

# The Ennobling Oath

## A Pilgrim's Reflection on the Historiography of the Knights Templar

---

### Seminar#3: The Outremer: Islam and the Crusades

“... no disguising the fact that the effect of the crusades on Christian-Muslim relations was profoundly destructive.”  
Norman Housley, “The Crusades and Islam,” *Medieval Encounters* (2007), 189-208

#### A. The Outremer:

1. French for "overseas", a general name given to the Crusader states established after the First Crusade
2. Initial Crusaders became indigenous, settling into the culture after Jerusalem was re-conquered
3. Key period under discussion:
  - i. *Start: June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1099: Crusaders capture Jerusalem (916 years, 6 days ago)*
  - ii. *End: May 18, 1291: Mamluk capture Acre, expel the Crusaders (724 years, 3 weeks ago)*
4. Also: 1300: destruction of Lucera, Italy—Christians killed or enslaved 20k+ Muslims
5. Thus on each end, Christians and Muslims experienced death, dispossession & slavery because of religious beliefs.

#### B. The Outremer vs Euro-centric Crusaders

1. Outremer culture
  - i. introduced new political presence and a novel cultural construct where French language was predominant
  - ii. toleration and accommodations established with Muslims, a *modi vivendi*
  - iii. but worldview, still religiously based, was not too dissimilar to their crusading co-religionist
2. Euro-centric Crusaders
  - i. were steeped in a “total war” mentality; saw war as a clash of two faiths, not just recovery of Jerusalem
  - ii. this caused friction between Euro-centric Crusaders and the Outremer-centric Crusaders
  - iii. differing frameworks created tensions in attitudes, discourse and affected “toleration”
3. Consequence of Euro/Outremer Crusader tension
  - i. Outremer Crusaders were viewed as “going native”; by 1200s they even dressed as Arabs
  - ii. Yet the Outremer relied on fresh Crusaders to sustain the Crusader kingdom in the Levant
  - iii. Outremer tensions rested upon broader Euro political contests (Investiture controversy)

#### C. Islamic political contests: Rise of Saladin

1. Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Ayyūb (1137/1138 March 1193), better known in the Western world as Saladin
2. first Sultan of Egypt and Syria and the founder of the Ayyubid dynasty—unified Islam against Outremer Crusaders
3. Ayyubid (Saladin) vs Fatimid (Egypt) vs Abbasid (Saudi Arabia)...and eventual rise of Mamluks and Ottomans

#### D. Broader Euro-Crusader political contests: Fall of Crusaders

1. Boniface VIII vs Phillip IV of France vs Jacques de Molay
2. Pope Boniface VIII:
  - i. Bull of 1302, *Unam Sanctam*: claims to temporal as well as spiritual power
  - ii. since the Church is one, necessary for salvation, and Christ appointed Peter... Roman pontiff must rule
  - iii. chronic intervention in "temporal" affairs, led to many bitter quarrels with Philip IV and Dante Alighieri
3. Jacques de Molay (1243 – 18 March 1314)
  - i. 23rd and last Grand Master of the Knights Templar, dissolved by order of Pope Clement V in 1307
  - ii. Molay's goal was reform the Order, adjust it to situation in Holy Land during waning days of the Crusades
  - iii. European support had dwindled; Philip IV arrested, tortured Molay in 1307; burned him on March 1314

#### E. Nature of War and lasting consequences

1. image of the enemy (Islam) shaped the dominant prejudice towards Islam that remains till today
2. purpose: not to mend relations between the faiths, but to revitalize the Christian cause to recover Jerusalem
3. Still, the narrative of Chivalry in battle also permeates till this day: Richard the Lionheart and Saladin ([Seminar#4](#))