Rome, and

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[853] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 151–2; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 75–8. Joachim's vision differed from the Sibylline tradition in its depiction of a series of persecutions that would precede the arrival of Antichrist and Gog. See Marjorie Reeves, "Joachimist Influences on the Idea of a Last World Emperor," *Traditio* 17 (1961): 323–70, at 324.

[854] Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore & the Prophetic Future*, 23; McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 26, 108, 110–2. McGinn observes that Joachim uniquely served "as his own iconographer" (108). See also Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 103–4. See also Brett Whalen, "Joachim of Fiore, Apocalyptic Conversion, and the 'Persecuting Society,'" *History Compass* 8/7 (2010): 682–91, at 683.

[855] For an explanation of how this image reflects Joachim's apocalyptic thought, see Marjorie Reeves, "Joachim of Fiore and the Images of the Apocalypse according to St John," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 64 (2001): 281–95, at 290–2 and fig. 159.

he critiqued attempts to reclaim the earthly Jerusalem by force.[856] He could not, however, fully ignore the events of the Third Crusade, and his identification of Saladin as the precursor to Antichrist would certainly have appealed to Richard and his companions. Yet Richard also had his own ideas about how the Apocalypse would unfold. When Joachim finished his explanation of the dragon, "the king said to him, 'Where was Antichrist born? And where will he be born again?" Joachim explained that Antichrist had already been born in Rome, and would "obtain the apostolic seat" and sit in the Temple of God there.[857] Richard, however, disagreed with Joachim, and offered a different interpretation:

> I thought that Antichrist would be born in Babylon, or in Antioch, of the tribe of Dan, and would reign in the Temple of God, which is in Jerusalem, and in that land would walk where the feet of God had stood, and he would reign for three and a half years, and would debate with Enoch and Elijah, and kill them, and afterwards would die.[858]

Here Richard was echoing the ideas of the early medieval apocalyptic writers Pseudo-Methodius and Adso of Montier-en-Der (d. 992), whose theories about the End Times were widely known in the twelfth century.[859]

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[856] Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 116; Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 156; Yeager, *Jerusalem in Medieval Narrative*, 92–7.

[857] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 153–4: "Dixit ei rex, 'Ubi est Antichristus natus? Et ubi renaturus est?' Respondit ei Joachim… quod Antichristus ille in urbe Romana jam natus esse creditor, et in ea sedem apostolicam obtinebit… ita ut in temple Dei sedeat." For a discussion of Joachim's focus on the Church of Rome, see McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 24, 26; Yeager, *Jerusalem in Medieval Narrative*, 98–9; Reeves, "Joachim of Fiore and the Images of the Apocalypse," 290.

[858] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 154: "Putabam quod Antichristus nasceretur in Babylonia, vel in Antiochia, de stirpe Dan, et regnaret in Templo Dei, quod est in Jerusalem, et in terra illa ambularet ubi steterunt pedes Domini; et regnaret per tres annos et dimidium anni; et disputaret cum Enoch et Helia, et eos interficeret, et postea moreretur." Cf. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 79. See also Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse; An Alexandrian World Chronicle*, ed. Benjamin Garstad, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 134–7.

[859] Cf. Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse*, 136–7. Adso of Montier-en-Der's work *Epistola de Antichristo* (c. 950) was one of the few apocalyptic texts written and recopied in the tenth and eleventh centuries. See McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, 87. For a background on Adso and his influence upon apocalyptic thought

Indeed, when Roger of Howden revised his account of the meeting between Joachim and Richard, sometime in 1192/3, he followed his narrative of Joachim's views with a lengthy quotation from Adso's *De Ortu et Tempore Antichristi*, itself probably the origin of many of Richard's ideas on the subject.[860] In this text, Adso explains that Antichrist will be born to the tribe of Dan in the city of Babylon, and when grown will come to Jerusalem, walking where Christ had walked. Pseudo-Methodius similarly describes how the "son of perdition" will be born to the tribe of Dan—and, therefore, be Jewish.[861] Joachim, like many earlier apocalyptic thinkers, believed that the Jews would peacefully convert at the End Times, and thus their persecution by Christians was contrary to God's plan.[862] Richard's emphasis on debating the details of Antichrist's birth, and his stress upon Antichrist's origins from the tribe of Dan, thus adds an additional apocalyptic dimension to the connection between Richard's crusading activities against the 'sultan of Babylon,' as Saladin was often known in the West, and the anti-Jewish violence in England in 1189–90. It also, importantly, shows that Richard was keenly aware of the eschatological readings of recent events.

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in the Middle Ages, see Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 82–4. Nearly two dozen pre-twelfth century manuscripts of the Latin translation of Pseudo-Methodius's *Revelationes* survive today; excerpts of it were also preserved in the works of other writers, like Peter Comestor. Stephen Pelle has further demonstrated the influence of the Latin Pseudo-Methodian tradition upon a twelfth-century Old English apocalyptic text. See Stephen Pelle, "The *Revelationes* of Pseudo-Methodius and 'Concerning the Coming of Antichrist' in British Library MS Cotton Vespasian D. XIV," *Notes and Queries* (Sept. 2009): 324–30, esp. 325–6. See also Flori, *Richard the Lionheart*, 103. On Adso's views, see also Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 13–14.

[860] For a short discussion of Adso's sources and his contribution to apocalyptic literature, see McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 82–4.

[861] Adso of Montier-en-Der, quoted in and trans. by McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 85; Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse*, 136.

[862] For a summary of recent scholarship about Joachim's understanding of the Jews' place in the Apocalypse, see Whalen, "Joachim of Fiore, Apocalyptic Conversion, and the 'Persecuting Society,'" 682–91.

Once Antichrist gains power, according to Adso, the "son of perdition" will cause great destruction, for "he will cause fire to rain down terribly from the sky, make the trees suddenly blossom and wither, the sea to be stirred up… the air to be agitated by winds and commotions, and innumerable and astounding other things."[863] Roger of Howden also quotes a text, attributed to Pope Gregory I, which outlines other such disasters, offering an account of earthquakes, pestilence and famines, followed by the stars falling from the heavens, and rivers turning to blood.[864] These disasters are, on the whole, quite similar to those that Roger of Howden and Rigord claimed had been predicted by the astrologers as harbingers of Saladin's conquests of 1187; they are also reminiscent of the signs of the Apocalypse mentioned in Revelation.[865] Like Saladin, the Antichrist of Pseudo-Methodius will "enter into Jerusalem and sit in the Temple of God."[866] He will cause tribulations to continue for three and a half years, until God will send Enoch and Elijah to denounce him. Ultimately, Antichrist will kill these prophets, and usher in the Day of Judgment.[867]

As Roger of Howden reports in the *Gesta*, Richard exclaimed that if Antichrist was in Rome, as Joachim claimed, he must therefore be Pope Clement III, with whom the English king had a longstanding feud.[868] Richard, however, did not want to fully accept Joachim's interpretation on this point, because Jerusalem, not Rome, was the target of the

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[863] Adso, quoted by Roger of Howden, *Chronicia*, iii: 82: "faciet de coelo ignem terribiliter venire, arbores subito florere et arescrere, mare turbari… aera ventis et commotionibus agitari, et caetera innumerabilia et stupenda."
[864] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 86. See also Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 156.
[865] See Rev. 6:12–3, 8:5, 11:19, and 16:18.
[866] Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse*, 136: "Ingredietur enim his filius perditionis in Jierusolimam et sedebit in templo Dei."
[867] Adso of Montier-en-Der, quoted in and trans. by McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 86–7; Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse*, 136–9.
[868] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 153–4; Flori, *Richard the Lionheart*, 103.

king's crusade.[869] The apocalyptic theories of Adso and Pseudo-Methodius fit better with

Richard's agenda, for they placed Antichrist in Jerusalem, which was the crusaders'

ultimate goal. Indeed, it is likely that Richard and his advisors believed that Saladin

himself was the Antichrist—a point confirmed by Joachim. By this reasoning, the older

apocalyptic theories predicted that Saladin-as-Antichrist would reign in Jerusalem for

three and a half years. Reckoning from Saladin's capture of the holy city in November

1187, the Christian army could hope to defeat the Ayyubid sultan in the early summer of

1191, only a few months away. Joachim's prophecies, while useful for his identification

of Saladin as the precursor of the seventh and final Antichrist, were therefore met with

some resistance by Richard and his advisors, who debated these and other interpretations

of Scripture with the abbot of Corazzo.[870]

In his *Chronica*, Roger of Howden inserted a new exchange, which he placed

after Joachim's exposition on the meanings of seven heads of the dragon of the

Apocalypse and Saladin's rule in the Holy Land. According to these revisions, Richard

asked the abbot for more details:

> Then the king of England asked him, "When will this be?" To which Joachim
> responded, "When seven years have elapsed from the day of the capture of
> Jerusalem." Then the king of England said, "Then why have we come here so
> soon?" Joachim replied to him, "Your arrival is very necessary, because the Lord
> will give you victory over His enemies, and will exalt your name over all the
> princes of the earth."[871]

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[869] Flori, *Richard the Lionheart*, 103–4; Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 116.
[870] Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, ii: 155.
[871] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 77–8: "Tunc interrogavit eum rex Angliae, 'Quando erit hoc? Cui
Johachim respondit, 'Quando septem anni elapsi erunt a die captionis Jerusalem.' Tunc ait rex Angliae,
'Ergo quare venimus huc tam cito?' Cui Johachim respondit; 'Adventus tuus valde necessarius est, quia
Dominus dabit tibi victoria de inimicis Suis, et exaltabit nomen tuum super omnes principes terrae."

By 1192/3, Roger had learned of Richard's failure to capture the Holy Land, so his revisions reflect his ongoing belief that Richard still had the potential to defeat Saladin.[872] As a number of scholars have noted, Joachim's statement (which Roger almost certainly invented) now gave the king until 1194 to achieve this victory.[873] Thus the initial failure of the crusaders to capture Jerusalem was not—so Roger hoped—a complete failure, but rather a temporary setback, still governed by the dictates of prophecy.

John Gillingham, who has probably written more extensively about Roger of Howden than anyone, comments that Roger was "not an expert theologican" and therefore was inclined to be "more impressed" by Joachim's prognostications than were the elite clergymen attending the meeting. Gillingham suggests that Roger was cautious, even "predictable," in his treatment of Joachim's prophecy, because he does not outright declare the prophecy false.[874] Yet Roger's alterations to Joachim's words about Richard's chances of success, and his inclusion of numerous additional apocalyptic texts in the *Chronica*, suggest that the chronicler was not so naïve as Gillingham would make him. Indeed, Howden's manipulation of the exchange between Joachim and Richard shows the chronicler actively shaping his narrative in Richard's favor, adapting to circumstances as necessary while still predicting a victory for the crusading English king.

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[872] John Gillingham notes that Roger blamed the French for the failure. Gillingham, "Roger of Howden," 66.

[873] Roger clearly had not yet learned of Saladin's death in March 1193. See, e.g., Gillingham, "Roger of Howden," 67–8; Flori, *Richard the Lionheart*, 101–3; Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 156.

[874] Gillingham, "Roger of Howden," 68.

Richard I, Last World Emperor

These exchanges at Messina—both the early version in which Richard challenged Joachim on whether Antichrist would seize power in Rome or in Jerusalem, and Roger of Howden's revised version, in which Joachim tells Richard that Saladin will be defeated within seven years from 1187—point to an active concern about the trajectory of the Third Crusade, and Richard's leadership of it. If Joachim was right, then the English king might defeat Saladin, but Antichrist would not be defeated until 1260, in Rome.[875] If Richard and his clerical advisors were correct, however, and Saladin was in fact Antichrist, then he would be defeated either in 1191 or in 1194. From the crusaders' point of view, this latter scenario held much greater promise, and much greater reward. Indeed, based on the available evidence, the leaders of the Third Crusade earnestly believed that they were fighting not only to recover the earthly Jerusalem, but also to usher in the age of the heavenly Jerusalem and the End Times.

The end of the world, however, as Adso cautioned, could not happen until the Roman Empire officially ended: "But some of our learned men say, that one of the kings of the Franks will hold the Roman imperium as though whole and renewed; who will arrive at the very end of time, and he will be the greatest and the last of all kings."[876] This king, having "happily governed" (*feliciter gubernaverit*) his kingdom, will then come to Jerusalem, where he will place his scepter and crown on the Mount of Olives, signaling

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[875] On the date of Antichrist's defeat and the end of the Third Age, see Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 156.

[876] Adso, quoted by Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iii: 83: "Quidam vero doctores nostri dicunt, quod unus ex regibus Francorum Romanum Imperium ex toto et integro tenebit: qui in novissimo tempore erit, et ipse erit maximus, et omnium regum ultimus, qui postquam regnum suum feliciter gubernaverit, ad ultimum Jerosolimam veniet, et in monte Oliveti sceptrum et coronam deponet. Hic erit finis et consummatio Romanorum Christianorumque imperii."

the end of the Roman Empire. Antichrist will kill Elijah and Enoch, and the Day of Judgment will at last arrive.[877]

Historians have long examined how medieval writers in France and Germany frequently cast their rulers in the role of Last World Emperor, often in the form of a second Charlemagne.[878] In the twelfth century, in the context of the Second Crusade, chroniclers assigned this role to Louis VII of France or Conrad III of Germany. The German chronicler Otto of Freising (*c*. 1110–58), too, famously depicted the reign of the German emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (r. 1155–90), who drowned on his way to the Holy Land in 1190, as a continuation of the Roman Empire, and ended his chronicle with an account of Antichrist. Barbarossa's own interest in apocalyptic matters is reflected by the *Ludus de Antichristo* (Play of Antichrist), presumably staged at the emperor's court around 1160.[879] Yet, perhaps because of the general focus in the twentieth century on the practical, bureaucratic developments of Angevin England, historians have largely excluded the Angevin kings and their court from participation in these prophetic discourses.[880]

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[877] Adso, quoted by Roger of Howden, *Chronicia*, iii: 83. For an English translation of parts of Adso's prophecies see McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 85–7.

[878] See, e.g., Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 157. On the influence of Joachite theories of later ideas of the Last World Emperor, see Reeves, "Joachimist Influences on the Idea of a Last World Emperor," 328, 330–2, 340, 354–7. For a discussion of the concept of Charlemagne as Last Emperor prior to the First Crusade, see Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, esp. 107–28, see also 17, 20, 30, 35, 77.

[879] Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 92; Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 153–4; Holdenried, *The Sibyl and Her Scribes*, 16. See also Otto Frisingensis, *Gesta Friderici Imperatori, Ottonis et Rahewini Gesta Friderici I Imp., MGH.Scr.Rer.Germ.* 46: 9–11; E.A.R. Brown, "La notion de la légitimité et la prophétie à la cour de Philippe Auguste," *La France de Philippe Auguste – Le Temps des Mutations*, ed. R. H. Bautier (Paris 1982), 85–96, 104–10.

[880] The greatest exception to this is the recognition of Roger of Howden's interest in prophetic matters. John Gillingham, for instance, calls the chronicler "a man of marked eschatological interest." Gillingham, "Roger of Howden," 68.

As I have argued in this chapter, it is clear that Angevin writers were, in fact, keenly aware of, and deeply interested in, the potentially apocalyptic role that Richard I might play in the context of the Third Crusade. Richard fell almost naturally into the role of Last Emperor. He began his reign shortly after Saladin's victory at Hattin and capture of Jerusalem, a time marked—so the chroniclers emphasized—by the ominous portents of lunar eclipses, solar eclipses, a planetary conjunction, and crosses in the sky. These heavenly movements, the chroniclers suggested, were in turn reflected on earth in the form of earthquakes, thunder, lightning, and strong winds, just as described in the Revelations of John. The Last Emperor, moreover, was destined to defeat unbelievers and usher in the culmination of Christian empire, in much the same way as Richard's reign began with an outpouring of violence against England's Jewish communities and was followed by his campaigns against the Muslims in the Holy Land.

On his way to the Holy Land, Richard celebrated conquests of Sicily (where he defeated the Griffons, even if he did not fully conquer the island kingdom) and Cyprus (where he donned the trappings of an eastern, Mediterranean emperor). The prophecy that a golden-haired king of the West would also conquer Byzantium gave further credence to the idea that Richard, the *flavus rex*, would extend these conquests. Following in the footsteps of Constantine the Great, Richard would be king of England and emperor of Byzantium, the new Rome. As the descendent of Fulk V of Anjou, Richard could, moreover, lay claim to the crown of Jerusalem. Like Adso's Last World Emperor, Richard would "possess anew the Roman Empire."[881] He then would go to Jerusalem,

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[881] Adso, quoted by McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 6.

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where, as Joachim of Fiore and other apocalyptic thinkers foretold, he would defeat Saladin, the Antichrist, after that sultan had held the holy city for three and a half years.

In the apocalyptic spirit of the early 1190s, Richard I, king of England, took on far more than a military command when he took over leadership of the Third Crusade. His reign began in the midst of a prophetically charged period, and contemporary observers saw all the signs that their king would unite Christendom, from England in the West to Jerusalem in the East, and ultimately restore the holy city to God. In this context, Richard became both a secular and a spiritual leader, a king and—so the chronicles of the time suggest—the Last World Emperor.

Anthony Smith, responding to the ideas of Elie Kedourie, who posited a link between nationalism and millennialism, has argued that nationalism "is wholly opposed to the kind of apocalyptic chiliasm prevalent in certain quarters in medieval Christendom." Specifically, Smith sees the "distinctly this-worldly movement and culture" of nationalism as inherently opposed to the idea of the Apocalypse, which entails the destruction of this world, and, therefore, of the nation.[882] For Smith, the nation and the Apocalypse cannot coexist, and thus they are mutually opposed. For the twelfth-century Angevins, by contrast, these two concepts went very much hand-in-hand. Rather than being the enemy of national identity, the Apocalypse offered the ultimate test of that idenity. Only the nation that was the most Christian, the most worthy, could usher in the Second Age of Christ. For the Angevin chroniclers of the Third Crusade, that role indisputably belonged to the English, and to their prophetically ordained king, Richard.

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[882] Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 12, 15 (quotes).

CONCLUSION

Adam of Eynsham, writing between 1197 and 1212, recalled the prophetic words of his friend, the bishop St Hugh of Lincoln, "that the holy city, which was captured recently in our own day by the Saracens, would be miraculously recovered from them also in our lifetime, through the mercy of our Saviour."[883] Richard the Lionheart's unexpected death in 1199 ended any hopes that the great crusader king would one day return to the Holy Land to fulfill this prophecy. Nor is Richard's brother and successor, John, remembered for his attentions to Jerusalem. This youngest son of Henry II is more associated with giving up his royal rights and losing England's overseas empire. Yet ironically it was John, the Angevin king who lost the most, whose vows to help Jerusalem came to be preserved in one of the foundational texts of English constitutional law, the Magna Carta.

Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) sought to negotiate peace between John and the French king Philip Augustus in order that they might together join in what became the Fourth Crusade (1202–4).[884] Laying blame on both rulers, Innocent lamented that the Muslims might have been subdued in the past, but "have now as a consequence of your quarrel regained their courage and risen in greater strength."[885] Hubert Walter, the archbishop of Canterbury and veteran of the Third Crusade, also pressured John on the matter of Jerusalem. With the support of the pope, Hubert urged the king to send one

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[883] Adam of Eynsham, *Magna Vita Sanci Hugonis*, ii: 91–92.
[884] Innocent has also tried to get Richard to go on crusade again. In 1198, the pope sent the cardinal legate Peter Capuanus to attempt to reconcile Richard and Philip and to preach the crusade. *Letters of Pope Innocent III*, 13–14 and 13n10.
[885] Innocent to Philip Augustus, May 1204, *Letters of Innocent III*, 56–9, quote at 59.

hundred knights to the Holy Land for a year.[886] John also pledged a fortieth of the income

from the lands in the royal demesne for a year, and gave 1,000 marks to support his half-

nephew Louis of Blois's crusading venture.[887] John, however, had his own share of

political troubles during this period, which by 1204 saw the Capetian conquest of the

Angevins' ancestral lands of Anjou and Normandy. Castilian claims on Gascony further

undermined any claims to a wider Angevin empire.[888] The loss of these continental

territories in turn placed additional financial strains upon John's insular possessions.

Moreover, John alienated many potential allies by claiming all the spoils of war for

himself and treating his prisoners poorly.[889] Even had he wished to, John could ill afford

the time or resources to personally come to Jerusalem's aid.

The king's problems were compounded by ecclesiastical disputes. Hubert Walter

died in July 1205.[890] The subsequent quarrel over the appointment of a new archbishop of

Canterbury increased tensions between the Crown and the Papacy. While John put

forward Walter de Gray as the archbishop's successor, Pope Innocent preferred Stephen

Langton as a candidate. John further antagonized the Church by attempting to exact an

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[886] The editors of Innocent's letters note that there are no records of this force ever being sent. Innocent III to John, 27 March 1202, *Letters of Innocent III*, 38 and 38n12. See also Paul Webster, "Crown, Cathedral and Conflict: King John and Canterbury," in *Cathedrals, Communities and Conflict in the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. Paul Dalton, Charles Insley, and Louise J. Wilkinson, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011): 203–19, at 210.

[887] Louis of Blois was the son of Alice, daughter of Louis VII of France and Eleanor of Aquitaine. Church, *King John*, 109–10.

[888] John Gillingham describes the loss of these territories thusly: "Since 1066 England had been ruled by Frenchmen: first Normans and then the Plantagenets of Anjou. The loss of Normandy and Anjou did not mean that an English kind had lost two outlying provinces. It meant that the heart had been torn out of the Angevin Empire. John became an English king only be default and against his will." Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion*, 205. See also Church, *King John*, 133.

[889] Church, *King John*, 107–8, 134.

[890] Church, *King John*, 136.

"unprecedented" new tax in 1207, without the backing of England's bishops.[891] In March 1208, Innocent placed England under interdict, cutting the kingdom off from all sacraments except baptism and deathbed confessions. The following year, in November, the archbishop of Reims excommunicated John.[892]

The twin punishments of interdict and excommunication signaled a real threat to Angevin power in England. With the withdrawal of the Church's protection and its sanction of his right to rule, John was in danger of being deposed. It was significant, John's most recent biographer Stephen Church emphasizes, that these penalties were issued by the reforming pope Innocent III, who during his papacy expanded the definition of crusading to include war against heretics and the Christian enemies of Rome. The way was now paved for a foreign prince—specifically, Louis (1187–1226), son of Philip Augustus—to wage a crusade against England.[893]

Late in 1212, facing invasion by the French and increasing discord at home, John began to reconsider his options. The following May, he officially submitted England and Ireland to Innocent III.[894] This was a substantial shift from Henry II's open defiance of Pope Alexander III during the Becket Affair some half century earlier. A generation later, Matthew Paris could accuse John of an even greater betrayal of England and the Church. John, the St Albans chronicler wrote, had initially offered to make England a vassal not of Rome, but of North Africa. As part of this offer, Matthew added, John agreed to

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[891] Church, *King John*, 144 (quote), 145.
[892] Church, *King John*, 151, 176.
[893] Church, *King John*, 175–6.
[894] Christopher Harper-Bill notes that "It is not clear whether the initiative for the enfeoffment came from the pope or king." Harper-Bill, "John and the Church of Rome," in *King John: New Interpretations*, ed. Stephen D. Church (Woodbridge: 1999): 289–315, at 307. For the text of John's charter of submission, see Warren, *King John*, 208, and Innocent III to John, 21 April 1214, *Letters of Innocent III*, 178–81.

convert to Islam.[895] This—needless to say wholly fictional—story neatly conveys the negative image of John's reign that survives up to the present. John, however, had little choice. By placing the kingdom under papal control, he could once again count on Innocent's support in his conflicts with England's barons and with France. The arrangement was also beneficial for the papacy, which now held the kingdom of England as a vassal state. This move, moreover, gave the pope exactly what he had wanted for so long: the promise that the king of England would lead a crusade to free Jerusalem from the Muslims.

The pope wrote to Stephen Langton and the "bishops, abbots and priors" of Canterbury in April 1213, urging them to assist in the recovery of the Holy Land.[896] Langton, now archbishop of Canterbury, lifted the king's sentence of excommunication on July 20.[897] In the spring of 1214, and then again that November, the pope wrote to John, reiterating his old complaint that John's ongoing conflict with France was "preventing the aid to the Holy Land."[898] This conflict had recently taken a turn for the worse (from John's perspective), when the French soundly defeated John's nephew and ally, the German emperor Otto IV, at the battle of Bouvines on July 27, 1214. John's position in England was increasingly precarious.

On March 4, 1215, John took the cross. Innocent wrote to the king in April of 1215, praising his decision: "Come, therefore, glorious king! equip yourself mightily to

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[895] Matthew claims (p. 559) that John sent messengers to the "Emir Murmelim [Mohammed el Nassir], the great king of Africa, Morocco, and Spain." Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii: 559–64. See also Warren, *King John*, 14.
[896] Innocent III to the clergy of Canterbury, *Letters of Innocent III*, 144–7.
[897] Church, *King John*, 196.
[898] Innocent III to John, 22 April 1214, and Innocent III to John, 18 November 1214, *Letters of Innocent III*, 184 (quote) and 192.

win the crown which the Lord has laid up for you."[899] Many men, Innocent added, were

already flocking to join the Fifth Crusade (1213–21), and they would look to John for

leadership. In reward for John's taking charge of this crusading army, Innocent

concluded, God "will on earth secure and confirm the throne of the kingdom to you and

your heirs."[900] In other words, the pope implied, Angevin rule in England would be

confirmed and strengthened, rather than weakened, by John's participation in this latest

crusade.

While it is likely that John never had any real intentions of going to the Holy

Land, becoming a *crucesignatus* offered the king a number of tangible benefits. The

proposed crusade played an increasingly central role in the negotiations between king,

pope, and barons, culminating with the signing of Magna Carta at Runnymede on June

15, 1215.[901] Much has been written about the great charter's influence on the

development of constitutional monarchy and judicial rights in England. The British

Library's webpage celebrating the 800th anniversary of the document in 2015 declares it

to be "the most valuable export of Great Britain to the rest of the world."[902] The

document importantly emphasizes that England is a unified kingdom. David Carpenter

notes that the common translation of "communitas regni" as "community of the realm"

would be better translated as "community of the kingdom," following the usage of the

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[899] Innocent III to John, April 1215, *Letters of Innocent III*, 203.
[900] Innocent III to John, April 1215, *Letters of Innocent III*, 204.
[901] Pope Innocent's subsequently nullified the Magna Carta, but it continued to be reissued—with alterations—by later English kings.
[902] "The History of the Magna Carta: 800 Years of Liberty" (British Library: Magna Carta 2015 Committee / HCL Technologies, 2014), http://magnacarta800th.com/history-of-the-magna-carta, accessed 1 November 2014.

term "regni" in John's lifetime.[903] Nevertheless, the frequent uses of the word "land,"

scattered throughout the charter's clauses, supports this idea of a shared community.

Clause 61, for example, establishing a council of twenty-five barons to oversee the king's

actions, calls for the "support of the whole community of the land."[904] Ironically, this

very community that the Angevin kings had created within England had now turned itself

to regulating the king himself.

A less celebrated aspect of Magna Carta's legacy appears in clauses 52, 53, and

57, which directly relate to John's crusading vows. Specifically, these three clauses

address the suits of anyone in England or Wales who had been dispossessed of forests,

"lands, castles, liberties, or rights without the lawful judgement of his equals" during the

reigns of Henry II and Richard I. In such cases, the charter grants John "respite for the

period commonly allowed to Crusaders," unless he should fail to fulfill his vows, in

which case he will have to directly restore these properties and rights to their

disenfranchised claimants.[905]

While these concessions may not seem terribly significant in relation to Magna

Carta's more famous and enduring clauses, they are nevertheless important reminders of

the political benefit that crusading conferred upon John's troubled reign. Being a

crucesignatus guaranteed the king at least temporary relief from what were certain to be

great financial burdens to the royal coffers. It also gave him an element of bargaining

power with the barons, who could not directly deny John certain rights as a crusader. This

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[903] David Carpenter (ed.), *Magna Carta*, Kindle edition, trans. with a new commentary by David Carpenter, Penguin Classics (Penguin, 2015), ch. 8.

[904] *Magna Carta*, Treasures in Focus (London: British Library, 2007), 25, clause 61. See also Carpenter, *Magna Carta*, ch. 8.

[905] *Magna Carta*, 22–4, clauses 52, 53, and 57.

point was made even clearer in Innocent III's response to the barons' rebellion. In early July 1215, the pope—who had not yet learned of the events at Runnymede—wrote to the bishop of Winchester and the abbots of Reading and Pandulf, chastising the clergy for supporting the barons over their would-be crusader king. Indeed, Innocent exclaimed, the barons, along with clergy who did not give their full backing to John, "are undoubtedly worse than the Saracens, for they are trying to depose a king who, it was particularly hoped, would succour the Holy Land!"[906]

Innocent wrote again in August to declare Magna Carta null and void. In a letter addressed to "all the faithful of Christ," the pope reiterated that even though John had sinned in the past, he had now pledged himself to protecting the Holy Land on behalf of the papacy and Christendom. England's barons were thereby acting for Satan, for "conspiring as vassals against their lord and as knights against their king, they… dared to make war on him, occupying and devastating his territory and even seizing the city of London, the capital of the kingdom."[907] Importantly, Innocent framed the issue as one that linked Jerusalem's future to the health of England's political body. John's land had been compromised, his authority undermined, and his kingdom's capital captured. All these things, in turn, threatened John's greater purpose, which was to rescue the Holy Land from the infidel. By preventing this, the barons and their supporters not only acted against the will of the pope, but sought to see "the king's rights injured, the English

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[906] Innocent III to the bishop of Winchester and abbots of Reading and Pandulf, 7 July 1215, *Letters of Innocent III*, 208.
[907] Innocent III to All the Faithful of Christ, 24 August 1215, *Letters of Innocent III*, 212–16, quote at 214.

nation endangered, and the whole plan for a Crusade seriously endangered."[908] Once

again, the fate of Jerusalem relied—at least rhetorically—on the fate of England and its

Angevin ruler. In reality, it was rather England and its king whose fates now relied on

Jerusalem.

As John's reign reminds us, the survival of the political entity of 'England' was

never a foregone conclusion. When the king died on October 19, 1216, he had lost nearly

all the empire amassed by his father and older brother, and the southern part of the

kingdom, including London, was controlled by the French prince Louis and the rebellious

barons.[909] Yet the first decade of John's reign also marked an important point in the

solidifying of English identity. As we have seen, it was during this time that miracle

stories about Thomas Becket began to include tales of eastern pilgrims who, freed from

the Muslims by the saint's intercession, directed their feet and prayers toward

Canterbury. It was also at this time that the monks Jocelin of Furness and Layamon

claimed Helena's and Constantine's legacies in the Holy Land as part of England's

Romano-British heritage, and the history of Glastonbury became officially associated

with Joseph of Arimathea and the Holy Grail. These popular and folkloric traditions used

past figures to meet a present need, linking the Angevin dynasty into the greater

narratives of European and Near Eastern history. In defiance of the political chaos of the

era, they asserted the strength of the bonds between England, the Angevin kings, and the

Holy Land.

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[908] Innocent III to All the Faithful of Christ, 24 August 1215, *Letters of Innocent III* 216. See also Innocent III to the barons of England, 24 August 1215, *Letters of Innocent III*, 218.
[909] John Gillingham has suggested that Henry never intended for this empire to remain intact, but rather envisioned dividing it as a partible inheritance for his four sons. See Gillingham, *Angevin Empire*, 32.

The "sacred communion of the people" that Anthony Smith identifies as the heart

of a nation is built upon the foundations of "community, territory, history, and

destiny."[910] Asserting England's connections to the Holy Land was a way of creating

legitimacy for what had been, at the beginning, a largely foreign dynasty within England.

It set the Angevins apart from their predecessors, the Normans, by focusing upon a

family past that knitted together the historic trajectories not only of Anjou and

Normandy, but also of England and Jerusalem, placing them within the broader trajectory

of Christian history. In the process of defining and reinforcing their power, the Angevins

drew upon the traditions, legends, and histories that linked them to their new homeland—

England—and to the Holy Land. The result was the evolution of a new understanding

about what it meant to be Angevin and English.

William of Newburgh, writing at the end of Henry II's reign (*c*. 1189), told the

story of a strange occurrence that had happened at the village of Woolpit near Bury St

Edmunds during the reign of King Stephen. Two children, a boy and a girl, completely

green from head to toe (*toto corpore virides*), appeared one day in a field. The local

villagers took them in, giving them food and shelter. As the children, who later explained

that they came "from the land of Saint Martin" (*de terra Sancti Martini*), adapted to the

local habits, their color gradually changed until they looked "similar to us, and they

learned the use of our speech."[911] Scholars have proposed a variety of interpretations of

[910] Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 31, 32.
[911] William of Newburgh, *Historia*, i: 82, 83 (quotes): similes nobis effecti, nostri quoque sermonis usum didicerunt.

this story.[912] I would like to see it as an allegory for the Angevins, who came from Anjou, the land of Saint Martin.[913] Angevin rule in England, like the Green Children's arrival in Woolpit, was marked by more than just a change of political geography. As the Angevins and their followers adopted the culture and customs of England, so too did they transform their very nature, becoming English themselves. "Fame sings of two kings," wrote the poet Geoffrey of Vinsauf about Henry II, "One is celestial, the other / English; one is a divinity in these things and the other a man."[914] The Angevin kings were only men, but they were Englishmen.

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[912] Some scholars place the story in the fantasy and folklore tradition, while others have read it as a commentary on actual events. Nancy Partner, in *Serious Entertainments*, 121–2, notes that Newburgh was very selective in his choice of miracle tales, and related the "homely" story of the green children because he felt that it was (in his own words) "prodigious" and might have some "hidden explanation." For a more extreme interpretation of the tale as fantasy, see John Clark, "Small, Vulnerable ETs": The Green Children of Woolpit," *Science Fiction Studies* 33 (2006): 206–229, who describes how the story later inspired early modern science fiction stories. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, in "Green Children from Another World, or the Archipelago in England", in *Cultural Diversity in the British Middle Ages: Archipelago, Island, England*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, The New Middle Ages (Palgrave, 2008): 75–94, at 84, suggests that the children are a veiled reference to the Welsh. For a discussion of the children as Flemish orphans, see Paul Harris, "The Green Children of Woolpit: A 12th Century Mystery and its Possible Solution," in Steve Moore (ed), *Fortean Studies: No. 4* (John Brown Publishing, 1998): 81–95.
[913] Saint Martin was the bishop of Tours in the fourth century, and in the high Middle Ages his cult was particularly associated with the medieval counts of Anjou. Farmer, *Communities of St. Martin*.
[914] Geoffrey of Vinsauf, "In Praise of Henry II," in *A Thirteenth-Century Anthology of Rhetorical Poems: Glasgow MS Hunterian V.8.14*, ed. Bruce Harbert (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1975), 18.

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APPENDIX

Figure 1. Saladin captures the True Cross from King Guy. From Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, f. 279. Image Credit: British Library.
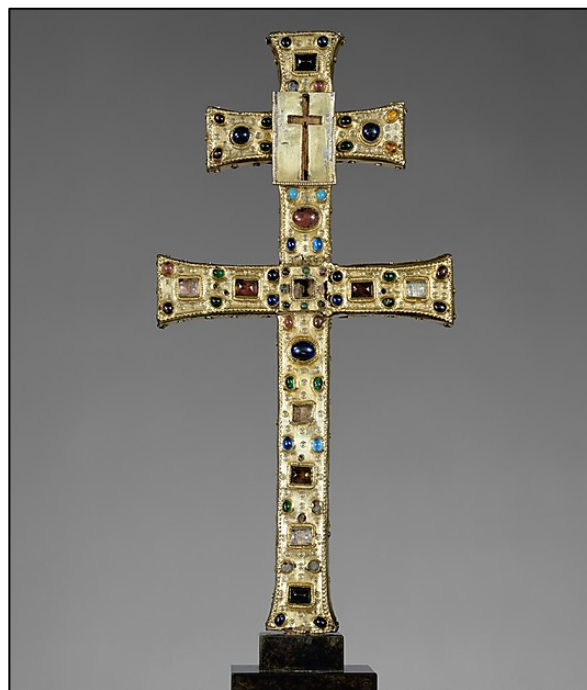

Figure 2. Reliquary containing fragments of the True Cross and the bones of several saints, *c*. 1180, Limoges, France. Image credit: the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Figure 3. Kelloe Cross wheel-style cross head, St Helen's Church, Kelloe, Co. Durham. Image Credit: Katie L. Hodges-Kluck, 2014.

Figure 4. Kelloe Cross upper panel, St Helen's Church, Kelloe, Co. Durham. Image Credit: Katie L. Hodges-Kluck, 2014.

Figure 5. Kelloe Cross middle panel, St Helen's Church, Kelloe, Co. Durham. Image Credit: Katie L. Hodges-Kluck, 2014.

Figure 6. Kelloe Cross lower panel, St Helen's Church, Kelloe, Co. Durham. Image Credit: Katie L. Hodges-Kluck, 2014.

Figure 7. Constantine the Great, York Minster. Image credit: Katie L. Hodges-Kluck, 2014.
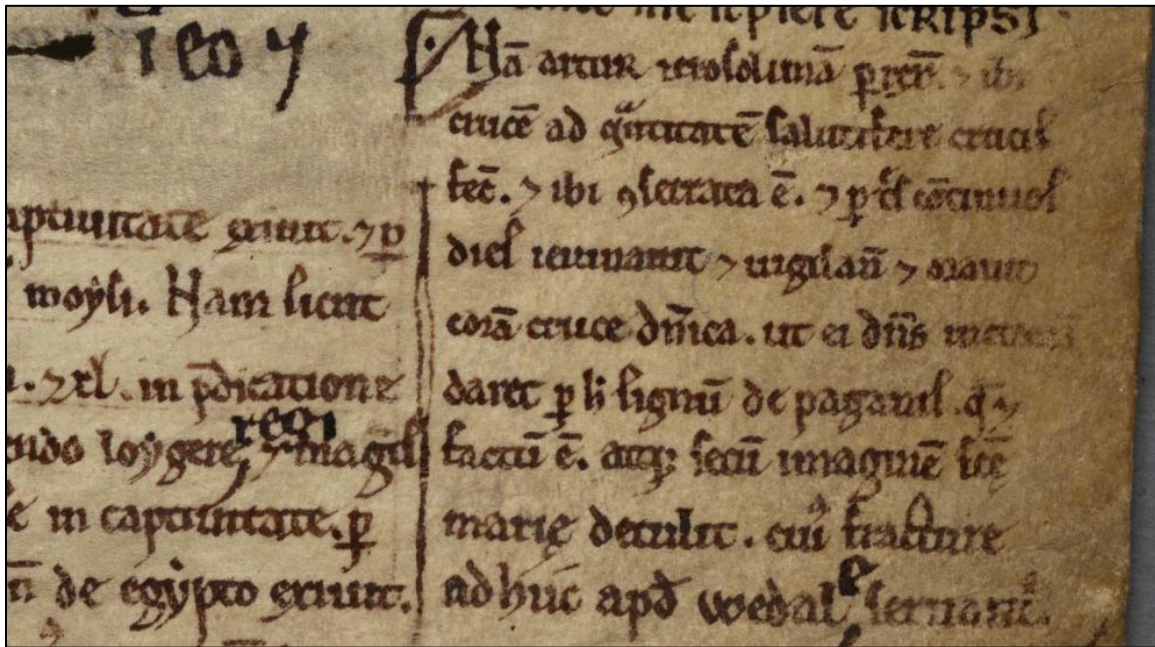
Figure 8. Marginal detail of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 139, f. 175 r.

Figure 9. The coronation mantle of Roger II of Sicily, *c*. 1134.

Figure 10. Joachim of Fiore's seven-headed dragon of the Apocalypse, from Revelation 12:3, showing the crowned sixth head representing Saladin. Reproduced in *Il Libro delle Figure dell'abate Gioachino da Fiore*, Vol. II: Tavole XXIX, di cui XIII a Colori Testo Relativo su Grafici, ed. Leone Tondelli, 2 vols (Turin: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1953), plate XIV.

VITA

Katie L. Hodges-Kluck was born in Helena, MT, where in third grade she gave a book report on a biography of Eleanor of Aquitaine, her first exposure to academic writing. In 2005 Katie received her B.A. in History, with concentrations in Archaeology and Medieval & Renaissance Studies, from Carleton College in Northfield, MN. During college she studied abroad at Oxford, and spent a summer working on an archaeology dig at George Washington's childhood home in Fredericksburg, VA. After graduating, Katie spent ten months working for the National Park Service as a historical resource interpreter at Fort Sumter National Monument in Charleston, SC, and its affiliated sites of Fort Moultrie and the Charles Pinckney Historical Site. She next moved to Albuquerque, NM, where in 2008 she received her M.A. in History from the University of New Mexico. Katie then spent three months working for the National Park Service at Minute Man National Historical Park in Concord and Lexington, MA. After this job ended, Katie moved to Knoxville, TN, to begin her doctoral studies at the University of Tennessee. At the same time, she met fellow history graduate student Stefan Hodges-Kluck. The couple married in 2013 in Stefan's homestate of Colorado. Katie received her Ph.D. in History in May, 2015.