

**Andrew D. Buck, James H. Kane, Stephen J. Spencer (ed.), *Crusade, Settlement and Historical Writing in the Latin East and Latin West. c. 1100–c. 1300*, Woodbridge (The Boydell Press) 2024, 312 p., 3 b/w fig. (Crusading in Context, 5), ISBN 978-1-78327-733-9, GBP 95,00.**

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This volume assembles contributions on the subject of historical writing and the crusade movement, specifically declaring its goal in putting works between the Latin West and the Latin East into conversation. It offers contributions from the First Crusade (1095-1099) to the later thirteenth century, many of them focusing on the twelfth century and the reception of the First Crusade. The thematic range is wide, straddling, for instance, chapters on vernacular texts (Kane, McCabe, Edbury) or gender dimensions (Lewis, McCabe). The volume is in many ways typical for British crusade scholarship: it assembles many of the usual suspects of this research community (twelve of the fifteen authors come from Britain), just as it focusses largely on, or often indeed limits itself to, historiographical sources (only two of the fifteen contributions, those by Smith and McCabe, examine other texts). This includes once again a strong occurrence of the usual suspects, notably three contributions on Fulcher of Chartres (those by Mortimer, Edgington, and Spencer) as well as three on William of Tyre (those by Buck, Wolsing, and Lewis). Nevertheless, the chapters show that one can still produce original results with these well-known accounts such as by applying new methodologies (for example, a narratological reading, see Mortimer) or by uncovering new versions of a text (such as the pieces of Fulcher of Chartres' chronicle included in Peter of Cornwall's *Liber Revelationum*, see Spencer).

The three editors penned an introduction which is admirable in its scope and for its depiction of the state of play regarding historiographical endeavors in crusade studies. It shows that the three editors have a firm grip of their field and belong to the most promising scholars of a younger generation that also emancipates itself from the heritage of the so-called Riley-Smith school (which had dominated not only British crusade scholarship, but crusade studies in general). The introduction aptly places previous contributions in a larger picture, just as it addresses important historiographical issues. It is also praiseworthy that it includes several German publications, since such do not always receive attention on the international stage. Yet, it is worth reviewing how much this state of research remains within the historiographical register, while most of the innovative scholarship on how sermons, liturgy, and exegesis interacted with and shaped crusading remains invisible (save for Katherine Allen Smith's work,



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which is devoted to exegetical dimensions within chronicles). Altogether, this is an introduction of which we would need more in our field, since it brings coherence to the volume and places it in a wider (though still historiographical) context.

The contributions are of varying quality and vigor: several chapters could have been pushed further in their analysis and arguments. For example, Katy Mortimer announces a narratological reading of Fulcher of Chartres' account, making some interesting observations, yet neither does she show a firm grounding in narratological theory nor is there much system to her analysis. Such would probably have required a more comprehensive depiction of the second part of Fulcher's chronicle (which has not received much attention, as Mortimer rightly notes) as well as a more extensive discussion of textual passages. Similarly, Helen Nicholson examines the silences of the first version of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum*, taking here the intriguing position that this text largely originated during the Third Crusade (1187-1192), and thus lacks the benefit of hindsight. However, her explanations of why the text omits certain episodes and facts often end up being speculative, just as they overstate the relevance of omissions. Lastly, turning to the heart of this reviewer's research, Katrine Funding Højgaard penned a chapter on Jerusalem's loss in 1187 in Western historiographical writing, including some stimulating observations, for example, on the use of the *Book of Lamentations* or the long-lasting traditions of city laments. However, the chapter suffers from only touching superficially on several larger subjects, and then reaching the somehow erroneous conclusion that all this was meant for shaping an »emotional community«, which displays a universal experience of the fall of cities throughout history. This disregards the unique situation of 1187 – in many ways a paradox to contemporary observers that was never meant to exist – with all its complex exegetical and providential underpinnings. Considering the authoritative work on the subject – Matthieu Rajohnson's monograph, which is, for some obscure reason, absent from the chapter – would have helped in this regard. Yet, let me underline once more that all three contributions also contain a number of valuable observations.

Turning to the volume's strongest contributions, Thomas Smith delivers another intriguing piece on the letters related to the First Crusade, unearthing how these correlated with and borrowed from modes of historiographical writing. These texts belong thus likewise to the historiographical register. Second, James Kane sheds light on the presence of the First Crusade in annalistic sources from Britain, thus elucidating a region that is otherwise peripheral to this expedition. He rightfully highlights that we should not neglect such rather short and unspectacular texts, which allow us to study the crusade's perception and commemoration in a more local context. Lastly, Stephen Spencer addresses the highly interesting case where pieces of Fulcher of Chartres' chronicle are included in Peter of Cornwall's *Liber Revelationum* (c. 1200). This illuminates how such a chronicle may have been repurposed and hence used. The contribution



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stems from profound work with manuscripts, including detailed textual comparisons that disentangle the different versions of Fulcher's chronicle. However, it would have been useful to provide a depiction of the contents of the *Liber Revelationum*, in order to get a better sense of the context in which Fulcher's chronicle is placed here, just as Spencer could have reached stronger conclusions about the purpose that it serves therein.

To sum up, this volume certainly contains many intriguing pieces as well as observations, even within those chapters that I criticized for certain points. The three editors are once again to be congratulated for heralding the volume with such a rich and exemplary introduction, from which this reviewer has learned much. The most pertinent point of criticism is that the volume limits itself to the historiographical register, instead of opening up towards other types of sources (exegetical, homiletic, liturgical) and the corresponding scholarship. Doing so would have sharpened the results put forward in this piece, just as it would have permitted to place the historiographical writings in a broader context (especially since this is published in a series called »Crusading in Context«). The limitation to »historical writing« represents in many ways an artificial and modern boundary, while we can see how a consideration of other sources modifies the same historiography, that is, our stories and ideas about crusading – but this task, certainly herculean in its scope, is perhaps left to another volume to achieve.



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