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H-France Review Vol. 13 (July 2013), No. 94

Nicholas L. Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps: The Crusades and Family Memory in the High Middle Ages*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2012. iv + 350 pp. Figures, maps, charts, bibliography, and index. \$55.00 U.S (cl). ISBN 10-8014-5097-7.

Review by Natasha R. Hodgson, Nottingham Trent University UK.

Nicholas Paul's study sets out to provide a firm historical framework for an argument which crusade scholars have often put forward, but without quantifying or examining in explicit detail. The earliest surviving crusade bull, an impassioned call for the expedition which has become known as the Second Crusade, is Eugenius III's *Quantum Praedecessores*. In it, the pope overtly utilised the cultural significance of crusading ancestors in order to boost recruitment for the expedition. He warned that those who failed to meet this challenge and emulate the deeds of their forefathers might taint their reputations with cowardice. The papacy evidently viewed family reputation as key to the motivation of crusaders, but from the time of the First Crusade, expeditions to the East required commitments from a wide range of kin. Charters such as those studied by Riley-Smith and Konweiser-Slack demonstrate the important roles that family members played in raising funds, protecting lands on behalf of absent relatives, and the efforts undertaken by crusaders to make arrangements for their loved ones.[1] Donations to religious houses, a traditional practice for families which fed into crusading enthusiasm, have also been examined to some extent by Marcus Bull.[2] Paul builds on the centrality of the family unit and kinship to the structure of crusades by examining a particular genre of source material: family histories. He argues that the collective memories of families, and the processes by which they were recorded and transmitted, were a fundamental feature of the continuing popularity of crusading throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (p. 6).

The introduction sets the scene by exploring the importance of family tradition and history in the historiography of the crusade movement, beginning with nineteenth century interest in crusading ancestors and looking backwards to the later crusades. Paul then turns to the early twelfth century, a period highlighted by Tyerman and Riley-Smith as central to the development of crusading.[3] His study draws broadly from ideas about collective memory instituted by Halbwachs, and acknowledges the influence of recent works specific to medieval studies such as Van Houts' *Memory and Gender*. [4] The author takes an inclusive view of women and gender in his work, cementing their importance as transmitters of family memory, and underlining the importance of lineage as a defining feature of the medieval aristocracy. Rather than taking a prosopographical approach as other historians have done, Paul uses dynastic histories and genealogies, applying modern scholarly approaches to elicit further information from them, especially with respect to the roles played by the family and women in relation to the crusades.

Family was certainly central to the portrayal of the aristocracy in wider crusade narratives. In some cases the only reason women were mentioned was to highlight or explain an important family relationship. Medieval authors made assumptions about women based on perceptions of their roles in the family, to the extent that even fictitious characters were perceived to act in a particular way.[5] Paul's focus is not so much on the portrayal of women in his chosen texts, as it is on their combined role with male kin in patronising and participating in the processes of historical remembrance, with a particular emphasis on the close relationship that families held with local ecclesiastical communities. The nobility, he asserts, were fully engaged with monastic discourses in these matters, and family histories "were widely used for the purposes of commemoration, moral instruction, and the enhancement of familial honour and reputation" (p. 4). He provides useful

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appendices of these works and their relationships to local noble houses and monastic communities, and highlights where explicit reference is made to crusading activity (pp. 299-303).

The book is divided into two parts, the first focusing on the form and function of family memory in a crusading context. Chapter one expands on this theme by exploring the role of the crusader in dynastic narratives and the social influences on the creation of a crusading ancestor's image. It also considers the extent to which this placed obligations on the descendants of crusaders to fulfil vows themselves. Chapter two, "Relations," explores the benefits and pitfalls of narrative in terms of recording the collective memory of medieval families and notes the close relationship between early dynastic histories and crusading. Here, Paul underlines the complex nature of the composition and circulation of these texts between monastic houses and examines the spaces within which secular and ecclesiastical subjects interacted. Of particular interest is a brief section on legacies of honour and shame. This section focuses predominantly on accounts of desertions from Antioch, but the author gives an indication of how such histories could make use of the opportunities to score points against rivals (pp. 80-83). It would be interesting to see how his findings could be compared with developments in medieval writing during the thirteenth century in this respect.[6]

Chapter three looks at the use of a range of material objects, whether "trophies" such as booty or relics, or items of personal remembrance such as finger rings. It considers the function of chapels and the liturgical activities surrounding material objects in the processes of remembrance. One aspect in which the author might potentially have developed these ideas further is their role in the processes of recruitment for subsequent expeditions. Chapter four, "Missing Men," explores remembering crusaders who died on the expedition, especially the problems posed when their bodily remains were not accessible, or indeed, if their deaths went unconfirmed. At the end, Paul gives particular attention to the case study of Elisabeth of Thuringia, exploring hagiographical connections with her husband's crusade and the emphasis on her role as a grieving widow (pp. 165-170).

Perhaps further parallels could have been drawn here with the more traditional twelfth century crusade narratives which were widely circulated in Europe, as well as classical influences. For example, what Paul refers to as "melodrama" in the case of Elisabeth's reaction also appears in the grief of the widow of Gualo of Chaumont Vexin in select First Crusade histories, or Queen Melisende's response to the death of Fulk V of Anjou in William of Tyre. Perhaps these examples, which fall outside the "dynastic" history bracket, also failed to fit with Paul's criteria of representing "death and distance." The fifth chapter recognises the importance of the rewriting of eleventh and early twelfth century pilgrimage narratives, and explores common motifs relating to the crusades found in dynastic narratives, with an emphasis on the closed gate—a metaphor which Paul argues was often used to predict and justify family involvement in crusades.

The second part of the book concentrates upon two case studies: Henry II of England (who took the cross but never went on crusade) and Alfonso II of Aragon. Paul evaluates the positive and negative aspects of choosing these royal case studies. On the one hand they provide a wealth of material, but on the other, can they truly be deemed representative of noble dynastic values? Paul argues that there is a case for including both on the grounds that it was their noble, rather than royal ancestors who had the majority of their crusading heritage, and that both were the product of composite dynastic relationships which resulted from noble, rather than royal activities. He traces the impact of crusading sites, liturgy, literature and traditions connected to Fulk V of Anjou which influenced both Henry II and his son, Richard I, the latter of whom Paul asserts "deliberately departed on crusade as the Count of Anjou" (p. 250). He pays considerable attention to John of Marmoutier in this respect, whose reworking of the *Chronica de gestis consulum Andegavorum* he associates firmly with Henry's Christmas Court at Chinon in 1172, encouraging him to regain divine favour in the wake of the Becket crisis by emulating his ancestor.

The case of Alfonso II, also count of Barcelona and marquis of Provence, was equally complex, and his crusading activities are set against a background of dynastic rivalries, political pressures and competing religious houses. Paul examines the importance of Alfonso's crusading ancestry in the narrative produced by the Benedictine house of Ripoll in Catalonia, and the king's ultimate decision

to reject this dynastic burial place in favour of the Cistercian monastery of Poblet. This chapter underlines the significance of bodily remains and the commemoration of lay aristocrats in attracting and securing noble patronage, and traces a shift in textual, material and liturgical emphasis on the counts of Barcelona as crusaders from the mid-twelfth century onwards. Paul explains how Alfonso was held up against the example of these heroic predecessors by critics such as Giraut del Luc and Bertran de Born, who saw him as failing to lead effectively and deal with the new Almohad threat. Most intriguing is the tale of the impostor who claimed to be Alfonso I, *el Batallador*, in 1178-79, which caused great disturbance and represented the literal revival of a crusading ancestor (pp. 284-85).

In a rather sparse epilogue, Paul puts forward a number of interesting ideas which warrant further discussion. He summarises the changing status of written history at the beginning of the thirteenth century, suggesting that dynastic themes were fading from crusading appeals and narratives, that royal, national and chivalric imagination were beginning to take precedence. He suggests that the Third Crusade marked a watershed for a new crusading era with new heroes, which began to eclipse dynastic concerns as “the living memory of twelfth century crusading slipped away” (p. 297). Perhaps some consideration could have been given here to the continuing remembrance of the First Crusade, both “historical” and “imagined,” throughout the thirteenth century and beyond, and the family ties which remained key to cementing the relationships between crusading nobles in the West and the surviving Latin aristocracy in the East. It would also have been interesting to explore the author’s views on the impact of the Albigensian Crusades in the context of this work, but that may have extended the scope too far.

Overall, this study is well conceived and thought provoking. The scholarship is excellent, and the subject matter is often extremely diverse. Paul occasionally gives considerable attention to the reconstruction of the narratives of medieval authors. Yet, he keeps tradition with the material which forms the basis for his study, and even well-established sources or subjects are analysed in innovative and appropriate ways. In addition to the more exhaustive investigation he applies to his case studies, the author draws from a wide body of written and material evidence, and provides a fascinating range of exemplars. As a result, far from being an exhaustive study, *To Follow in their Footsteps* offers new pathways for future investigations into crusade and memory, and promises to be a very influential work.

## NOTES

[1] Giles Constable, “Medieval Charters as a Source for the History of the Crusades,” in *Crusade and Settlement*, ed., Peter W. Edbury (Cardiff: University College Cardiff Press, 1985), 73–89; Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders 1095–1131* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Corliss Konwiser Slack, *Crusade Charters 1138–1270* (Tempe: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001).

[2] Marcus Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade: The Limousin and Gascony, c.970–c.1130* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

[3] Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades 1095–1588* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 35; Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders*, pp. 93–97.

[4] Maurice Halbwachs, *Les Cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1925); Elisabeth van Houts, *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe 900–1200* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999).

[5] Natasha Hodgson, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007).

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[6] See David Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in Twelfth Century France, 900-1300* (London: Longman, 2005) and Natasha Hodgson "Honour, Shame and the Fourth Crusade," *Journal of Medieval History* 39:2 (2013): forthcoming.

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ISSN 1553-9172