Shifting sensibilities? Changes in the symbolism and the appeal of the Crusades after the end of Outremer (Fourteenth century)

Simone Lombardo

Abstract:

After 1291, the crusading experience underwent considerable changes, conceptual rather than only military. Despite the loss of the direct experience of the Holy Land, however, the crusading symbolism and institutions did not disappear, but lent themselves to new uses. New goals and forms channeled the penitential expectation. The movements of the Fourteenth century, such as the Flagellants and the *Bianchi*, seemed to be alternative forms to the overseas crusade, inheriting similarities and symbols. Did these penitents present themselves as new crusaders? These movements had however completely disengaged themselves from the Papacy in granting indulgences and from the earthly Jerusalem. Another way to the crusade was that of the French, Burgundian and English aristocracy. For them, the participation in a crusading expedition was functional to the construction of an aristocratic *ethos*. After the end of the crusades, the legacy they left behind took new and unexpected paths.

Parole chiave: Later Crusades; popular movements; Bianchi; penitential practices; chivalric ethos

Shifting sensibilities? Changes in the symbolism and the appeal of the Crusades during the Fourteenth century

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1. Introduction

After the fall of Acre in 1291, the last Latin Christian outpost in the Levant, the crusading experience underwent considerable changes. This happened not only from a military viewpoint but also from a conceptual one. Despite the loss of the direct experience of the Holy Land because of the end of bridgeheads in *Outremer*, the crusading symbolism and institutions did not disappear, they adapted themselves to new uses. New goals and forms channelled the penitential expectation. The penitential movements of the Fourteenth century of popular origin seemed to be a proper alternative to overseas crusades, inheriting their symbols and paraphernalia, like the white robes bearing the red *signum crucis* on their chests. Penitential movements re-proposed the features of a pilgrimage *iter*, expiating the sins of the entire community, in the yearning for a heavenly Jerusalem. They strove for the pacification of the city's struggles, closely recalling the experiences of the eleventh-century truces of God. These quite spontaneous movements had however completely disengaged themselves from the Papacy and the ecclesiastical institutions in granting plenary indulgences. They were self-involved in forgiveness. Did these penitents present themselves as new – and renewed – crusaders? How did they acquire the crusading symbolism and aims?

In the paper, I will attempt to propose some hypotheses concerning the changes that occurred in the crusader imagination at both a popular and aristocratic level during the Fourteenth century. What we call "a crusade" was not defined by fixed objectives or even by constant factors in each of the expeditions – to the Holy Land, to Spain, against the heretics, in Eastern Europe or in the Baltic. Rather, the crusade had continually transformed in its form and purpose, since its very beginning at the end of the Eleventh century.[1] Nevertheless, the penitential experience had remained among the cornerstones of the crusading experience, in close connection with the dynamics of pilgrimage.[2] The penitential nature of the crusades generated an extensive debate in historiography, which it is not possible to go over here due to its vastness.[3] The crusade, *passagium* or *iter* within the

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[1] Chevedden, *Crusade Creationism "versus" Pope Urban II's Conceptualization of the Crusades*, 44-46.

[2] According to Jean Flori, at the origin of pilgrimages there were no indulgences in the strict sense, which were formalised during the Twelfth century, but a commutation of the vow, since the expedition itself (the crusade, which after all in the sources was a "peregrinatio") acted as a penance. Flori, *La guerra santa*, 305-306.

[3] For an overview of the topic: Tyerman, *The Debate on the Crusades*; Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*. The generally recognised division is between a "traditionalist" and a "pluralist" historiographic position. However, this division does not account for the wide range of facets among different historians. A few of the most representative titles: Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens*; Riley-Smith, *What Where the Crusades?*; Tyerman, **The invention of the Crusades;** Phillips, *Holy Warriors*; Frankopan, *The First Crusade*; **Cobb, *The Race for Paradise;*** Cardini, Musarra, *Il grande racconto delle crociate*. About the fundamental links between the crusade and eschatology: Rubenstein, *Nebuchadnezzar's dream*.

sources, was certainly a sacred war that had acquired this connotation in the defence of the Church. Jonathan Riley-Smith wrote of "penitential war-pilgrimage", collecting the essential features according to him.[4] The crusade actually responded to the penitential need of the participants, taking up the strongest elements of the pilgrimage and going beyond the institutional dimension towards a socio-cultural one.[5] Thus, the *passagium* assumed an increasingly strong link with the remission of sins through the practice of indulgences, as well as performing a levelling function between the rich man who became a penitent and the poor man who became a defender of the faith.[6]

The movements of the early Fourteenth century inherited this need for penance, though they often freed themselves from the ecclesiastical authority. However, during the second half of the century, the crusader ideal no longer seems to have been an adequate channel for this religious need. Why was the crusade no longer able to gather these demands and channel them? Was the *passagium* able to meet the penitential needs of a society at a time of great religious tension?

The same century had also seen a series of expeditions that took place after the fall of Acre. The so-called *Later Crusades* were little considered by historians for a long time, and were looked upon as failed relics of an era that was now over. The study in this field is indebted to an initial generation of historians, between the end of the Nineteenth century and the first decades of the Twentieth century. Nicolae Iorga, a key cultural and political figure in Romania, among many other topics also edited documents regarding the struggles against the Turks and focused on an important figure such as Philippe de Mézières. Aziz Suryal Atiya, being an Egyptian Copt, had access to a wide range of sources in Arabic, and was able to write the first general history of the *Later Crusades*. Some French scholars were very active: Joseph Delaville Le Roulx mainly investigated the Hospitaller knights or the expeditions of Boucicaut; Paul Alphandéry and Alphonse Dupront focused on the history of the idea of crusade. Later, Kenneth Meyer Setton directed a reconstruction of the crusading events in the Levant.[7] They were followed, in the second half of the past century, by scholars such as Norman Housley, who focused on the crusade from the perspective of the Avignonese Papacy.[8] Jacques Paviot and Daniel Baloup linked their studies to the French and Burgundian crusade, the world of chivalry and the logistics of expeditions.[9] Among others, Peter Edbury and Mike Carr have delved into the Mediterranean crusade of the Kingdom of Cyprus and the Aegean crusade of the Fourteenth century. However, the change of

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[4] Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders*, 77. In Riley-Smith's opinion, the characteristics that make a crusade such consist of: papal authorization, indulgence, a vow, and privileges granted to participants.
[5] Riley-Smith, *What Where the Crusades?*, 74-75. Riley-Smith followed the line of investigation of the crusade as an eminently religious phenomenon.
[6] Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching and the Ideal Crusader*, 91-132, 259-277.
[7] See Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*; Iorga, *Philippe de Mezieres et la Croisade au XIVe siècle*; Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*; Alphandéry, Dupront, *La Chrétienté et l'idée de Croisade*; Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. 1.
[8] Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades*; Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274-1580: From Lyons to Alcazar*.
[9] Paviot, *Les ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade et l'Orient*; Baloup, Sánchez Martínez, *Partir en croisade à la fin du Moyen Âge*; Nejedlý, Svátek, *Histoires et mémoires des croisades à la fin du Moyen Âge*.

sensibilities seems to be a topic that still needs to be explored in order to fathom the legacy of the crusades.[10]

In the first section of the paper, I will investigate the appeal of the crusades during the Fourteenth century, and the domestic popular movements, to reveal their links to the crusading practice and legacy. In the second section, I will analyse the reception of the crusade by the European aristocrats and their particular view of the holy enterprise. Both investigations allow us to see the changing sensibilities, the new religious demands and the transformations within the idea of crusade during the Late Middle Ages.

2. New type of crusaders? The popular movements

The beginning of the Fourteenth century had seen the greatest ferment of the so-called *popular crusades*, after the previous Thirteenth-century outbursts.[11] In 1309 thousands of people moved spontaneously from France, Germany and Flanders, combining the crusading will with eschatological and social justice expectations. The 1309 crusaders asked the pope to call for a crusade.[12] Unlike this first movement, which ended fairly peacefully, the 1320 one, known as the "crusade of the *pastoureaux*", resulted in a series of violence and looting towards the clergy and Jews. It ended in a massacre.[13] None of these expeditions ever managed to reach the Levant.

The popular mobilizations – with peasant participation – showed the strong attraction of an ideal that gathered tensions and expectations, channelling them towards the holy war and Jerusalem. Nonetheless, thirty years after the fall of Acre, even this powerful tension and the attraction towards *Outremer* seemed to have completely evaporated. The stagnation of the crusading popular movement in the Fourteenth century, in addition to a decline in enthusiasm, is linked to political and economic obstacles. The conjuncture defined by historiography as the "crisis of the Fourteenth century" generated a long debate among scholars, who provided different interpretative models, in search of the causes of a period of difficulty.[14] The Black Death of 1347-1352 had hit extremely hard an already troubled world, adding to the famines of the first decades of the century, to agrarian and to monetary crises.[15] A long season of

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[10] Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades*; Carr, *Merchants Crusaders in the Aegean*.

[11] This was not a new phenomenon, as the "Children's crusade" of 1212 and the "Shepherds' crusade" of 1251 show. Raedts, *The children's crusade of 1212*; Cardini, Del Nero, *La crociata dei fanciulli*; Barber, *The Crusade of the Shepherds in 1251*.

[12] Cardini, Musarra, *Il grande racconto delle crociate*, 306.

[13] Barber, *The Pastoureaux of 1320*; Nirenberg, *Communities of violence*.

[14] Regarding this discussion: Carocci, *Il dibattito teorico sulla congiuntura del Trecento*.

[15] In Guy Bois' vision, the systemic crisis begun at the beginning of the Fourteenth century would only deepen with the mid-century Plague. Bois, *Crise du féodalisme*; Bois, *La grande dépression médiévale*. See also: Day, *Crisi e congiunture nei secoli XIV-XV*; Campbell, *Before the Black Death*. About the Italian context: Pini, *La società italiana prima e dopo la Peste Nera*; Montanari, *La fame e l'abbondanza*, 87-90. The *Great Hunger* of 1315-1317, which had involved the entire European system, has been placed by English historiography as a possible chronological moment of the beginning of the crisis, while the Black Death ceased to be considered as the turning point in Northern Europe. Grillo, *Introduzione*, 9-10. We have not to forget the climate change of the late Middle Ages: Campbell, *The European Mortality Crises of 1346-52 and Advent of the Little Ice Age*, 19-42; Kelly, *Debating the Little Ice Age*. Moreover, bankruptcies of Florentine companies, such as the Bardi and Peruzzi, generated following disruptions on many merchant enterprises, which had entrusted banks with the management of their capital and were

conflicts, often conducted with the devastating method of mercenary companies, had contributed to the general climate of difficulty. The Plague, made endemic from its first appearance, had come to crown all this.[16]

These events made difficult to undertake expeditions to the Levant, not allowing the practical expression of the votes of a large number of people.[17] The lack of attraction of the crusade seems strong from the watershed of the Plague. Moreover, the lack of significant crusading military successes throughout the Thirteenth century may have eroded the appeal of the crusade, even questioning its efficacy. The enthusiasm was surely dormant while waiting for more favourable conditions for new overseas expeditions. The zeal could awaken at certain times of recall, as in 1363-1365 and in 1395-1396, or find alternative routes, such as the seasonal *Reisen* in Lithuania and Prussia for the northern aristocracy.[18] But the gradual disappearance of the crusade from the donations in testamentary bequests seems to indicate a loss of appeal of the crusade itself.[19] Some scholars theorised a lack of participation primarily linked to the difficulties of the time and the lack of concrete outlets. It is also true that during the second half of the Fourteenth century the references to the crusades are much rarer in documents and literary sources. Italian chronicles show the absence of references to the *passagium* even on the occasion of actual expeditions to the East.

The *Monumenta Pisana* contains no reference to the 1365 crusader expedition of Peter I of Cyprus, nor to the European tour of the king.[20] The crusade was only mentioned when it physically entered the city walls, as in the case of Peter of Cyprus' visit into Pisa in 1368.[21] The chronicler recounts that "questo Re si era partito di Cipri, e venne in Italia, e per altre Provincie, del Mondo, per far rauno di gente nella Cristianità per andare a conquistare lo passaggio, e andar contra l'infedeli",[22] but gives no follow-up to this statement. Even the anonymous author of the *Annales Mediolanenses* seems more fascinated by the "pulchra comitiva"[23] of Peter of Lusignan, who had crossed

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thus subject to heavy losses. Sapori, *La crisi delle compagnie mercantili dei Bardi e dei Peruzzi*; Tanzini, *1345: la bancarotta di Firenze*.

[16] The Black Death has a huge number of studies. See: Gottfried, *The Black Death*; Herlihy, *The Black Death and the Transformation of the West*; Benedictow, *The Black Death 1346-1353*; Aberth, *The Black Death*; Benedictow, *The complete history of the Black Death*; Green, *Taking "Pandemic" Seriously*.

[17] Norman Housley notes the rise of groups of enthusiasts in Northern France and Flanders in 1375, ready to fight the Turks in a *passagium particulare* in response to Gregory XI's appeal. However, the pope himself was cautious about them, inviting them to send soldiers, or rather make donations. Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades*, 229.

[18] On the *Reisen* and more generally on the Baltic Crusades: Urban, *The Baltic Crusade*; Hardwick, *The Knightly Class of Europe and the Lithuanian Crusades*, 26-29; Vander Elst, *Chivalry, Crusade, and Romance on the Baltic Frontier*; Murray, *Crusade and conversion on the Baltic frontier*.

[19] Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades*, 234-236.

[20] The chronicle is focused on the local dimension and does not mention the assault on Alexandria, which had damaged the Pisan *fondaco*. *Monumenta Pisana ab anno MLXXXIX usque ad annum MCCCLXXXIX*, coll. 1038-1044.

[21] "et essendo presso a Pisa, li andò incontra lo Dogio di Pisa con popolo e cavalieri; e sotto un palio di seta entrò in Pisa, e dietro a lui lo Dogio con l'altra gente; e tutta la Chiericia li andò incontra, e posoe al Vescovado di Pisa, e stettevi tre dì, e sulli fatto grande onore, e presenti di cose da vivere". *Monumenta Pisana ab anno MLXXXIX usque ad annum MCCCLXXXIX*, col. 1048.

[22] *Monumenta Pisana ab anno MLXXXIX usque ad annum MCCCLXXXIX*, col. 1048.

[23] *Annales Mediolanenses ab anno MCCXXX usque ad annum MCCCCII*, 733.

Milan in 1363, than by the crusader purpose of the king's journey, which is never mentioned. The crusade of Amadeus VI of Savoy in 1366, which passed through Milan, is also never acknowledged. Surprisingly, neither the Genoese chronicler Giorgio Stella, nor the Venetian Raffaino de Caresini wrote about the 1365 crusade, despite the Genoese and Venetian galleys which participated to the expedition. The same happened with Amadeus VI's 1366 expedition, whose fleet consisted mainly of Genoese and Venetian galleys, yet is never referred to.[24]

The most abundant source with references to the crusade is an anonymous Bolognese chronicle, as the city was at the centre of negotiations for Peter of Lusignan's expedition. Ambassadors from the pope and the King of France arrived in Bologna in 1363, together with the Cypriot chancellor Philippe de Mézières.[25] The emissaries acted as intermediaries for peace in Italy, and "dicevasi ch'egli erano mandati da' soi signuri perchè voleano fare lo passazo al Sepolcro; et haveano tolto la croce in Vignone".[26] Unlike the other city chronicles, the capture of Alexandria in 1365 is reported in great detail.[27] However, there is no mention of the spiritual nature of the enterprise, but only economic considerations. The only result of the expedition against the infidels was a fluctuation in prices: "per questa chasone inchar la speziaria et altre merchantie".[28] The crusade, according to the chronicle, had lost its religious connotations. Amadeus VI of Savoy also passed through Bologna on his way back.[29] In the chronicle, Peter I of Cyprus is criticised precisely for his absence from his own country due to his crusading commitment, and for dragging his kingdom into war against the Muslims.[30]

The *Monumenta Pisana* does not even report the armed expedition in 1388 against the Muslims in Djerba, North Africa, in which Pisan galleys had participated.[31] The crusader call of 1375 by Gregory XI does not appear in any chronicle. The defeat at Nicopolis in 1396 had such a strong psychological impact that it could not be ignored in the Milanese chronicle, which, however, completely misrepresents the facts. According to the writing, the battle resulted in 100.000 dead soldiers among the Christians and many more amongst the infidels;

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[24] I refer to: *Georgii et Iohannis Stellae Annales Genuenses*; Rafaino De Caresini, *Chronica*.

[25] He was the "canzeliero secreto de re de Cipri". *Corpus chronicorum Bononiensium*, 162.

[26] *Corpus chronicorum Bononiensium*, 162-163.

[27] *Corpus chronicorum Bononiensium*, 202. The chronicler says that "lui era non troppo savio", probably referring to the king's foolishness. The description of the assault is very accurate: "Fé una andata in Allexandria cum forsi trea millia homini; et si zunse a porto et subito corse in sul tereno d'Allixandria, e trovogli de fuora, et inchalzogli dentro, et si prese Allexandria, et si anciseno et rubbono la terra; et hava sì grande thesoro che sempre doverebe essere richissimo. E vezendo che non era città da tenere, però che sì magna cosa era, si l'affogonno e desfenla tucta. Cossi ze fu novella. Et questa terra, zoè Allexandria, si se tenea per li Paghani". *Corpus chronicorum Bononiensium*, 202.

[28] *Corpus chronicorum Bononiensium*, 202. The author also wrote about the 1366-1370 peace negotiations between Peter I and the Mamluk sultan. "Ancora, si fé la paxe tra lo re de Cipri e 'l gran Cane; et fu d'aprile o di marzo. Dissese che li baruni del gram Chane lo havea morto, imperzoché igli non voleano paxe; et cossì non fu paxe". *Corpus chronicorum Bononiensium*, 212.

[29] "Venne in Bologna lo conte de Savoglia, lo quale venia d'oltra mare contra li infideli; et eragli stato più d'uno anno cum grande gente, et assai gli ne morì; et era homo di gran possanza et di gran signoria". *Corpus chronicorum Bononiensium*, 218.

[30] In 1368 "Venne in Bologna lo re de Ciprio, lo i quale venia dal papa, et era molti anni che non era stato in soe contrade; ancho era stato in guerra contra li infideli". *Corpus chronicorum Bononiensium*, 218.

[31] The Genoese Giorgio Stella wrote about it instead. *Georgii et Iohannis Stellae Annales Genuenses*, 193-194.

and while all the Christian victims lay with their faces turned to the sky, the Muslims corpses were all facing the ground.[32] The defeat was due to Christian renegades, who had tricked the crusader princes and massacred them in an ambush.[33] In the rare case that an Eastern crusade appears, it does so with inaccurate references. The Pisan text only contains traces of nostalgia for the ancient times, when "Pisani e Genovesi, e per mare e per terra fecero grande passaggio alla Terra Santa d'oltra mare".[34]

The social, economic and mental changes of the Fourteenth century also seemed to modify the adherents to the crusader appeals. Which social class would respond more to the papal calls for a new *passagium*? The popular crusades at the beginning of the Fourteenth century gathered social instances, expectations of equality and eschatological concerns, all under the cloak of the reconquest of the Holy Land. This "crusade spirit" permeated a series of European uprisings, fuelling a crusade myth after the end of *Outremer*.[35] The tension towards the Holy Places coagulated the messianic movements, providing a geographical purpose to the pauperistic outbursts, especially during the decades following the fall of Acre. The popular crusades in the early part of the Fourteenth century seemed to gather an awareness of the value of poverty itself, which constituted an elective condition, linked to the wake of the pauperistic developments of the last centuries.[36]

The situation of the lower classes and the simultaneous worsening of living conditions has been the focus of historiographical debates. The manifestations of social unrest throughout the entire Fourteenth century attest to an increasing gap between the rich and the poor. There were many episodes of violent rebellion: the French *jacquerie* of 1358, the Ciompi riot in Florence in 1378, the Flanders revolt in 1379 and the English peasant uprising of 1381, up to the anxieties of Taborite Bohemia. It was a long season of social turmoil that often ended in bloodshed.[37] The subversive wave had swept through Europe around 1380, coinciding with the moment of maturity of the generations born after the Plague. The link between social unrest and religiosity is anything but superficial in these movements, in which

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[32] *Annales Mediolanenses ab anno MCCXXX usque ad annum MCCCCII*, 826.

[33] "In dicto proelio et in quadam Valle, ubi errant Vexilla XVI Christianorum, accesserunt XXIV millia Christianorum renegatorum, qui coeperunt clamare: *Vivat Sanctus Dionysius et Sanctus Georgius*; quae nomina erant data aciebus Christianorum. Credentes Christiani, quod esset auxilium, quod exspectabant ab Alamannis et aliis Christianis, laudaverunt Deum et accesserunt cum Laetitia ad istos renegatos Christianos. Omnes una voce clamabant: *Vivat Sanctus Dionysus et Sanctus Georgius*. Sic Christiani decepti se immiscuerunt cum dictis renegatis, et positi fuerunt in conflictum, et mortui et capti fuerunt omnes" *Annales Mediolanenses ab anno MCCXXX usque ad annum MCCCCII*, 826.

[34] The sentence referred to the crusade of 1146. *Monumenta Pisana ab anno MLXXXIX usque ad annum MCCCLXXXIX*, col. 975.

[35] Cohn, *I fanatici dell'Apocalisse*, 105-126.

[36] Cardini, *Per una ricerca sulle crociate popolari*, 239-240.

[37] About the *jacquerie*: Mollat Du Jourdin, Wolff, *Ongles bleus, Jacques et Ciompi, les révolutions populaires en Europe aux XIVe et XVe siècles*; Rigault, Toussaint, *La Jacquerie entre mémoire et oubli*. About the Ciompi revolt in Florence: *Il tumulto dei Ciompi. Un momento di storia fiorentina ed europea*; Stella, *La Révolte des Ciompi*; Screpanti, *La politica dei Ciompi*. About the *Peasants' Revolt* in 1381 and the social tensions in England: Hilton, Aston, *The English Rising of 1381*; Dunn, *The Great Rising of 1381*; Prescott, *The Hand of God*; Cohn, *Popular Protest in Late Medieval English Towns*.

the expectations of renewal and evangelical justice were strong.[38] Religious, or even clerical forces were more or less present in the popular protests of the Fourteenth century, contributing to the awareness of even the lowest social classes.[39] The link between popular crusades, such as those of 1309 or 1320, and social tensions seems to be close throughout the century. The enthusiasm towards the overseas *passagium* could also be aroused by miracles or supernatural events: at the time of the Smyrna crusade in 1343, many inhabitants of L'Aquila had set out to go against the infidels after a miracle, but the enterprise resulted in killing innocent Jews.[40]

During the second half of the century, the link between social claims and crusade seemed to have been lost, while the war of the populace against the masters found other ideal references. The same French towns of Picardy and Normandy, that had given rise to the *Pastoureaux* crusade in 1320, were still protagonists of the revolts of 1381-1382 against the king's taxation, but this happened without any reference to Jerusalem.[41] An undercurrent of eschatological enthusiasm also persisted in Florence during the Ciompi.[42] The massacres of Jews at the hands of the German Flagellants in 1349 retraced the events of the first crusade of the poor in 1096, adding attacks on the rich people.[43] On the one hand, the social uprisings following the Plague acquired a stronger apocalyptic tenor and happened in the grip of religious enthusiasm. On the other hand, they reduced their range of action and were content with political demands circumscribed to the particular situation, while the crusade had slipped from the minds of the violent fringes. The second half of the Fourteenth century had seen no more experiences similar to the *Pastoureaux*, perhaps due to the disillusionment with the viability of the crusade, or perhaps due to a greater concentration on limited objectives. The reference to the earthly Jerusalem, in most cases, was no longer functional to expectations. Did the needs that moved the crusades disappear?

The penitential dimension was also a secondary concern in Fourteenth-century overseas expeditions, but it managed to present itself in alternative ways. The need for repentance had grown stronger on the occasion of catastrophic events, as shown by the Flagellants arisen in 1348 during the Plague. The movement, formed by various groups in a state of emotional turmoil, and with a certain internal organization, spread rapidly from France to Hungary.[44] The movement, in addition to self-flagellation practices, took up the legacy of the *Pastoureaux* crusade of 1320. They implemented anti-clerical

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[38] Raoul Manselli questioned religious awareness within insurrectional phenomena starting with the Florentine case. Manselli, *Dai movimenti religiosi popolari ai movimenti sociali del Trecento*; Manselli, *La religiosità popolare nel Medio Evo*.

[39] According to Gioacchino Volpe, social phenomena were not born from religious motivations, but found these expressive ways to manifest and induce consensus. The religion was a sort of spiritual varnish that cloaked practical needs. G. Volpe, *Movimenti religiosi e sette ereticali nella società medievale italiana: secoli XI-XIV*. Manselli disagreed with this view, analyzing the close relationship between religious movements and popular discontent. Manselli, *Religiosità e rivolte popolari*, 270.

[40] Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades*, 145-147.

[41] Cohn, *I fanatici dell'Apocalisse*, 123.

[42] Manselli, *Religiosità e rivolte popolari*, 265-268.

[43] Cohn, *I fanatici dell'Apocalisse*, 168. Mitchell B. Merback has problematised the anti-Jewish violence of this flagellant movement. Merback, *The living image of pity*.

[44] Cohn, *I fanatici dell'Apocalisse*, 158-159. Cohn's essay was criticised, as it seems to indirectly propose a kind of historical-mythological continuity between Medieval apocalyptic experiences and Twentieth-century Nazism and Communism.

polemic, egalitarianism and messianic expectations; positions that ended up being condemned by the Church in 1349.[45] Furthermore, the Flagellants seem to have much in common with the popular crusades, whose identical motives they expressed, including the election of the *pauperes*, the heavenly Jerusalem, the Antichrist, anti-Judaism and the struggle for social justice.[46] The Flagellants gave themselves collective names, such as "Crucifers" or "Brothers of the Cross", like the crusaders of 1309. The groups moved through towns and villages under the orders of a lay master who imposed penances and absolution. The processions had a fixed duration, and at that time the participants had to undergo serious moral discipline.[47] The white dress they wore was adorned with a red cross on the chest and on the back, thus immediately recalling the appearance of the crusaders, of whom the Flagellants presented themselves as a renewed evolution. The Flagellants wanted to atone for the sins of the whole world. They performed a service of purification for the humanity by imitating Christ, like the participants in the *passagium* who shed their blood in the name of the Christianity.[48] The institutions of pilgrimage and crusade were recalled, with the delimitation of an itinerary, some temporal boundaries and a clear morality during the consecrated period.[49] The crusade was a spiritual dimension, whose aim was the conversion of the heart and soul of the *crucesignatus*. The battle for the Holy Land in its physicality developed last. Through the *Pastoureaux* and the apocalyptic movements, there was a renewed sense of election of the poor as authentic recipients of the Gospel.[50]

The decline of crusade movements from the populace corresponded to the rise of new processional forms of the people, in which their radical expectations were contained. Thus, during the second half of the Fourteenth century, the crusade gave way to domestic devotional movements. Both were the expression of the same underlying tension, untied to any reference to the ecclesiastical hierarchy. It was no longer the Church-institution that provided the instruments for salvation, as the Papacy had attempted to do during the *Outremer* crusades. Fourteenth-century penitents gave themselves the grace to absolve their sins through self-inflicted punitive practices, without resort to a priest. They even boasted of possessing thaumaturgic powers.[51] On the one hand, the penitents presented themselves as a sort of "new crusaders", on the other hand, they distanced themselves from the institutional and indulgential dimension, breaking with the crusaders of the previous centuries.[52] At the same time, the willingness to embark to a pilgrimage to the earthly

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[45] Cohn, *I fanatici dell'Apocalisse*, 161-164.

[46] Cardini, *Per una ricerca sulle crociate popolari*, 244.

[47] Penitents were to avoid washing, changing clothes or sleeping on a bed; they especially had to avoid sexual relations and contact with women. Cohn, *I fanatici dell'Apocalisse*, 160.

[48] Cohn, *I fanatici dell'Apocalisse*, 159-161.

[49] Participants in the crusade expeditions were asked to maintain an atmosphere of spiritual recollection, avoiding carnal acts as much as possible, also because in almost all cases they were not accompanied by their wives. Tyerman, *Come organizzare una crociata*, 236-237.

[50] Cardini, *Per una ricerca sulle crociate popolari*, 244-245.

[51] Cohn, *I fanatici dell'Apocalisse*, 162.

[52] The discussion on the practice of indulgences was heated during the centuries of the crusades, and took some time to be formalised. Indulgences were part of the privileges granted to crusaders to invite them to leave, always however by the ecclesiastical institution, which had the exclusive power to do so. For a complete analysis on the case history and modalities: Bysted, *The Crusade Indulgence*, 156-204.

Jerusalem decreased and shifted towards a spiritual journey to the heavenly realm.[53] Furthermore, the Western Schism of the Church, starting in 1378, exacerbated an atmosphere of disorientation and eschatological exaltation, while the Papacy itself was losing authority.[54]

The crusade was an omnipresent element in the prophetic theme. There was no divine revelation of the end times that did not include the crusade among the last signs. Because the schism was a fundamental element in the apocalyptic chronology, the eschatological production was accelerated by the institutional crisis of the Church and the millenarian expectations of the late Middle Ages were linked to the Jubilee anniversaries.[55] The Jubilee itself seems to be one of the reasons for the change in meaning of the crusade, because it contributed to the possibility of obtaining an indulgence through a "domestic" journey rather than in the East. The Jubilee, surrogate or not of the *passagium*, became a moment in which expectations of extraordinary events were gathered.[56] Some popular movements, such as the case of the *Bianchi* in Italy in 1399, had a strong expectation of the last times, together with the desire for peace in the troubled Italian cities, which was at the centre of their sensibility. Some bands of devotees marched towards Rome to elect a new pope, in coincidence with a new wave of plagues and the Jubilee of the following year. One of the *Bianchi*'s chronicler, Luca Dominici, underlined the eschatological components of the movement. The new epoch would have started in 1400.[57] The threat of the imminent end of the world – or, at least, a partial destruction – and the consequent Last Judgement would have induced the masses to gestures of collective expiation.[58]

The Flagellants of 1348-1349 had little success in Italy, while the *Bianchi* movement in 1399 strongly shook the Northern and Central Italian peninsula.[59] From a crusading point of view, they provide new

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[53] Cardini, *Per una ricerca sulle «crociate popolari»*, cit., p. 245. We can also observe the rising of virtual pilgrimages in literary works like Petratch's *Itinerarium Syriacum*. This is the account of an imaginary journey to the Holy land, never made by the author. Francesco Petrarca, *Guida al viaggio da Genova alla Terra Santa: Itinerarium Syriacum*.

[54] About the Great Western Schism: Favier, *Genèse et Début du grand schisme d'Occident*; Payan, *Entre Rome et Avignon*; Genequand, *Une politique pontificale en temps de crise*.

[55] Rusconi, *Profezia e profeti alla fine del Medioevo*, 33. Also: Rusconi, *Escatologia e povertà nella predicazione di Bernardino da Siena*; Rusconi, *Gerusalemme nella predicazione popolare quattrocentesca*; Rusconi, *L'attesa della fine*; Rusconi, *Il presente e il futuro della Chiesa*.

[56] Cardini, *L'eclisse di Gerusalemme*, 56-69; Benvenuti, Piatti, *Come a Gerusalemme. Evocazioni, riproduzioni, imitazioni dei luoghi santi*. Bernard of Clairvaux was one of the first to introduce this link between crusade, indulgences and Jubilee into crusade preaching. Bysted, *The True Year of Jubilee*.

[57] Chronicler Luca Dominici tells of tens of thousands of devotees heading to St. Peter's for the renewal of the Church. Luca Dominici, *Cronache*, vol. 1, 56. In any case, Rome was not a final destination for all participants to the processions and Dominici represent only one of the narratives of the *Bianchi*. About the relationship between the movement and Rome: Frank, *I Bianchi fra Umbria e Lazio*, 346-349.

[58] Rusconi, *Profezia e profeti alla fine del Medioevo*, 133. According to the accounts of the origin of the *Bianchi*, the legend of the three pieces of bread (one of which was thrown by the peasant who met the Virgin Mary and Jesus) would have meant the destruction of a third of humanity, though not a total apocalypse. Bornstein, *The Bianchi of 1399*, 43-47.

[59] The motion has been extensively analysed by historiography, which has focused on the study of processions as a public phenomenon, with a desire for pacification, within a city context: Frugoni, *La devozione dei Bianchi del 1399*; Tognetti, *Sul moto dei bianchi nel 1399*; Webb, *Penitence and peace-making in city and contado*; Bornstein, *The Bianchi of 1399*. Also: Bliersbach, *Sulle orme dei Bianchi dalla Liguria all'Italia Centrale*; Lee, *The Bianchi of 1399 in central Italy*. The *Bianchi* were a manifestation of civic religiosity, representing a collective and symbolic event in relation to municipal authorities: Giraudo, *La devozione dei Bianchi del 1399*, 169-170.

perspectives for investigation. The origins of the movement, as told in Italian chronicles, are linked to an extra-citizen and non-institutionalised context.[60] In Luca Dominici's chronicle it is narrated that the Virgin Mary appeared to a peasant and gave orders for a procession, invoking mercy and bringing peace on Earth.[61] The Virgin Mary gave further instructions on the form and practices the movement was to take. Each of the penitents in the processions, whether adult or child, priest or friar, was to dress in a white robe. The women were to wear a red cross sewn on their hood, and men a vermilion cross on their shoulder.[62] The scarlet cross on the shoulder had for centuries been the distinctive – though not exclusive – trait of those who took the crusade vow, remaining as a strong symbolism within the collective imagination. This was also reported in the Thirteenth-century crusade preaching manuals, with repercussions on a very wide audience.[63] In artistic testimonies, the resemblance between the *Bianchi* and the old crusaders is striking. We can observe it in the cycle of frescoes painted by Cola di Pietro da Camerino in 1401, on the walls of the church of Santa Maria at Vallo di Nera, near Spoleto. The fresco has the freshness of a chronicle, and depicts the penitents in their white tunics, performing works of charity, exchanging kisses of peace and chanting hymns to the Virgin (Figure 1).[64]

(Figure 1) Cola di Pietro da Camerino – *Processione dei Bianchi*, Church of Santa Maria Assunta at Vallo di Nera (Italy, 1401)

The penitents had to invoke mercy, as well as observe a series of indications: during the nine-day procession they were not to undress or enter a bed, they had to visit at least three churches, attend a solemn

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[60] Giraudo, *La devozione dei Bianchi del 1399*, 171.

[61] Luca Dominici, *Cronache*, vol. 1, 52-53.

[62] Luca Dominici, *Cronache*, vol. 1, 53-54.

[63] Around 1265, Humbert of Romans composed a handbook to the preaching of the crusade, the *De predicatione S. Crucis contra Saracenos*. In it, among the many topics addressed in the mechanics of preaching, he specified that the cross sewn on clothes should be worn on the right shoulder. It was not a theoretical text but was expressly addressed to preachers who had to work at a popular and low level. Tyerman, *Come organizzare una crociata*, 140-141.

[64] Ceccaroni, *Testimonianze del movimento dei Bianchi a Vallo di Nera agli inizi del XV secolo*, 39-44; Bliersbach, *I Bianchi nell'arte Umbro-Laziale*, 388-393.

mass, not eat meat, fast on bread and water on Saturdays, go barefoot and intone hymns like the *Stabat Mater*.[65]

The *Bianchi* had reached the Venetian lagoon by 1399. However, the Venetian authorities opposed the devotional enthusiasm, which threatened to slip out of their control. On November 18th 1399, a procession had been violently dispersed by police forces, as told in a letter from the patrician Ruggero Contarini.[66] The Venetian leaders of this stage of the movement, namely the friar Giovanni Dominici, the priest Leonardo Pisani and the nobleman Antonio Soranzo, had been arrested and subsequently exiled from the city.[67] The harshness of the repression had disconcerted the merchant Ruggero Contarini, who had not participated in the movement[68]. The reaction of the authorities, in line with the control of the city's spirituality, had nipped in the bud a demand evidently shared in many sectors of Venetian society.[69]

In Genoa, the contrast between the reaction given to the Flagellants of 1260 and the *Bianchi* of 1399 is even more striking, as shown by Benjamin Z. Kedar. The processions of 1260 had elicited a lukewarm response,[70] whereas by the end of the Fourteenth century the penitents aroused incredible enthusiasm in the city. Giorgio Stella's chronicle recounts the devotional explosion in Genoa and the thousands of penitents invading the streets. The processions, which lasted for weeks without interruption, were also joined by Archbishop Giacomo Fieschi, who took the leadership of the movement.[71] Stella recounts: "Viris equidem cohopertis alba, binis euntibus ante et post et sic in medio mulieribus, cruce tamen rubea signatis in capite binisque parvulis cum eis".[72] The *Bianchi* in Genoa also clashed with the setting

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[65] It was believed that the *Stabat Mater* was composed by the *Bianchi*, as Dominici states in his chronicle. Luca Dominici, *Cronache*, vol. 1, 53-54. The first transcription of the hymn text of the *Stabat Mater* is in: *Georgii et Iohannis Stellae Annales Genuenses*, 237-238. About the songs and the *laudi* of the *Bianchi*, which predated the movement in many cases and had a lot of regional variations: Bornstein, *The Bianchi of 1399*, 120-145.

[66] Dalla Santa, *Uomini e fatti dell'ultimo trecento e del primo quattrocento*, 34-35.

[67] The *Consiglio dei Dieci* immediatly began to investigate on the leaders of the movement: "Inquisitores consilii de decem debeant istud factum diligenter inquire et examinare ut heri possit qui fuerunt principales motores et tractatores dicte congregationis et processionis". Venezia, Archivio di Stato (ASVe), *Consiglio dei Dieci, Deliberazioni miste* 8, f. 43r. Venice, 18 November 1399. They were quickly identified: "nobili viro domino Antonio Superatio, presbitero Leonardo Pisani et fratri Iohanni Dominici ordinis predicatorum". Giovanni Dominici was exiled from Venice for five years, Leonardo Pisani and Antonio Soranzo for one year. Venezia, Archivio di Stato (ASVe), *Consiglio dei Dieci, Deliberazioni miste* 8, ff. 43r.-45r. Venice, 21 November 1399.

[68] Ruggero Contarini wrote sentences like: "per y nostri pechadi, perché non ieremo degni de tal". Although he was not directly affected, he was negatively affected by the exile of leaders: "Del qual bandizar ho sentido et sento tanto desplaxer cho sentise may, e priego Dio et la soa Mare abia miserichordia de nuy". Another letter of Ruggero, dated April 1400, talked about the end of the *Bianchi* in Venice: "e dubiome el nostro falo chontra y servi de Dio et in chazarli, non de sia amaro". Dalla Santa, *Uomini e fatti dell'ultimo Trecento e del primo Quattrocento*, 35.

[69] The Venetian authorities had allowed the *Bianchi* into the city in a quite exceptional way. But since the movement was in danger of getting out of hand, it was violently repressed. Lane, *Storia di Venezia*, 183. Regarding the *Scuole* and the spiritual life in Medieval Venice: Pullan, *Rich and poor in renaissance*; Sbriziolo, *Per la storia delle confraternite veneziane*; Ortalli, *Per salute delle anime e delli corpi*; Guidarelli, *Le Scuole Grandi veneziane nel XV e XVI secolo*; *La Scuola grande di San Marco e le scuole in Venezia tra religiosità laica e funzione sociale*.

[70] Kedar, *Mercanti in crisi*, p. 169. Regarding the Flagellants of 1260: Frugoni, *Sui Flagellanti del 1260*; Fresta, *In margine al movimento dei Flagellanti e dei Bianchi*; Tognetti, *Quesiti sui flagellanti del 1260*.

[71] *Georgii et Iohannis Stellae Annales Genuenses*, 237-241.

[72] *Georgii et Iohannis Stellae Annales Genuenses*, 238.

up of a crusade expedition. The Genoese officials in July 1399 complained of problems in arming galleys to defend Constantinople from the Turks, because the climate of religious exaltation had stopped work in the city.[73] The armed expedition against the infidels was replaced by a domestic and peaceful religious dimension. Thousands of devotees had moved in long processions, their white cloaks adorned with red crosses, on their way to Rome, the new Jerusalem for the new domestic crusaders.

The connections between popular crusades and religious movements can be observed in several dimensions. Manifestations of devotion and processions at the end of the Fourteenth century seemed to gather the penitential impulses, once expressed by and through the crusade. Many crusading forms were taken up more or less unconsciously by religious movements, which had inherited an eschatological framework. However, the earthly Jerusalem disappeared from the geographical horizon, which was now considerably more closed. Social contestations, on the contrary, found their own way: the crusade had gone out of fashion, so it was no longer a functional object on which to cast hopes and expectations of renewal.

3. A chivalric way to the crusade

Alongside the popular movements, there was another – somewhat opposite – way to the crusade in the Late Middle Ages, which had not lost its military character. Some naval leagues against the Turks in the Aegean were born, such as the 1332 expedition and the 1342-1346 crusades of Smyrna.[74] The second half of the century would see other expeditions against the Turks, the Mamluks or the North African powers. In this case, the geographical horizons were vast, with expeditions along the Mediterranean, the Balkans and beyond. The military dimension had not disappeared: however, the concept of the traditional crusade towards the Holy Land was overturned.

Historiography has often described the crusade at the end of the Middle Ages as a matter for the European aristocracy. It was part of the knightly representation of the world the nobles looked up to. The crusade was a fundamental component of the model of the perfect knight, to which the prime of the nobility sought to adhere in a playful and melancholic dimension of life, oblivious of the rawness of reality. This reading, made traditional by Johan Huizinga, relies on a concept of an autumnal crusade, relegated to an almost fairy-tale and declining universe, just as, moreover, western chivalry was in decline in the twilight of an era.[75] What was the legacy of the crusade for the Northern European nobles?

The penitential movements were not the only ones to take up the symbols of the crusade. In the Fourteenth century the iconography of the so-called *Jerusalem cross* began to spread in aristocratic circles. This

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[73] "processiones ad honorem Dei et gloriose Marie Virginis facte sufficientes cause fuerunt ac impedimenta quibus galee ipse armari non potuerunt temporibus ordinandi". Genoa, Archivio di Stato (ASGe), *Archivio Segreto, Diversorum* 499, f. 88r., doc. 313. Genoa, 22 July 1399.

[74] On the Smyrna Crusade, launched in several waves between 1344 and 1346 and the crusades in the first half of the Fourteenth century: Carr, *Humbert of Viennois and the Crusade of Smyrna*; Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. 1, 195-223; Demurger, *Le pape Clément VI et l'Orient: ligue ou croisade?*, 207-214.

[75] Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*.

type of *potent cross* surrounded by four smaller crosses, traditionally associated with the Kingdom of Jerusalem, was in fact never used during the crusader reign in *Outremer*. This type of cross, although existing on Twelfth century English coins, firstly appeared associated with the crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem only in coins under king John II of Cyprus in 1284-1285, a few years before the fall of Acre.[76] In the last quarter of the Thirteenth century the cross appears in the heraldry of the crusader kingdom in manuscripts of roll of arms, as in the case of the Camden Roll. In fact, the real appearance of the *Jerusalem cross* as the crusader symbol *par excellence* dates to the Fourteenth century, long after the crusades in Syria-Palestine. In the illustrations of a manuscript of the chronicle of William of Tyre, illuminated in 1337, the crusader knights fighting against the infidels are depicted sporting the *Jerusalem cross* (Figure 2-3).[77]

(Figure 2) Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF), *Manuscrits Français* 22495, f. 36r. Paris, 1337.

(Figure 3) BNF, *Manuscrits Français* 22495, f. 115r. Paris, 1337.

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[76] The heraldic bibliography on the *Jerusalem cross* is very underdeveloped. I refer only to the short paper: Haxthausen, *The Jerusalem cross*.

[77] Illustrations in folios: Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF), *Manuscrits Français* 22495, f. 36r., 115r. Paris, 1337.

In the manuscript containing the statutes of the Order of the Knot and of the Holy Spirit, illuminated in Naples around 1353 by Cristoforo Orimina, a scene depicts the departure of the Crusaders to the Holy Land. Among the banners there is one with a golden Jerusalem cross on a silver field (Figure 4).[78] This aristocratic order gathered the crusade demands coming from the noble class.

(Figure 4) BNF, *Manuscrits Français* 4274, f. 6r. *Statuts de l'ordre du Saint-Esprit au droit désir*, Naples, 1353 ca.

Moreover, representations of crusader figures in aristocratic residences increasingly refer to this symbolism. In the cycle of the "Nine Prods", frescoed at the castle of Manta (Piedmont) at the beginning of the Fifteenth century, a singular Godfrey of Bouillon appears, as a synthesis of courtly ideals at the side of Charlemagne and King Arthur. The first ruler of Jerusalem is depicted in fine robes, bearing gaudy golden *Jerusalem crosses*, in a delicate feast of flowers, gold and steel, while multi-coloured feathers and ivy shoots are woven on his head (Figure 5).[79]

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[78] BNF, *Manuscrits Français* 4274, f. 6r. *Statuts de l'ordre du Saint-Esprit au droit désir*, Naples, 1353 ca.
[79] Debernardi, *Le cycle des fresques du Château de la Manta*; Debernardi, *Lo specchio della famiglia: cultura figurativa e letteraria al castello della Manta*.

(Figure 5) *Godfrey of Bouillon*, Castle of the Manta (Italy, beginning of the Fifteenth century)

Thus, the *Jerusalem cross* was not used as a symbol among the crusaders of the Twelfth and Thirteenth centuries. It was only applied to them at a slightly later time, during the decline of the same ideal. It was a successive rewriting of a world that no longer existed. The educational treatises of the nobles, which urged the young to travel around the world and fight the infidel, were also an incentive to the crusade. Jean Petit's treatise of 1389 called for "voyages d'oultremer, et de Pruce et de Barbarie".[80] Philippe de Mézières, tutor to the future King of France Charles VI, intended to educate a perfect sovereign and thus promote a general *passagium*, attempting to instil in the young Charles a crusading passion. Perhaps thanks to Mézières, in 1378 the exploits of Godfrey of Bouillon, a fundamental element of crusade propaganda, were represented at the banquet offered in Paris to the emperor Charles IV on a visit, under the eyes of the country's nobility.[81] The membership of one of the numerous chivalry orders could also awaken, among the other members, a desire to defend the Christian faith.

A prosopographical approach helps to investigate the massive participation of the European aristocracy in the military crusades of the second half of the Fourteenth century, and to highlight the peculiar features of this participation. There are lists with the names of hundreds of nobles, especially French and Burgundians, who participated in the Alexandria expedition of 1365,[82] the Mahdia one of

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[80] Jean Petit's treatise on aristocratic education, expressed in poetic form, was entitled *Les condicions qui sont requises a l'enfant d'un seigneur a estre droit gentilz*. One verse reads: "Ainsi la belle servira / Et, en la servent s'en yra, / Si tost com se pourra armer, / En ces voyages d'oultremer, / Et de Pruce et de Barbarie. / Et pour Dieu ne s'espairgne mie, / Mais a la mort nostre Seigneur / Vengier mette pleine greigneur / Qu'il pourra, selon sa puissance". Jean Petit, *Le Livre du champ d'or et autres poèmes inédits*, 124-137.

[81] Radkovská, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 39. On the influence of Godfrey of Bouillon's crusade epic within Fourteenth-century propaganda: Williamson, *Philippe de Mézières et l'influence du cycle de la croisade au 14e siècle*, 163-169.

[82] Edited in: Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, vol. 2, 12-13.

1390[83] and the crusade of Nicopolis in 1396.[84] Among them, one of the most famous was the admiral of France Jean de Vienne who had taken part in the expedition of Amadeus VI of Savoy in 1366, then had been in Barbary in 1390 and had finally died in the charge of Nicopolis.[85] Jean Le Meingre, known as Boucicaut, had a remarkable crusading curriculum, with two expeditions against the pagans of Prussia in 1384 and 1385, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1388-1389, a third Prussian voyage in 1390, the Nicopolis crusade in 1396, the relief to Constantinople in 1399 and a naval expedition, on Genoese galleys, in 1403.[86] Dozens of French-Burgundian aristocrats had multiple participation on the various fronts of the Fourteenth-century crusade.[87] Jacques, lord of Mametz, is one of the best examples of an aristocratic crusader: he had made a first voyage to Prussia in 1389-1390, then followed Louis of Bourbon on the Barbary expedition in 1390, then did a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1393, then fought again in Prussia the following year and, last, was against the Turks in Nicopolis.[88] These crusading appearances were interspersed in the protagonists' lives by other military exploits related to the Hundred Years' War, the Flanders revolt in 1382 or the expedition to Scotland in 1385.[89]

The Duchy of Burgundy at the time of Philip the Bold (1363-1404), seemed to be the centre of this chivalric revival, as the Dukes had made the crusading zeal a political tool for their own prestige.[90] The holy war was inscribed in the chivalric canon as a necessary step in the formation of the young nobleman. Philip the Bold participated in the Barbary expedition of 1390 by sending a few knights.[91] The Duke in 1392-1394 intended to carry out personally a crusade, but did not know yet whether against Prussia or the Turks in the Balkans. So, in May 1394, he sent an embassy to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, composed by Pierre de La Trémoille and 150 Genoese crossbowmen.[92] Philip's eldest son, Jean de Nevers, took part in the Hungarian expedition of 1396, with a vast retinue of nobles. They were equipped with every comfort and refinement, silks and silverware, in a procession of squires and embroidered banners. Were the knights going on a joust or a crusade? Even one of the heroes of Agincourt, the Englishman Sir Thomas Erpingham, had a fight in Prussia and a pilgrimage to Jerusalem behind him. Thomas Despenser, Earl of Gloucester, had also gone against the pagans of the Baltic.[93]

In this *milieu* of men-at-arms belonging to the Western nobility there were French, Englishmen, Germans, Italians and Cypriots. Many of the participants had blood relations with each other and some

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[83] Mirot, *Une expédition française en Tunisie au XIVe siècle*, 396-406.

[84] About Nicopolis' crusade: Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, vol. 2, XXII, 78-86; Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis*, 144-148.

[85] About him: Terrier De Loray, *Jean de Vienne, amiral de France*.

[86] Regarding Boucicaut: Puncuh, *Jean Le Meingre detto Boucicaut tra leggenda e realtà*.

[87] Between them, Jean Prunellé fought in Prussia in 1385, 1390, 1391, then at Nicopolis in 1396; Renaud de Natouillet, embarked to Alexandria in 1365 and to Mahdia in 1390. Paviot, *Noblesse et croisade à la fin du Moyen Âge*, 81.

[88] Geoffroy de Charny was at Mahdia, on the Baltic Sea, too, and in the Hungarian crusade, like Jacques de Courtiambles. Guillaume de La Trémoille, instead, fought at Alexandria in 1365, then with Amaedeus VI in Constantinople and, last, in the North of Africa. Paviot, *La croisade bourguignonne aux XIVe et XVe siècles*, 57-65.

[89] P. Contamine, *Les princes, barons et chevaliers*, 48-54.

[90] On this theme: Paviot, *Les ducs de Bourgogne*.

[91] Paviot, *La croisade bourguignonne*, 35-36.

[92] Paviot, *La croisade bourguignonne*, 38.

[93] Contamine, "*Les princes, barons et chevaliers*, 53.

relatives often participated in the same crusade. In fact, pairs of brothers, or father and son, on the same expedition were not uncommon.[94] These synchronic adhesions seemed to indicate that the crusade was a matter of family tradition. The crusade seemed to have shed its role as a penitential vow, becoming the prerogative of a class of war professionals. The battlefronts had become multiple and interchangeable, in some ways they were even indifferent. The Mediterranean crusades attracted nobles from the North following the epic of Peter I of Cyprus, whom Philippe de Mézières called the "noble et vaillant roi Lion".[95] Two other nobles from the French-speaking area, Amadeus VI of Savoy and Louis, Count of Bourbon, led the relief effort in Constantinople and the North African venture of 1390. However, the Teutonic Order from its stronghold at Marienburg led a perennial crusade in the Baltic countries, with a series of annual *Reisen*.[96]

Prussian voyages were a constant element in many of the nobles' lives, in addition to the Iberian battlefields.[97] Hungary, under pressure from the Turks, received the attention of the European nobility. This series of different contexts is indicative of the disappearance of Jerusalem from the crusader horizon. The aristocrats preferred to fight against the infidel in every circumstance that permitted it. The essential thing was to carry out feats of arms as in courtly romances, little did it mattered whether in Prussia or Barbary, in Flanders or Granada, the point was to replicate the model of the errant knight on the outskirts of Christendom. This model transcended the borders and conflicts that divided the continent. As a consequence, a kind of "Crusading International" of the North was born, whose entry requirements were dictated by class rather than obedience. Among the adherents of Philippe de Mézières' Order of the Passion, were French, Scottish and English, who were fighting in opposing camps. Several of French knights were probably killed or taken prisoner at Agincourt by the same English knights with whom they had promised to participate in the crusade. The same ones participated in international fairs and jousts, such as the Englishman Richard Abberbury, who had competed at the *jouste* of Saint-Inglevert on his return from a *Reise* in Prussia in 1390.[98] Many other noble crusaders were at the joust of Saint-Inglevert in 1390: several of them had been to Prussia or would leave for Hungary in 1396.[99] The logic of this kind of fighting was completely scenic and mixed the plane of fiction with that of reality, anticipating the reasons of the defeat at Nicopolis.[100] In the *Grand Tour*

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[94] The brothers Philippe and Henri de Bar both died at Nicopolis. Three people from the De Jaucourt family participated at the Mahdia expedition of 1390: Geoffroy, Guillaume and Philippot. Another relative, Philippe de Jaucourt, was in the crusade of Alexandria before them. Paviot, *Noblesse et croisade à la fin du Moyen Âge*, 75-78.

[95] Radkovská, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, 33-35.

[96] This phenomenon had begun in the Thirteenth century and continued even after the Duke of Lithuania's conversion to Catholicism. On the Northern crusades: E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*.

[97] The English adherents of Philippe de Mézières' Order of the Passion had almost all made an expedition to Prussia. Mediterranean crusades and those to Hungary are much rarer. Contamine, *Les princes, barons et chevaliers*, 53-58; Paviot, *Noblesse et croisade à la fin du Moyen Âge*, 79.

[98] Contamine, *Les princes, barons et chevaliers*, 48-55.

[99] Thomas Clifford, having fought in France since 1386, had participated in the joust of Saint-Inglevert in 1390 and headed to Prussia in 1391. Contamine, *Les princes, barons et chevaliers*, 54.

[100] The joust of Saint-Inglevert in 1390, which took place outside Calais, created a widespread interest throughout the aristocratic circles of the time. We have at least five

that constituted the life of many aristocrats, from Provence to Scotland, military exploits were a quest for adventure on different fronts: the crusade was functional to the growth of personal glory.

This sensibility was particularly present among the Northern European élites, between France and England. While this kind of aristocratic fascination with the crusade is fundamentally absent in Italian chronicles or *novelle*, its best example can be found in the major English literary work of the period. A summary of the contradictions of the aristocratic crusade is present in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. In this work, the first character to appear is the *Knight*, whose portrait revolves around the two main concepts of valour, "worthiness", and "wisdom". Valour was not just a synonym for courage, but encompassed a more complex set of meanings, such as battlefield experience. Wisdom, equally, was the full mastery of the knightly ideals of "trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie".[101] The *Knight* participates in the pilgrimage to thanks God for preserving him in a long series of military engagements. The *Knight*'s list of war exploits reflects his wisdom: he had been at "Alisaundre" during the victory of 1365.[102] He had ridden against the pagans in "Pruce", in Lithuania and in Russia;[103] he had fought against the Moors of Granada in the city of Algeciras,[104] then in North Africa attacking "Belmarye". He was in Anatolia at Ayas and Atalya, when he had crossed the "grete see", or Eastern Mediterranean, with a host of nobles and participated in battles against the infidel, as far as Tlemcen in Algeria[105]. The text is full of unclear references.[106]

The *Knight* had even fought for the emir of "Palatye" (Ephesus) against other Turkish lords. The mercenary service under the orders of infidel potentates was permissible as long as it was directed against other Muslims.[107] All the battles that were part of the *Knight*'s experience, were fought against the enemies of Christianity, Muslim or pagan, in different corners of the world. Chaucer omitted all other English victories during the Hundred Years' War: there are no allusions to Crécy or Poitiers, or to the exploits in Picardy and Normandy. The poet preferred to include much more obscure and secondary episodes which had in common the defence of the Christian faith and are difficult to identify today. The *Knight* became an emblem of the European aristocracy: true valour and wisdom were

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different written accounts of it written by different observers. The King of France Charles VI also appeared there in disguise. Nadot, *Le spectacle des joutes*, 20; Gaucher, *Les joutes de Saint-Inglevert*; Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood in France*, 94-96.

[101] Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 18. Regarding these concepts: Hatton, *Chaucer's Crusading Knight*, 77-79.

[102] "Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne". Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 18.

[103] "in Pruce, / in Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce". Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 18.

[104] All the enterprises mentioned are chronologically situated after 1360 and compatible with each other. Was the *Knight* an idealised figure, or did it refer to a real possibility of experience?

[105] "At Lyeys was he and at Satalye, / whan they were wonne; and in the grete see / at many a noble armee hadde he be. / at mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene, / and foughten for oure feith at Tramyssene". Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 18.

[106] We do not know what it means that the *Knight* fought in Tlemcen, since we have no record of a Christian raid in the North African city. Is the reference to one of the anti-piracy operations in Barbary? Likewise, we do not know of the ride to "Belmarye", in the Kingdom of Morocco. What did he mean by confronting and killing his opponent three times?

[107] "Somtyme with the lord of Palatye / agayn another hethen in Turkye" Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 18.

demonstrated in the crusade. Chaucer's discreet knowledge of Iberian or Mediterranean events of arms shows the arrival of news from distant fronts even at the English court of Richard II.[108] Geoffrey Chaucer also had direct relations with Odo de Granson, one of Mézières' closest followers, and was a friend of Lewis Clifford, who was a candidate for the Order of the Passion.[109]

The *Knight* was as modest as his discoloured clothes indicated, with no accessories to suggest vanity.[110] Unlike the other characters in the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer does not display any irony towards him. The *Knight* is the only totally positive character among the members of the pilgrim brigade, the only one to whom the poet does not wink in some criticism and towards whom he shows a deep respect. After all, he is presented first.[111] Immediately afterwards comes the antithesis of the *Knight* in the work: it is the squire who accompanies him, "a yong squire".[112] The young man is the *Knight*'s son and represents the other soul of chivalry, that struggled with his father's conception. He was slender and in love, with perfect curls and a fine face.[113] His long-sleeved robe, in the fashion of the time, was a counterpoint to his father's austere tunic. The *Squier*, in his feast of colours, was devoted to music and the pursuit of women's love. He seemed straight out of a chivalric romance.[114]

As a matter of fact, the *Squier*'s military career was complementary to his father's one. The young man had fought not against the infidels but in France, "in Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie".[115] Chaucer ironically described the young man devoted to worldly pleasures and fights.[116] These were the two souls of chivalry: one devoted to fight in the name of Christ, the other devoted to vanity. However, whether religious or profane, there is never any reference to the Church, to penitential indulgences or the direction of the Papacy. The crusade had become a self-referential enterprise on the part of the aristocracy, defending the faith but without any ecclesiastical direction. The

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[108] We can see the penetration of Philippe de Mézières' ideas into the English court. Numerous nobles of the island had joined the Order of the Passion. Contamine, *Les princes, barons et chevaliers*, 48-49.

[109] Hatton, *Chaucer's Crusading Knight*, 86.

[110] "And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys / and though that he were worthy, he was wys, / and of his port as meeke as is a mayde. / He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde / In al his lyf unto no maner wight. / He was a verray, parfit gentil knyght. / But, for to tellen yow of his array, / his hors were goode, but he was nat gay. / Of fustian he wered a gypon / al bismotered with his habergeon, / for he was late ycome from his viage, / and wente for to doon his pilgrimage". Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 19.

[111] Regarding Chaucer's *Knight*: Keen, *Chaucer's Knight*; McAlpine, *Chaucer's Knight's Tale*, 111-168; Jones, *Chaucer's Knight*; Pratt, *Was Chaucer's Knight Really a Mercenary?*; Hughes, *Fourteenth-Century Weaponry, Armour and Warfare in Chaucer*. Also: Bowden, *A Commentary on the General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales*.

[112] Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 19.

[113] "A lovyere and a lusty bacheler, / with lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse. / Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse. / Of his stature he was of evene lengthe, / and wonderly delyvere, and of greet strengthe. [...] Embrouded was he, as it were a meede / al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and reede. / Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day; / he was as fressh as is the month of may". Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 19.

[114] "Short was his gowne, with sleves longe and wyde". Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 19.

[115] Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Works*, 19.

[116] The *Squire* (or *Squier* in the original Middle-English diction) has been subject to different levels of analysis. Kuhl, Webb, *Chaucer's Squire*, 282-284; Pearsall, *The Squire as Story-Teller*; Wood, *The Significance of Jousting and Dancing as Attributes of Chaucer's Squire*; Kahrl, *Chaucer's Squire's Tale and the Decline of Chivalry*; Jones, *Chaucer's Anxiety of Poetic Craft: The Squire's Tale*; Bleeth, *Orientalism and the Critical History of the Squire's Tale*.

Christian paladin decided where to go, who to fight and when, without the pursuit of spiritual benefits having any relevance. After all, the most odious character in all the *Canterbury Tales* was the *Pardoner*, the seller of indulgences. The indulgence, developed within the *passagium* and still linked to it in the Fourteenth century, was for Chaucer the most adverse element of the chivalric crusade.[117] The call to Jerusalem had likewise disappeared from the horizon of noble expeditions.

The nobility itself, however, was not insensitive to the religious element, which often coexisted with the passion for glory and deeds of arms. The Englishman Sir Lewis Clifford, belonging to a family of crusaders and fighting in France and Spain, was a devout Christian with a deep spirituality.[118] Next to the war effort, another way to express devotion was pilgrimage. Only few people took advantage of the crusade expeditions to be appointed knights, while the majority preferred to have the accolade during the journey to the Holy Sepulchre.[119] Many nobles interspersed fighting with pilgrimages to Jerusalem or Santiago.[120] The pilgrimage could even be in contradiction with the crusade. In 1395 a nobleman from Champagne, Ogier d'Anglure, had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and returned to Venice. In May 1396, he met Henri de Bar and Eguerrand de Coucy, who were embarking to the Hungary against the Turks, in the lagoon. However, Ogier, tired of the pilgrimage and probably short of funds, preferred to return home. Maybe for Ogier, descendant of an ancient family of crusaders, the main thing had already been done: praying kneeled at the tomb of Christ, rather than fighting the Turks in the Balkans.[121]

4. Conclusions

The crusader ideal, once detached from the Holy Land, had undergone profound transformations during the Fourteenth century. On the one hand, the penitential needs, which had been one of the fundamental factors of the previous crusades – though not the only one – were expressed in other ways. On the other hand, we can see the use of the crusade, and especially its narrative, by the aristocracy. These are two complementary approaches to the *Later Crusades*, and opposed at first sight. In reality, both of these paths indicate that the crusade, as it was known until the beginning of the Fourteenth century, was by then an inadequate object for the challenges of the present.

In the first section of this paper, I tried to take up the suggestions of scholars, who have glimpsed a link between the crusades and later penitential religious manifestations. These similarities relate to the

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[117] Regarding the *Pardoner*: Gross, *Trade Secrets*; Vance, *Chaucer's Pardoner*.

[118] Contamine, *Les princes, barons et chevaliers*, 53.

[119] Mentions of conferring the knighthood during military expeditions are rare. We know that the Englishman Stephen Scope received knighthood in Alexandria in 1365, Guillame de Meuillon in Mahdia in 1390, and Jean de Nevers in Nicopolis. Paviot, *Noblesse et croisade à la fin du Moyen Âge*, 83.

[120] Gauvignon de Semur was the squire and cupbearer of the Duke of Burgundy. He was in Prussia in 1380, had gone on a pilgrimage to Santiago in 1383 shortly after concluding the Flanders campaign, had fought in Barbary in 1390 and the following year had undertaken the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, until participating in the charge of Nicopolis in 1396. Paviot, *La croisade bourguignonne*, 57.

[121] Ogier D'Anglure, *Le saint voyage de Jherusalem*, 98.

symbolic level and content, even if they show a certain evolution. The detachment from the institutional plan of the Church to obtain indulgences seems indicative, as well as the proximity of geographical destinations. The recipients and modes of participation in the *passagium* of the second half of the Fourteenth century had changed. The popular crusades disappeared, while religious and eschatological tensions were resolved by alternative ways.

However, there seemed to be a clear revival in crusading forms, clothing and heraldry, as I discussed in the second section of the paper. Sometimes new symbols were created and applied to previous situations, as in the case of the *Jerusalem cross*. Even the aristocrats of the waning of the Middle Ages were fascinated by the crusades, but in a different way. The aristocratic expeditions moved within an ideological horizon nourished by dreams, searching for glory, and chivalric behaviour. The crusade seemed to be functional to the self-representation of a noble *ethos*, shared by the aristocratic classes of Northern Europe. The holy enterprises were used to mark a social status. The disappearance of the penitential aims was accompanied by a disinterest to the geographical fronts where the infidels have to be fought. It gave way to a crusading attitude in the broadest sense. After the end of the crusades, the legacy they left behind took new and unexpected paths. These two legacies of the crusades, the domestic popular movements and the chivalric dream, seemed predominant in the continent. Were they the only possibilities?

A third and pragmatic way to the crusade is the one adopted by the inhabitants of the Mediterranean mercantile centres. They had direct experience of the complexity of their world and close relations with the Muslim people. The custom of relations with other shores pushed for a flexible management, marked by compromise, but capable of achieving concrete results. The most unexpected heirs of the crusades and the defence of the Christian Levant were the merchants of the Italian maritime cities.[122] The cases here investigated can open up new perspectives for the study of changing sensibilities at the end of the Middle Ages. The new perception of the reality and the new needs seems to be profoundly linked to a changed context, made difficult by the Fourteenth-century situation. The examples are open to future study: the crusade, in this sense, is an extremely useful object if used as a magnifying glass for the reconstruction of a world.

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[122] On this particular theme, I can only refer to the PhD thesis: Lombardo, *La croce dei mercanti*.

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