



# *The Medieval papacy, crusading, and heresy, 1095-1291*

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A Companion to the Medieval Papacy

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# A Companion to the Medieval Papacy

*Growth of an Ideology and Institution*

*Edited by*

Keith Sisson  
Atria A. Larson



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# The Medieval Papacy, Crusading, and Heresy, 1095–1291

*Rebecca Rist*

## 15.1 Introduction

From the 11th century, popes authorized crusades against Muslims in the Near East and from the 13th century against heretics. Contemporary chroniclers, annalists, canon lawyers, and preachers leave us in no doubt that during the High Middle Ages the papacy's authorization of such crusades had a profound effect on Christians: religiously, socially, and politically. From Urban II's call for the First Crusade at Clermont in 1095 to the fall of Acre in 1291, they not only changed the politics of the Near East and Europe, but helped to mould and foster European Christian society. Some crusades were large, elaborately organized affairs employing vast numbers of professional soldiers. Others were small – no more than scattered bands of men known as pilgrims or *crucesignati*, those “signed with the Cross” who answered the papal call.<sup>1</sup>

## 15.2 The Papacy and Crusades to the Near East

The impetus for the First Crusade began in 1095 at the Council of Clermont when Pope Urban II (1088–1099) preached a sermon calling for an armed pilgrimage to the Near East to support Byzantine Christians against the Seljuk Turks and liberate the Holy Land, particularly Jerusalem. His preaching at Clermont brought together ideas of pilgrimage and holy war that would form the theological and ideological basis for future crusading.<sup>2</sup>

We have a number of contemporary sources that recorded his speech and we know from these that Urban journeyed through France with a large Italian entourage.<sup>3</sup> One in a long line of 11th-century reforming popes, Urban saw it as

1 Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke: 1988), 49–55.

2 Carl Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugs Gedankens* (Stuttgart: 1935); English translation: *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, trans. Marshall W. Baldwin and Walter Goffart (Princeton, NJ: 1977), 333.

3 Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London: 1986), 60–61.

a principal duty of his pontificate to reform the French church and was at pains to stop en route in order to dedicate cathedrals, churches, and altars, and to preside over ecclesiastical councils before preaching his first public crusade sermon at the Council of Clermont.<sup>4</sup> This was a carefully stage-managed event in which the crowd responded fervently to a sermon by the bishop and papal legate Adhémar de Monteil and monks were on hand to act as recruiting agents.<sup>5</sup>

When Urban II preached this sermon at Clermont, he not only encouraged Christians to take part in the First Crusade but set in motion the machinery to propagandize the expedition. According to contemporary sources, he instructed bishops and other clerics present to preach the crusade when they returned to their dioceses and parishes and cautioned them to be selective in their recruitment. Urban's speech was aimed primarily at able-bodied males, particularly the knightly classes with military experience and sufficient means to pay their own expenses for the crusade's duration.

Urban's speech at Clermont was skilfully crafted, marrying together ideas of pilgrimage and of knightly service for Christ. It not only inspired his contemporaries but was highly influential on later crusading since it served as an exemplum for the propaganda devices employed by subsequent crusade preachers. There is a substantial amount of agreement among medieval writers about the topics Urban covered. Responding to an appeal for assistance from the Byzantine emperor Alexius Comnenus, Urban strongly stressed the need for Western Christians to aid their beleaguered Greek Orthodox brothers in the Near East, appealing to their sensibilities with graphic accounts of Turkish victories over Eastern Christians and the sufferings of those under Turkish rule. He emphasized the desecration and destruction of Christian places of pilgrimage, in particular the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the fact that ancient pilgrimage routes were no longer safe for Christian travellers. He preached that God wished them to avenge the injury done to the places of Christ's life and Passion. In particular he stressed that those who fought against the infidel for such a righteous cause would be rewarded by God. These topoi, emphasizing the defense of Christian territory and the certainty of eternal reward for military action, were to become staple themes used by preachers to sell the idea of crusading throughout the High Middle Ages.

In calling for aid for Eastern Christians and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, Urban hoped to achieve the shorter-term goal of freeing the holy places for Christian pilgrims and the longer-term goal of uniting Greek and

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4 Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (Cambridge: 1997), 54–55.

5 Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders*, 58.

Latin churches.<sup>6</sup> However, the sermon at Clermont had other consequences, especially as the knightly class were not the only Christians who responded to Urban's message.

Dreadful pogroms against Jews broke out following Urban's call, as a result of a "Peasants' Crusade" led by a monk named Peter the Hermit.<sup>7</sup> Despite the fact that many of these "crusaders" only got as far as the Balkans, there were ferocious persecutions of Jewish communities in Germany and France.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile the main crusader contingents arrived outside Constantinople in late 1096/early 1097. These crusaders recaptured Jerusalem soon enough; the end of the crusade also saw the establishment of four crusader kingdoms: the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the County of Edessa, the Principality of Tripoli, and the Principality of Antioch.

After the crusaders had taken Jerusalem and many returned home, Urban commissioned the archbishop of Milan to preach the cross in Lombardy. After the death of Urban, his successor Paschal II (1099–1118) continued to encourage crusading, with recruitment initiatives spreading to France and Germany spawning new crusader armies. Yet although both Paschal and his successor Calixtus II (1119–1124) authorized crusades to the Near East, we possess no surviving references to their preaching. Certainly the contingents which set out on crusade were much smaller affairs until Eugenius III (1145–1153) authorized the Second Crusade in his general letter *Quantum praedecessores* of 1145, following the fall of the northernmost crusader state of the County of Edessa, the first to revert to Muslim control in the 12th century. According to contemporaries Odo of Deuil and William, archbishop of Tyre, this crusade was organized by Bernard of Clairvaux and led by the crowned heads of Europe – Louis VII of France and Conrad III of Germany. Again there is evidence of anti-Jewish preaching that resulted in massacres of Jews in Germany and France.<sup>9</sup>

Although the Second Crusade ended in failure (as Bernard later lamented in his *De Consideratione*), no less than thirty years later, in 1187, Gregory VIII called for yet another military venture. Instigated by the devastating news of the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin, this Third Crusade was organized by Archbishop Joscius of Tyre, led by Philip II Augustus, Frederick Barbarossa, and Richard I the Lionheart, and funded in England by the Saladin tithe. Those who took

6 For discussion of the idea of "liberation" see Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, 355–371.

7 Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders*, 56.

8 Jeffrey Richards, *Sex, Dissidence and Damnation: Minority Groups in the Middle Ages* (London: 1991), 91.

9 Richards, *Sex, Dissidence and Damnation*, 92.

part achieved the military victory of winning back Acre, but the enterprise as a whole was only a partial success since it did not recapture Jerusalem.

Impelled by a desire to retake Jerusalem, Innocent III (1198–1216) issued a call for the Fourth Crusade, enunciated in his crusading encyclicals *Post miserabile* of 1198, *Graves orientalis terrae* of 1199, and *Nisi nobis dictum* of 1200.<sup>10</sup> According to contemporaries Robert of Cleri and Geoffrey of Villehardouin, the main leaders of this new crusade were aided by the particular involvement not only of the preacher Fulk of Neuilly but also of the papal legates Peter Capuano and Soffredo.<sup>11</sup> To Innocent's chagrin and disgust, the crusaders, in debt to the Venetians who had organized the crusade, sacked first Zara on the Dalmatian Coast and then Constantinople, rather than attempting their original goal: the capture of Jerusalem. Indeed the reason behind the subsequent Fifth Crusade was to re-take Jerusalem and, when this failed, the strategically placed town of Damietta. First Innocent and then Honorius III (1216–1227) organized the Fifth Crusade; the secular leaders of the expedition operated under the spiritual guidance of the papal legate Pelagius and preachers Robert of Courçon, Oliver of Paderborn, and James of Vitry.

Seven years after the failure of the Fifth Crusade, the German emperor Frederick II, excommunicated by Gregory IX (1227–1243), attempted in 1228 to regain Jerusalem. Ironically, unlike the previously papal-led crusades, this crusade involved little fighting, and Frederick's diplomatic maneuverings ended in the Kingdom of Jerusalem regaining control of Jerusalem and surrounding territories for fifteen years. In 1235 papal calls for renewed action against Muslims in the Holy Land resulted in the Barons' Crusade of 1236 led by Richard of Cornwall and Thibaut of Champagne.<sup>12</sup> Later 13th-century crusades included two crusades of Louis IX of France. The first fell under the spiritual guidance of the papal legate Eudes of Chateauroux, Robert Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Galeran, bishop of Beirut. It achieved the military success – albeit brief – of the

10 Innocent III, *Post miserabile Hierosolymitanae* (17/15 August 1198); *The Church and the Jews in the 13th Century: A Study of their Relations During the Years 1198–1254, Based on the Papal Letters and the Conciliar Decrees of the Period*, Vol. 1, (ed.) Solomon Grayzel (New York: 1966), 86; *The Apostolic See and the Jews: Documents, Vol. 1: 492–1404*, (ed.) Shlomo Simonsohn (Toronto: 1988), 71; Innocent III, *Graves orientalis terrae* (31 December 1199), (ed.) Grayzel, 98; (ed.) Simonsohn, 78; Innocent III, *Nisi nobis dictum* (4 January 1200), (ed.) Grayzel, 98; (ed.) Simonsohn, 78–79.

11 Jonathan Philips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (London: 2004), 7.

12 Gregory IX, *Sicut Iudeis non* (3 May 1235), (ed.) Grayzel, 218; (ed.) Simonsohn, 154–55; *Rachel sum videns* (17 November 1234), (ed.) Grayzel, 216; (ed.) Simonsohn, 152–53; *Pravorum molestiis eum* (13 April 1235), (ed.) Grayzel, 218; (ed.) Simonsohn, 153–54. See Grayzel, 76, note 3.

conquest of Damietta, but was eventually defeated by Muslim Ayyubids. For his second crusade Louis resolved to disembark at Tunis. The crusaders landed at Carthage in 1270, but disease broke out in the camp and Louis died. Although both crusades had the papacy's backing, its internal wars with the German emperors meant that they were effectively organized by the French monarchy.

Despite the death of Louis IX in 1270, crusading continued. Edward I of England crusaded in Palestine in 1271–2. In 1274 the Second Council of Lyons issued the crusade decree *Pro zelo Fidei* in order to encourage Christians to crusade once more. A number of smaller crusades such as that of Alice of Blois (1287), John of Grailly (1288) and Otto of Grandson (1290) followed. Yet reversals of fortune continued for crusaders in the Near East. In 1289 Tripoli fell to Muslim Mamluks, followed in 1291 by Acre, the last crusader stronghold in Palestine. The “Golden Age” of crusading was over.

### 15.3 From Muslims to Heretics: The Development of the Idea of Crusade

The period 1198–1245 was crucial for the papacy's development of the idea of crusading because for the first time popes began to authorize and promote crusades against heretics.<sup>13</sup> This was a significant decision since they had previously concentrated their primary energies on authorizing crusades against Muslims in the Holy Land and Spain. In his influential work *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade* (1935), Carl Erdmann argued that from Late Antiquity the church had endorsed wars against heretics, an “internal” threat to Christian society, much earlier than it had accepted those against “external” Muslims, but that in the 11th century popes realized that the idea of such an internal crusade could not engender popular support. Erdmann suggested that to become a “motive force in history” the idea of crusade had to be transformed by the papacy and given a new goal, namely the recovery of the Holy Land, and that this transformation was successfully achieved by Urban II at Clermont in 1095.<sup>14</sup>

Erdmann defined a crusade as any holy war authorized by the papacy. This definition has not been accepted by many recent crusade historians, who have argued for other criteria besides papal authorization, especially the taking of crusade vows and the papal grant of a plenary indulgence.<sup>15</sup> The fact that there

13 Colin Morris, *The Papal Monarchy. The Western Church from 1050–1250* (Oxford: 1989), 1.

14 Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, *passim*.

15 For example, Jonathan Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?*, 3rd ed. (Basingstoke: 2002), 2–5; Compare with Christopher Tyerman definition of a crusade in *The Invention of the*

was no contemporary medieval Latin word for “crusade” problematizes definition even further. Yet Erdmann’s work was groundbreaking because it helped to establish the idea that crusades in Europe authorized by the papacy were different from, and yet fundamentally related to, Holy Land crusades.<sup>16</sup> Papal fears about the spread of the Cathar heresy in Europe and the ability of successive popes to wield temporal power in the Papal States encouraged 13th-century popes to use the idea of a crusade, already employed against Muslims in the Near East, to authorize wars against European enemies, including heretics.

The belief that all enemies of the papacy were heretics accorded with traditional church teaching. In the 11th century Nicholas II (1058–1061) had declared that anyone who tried to seize the prerogative of the Roman church conferred by Christ fell into heresy because his action injured Christ himself.<sup>17</sup> According to the 11th-century theologian Peter Damian, a heretic was anyone who set aside the idea of papal privileges and did not show obedience or seek the advice of the apostolic see.<sup>18</sup>

To some extent in the 12th century, and even more in the 13th, Christians throughout Europe perceived the papacy as the ultimate spiritual authority on earth; it was also at the height of its temporal jurisdiction. Besides exercising lordship over territories stretching across central Italy, popes considered it proper to intervene directly in certain aspects of secular political activity and to expect the cooperation of the secular arm in defeating heresy.<sup>19</sup> Long before 13th-century popes called for crusades against heresy, their predecessors in the 11th and 12th centuries had sanctioned and authorized wars against those deemed the church’s enemies, promising spiritual benefits for those fighting on its behalf.

Most important in this respect was canon 27 of the Third Lateran Council of 1179, called by Alexander III (1159–1181). This canon pronounced a sentence of anathema on heretics and their protectors “in Gascony and the regions of Albi

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*Crusades* (Basingstoke: 1998), where in rejecting definition, he argued that it is modern scholars who have given form to – his word is “invented” – concepts and structures which were in fact being re-manufactured to suit the church and the upper echelons of society at different times and cannot be said to have had any independent existence.

16 This idea was also present in Hippolyte Pissard, *La Guerre sainte en pays chrétiens: essai sur l'origine et le développement des théories canoniques* (Paris: 1912).

17 Text recorded in Gratian, “Concordia discordantium canonum”, *Corpus iuris canonici*, (ed.) E.A. Friedberg, Vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1879), at D.22 c.1, col. 73.

18 Peter Damian, “De privilegio Romanae Ecclesiae,” PL 145:91; “Epistolae,” PL 144:241.

19 Peter Partner, *The Lands of St. Peter: The Papal State in the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance* (London: 1972), 259–60. On the Papal States, see also the chapter above by Sandro Carocci.

and Toulouse and in other places” and denied them Christian burial. It prescribed the same penalties for employers of “routiers” and summoned the faithful to defend Christians “for the remission of their sins.” It also promised an indulgence for sins and eternal reward to those who *died* in action in the south of France, guaranteeing the same protection as that enjoyed by pilgrims to Jerusalem: “Indeed we receive under the church’s protection those, who, with the ardor of faith, shall have taken up that labor in order to fight...just as those who visit the tomb of the Lord.”<sup>20</sup>

Yet this call for military action involved no suggestion of a *crusade* authorized against heretics in the south of France, no mention of votive obligations, and no apparatus for taking the cross. It has even been suggested that Alexander III was not considering military action against Cathar heretics at all but rather that the coercive aspects of the canon referred only to “routiers” and their employers.<sup>21</sup> Yet this seems unlikely since the pope had already backed an Anglo-French preaching tour against Cathars in 1177–78 led by his legate Peter of San Crisogono and Henry of Marcy, abbot of Cîteaux.<sup>22</sup> Alexander also supported a campaign in 1181 against the Cathars, again led by Henry of Marcy, now cardinal bishop of Albano. Henry himself may have pressed for the formulation of c.27.<sup>23</sup>

In the late 12th and early 13th century, fear of heresy centered on the Cathars and to a lesser extent the Waldensians.<sup>24</sup> The Third Lateran Council had voiced the church’s increasing preoccupation with the activities of these heretics in the south of France, while specifically papal concern about these and other heretical groups had been expressed in Lucius III’s decree *Ad abolendam* (1184).<sup>25</sup> Although historians dispute the actual numbers of heretics in the south of France, their correspondence leaves us in no doubt that popes were

20 COD, 1.224–25; COGD, 2.1.145–47. See discussion of plenary indulgences below.

21 Housley, “Crusades against Christians,” 26.

22 For Peter of Pavia’s account of the preaching mission see PL 199:119–24. For Henry of Marcy’s account see PL 204:234–42. For the earlier preaching mission of 1145 led by Bernard of Clairvaux, see PL 182:434–36; PL 185:312–13; PL 185:410–16.

23 Cassandra Chideock, “Henry of Marcy, Heresy and the Crusade, 1177–1189” (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge, 2001), 101–03; see also Danica Summerlin, “The Canons of the Third Lateran Council of 1179, Their Origins and Reception, ca. 1148–ca. 1191” (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge, 2011), *passim*.

24 Malcolm Barber, *The Cathars, Dualist Heretics in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages* (Harlow: 2000), 1–5; Gabriel Audisio, *Waldensian Dissent: Persecution and Survival, c.1170–c.1570*, trans. Claire Davison (Cambridge: 1999), 22–24.

25 Lucius III, *Ad abolendam diversarum* (4 Nov. 1184), PL 201:1297–1300.

greatly alarmed and horrified by what they considered a real threat to the orthodox teachings of western orthodox Christianity.

Papal fears were echoed by a large number of the western European clergy in their sermons and by canon lawyers and theologians in their treatises. The greatest concern for many clerics was that the truth of Christianity would be undermined by heretical doctrines. At times popes sought to limit any damage to Christianity by pursuing a policy of deliberately encouraging heretics' incorporation into the church, while at the same time condemning them if they continued to follow their own doctrines and beliefs.<sup>26</sup> Yet the Cathar heresy, especially in its absolute dualist form, was seen as a significant threat because it was so radically opposed to Christianity.<sup>27</sup>

#### 15.4 The Albigensian Crusade

While both ecclesiastical and secular legislation against heretics continued to grow during the 12th and early 13th centuries, Christian society became increasingly accustomed to frequent papal calls for crusades against Muslims. Since Urban II had preached the First Crusade, there had been continuous crusade activity to the Near East.<sup>28</sup> Even if they or their family members had not been on crusade themselves, many western Christians had heard tales of the crusader states and the activities of the military orders to protect places of pilgrimage and to ensure the survival of a Latin presence in the places of Christ's life and Passion. When popes called for fresh forces of crusaders, they always began their general letters by recounting the current, often disastrous, situation in the Near East. Gregory VIII painted an apocalyptic picture of the loss of Jerusalem to Saladin in his general letter *Audita tremendi* (1187), hoping his

26 For example, Alexander III and the Waldensians and Lucius III in *Ad abolendam*. For the Cathar heresy seen as a significant threat to Catholicism, see Rebecca Rist, *The Papacy and Crusading in Europe, 1198–1245* (London: 2009), 4. On Innocent III's attempts in particular to incorporate the popularist *Humiliati* into the church, see Brenda Bolton, "Innocent III and the *Humiliati*," in *Innocent III: Vicar of Christ or Lord of the World?*, (ed.) James M. Powell, 2nd ed. (Washington DC: 1994), 114–20.

27 For a description of the Cathar heresy see Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Historia Albigensis*, Vol. 1, (ed.) Pascal Guébin and Ernst Lyon (Paris: 1926), 9–20. For scepticism about Catharism and dualism see Mark Pegg, *A Most Holy War: the Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom* (Oxford: 2008). For a recent book that discusses the Cathar heresy and its relationship to Latin Christianity see, for example, Claire Taylor, *Heresy, Crusade and Inquisition in Medieval Quercy* (York: 2011), 7–11.

28 Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History* (London: 2001), 37–39; 88–89.



passionate language would stir up a desire to fight.<sup>29</sup> Popes knew that the faithful regarded the fate of the Holy Land as integral to their own Christian identity and wished to be kept abreast of events, even those in distant lands.

In striking contrast, crusades against heretics were unfamiliar to Christians. This changed under Innocent III, who was fascinated by heresy and wished to define, to a much greater extent than his predecessors, what it meant to be a heretic.<sup>30</sup> He understood that heresy could not grow unless it had active backing and emphasized that supporters of heretics were as pernicious to Christian society as the culprits themselves. Eventually in 1208 he authorized the Albigensian Crusade against heretics in the south of France. Following his lead, subsequent popes also sought to inspire the Christian faithful to take part in crusades against heresy. Here the enemy was not the hated Muslim infidel – who had at different times impeded pilgrimage, upset the Byzantine Empire, and caused havoc in the crusader states, or re-taken Jerusalem – but rather heretical groups living within Christian Europe.

To call for crusades against heretics seemed an obvious progression to many Christians, both clerics and laymen, since they viewed heretical beliefs as perverted and believed that heretics and their supporters disrupted and damaged the spiritual and temporal framework of medieval society. Yet in the absence of a tradition of crusading against heretics it was difficult for the papacy to justify and explain these crusades to Christians as pilgrimages – as the papacy had done for crusades to the Holy Land from Urban II onwards.<sup>31</sup> It was not therefore surprising that popes deliberately used the same language when calling for crusades against this new enemy as they had always done when calling for crusades to the Near East. They wanted to reassure the faithful of the similarity of both enterprises.

So when 13th-century popes called for crusades against heretics they were not seeking to re-define crusading. Papal authorization, the taking of vows, and the grant of the plenary indulgence all remained central to their idea of

29 Gregory VIII, “Audita tremendi severitate” (29 October 1187), (ed.) William Stubbs, *Chronicle of the Reign of Henry II and Richard I*, Vol. 2, *Chronicles and Memorials* (London: 1867), 15–19.

30 Innocent III, *Vergentis in senium* (29 March 1199), PL 214:537–39. See Walter Ullmann, “The Significance of Innocent III’s Decretal ‘Vergentis,’” *Études d’histoire du droit canoniques dédiées à Gabriel le Bras* (Paris: 1965), 729.

31 For example, Eugenius III had referred to the Second Crusade as a *sanctum opus, sanctum iter*, and *tam sanctum tamque preecessarium opus et laborem devotionis in Quantum praedecessores* (1 December 1145), in *Otonis et Rahewina Gesta Friderici I Imperatoris*, 3rd ed., (ed.) Bernhard von Simson (Hannover: 1912), 1.55–57. See Rist, *The Papacy and Crusading in Europe, 1098–1245*, 4, 5, 25.

what constituted a crusade. Rather, popes were aiming to convince Christians of the need for crusades against a new type of enemy. They needed to re-assure Christians that they would gain the same spiritual privileges and that their enterprise was no less worthy than that against the infidel. This idea of crusading armies fighting within Europe rather than in the Near East was new and unfamiliar. Admittedly there were ongoing crusades in Spain, but these were against a “traditional” target – Muslims, while those against a less “traditional” enemy – pagans – in the Baltic, were far away on the frontiers of Europe. Both clerics and the laity must have wondered whether crusades against neighboring heretics could really be as important as defending the places of Christ’s Passion and resurrection in the Holy Land and what would be the practical as well as spiritual benefits of taking part in such ventures.

Yet although the idea of crusading against heretics was new, the idea of utilizing physical force against them was not. Canon law collections, and especially Gratian’s *Decretum*, revealed a long history of holy violence against heretics and schismatics.<sup>32</sup> In particular the church’s early declarations about just violence, including letters of Augustine of Hippo (354–430) about the treatment of Donatist heretics, were carefully recorded in Causa 23 and 24 of the *Decretum* and were highly influential in forming 12th- and 13th-century popes’ beliefs about the treatment of heretics and the justification of force. The Donatists had challenged the spiritual authority of clerics who had abandoned the faith under the persecution of the emperor Diocletian (303–305). For them, the particular character of the priest, rather than his office, gave validity to the sacraments. The dualist beliefs of the Cathars in the 12th and 13th centuries presented similarities to these Donatist beliefs as recorded in Gratian’s *Decretum*, which meant the church already had examples and precedents to follow. So when popes authorized crusades to counter heresy, they borrowed ideas from their predecessors’ earlier crusades against Muslims and also drew on a wealth of material from canon law collections justifying military action against heretics.

It was not surprising that Innocent III led the way in authorizing crusades against these heretics. He was acutely aware that secular power had failed to deal with the problem of heresy in the south of France. His natural dynamism meant that he threw himself wholeheartedly into every concern of the church.<sup>33</sup>

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32 On the *Decretum*, see chapter above on canon law. On Gratian’s general treatment about violence and the church’s role in it, see Frederick H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 3rd Ser. 8 (Cambridge: 1979), 55–85.

33 There is a vast amount of recent secondary literature on Innocent III, for example, Helene Tillmann, *Pope Innocent III*, trans. Walter Sax (Amsterdam: 1980); Jane Sayers, *Innocent III*:

His authorization of the Fourth and Fifth Crusades, his encouragement of crusading in the Baltic, his call for the first “political” crusade against Markward of Anweiler at the very beginning of his pontificate, his widening of the scope of crusading by allowing for the redemption and commutation of vows, his permitting crusaders to take part in campaigns even without the permission of their wives – all testify to his favoring crusading as a way of dealing with the church’s enemies. His decision to use crusades against heretics was innovative but not surprising, considering both his fascination with crusading and his firm belief that it would be effective in harnessing secular support for the papacy’s causes.

Besides using such crusades to combat heretics and their supporters in the south of France, Innocent also had further aims for these crusades. He wanted to re-assert the papacy’s authority over crusading after the disastrous events of the Fourth Crusade where he had lost control and been unable to prevent the diversion of the crusade armies to Zara and Constantinople.<sup>34</sup> He wished too to show that the church, with the help of secular powers, was unified in its struggle against heresy. He also felt the urgent need to assert the authority of the papacy in the French south and ensure that throughout France clerics refused to tolerate heresy in their dioceses and parishes. An early manifestation of this latter policy at the beginning of his pontificate was his depriving bishops and clergy of their office when he believed they were doing little to tackle heresy in their areas of jurisdiction.<sup>35</sup>

Innocent’s subsequent decision to favor crusading, as well as teaching and preaching, against heretics was not therefore a radical departure but rather a continuation of these aims. Indeed although the death of his legate Peter of Castelnau in 1208 was a catalyst for his decision to call for a crusade, he had already tried several years previously to secure the military involvement of the king of France and promised spiritual privileges to those who would fight against heretics.<sup>36</sup> According to the church’s teaching, violence was not intrinsically wrong but morally neutral; the legitimacy of its use in a just cause

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*Leader of Europe, 1198–1216* (London: 1994); John Moore, *Innocent III 1160/61–1216: To Root up and to Plant* (Leiden: 2003); *Innocenzo III: Urbs et Orbis* (ed.) Andrea Sommerlechner (Rome: 2003).

34 Jonathan Philips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (London: 2004), 193–97.

35 Rist, *The Papacy and Crusading in Europe, 1198–1245*, 7–8.

36 For example, Innocent III, *Inveterata pravitatis haereticae* (17 November 1207), PL 215:1246–48.

depended on the intentions of the participants.<sup>37</sup> Believing that he was acting with right intention for the good of the *societas Christiana*, Innocent saw no reason not to call for military action against southern French heretics.

Nevertheless, although Innocent had the theory to back him up, he did not give enough serious consideration to what a crusade against heretics would entail and he made serious misjudgments about the long-term consequences of the campaign. Crusading might be successful when properly organized against Muslims in the Near East, but it would prove much less so against heretics who were sheltered and supported by local communities. Although he had no previous experience on which to base his conclusion, Innocent believed, as did his successor Honorius III, that crusading was the right way to tackle heresy in the south of France. Added to this, Innocent was not a good judge of character, which caused him yet more difficulties when dealing with the leaders of the Albigensian Crusade.<sup>38</sup> Innocent therefore wished to control closely the course of the crusade in the south of France, just as he later also wanted to control every aspect of the planning of the Fifth Crusade to the Near East.

### 15.5 Crusades against Heretics

Unlike his predecessor, Gregory IX soon also realized that crusading did not prove a very effective tool against heretics in the south of France and recognized that it was just as likely to drive heretical movements underground and encourage resistance as deal with the problem effectively. Gregory had the benefit of hindsight, since by the time he was elected in 1227, crusading had continued sporadically in the south of France for almost twenty years. Simon de Montfort, the crusade's original leader, and subsequently his son Amalric, had encountered continuous difficulty in raising sufficient numbers of troops, testimony to a lack of widespread support for the crusade.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, a great number of "bona fide" Christians were inevitably killed when a town supposed to contain heretics was ransacked or burnt. Although some clerics were more concerned about the fate of orthodox Christians than others – if Caesarius of Heisterbach is to be believed, the matter was of little concern to

37 See, for instance, Gratian's *Decretum* C.23 q.1 c.5 (ed. Friedberg, 893); C.23 q.5 c.9 (ed. Friedberg, 933–34).

38 James Watt, "The Papacy" in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. 5, c.1198–c.1300*, (ed.) David Abulafia (Cambridge: 1999), 130–31, 196–203.

39 Barber, *The Cathars*, 122–29; William Sibly and Michael Sibly, *The History of the Albigensian Crusade* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: 1998), 300–01.

the papal legate Arnald Amalric – it is likely that popes realized that such killings alienated the support of some Frenchmen.<sup>40</sup> So Gregory and his papal successors turned instead to inquisition as a more effective method of dealing with heretics in the south of France.<sup>41</sup> They understood the importance of encouraging local support against heresy and the need to set up inquisitorial procedures in order to encourage informers. Yet although Gregory increasingly favored inquisitorial procedures in the south of France over crusades, he also granted indulgences for military campaigns against suspected heretics in other parts of Europe.<sup>42</sup>

Just as popes had their own agendas for authorizing crusades against heretics, so the local ecclesiastical hierarchy often had their own political as well as religious reasons for supporting them. To a great extent, local magnates orchestrated the crusades with clerics on their side; they appealed to the pope, often via the clergy, to validate their military action. Since bishops and secular magnates often came from the same families and social networks, they often shared common “political” as well as “religious” goals. At times bishops came under immense pressure from magnates, embroiled in local politics, to seek papal authorization for crusades against heresy. For example, the politically-motivated murder of Count Hermann II of Lippe by the Stedinger in 1229 propelled his brother Archbishop Gerhard II of Germany to excommunicate them. This action turned out to be the prelude for a crusade.<sup>43</sup>

Yet these influences and pressures did not lessen the fact that, like the popes in Rome, clerics, especially bishops, were themselves extremely worried about heretics in their dioceses. Papal authorization of crusades in the south of France encouraged clerics to support military action against the church’s enemies. Perturbed by heresies in their local area – whether in Germany, Italy, or Bosnia – clerics were often heartened by the idea that they might persuade popes to authorize a crusade against particular heretical groups. They were also pleased that the laity was encouraged to join in the church’s struggle to

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40 English translation of Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum: The Dialogue on Miracles*, trans. Henry von Essen Scott and C.C. Swinton Bland, with an introduction by G.G. Coulton (London: 1929), 1.345–46. On Caesarius’s text, see most recently William J. Purkis, “Crusading and Crusade Memory in Caesarius of Heisterbach’s *Dialogus miraculorum*,” *JMH* 39:1 (2013): 100–27.

41 Bernard Hamilton, *The Medieval Inquisition* (London: 1981), 13, 36–39.

42 Christoph Maier, *Preaching the Crusades: Mendicant Friars and the Cross in the 13th Century* (Cambridge: 1994), 32–62.

43 Maier, *Preaching the Crusades*, 52, 124.

eradicate heretics by the grant of spiritual privileges and in particular the crusade indulgence. This interaction between local clerics and the papacy in its authorization of crusades was extremely complex, as the example of the handling of accused heretics in Bosnia amply demonstrates.

## 15.6 Recent Historiography on the Papacy, Crusading, and Heresy

The role played by the papacy in authorizing crusades continues to be a central topic of crusading scholarship. In particular, for the latter half of the 13th century a number of influential works such as Maureen Purcell's *Papal Crusading Policy* and Norman Housley's *The Italian Crusades* have discussed papal policies with regard to crusading. The increasing formalization of the idea of crusade shown by the use of the technical term *crucesignati* and the appearance of the crusading vow in crusade sermons, invite conclusions about the theological and legal background against which popes issued appeals. Historians have discussed how popes of that age inspired, promulgated, organized, and endeavored to control the crusades that they authorized.<sup>44</sup>

Similarly, there are many recent books on the Albigensian Crusade, but papal policies with respect to heretical activity in the south of France has not been the primary focus of these works, even though it was the popes themselves who authorized and sought to control crusading.<sup>45</sup> Likewise, few historians have studied in detail the papacy's call for crusades against those described as "heretics" in other parts of Europe. One important exception has been Christoph Maier, who has analyzed papal endorsement of Dominicans and Franciscans who preached the cross against the Stedinger and Drenther peasants in Germany and against other German, Bosnian, Hungarian and

44 Maureen Purcell, *Papal Crusading Policy: The Chief Instruments of Papal Crusading Policy and Crusade to the Holy Land from the Loss of Jerusalem to the Fall of Acre 1244–1291* (Leiden: 1975); Norman Housley, *The Italian Crusades: the Papal-Angevin Alliance and the Crusades Against Christian Lay-Powers, 1254–1304* (Oxford: 1982).

45 Mark Pegg, *A Most Holy War: The Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom* (Oxford: 2008); Laurence Marvin, *The Occitan War: A Military and Political History of the Albigensian Crusade, 1209–1218* (Cambridge: 2008); Malcolm Barber, *The Cathars, Dualist Heretics in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages* (Harlow: 2000); Michael Costen, *The Cathars and the Albigensian Crusade* (Manchester: 1997). For a helpful overview of the large number of recent books and articles on the Cathar heresy and the Albigensian Crusades see Marco Meschini, "Bibliografia delle crociate albigesi," *Reti Medievali Rivista* 7, vol. 1 (2006).

Lombard heretics.<sup>46</sup> Fine, Sanjek, and Kieckhefer have also treated more widely the church's response to European heresy.<sup>47</sup>

That papal policies toward early 13th-century crusades against heretics is still in need of further study is partly due to the continuing influence of a "traditionalist" or "exclusivist" approach to the study of crusades. In general historians with this approach have argued that contemporaries believed that the only "true" crusades were launched to defend the Holy Land. Significantly, although "pluralist" or "inclusivist" historians such as Jonathan Riley-Smith have defined crusades much more broadly as any wars authorized by the papacy for which an indulgence was granted and vows were taken, they have nevertheless, with the notable exception of Housley, tended to focus on crusading to the Near East.

There is still no consensus as to whether 12th- and 13th-century ventures against non-Christians in places other than the Holy Land were regarded by contemporaries as essentially connected to and qualitatively identical with crusades to the Near East. Recent "pluralist" historians hold that they were indeed viewed as essentially similar and that all such ventures should be classed as crusades.<sup>48</sup> The "traditionalist" view has held that crusades to the Near East held a special significance to contemporaries in respect of which all other ventures against infidels and pagans were measured.<sup>49</sup> There is as yet no agreement as to whether 13th-century ventures against those accused of heresy were seen by contemporaries as qualitatively identical or fundamentally different from crusades to the Holy Land.<sup>50</sup>

Consideration of one particularly important contemporary viewpoint, namely that of the popes themselves who called for crusades, provides an

46 Maier, *Preaching the Crusades*.

47 John Fine, *The Bosnian Church: A New Interpretation. A Study of the Bosnian Church and its Place in State and Society from the 13th to the 15th Centuries*, East European Monographs 10 (Boulder: 1975); Franjo Sanjek, *Les Chrétiens bosniques et le mouvement cathaire, XIIe-XIVe siècles* (Brussels: 1976); Richard Kieckhefer, *The Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany* (Liverpool: 1979). There have also been a number of studies of the anti-Hussite crusades of the fifteenth century, but these are outside the chronological framework of this chapter.

48 Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?*; Elizabeth Siberry, *Criticism of Crusading 1095–1274* (Oxford: 1985); Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades 1274–1580: From Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford: 1992).

49 Hans Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (Stuttgart: 1965), trans. John Gillingham, *The Crusades* (Oxford: 1972). Most recently Jean Richard, *Histoire des Croisades* (Paris: 1996), trans. James Birrell, *The Crusades c.1071–1291* (Cambridge: 1999).

50 Housley, *The Later Crusades*, 2–4.

important dimension to the on-going debate. The majority of both “pluralist” and “traditionalist” crusade historians recognize the importance of papal authority for a crusade. An understanding of the views of popes is important for “pluralists” since they argue that a critical part of the definition of a crusade is that it is a war proclaimed, or at least supported, by the papacy. It is also important for the majority of “traditionalists” who, although believing that the popular response to papal calls for crusades to the Holy Land was significantly different from the popular response to their calls for other crusades, have nevertheless also now accepted a significant part of the pluralist position: that a crusade needed papal authorization to be a legitimate enterprise. Even influential “traditionalists” such as Hans Mayer have argued that the popes themselves thought that their calls for crusades were qualitatively identical and suggested that they considered all crusades of the same importance.<sup>51</sup>

As both “traditionalists” and “pluralists” agree, popes did indeed grant the same spiritual rewards for crusades within Europe and to the Holy Land. This is apparent from their emphasis on the grant of the plenary indulgence for crusading against heretics. Gregory IX’s letters show that the grant of the plenary indulgence was used specifically to signify a crusade rather than merely a military campaign that had papal approval. Both Gregory IX and Innocent IV used their grant of the plenary indulgence to show they were now upgrading a campaign to a crusade. The papacy’s desire to link crusades against heretics and crusades to the Holy Land is also apparent in the similarity of rhetoric, including similar metaphors, similes, and biblical texts, found in papal correspondence concerned with “enemies within” Europe and that concerned with “external” enemies of the Near East.

Yet it is generally agreed that traditionalist historians have sometimes failed to appreciate fully the significance of the fact that different popes had different priorities, depending on political circumstances. Pluralist historians have also perhaps not given enough thought to the complexities of papal policies and

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51 In 1965 Hans Mayer did not argue that all crusades were of the same importance but rather took a “traditionalist” stance. Thus in Hans Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans. John Gillingham (Oxford, 1972), 283, he argued that “A crusade in the true sense of the word, however, is not just a war which is called for by the pope and in which an oath is demanded and indulgences and worldly privileges are granted. It is also a war which is aimed at acquiring or preserving Christian dominion over the Sepulchre of Our Lord in Jerusalem i.e. a clear-cut objective which can be geographically pinned down to a particular region”. It is possible that he later became less convinced of this position since in Hans Mayer, *The Crusades*, 2nd ed., trans. John Gillingham (Oxford: 1988), he omitted Chapter 15 “The Aftermath: Consequences and Perspectives” in which he had put forward this “traditionalist” position.



the importance of understanding the different personalities of the popes involved. Although popes granted the same plenary indulgence for different crusades, not just those against the Muslims, they sometimes emphasized one crusade more than others to suit their own and the church's interests. Hence in 1213 Innocent III called for crusading in the south of France to be scaled down in order to concentrate on the Fifth Crusade to the Near East.<sup>52</sup> Yet, despite this pragmatic approach, the Holy Land crusade remained a standard against which popes judged other crusades. It is crucial to highlight the importance of studying the different policies of individual popes to understand the papacy's continuing authorization of crusades during the first half of the 13th century.

Other important topics of crusading related to the papacy include the so-called political crusades and the role of the Papal States. Despite fewer studies of the political crusades of the first half of the 13th century than the second, there has nevertheless been some important work done on the earlier period by historians such as Joseph Strayer and Elizabeth Kennan.<sup>53</sup> Seminal works on the politics of the Papal States, such as, for example, those of Peter Partner and Daniel Waley, have discussed their growth and increasing importance as a power base in central Italy from which popes could authorize crusades against their enemies.<sup>54</sup>

### 15.7 Papal Correspondence, Crusading and Heresy

Popes called on the Christian faithful throughout Europe to crusade by means of general letters or bulls. These enjoyed wide circulation and were propaganda instruments in their own right. Although Urban II himself did not issue

52 Innocent III, *Cum iam captis* (15 January 1213), PL 216:744–45; *Quia major nunc* (19–29 April 1213), *Studien zum Register Innocenz III*, (ed.) Georgine Tangl (Weimar: 1929), 88–97.

53 Joseph Strayer, "The Political Crusades of the 13th century," in *A History of the Crusades, Vol. 2: The Later Crusades, 1189–1311*, (ed.) Kenneth Setton, 2nd ed. (Madison: 1969), 343–75; Elizabeth Kennan, "Innocent III and the First Political Crusade: A Comment on the Limitations of Papal Power," *Traditio* 17 (1971), 231–49; Elizabeth Kennan, "Innocent III, Gregory IX and Political Crusades: A Study in the Disintegration of Papal Power," in *Reform and Authority in the Medieval and Reformation Church*, (ed.) Guy F. Lytel (Washington: 1981), 15–35. On later political crusades, see, for example, Norman Housley, *The Italian Crusades: The Papal-Angevin Alliance and the Crusades against Christian Lay Powers, 1254–1343* (Oxford, 1982); Norman Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades, 1305–1378* (Oxford, 1986); Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580: From Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford, 1992).

54 Peter Partner, *The Lands of St. Peter: the Papal State in the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance* (London: 1972); Daniel Waley, *The Papal State in the 13th century* (London: 1961).

a general letter for the First Crusade, solemn written proclamations were used regularly by popes to authorize later crusades, both to the Near East and within Europe. These letters outlined the reasons for the crusade and elaborated the major themes that crusade preachers would need to employ in their appeals if they were to recruit successfully. They also outlined the various privileges crusaders would enjoy for participation.

The earliest general crusading letter, *Quantum praedecessores*, issued by Pope Eugenius III on 1 December 1145 and reissued the following March, stressed the success of the First Crusade but then retold the reverses that the crusader states had suffered as a result of the loss of Edessa to the Turks in December 1144. Eugenius promised for the Second Crusade the same remission of sins that his predecessor Urban II had promised to those who took part in the First Crusade. He also took members of the crusading army under his protection, forbade attempts to harm their wives, families or possessions during their absence, and guaranteed the church's help to make good these assurances of protection. Crusaders were granted the right to sell or mortgage their lands and estates in order to finance participation. Significantly, they were also exempted from interest on loans made to them, even if they had already taken an oath to make such a payment. Eugenius also set out a blueprint for the conduct of crusaders: they were enjoined to avoid displays of wealth, hunting, and any other entertainments not thought suitable pastimes for a warrior-pilgrim of Christ.

Such proclamations were later incorporated into the constitutions and decrees of several general councils, most notably the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), the First Council of Lyon (1245) and the Second Council of Lyon (1274). These ecumenical councils laid down rules under which crusades were to operate, spelled out the spiritual privileges that would accrue to crusaders, and clarified the temporal and, even more importantly, spiritual inducements that awaited crusaders. The decrees of these councils also promised lesser benefits to those who assisted the crusade with financial contributions or other types of help.<sup>55</sup> They thereby served both as propaganda tools for crusading and as guidelines for the organization of a particular crusade.

Papal correspondence included the general letters addressed to the Christian faithful that popes expected would be read out by the clergy in churches throughout Europe and even be used as guides by crusade preachers; it also included many other letters dispatched from the curia to individuals, in particular to the rulers of Europe and bishops. Always concerned to honor tradition,

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55 Lateran IV c.71 (COGD 200–04; COD 270–71); Lyon I c.2.5 (COGD 241–45; COD 301); Lyon II c.1 (COGD 289–306; COD 312).

popes were extremely careful to follow the language of their predecessors when calling for crusades. Since some of these popes were also trained lawyers, their pronouncements deliberately reflected their understanding of canon law and were steeped in that tradition. Notaries and scribes at the curia drafted papal letters with the deliberate aim of reflecting continuity not only among the different popes but among themselves as their secretaries, rather like artisans working for a major artist in a workshop. Papal correspondence was a highly formulaic creation of the curia reflecting a standard style of composition developed over many centuries, which only increased the popes' natural conservatism.

When assessing popes' letters as evidence for papal policies, the employment of notaries, scribes, correctors, and *bullatores* at the curia, the working conditions under which papal letters were composed, and the particular political circumstances for which they were written, are all important considerations.<sup>56</sup> The complex workings of the chancery mean that personal involvement of popes in the production of their letters remains impossible to delineate. The issue constitutes a question of on-going scholarly debate.<sup>57</sup> Although it is not possible to be sure in what proportion pope, vice-chancellor, and notaries composed the most important letters, it seems likely that the pope himself dictated some. Thus although not every word came from the papal mind, it is probable that the essence of the letter did. There is, therefore, definite evidence of their own "voice" in many of the papal letters, although this often remains difficult to define. Yet certainly a significant number have a highly personal flavor. Popes also probably took advice about the content of their correspondence from their cardinals in consistory.<sup>58</sup>

56 On papal letters and the workings of the chancery, see the chapter above by Andreas Meyer.

57 For an excellent recent discussion of this complex subject see Patrick Zutshi, "The Personal Role of the Pope in the Production of Papal Letters in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," in *Von Nutzen des Schreibens: Soziales Gedächtnis, Herrschaft, und Besitz im Mittelalter*, (eds.) Walter Pohl and Paul Herold (Vienna: 2002), 225–36. For some examples of the ongoing debate see Hans Martin Schaller, "Die Kanzlei Kaiser Friedrichs II., Ihr Personal und ihr Sprachstil, Zweiter Teil," *Archiv für Diplomatik* 4 (1958), 278–83; Hans Martin Schaller, *Stauferzeit: Ausgewählte Aufsätze* (Hannover: 1993), 283–306; Wilhelm Imkamp, *Das Kirchenbild Innocenz' III. (1198–1216)* (Stuttgart: 1983), 71–104; Patrick Zutshi, "Pope Honorius III's *Gratiarum omnium* and the Beginnings of the Dominican Order," *Omnia disce: Medieval Studies in Memory of Leonard Boyle, O.P.* (eds.) Anne J. Duggan, John Greatrex, Brenda Bolton (Aldershot: 2005), 199–210.

58 Zutshi, "The Personal Role of the Pope," 225–36.

In general, then, with proper historical discernment, popes' own views, interests, and ambitions can often be discerned. It is likely that the pope would have been present at some point during the composition of general letters sent to the Christian faithful throughout Europe calling for crusades, even if he was not personally involved in the production of all letters to individual rulers and clerics. Yet some letters are more informative about the individual policies of popes than others, particularly those less formulaic examples which not merely repeated stock phrases and sentiments but contained new and original material. Different popes favored different scriptural passages and used different images to express themselves, and, although the notaries involved in the production of the letters may also have inserted their own favorite biblical passages and metaphors, they could not have employed them without their master's consent.

Certainly papal letters display great continuity. Similar metaphors were employed by all the popes of the first half of the 13th century to describe heresy, for example, as a disease. Yet there were subtle differences in the way these were employed. Indeed such subtle differences in language enable the historian to build a much more complete picture of the characters and views of the popes than he gets from chronicle and biographical accounts. Honorius III's letters show him to be much more interested in the crusade against heretics in the south of France than the writings of contemporary chroniclers and biographers suggest, presumably because they emphasized almost exclusively, in comparison to their depiction of his predecessor Innocent III and his successor Gregory IX, his reputation as a man of peace, a picture endorsed by his career as a bureaucrat at the papal curia and a meticulous compiler of the *Liber Censuum*.<sup>59</sup> Yet although Honorius's letters show he was cautious and keen to emphasize the importance of crusading to the Holy Land, they also show his commitment to the crusade against heresy in the south of France, where he was possibly influenced by Cardinal Ugolino (later Gregory IX), and that he pursued a much more complex policy there than might at first appear. Honorius's correspondence thus reinforces the obvious point that popes were individuals with their own aims and agendas.

## 15.8 Other Contemporary Sources for the Papacy, Crusading and Heresy

It is important to remember, however, that papal letters and decrees of councils are not the only sources for papal crusade propaganda. The most important medium

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59 James Powell, *Anatomy of A Crusade 1213–1221* (Philadelphia: 1986), 110; Morris, *The Papal Monarchy*, 214–17.

for crusade propaganda for the papacy was the spoken word mediated through sermons. Crusade preachers were always the principal recruiters for crusades. It seems that the principal preachers of the First Crusade were those bishops and other clergymen who attended the Council of Clermont. Yet popular self-appointed preachers such as Peter the Hermit often also took up their work, and there was always the danger that they might manipulate crusaders for their personal advantage and self-aggrandizement. Perhaps the most famous crusade preacher of the High Middle Ages was Bernard of Clairvaux, appointed in 1145 by Eugenius III to be the principal preacher for the Second Crusade. The Third Crusade was also particularly well organized with teams of preachers following planned itineraries that carried the crusade message throughout Europe. We know of many crusade preachers by name such as Henry of Albano (Third Crusade) and James of Vitry, Oliver of Paderborn, and Robert of Courçon (Fifth Crusade).<sup>60</sup>

Like so much else, during Innocent III's pontificate, crusade preaching, formerly organized on an ad hoc basis to meet the needs of each expedition, became a permanent, continuous enterprise. Increasingly in the 13th century those who preached were mendicants: Dominicans and Franciscans favored and protected by the papacy. In the mid-13th century, Humbert of Romans, Master General of the Dominican Order, wrote a manual for crusade preachers known as *De predicatione sanctae crucis*. Humbert set forth the art of crusade preaching in a systematic way for the guidance of novices by the use of a series of examples (*exempla*). His do-it-yourself guide to crusade preaching included tips on topics to emphasize and to avoid, lists of biblical passages to cite, illustrative stories, and examples of answers to give to criticisms or challenges to the idea of crusading which preachers might encounter from their audiences.

### 15.9 The Papacy and the Plenary Indulgence for Crusading

According to the 12th-century *Historia peregrinorum*, at Clermont Urban II granted that all crusaders who made the journey to the Near East to win back

60 For editions and translations of crusade sermons see, for example, *Le traité De usura de Robert de Courçon : texte et traduction publiés avec une introduction*, (ed.) G. Lefèvre, Travaux et mémoires de l'Université de Lille, t.X, mémoire no. 30 (Lille: 1902); *Lettres de la Cinquième Croisade*, (eds.) and trans. R.B.C. Huygens and C. Duchet-Suchaux (Belgium: 1998); *Christian Society and the Crusades, 1198–1229: Sources in Translation, Including the Capture of Damietta by Oliver of Paderborn*, trans. J.J. Gavigan, (ed.), E. Peters (Philadelphia: 1971); For Humbert of Roman's treatise see *The Crusades: A Reader*, (ed.) S.J. Allen and E. Amt, Readings in Medieval Civilizations and Cultures, 8 (Toronto: 2003).

Jerusalem from the infidel would acquire “remission of all their sins.”<sup>61</sup> The council’s second canon decreed that whoever set out on the journey to Jerusalem solely out of devotion, and not for honor or to gain money, would be granted a reckoning of all his penances.<sup>62</sup>

Many historians have discussed what Urban’s promise meant in the context of the First Crusade and how it would have been interpreted by successors who continued to call for aid to the Holy Land. For the journey to Jerusalem, Urban was not granting an indulgence in which God would be repaid the debts of punishment owed on account of combatants’ recent sins, for which penance had not yet been performed, in addition to any residual debt left over from earlier but insufficient penance.<sup>63</sup> Such a spiritual privilege was developed only later. During Innocent III’s pontificate the church claimed that, acting on the authority given it by Christ through Peter, it could grant remission of the temporal punishment owed for sin by drawing on a storehouse of merit earned by the sacrifice that Christ had made for mankind on the cross and by the prayers and good works of the Virgin Mary and the saints. Instead, in 1095 Urban enjoined on Christians a holy war of such intensity that it would itself impose a penance so severe as to be entirely “satisfactory,” counterbalancing all previous sin and making good any previous unsatisfactory penance.<sup>64</sup> He was proposing that the First Crusade be regarded as the most severe and meritorious form of penance imaginable.

Certainly throughout the 13th century popes continued to grant plenary indulgences for crusades in Europe and to state categorically that they were the same indulgence as those granted for the Holy Land. Such indulgences reflected the desire to emphasize that these crusades were not only holy but also meritorious enterprises that would contribute to the salvation of their participants. Popes continually referred to the Holy Land in the formulation of

61 Mansi, Vol. 20, col. 816; Heinrich Hagenmeyer, *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacri spectantes. Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100* (Innsbruck: 1901), 136–37; Norman Housley, “Crusades against Christians: Their Origins and Early Development,” in *Crusade and Settlement: Papers Read at the First Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East and Presented to R.C. Smail*, (ed.) Peter Edbury (Cardiff: 1985), 19; Jean Richard, “Urbain II, la prédication de la croisade et la définition de l’indulgence,” *Deus qui mutat tempora: Menschen und Institutionen im Wandel des Mittelalters, Festschrift für Alfons Becker zu seinem fünfundsiebzehnten Geburtstag*, (ed.) Ernst-Dieter Hehl, Hubertus Seibert and Franz Staab (Sigmaringen: 1987), 130.

62 “Historia peregrinorum,” *Historia Occidentalis, Recueil des historiens des Croisades publié par les soins de L’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres*, vol. 3 (Paris: 1875 ff.), 169.

63 Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders*, 68–69.

64 Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, 28.

the plenary indulgence because it remained the standard by which all crusades were judged. Such a policy of deliberately invoking the Holy Land showed not only its importance for popes and their determination that it remain at the fore, but also that they understood full well what fellow Christians wished to read in their general letters or hear preached. Indeed popes were careful to emphasize the needs of the Holy Land even when they wished to prioritize other crusades. Thus, although, for example, at the beginning of his pontificate Honorius III wished to promote the Albigensian Crusade and re-focus energies there, he was nevertheless careful to maintain his predecessor's insistence that the Holy Land not be forgotten and that nothing jeopardize crusading in the Near East.<sup>65</sup>

Although the Holy Land crusade was the standard by which popes judged other crusades, they did not think that those to the Near East were of greater spiritual worth. By bestowing the same plenary indulgence for crusades against heretics as for crusades against Muslims, they emphasized that they were granting the same full remission of the temporal punishment owed for sin to the crusader, just like for his counterpart crusading in the Near East; in spiritual terms, the rewards were the same. Yet although popes made clear that there was no hierarchy of spiritual rewards for different crusades, they believed in the importance of prioritizing different crusades at different times. Sometimes popes wished the energies of Christian Europe to be focused on the Albigensian Crusade, sometimes on Spain, sometimes on the Baltic, sometimes on crusades against political enemies, and when necessary they emphasized that priority through their correspondence to the Christian faithful. Nevertheless, despite this "pluralism" of approach, they continued to remind Christians of the particular need for the Holy Land crusade.

## 15.10 Conclusion

In 1095 Urban II promulgated the First Crusade at the Council of Clermont. From then onwards and subsequently throughout the 12th and 13th centuries popes continued to call for crusades to the Near East. During the 13th century, with the aid of the clergy, the papacy expanded and institutionalized the idea of crusading against Muslims to encompass military action against heretics. Furthermore, it also began to organize "political" crusades against other enemies of the papacy some of whom were themselves accused of heresy – namely

65 Honorius III, *Litteris tuis* (1 Oct. 1219), *Opera omnia*, (ed.) César A. Horoy (Paris: 1879–82), *Epistolae* Vol. 3, cols. 299–301.

the enemies of the Papal States. Popes were never responsible for all that occurred under the umbrella of a “crusade,” but increasingly they attempted to exert centralized control over crusade enterprises and to utilize the concept of “crusade” to protect the orthodox purity of Latin Christendom and to defend papal territory from its temporal enemies.