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Edited by Peter Edbury and Jonathan Phillips

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*Jonathan Riley-Smith and the Latin East:
an appreciation*

Jonathan Phillips, with Peter Edbury

In recent decades, the majority of Jonathan Riley-Smith's work has examined the motives and identities of early crusaders. When looking at Jonathan's career as a whole, however, it is immediately apparent that a significant proportion of his research has concerned the Latin East, and that he continues to produce important studies on this area. This appreciation has the agreeable task of providing a brief overview of this body of work: Jonathan's publications on the Frankish Levant constitute a formidable *oeuvre* in their own right and have done much to advance our understanding of the history and the government of the Latin East.

Right from the start, his interest in the history of the Latin East has been undisguised. *The Knights of St John in Jerusalem and Cyprus c. 1050–1310* (1967) had much to say on the subject, and another early publication, 'The Templars and the Castle of Tortosa in Syria: An Unknown Document Concerning the Acquisition of the Fortress' (1969), demonstrated a fine balance between detailed analysis of a text and placing it in a wider context. In this instance, Jonathan showed that the initiative for this gift came from the bishop of Tripoli, rather than any secular power, and how this document, in conjunction with various papal privileges, defined the Templars' rights in northern Syria at that particular moment.

In the period after *The Knights of St John* Jonathan turned his attention to the workings of the kingdom of Jerusalem, and most particularly to the relationship between the crown and nobility in the thirteenth century. No one had previously subjected this topic to such a detailed study. Aspects of Jonathan's work challenged the research of other eminent historians including Joshua Prawer, Jean Richard and Hans Eberhard Mayer – an awkward task, and one that Jonathan accomplished with great courtesy towards the opinions of those individuals whom he respected. Yet if, as on several occasions, his own work yielded a different answer, he set out his opinion with customary rigour and directness.

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The substantial corpus of material that Jonathan published on this subject is headed by his monograph *The Feudal Nobility and the Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1174–1277* (1973); five associated articles on related issues also appeared. The time-frame of the book covered the period from the reign of the leper-king Baldwin IV to the sale of the kingdom to Charles of Anjou in 1277. During this period the crown of Jerusalem suffered under weak rulers, absentee rulers, minors, or claimants to the crown through marriage. From this inherently difficult position emerged a group of nobles determined to enhance and protect their growing power through the exploitation of the legal process. At the heart of this study lies the question: what was the relationship between the constitutional ideas of the Frankish nobility in Palestine and the reality of their political power?

This work required the mastery of a huge range of sources. The loss of the central archives of the crown and the records of most of the nobility deprived him of the obvious sources of information for such a study. Instead, he had to assemble the fragmentary evidence provided by the charters of the Military Orders (with which he was, of course, already familiar), the churches and monasteries of the Levant, and the mercantile communities who traded with the Latin settlers. Alongside this were the law books written by a group of nobles in the thirteenth century. Men such as Ralph of Tiberias, John of Jaffa and Philip of Novara formed part of a powerful group of legal and judicial experts whose complex and self-interested writings allow an insight, however distorted, into the minds of the Frankish nobility in the thirteenth century. The breadth of ideas and the remarkable detail contained within *The Feudal Nobility* bears testimony to Jonathan's grasp of this material. Over time, this would prove valuable not just in his own work, but also in advising his own (and other scholars'!) research students.

The Feudal Nobility was divided into two sections. In order to properly ground the study of the nobility, Jonathan felt it necessary to secure a firm understanding of the foundations of their power; namely, the economic and institutional context in which these men operated. He provided a highly detailed analysis of feudal relations within the Latin kingdom and the structure of fiefs that gave the nobles their authority. His closely researched work on manorialism established a new and clearer understanding of the daily workings of the Latin lordships and of the officials who administered estates on their master's behalf. Jonathan observed that simple practicality dictated that a minority ruling class who arrived in an area with well-established administrative structures should choose to adopt and borrow many of these practices. Two articles, 'Some Lesser Officials in Latin Syria'

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(1972), and 'The Survival in Latin Palestine of Muslim Administration' (1977), developed these ideas in greater detail.

The basis of the nobles' wealth, however, lay in the cities of the Levantine coast. Urban life flourished in the thirteenth century and Acre was, along with Alexandria and Constantinople, one of the most prosperous ports in the Mediterranean. Jonathan showed the workings of the money-fiefs within these cities and indicated how the nobles accrued their fortunes. Here, and in a related article 'Government in Latin Syria and the Commercial Privileges of Foreign Merchants' (1973), he explained how the economy of the Frankish East functioned. He argued convincingly that the nobles' fierce guardianship of their territorial and jurisdictional rights did not extend to an overzealous gathering of tax exemptions because they saw the wider need to foster a growth of trade. Jonathan showed how the numerous exemptions granted to the Italian mercantile communities were, in fact, a sufficiently powerful stimulus to the overall volume of trade flowing through royal and noble markets and tax-collecting points that they more than compensated donors for offering such exemptions in the first instance.

The second half of *The Feudal Nobility* built upon this context to examine the relationship between the crown and the nobility. The law books of the thirteenth century had depicted the earlier rulers of Jerusalem as weak, but historians had started to question this. Historiographically, the early work of Grandclaude in the 1920s had emphasised the strength of the kings of Jerusalem in this early period and Richard and Prawer had developed this line further. Jonathan's research tempered this assessment of royal power and was also concerned to ask why the later nobles had wanted to portray the crown in such a poor light. The study of King Amalric's *Assise sur la ligece* lay at the centre of any such assessment. Through this legislation – which in Amalric's time was to the advantage of the king in his dealings with his nobles – membership of the High Court of Jerusalem was extended to include rear-vassals, who, in certain (and probably unforeseen) circumstances, could pose a threat to the crown. In the political conditions of the thirteenth century the nobles were able to use this measure in cases where they felt the crown had acted unconstitutionally. They could argue that, if there was a minor or an absentee king, there was a need for a regent and that, if the king or regent was absent, then there had to be a lieutenant to act on his behalf. The regent or lieutenant had to be resident in the kingdom, recognised by the High Court and prepared to abide by the customs and laws of Jerusalem. In light of the turbulent political situation in the thirteenth century, there was considerable scope

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for the nobles to try to implement such measures. In the early stages of the conflict (1229) between Frederick II and the nobles, the latter used the *Assise* to their advantage. Jonathan showed that by 1231, however, their faith in this law was misplaced and Richard Filangieri, the imperial *bailli*, demonstrated that if a royal representative was backed by a mercenary force, he could easily face down his opponents in spite of the *Assise*. To impose the *Assise*, the nobles needed to face a weak king who acted in isolation; criteria that Filangieri did not fulfil. Jonathan also looked at the *Assise* in relation to the Commune of Acre (a 1971 article ‘The *Assise sur la ligece* and the Commune of Acre’) and concluded that this was formed in the aftermath of the episode noted above and was a way of trying to resist imperial power through another forum, although this too was of limited success.

In short, Jonathan concluded that the ideas of the nobles were interesting, but not always very effective. He sympathised with the increasingly difficult military situation that they faced and acknowledged that this created a pressure the like of which their co-religionists in the west would have found intolerable. The prosperity of Acre helped to sustain the Latin East until the appearance of the Mongols in the Near East and the Franks’ defeat at La Forbie in 1244 led to a decline in trade. These events, along with the rise of the Mamlūks and the constitutional turbulence of the kingdom, meant that the Frankish presence in the Levant became especially tenuous. Against this, however, Jonathan had little time for the introspective, ‘quarrelsome and shortsighted’ aspects of the Jerusalem nobility. ‘One cannot help feeling that the settlement could have been more permanent if it had been given strong government and if the Frankish lords had not themselves been so unmanageable . . . They seem to have been quite prepared to exploit their own laws or overturn them for political ends. They had many qualities but they were not very likeable.’ (p. 229)

Over a decade later Jonathan would return to the topic of royal and noble power in his 1985 paper ‘The *établissement* of Baldwin II’. First of all, he showed that this was more likely to have been promulgated by Baldwin II than Baldwin III (to whom it had previously been attributed). The legislation concerned the king’s right to take a fief without recourse to the High Court, but Jonathan showed that previous historians had misconstrued this and in so doing had promoted an exaggerated sense of royal authority. In fact, the *établissement* concerned the sentencing of nobles found guilty of treason, rather than the accusation and judgement. In other words, it was not dealing with the process of trial but with what happened after a conviction had been secured.

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One of Jonathan's great strengths as a scholar has been an ability to sense inconsistencies in other historians' interpretations of the sources. Hand in hand with his research into new fields of crusading history is a careful correction of existing errors. From his work on the institutions of the kingdom of Jerusalem came a simple, but revelatory analysis: 'A Note on Confraternities in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem' (1971). Confraternities were initially dedicated to charitable works, but in the thirteenth century they grew in political importance and some have viewed them as an early manifestation of the Third Estate through the burgess classes of the kingdom. In fact, for the eight confraternities identified in the kingdom, Jonathan made plain that membership was usually limited to a particular locality or place of origin, and, while burgesses did belong to confraternities, many contained non-resident foreigners. Furthermore, two of these groups were for eastern Christians. Jonathan also showed the true aims of these associations: namely to assist in the defence of the Holy Land and to secure the crusade indulgence. New members were expected to bring their own weapons and to fight the enemies of the cross. In fact, therefore, the confraternities were more akin to the Military Orders than to burgess charities.

Jonathan's interest in constitutional history led him to confront the widely accepted opinion that Godfrey of Bouillon took the religious title of *advocatus* of the Holy Sepulchre in 1099 ('The Title of Godfrey of Bouillon', 1979). In fact, contemporary letters reveal that he adopted the mantle of *princeps* – one chosen by God, but a secular title nonetheless.

In the late 1970s Jonathan's work became more concerned with the motivation and ideology of the crusades. While much of this research was focused on western Europe rather than the Latin East, there was a need to examine issues connected to crusading and settlement in the Levant. A cornerstone of this was the seminal paper, 'Peace Never Established: The Case of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem' (1978). This considered the ideological background to the defence of the Frankish kingdom and drew the crucial distinction between crusaders, who had taken a temporary vow; and settlers, who lived in the Levant and had to deal with the consequences of crusading expeditions. As defenders of Christ's patrimony, the settlers were engaged in a morally imperative holy war. In spite of their sacrifices, the Franks became the subject of intensive criticism from their co-religionists in the west and faced accusations of luxurious living, avarice and a lack of aggression towards their Muslim enemies. Jonathan explained the reasoning behind such a trend thus: the settlers' military setbacks had to be God's judgement on their sins, so they must have been wanting in their behaviour. The westerners identified aspects of their lives that were open to criticism

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and highlighted them, to try to demonstrate how and why the Franks had been failing in their sacred responsibilities. In any case, for ideological reasons, peace with Islam was unattainable – except in one remarkable case highlighted by Jonathan. Such was the desperate position of the failing Fatimid caliphate in 1167 that on this occasion a perpetual peace – in contravention of Islamic law – was offered to the settlers, although political and military developments soon rendered such a move redundant.

After this paper, much of Jonathan's research was focused on the first crusaders; inevitably this led to scrutiny of the initial decades of settlement in the Levant. In consequence, numerous articles have appeared that link together these themes and locations and have explored the relationship between the Franks in the east and their co-religionists in the west.

Two examples of this are in his papers 'King Fulk of Jerusalem and "the Sultan of Babylon"' (1997) and 'Raymond of St Gilles, Achard of Arles and the Conquest of Lebanon' (1998). The first of these studied an entry in a French cartulary that described the reception of new counts of Anjou at the church of St Laud in Angers. Part of the ceremony involved the presentation of an ivory tau given to King Fulk of Jerusalem (formerly Count Fulk V of Anjou), and sent by him back to the west. Jonathan used this evidence to display the king's continued affinity to a church in his homelands, but also related it to the political events of Fatimid Egypt, where an unstable new regime made a short-lived attempt to secure support from the Franks. The second of these papers showed the identity of those associated with Count Raymond of Toulouse as he tried to establish his power in what became the county of Tripoli. A witness list from 1103 for a proposed (but never realised) gift to the abbey of St Victor of Marseilles revealed a mix of Raymond's personal household, some 1101 crusaders from the Languedoc, and a group from Marseilles that included Archbishop Achard of Arles, a former supporter of Emperor Henry IV and an opponent of the Gregorian reformers. Achard had been excommunicated for his behaviour, but had been released from this and may have been on crusade as an act of penance.

The establishment of Latin power in the Levant was one subject that followed on from Jonathan's work on the First Crusade. His interest in prosopography was shown in his 1983 paper 'The Motives of the Earliest Crusaders and the Settlement of Latin Palestine, 1095–1100'. In addition to examining the secular and pious motives that lay behind the first settlers, he identified a list of individuals known to have remained in the kingdom of Jerusalem. An examination of their backgrounds and careers highlighted the importance of patronage; of retainers staying with the main leaders of

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the expedition, whose own motives varied between the pious and the more secular, according to character.

Another aspect of settlement was the establishment of the Latin Church. Jonathan's papers on 'Latin Titular Bishops in Palestine and Syria, 1137–1291' (1978), and 'The Latin Clergy and the Settlement in Palestine and Syria, 1098–1100' (1988) examine, respectively, the relationship between the appointment of landless clergy and papal diplomatic policy, and the establishment of the Latin Church in the Levant after the early practice of removing non-Christians from places of religious or strategic significance. Another aspect of Latin settlement was the conquerors' relationship with the indigenous. In part casting back to his earlier research on the lordships of Jerusalem and in part prompted by the recent study of Ronnie Ellenblum (*Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge, 1998)), Jonathan's 'Government and the Indigenous in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem' (2002) explored the extent of acculturation between Franks and the existing inhabitants of the Levant. He indicated that the Christians and Muslims shared a surprising number of shrines and places of worship. Furthermore, non-Christians were accorded a status comparable to the Muslim *dhimma* (which allowed freedom of religion, required the payment of a poll tax and incurred certain legal disabilities), which the Franks adapted to impose upon Muslims and Jews. Some of these measures were also applied to non-Latin Christians, and Jonathan highlighted the legal distinctions drawn in their case and concluded that the use of the *dhimma* allowed the native communities to live alongside the Franks in relative peace.

The overlap between Jonathan's research on early crusaders and the history of the Latin East came to the fore in the latter stages of his most recent monograph *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (1997). This research, founded on an immense prosopographical study of crusaders from 1095 to the reign of King Fulk, showed how early crusading was, to some extent, reliant on particular kin-groups, and that the political situation in the Latin East might be manipulated by them. The most important of these was the Monthléry family who, by 1118, had come to acquire significant landholdings in Edessa, Jaffa and Galilee. On the accession of King Baldwin II a new level of power was attained; back in the west, Pope Calixtus II was another member of the clan, and he launched a new crusade in 1119. Baldwin II's failure to provide a male heir led to the selection of Fulk V of Anjou in an attempt to sustain their position, but his subsequent moves towards independence, which included his clash with Hugh of Jaffa, another Monthléry, led to a decline in their influence.

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This appreciation should end on a more personal note. Jonathan's knowledge, enthusiasm and utter commitment to his subject have inspired the public, students and academics over five decades. His ability to enthuse and captivate an audience, to take them back to the age of the crusades, is something quite special. Outside of university teaching and academic publishing, Jonathan's BBC Radio 4 series 'The Crusades' (1987) and 'The English' (1991) and his numerous television appearances testify to his abilities as a communicator.¹ He has also proven a powerful force in sustaining and perpetuating research into the history of the crusades. In 1979–80, he was one of those responsible for the establishment of The Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East (SSCLE) – the international organisation that has become the prime forum for crusading studies. He also chaired the Crusades and Eastern Mediterranean Seminar at the Institute of Historical Research, London, from 1980 until his move to Cambridge in 1994, when he established a joint programme between the two institutions. Jonathan was a key instigator in the series of Military Orders conferences held in London under the auspices of the SSCLE and the London Centre for the Study of the Crusades. It is no surprise that he has successfully supervised a large number of Ph.D. students, and to these individuals, as well as to undergraduates and academic colleagues, Jonathan has always offered his fullest support. His observations and advice (however painful to the recipient!), borne from the huge well of knowledge accumulated over a career devoted to the study of the crusades, have proven invaluable to all who have approached him. This is even more remarkable when placed against a busy administrative career that included a long period as head of department at Royal Holloway and Bedford New College (University of London) and head of faculty in Cambridge, as well as the chairmanship of the Institute of Historical Research, London. Jonathan's generosity with his time, his unmatched passion for his subject and his true empathy for the crusades places us all in his debt: this collection is some acknowledgement of that.

¹ Thus Robert Hanks, writing of 'The English' in the *Independent* (15 Jan. 1991), had this to say: '... *The English* is superb radio, the reason being Professor Riley-Smith. The Royal Holloway and Bedford College's gain was the theatre's loss: he intones, whispers, exclaims and insinuates. And contrary to the usual practice of academics, who believe that popularisation and demystification walk hand in hand, Professor Riley-Smith knows that the best way to make your public sit up and take notice is to apply three thick coats of mystery. For instance, contrasting the artistic sophistication of fifth-century Ravenna with the parlous state of the empire generally, he suggested you think of the imperial court as "the brains of a great stranded whale thrashing on a beach while pecked at by seagulls." ...' In the same vein, but less kind, were the remarks of another reviewer: 'Riley-Smith ... is a man much given to hyperbole, exclamation, stretched metaphor and dark, significant tones, and probably waves his arms around a lot.'

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PART I

People and politics

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CHAPTER I

The 'muddy road' of Odo Arpin from Bourges to La Charité-sur-Loire

Jonathan Shepard

Besides exploring the shift in attitudes towards rightful and righteous violence on the eve of the First Crusade, Jonathan Riley-Smith's recent monograph offers a prosopography of those who can be supposed, with a greater or lesser degree of confidence, to have embarked on the sacred *iter* to Jerusalem between 1096 and 1103.¹ The magnificent *instrumentum studii* that he has devised invites further research. What follows is an attempt to elaborate upon the entry for just one individual in Riley-Smith's 'Preliminary list of Crusaders', and its speculative nature is self-evident. Essentially our thesis proposes the identification as one person of two bearers of the same name, an identification yet to be demonstrated beyond all reasonable doubt; and it draws attention to a coincidence which might in itself corroborate the proposed identification, rather than just perpetuating a circular argument. Hopefully this enquiry will anyway prove to be of interest to our honorand, as well as of use to those pursuing the numerous lines of enquiry his scholarship has begun.

The individual in question is Odo Arpin, viscount of Bourges. Odo is probably best known for making over or entrusting his lands and rights to the viscounty of Bourges and the lordship of Dun to King Philip I in return for a sum that one source puts at 60,000 *solidi* and which is in any case likely to have been substantial.² His aim was to finance his journey to Jerusalem, and it is a fair example of the heavy costs that prospective

¹ J. S. C. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 196–238.

² The huge figure is provided by the late and not outstandingly reliable 'Excerptum Historicum ex collectione Freheri', in *RHGF*, II: 157–8. See also Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1969–80), v: 324–5. Important revisions to earlier views about the hand-over have been proposed by R.-H. Bautier, 'La prise en charge du Berry par le roi Philippe I et les antécédents de cette politique de Hugues le Grand à Robert le Pieux', *Media in Francia . . . Recueil de mélanges offert à K.-F. Werner* (Maulévrier, 1989), pp. 31–60, repr. in his *Recherches sur l'histoire de la France médiévale* (Aldershot, 1991), IX. See also G. Devailly, *Le Berry du X^e siècle au milieu du XIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1973), pp. 382–6; C. K. Gardner, 'The Capetian Presence in Berry as a Consequence of the First Crusade', in *APC*, pp. 71, 75 and n. 19; Riley-Smith, *First Crusaders*, p. 76; E. M. Hallam and J. Everard, *Capetian France (987–1328)*, 2nd edn. (London, 2001), pp. 101, 107.