

Irina Savinetskaya

**THEORY, PRACTICE AND CHIVALRIC IDENTITY:
THE FRENCH CONTRIBUTION TO THE LATER CRUSADES.**

MA Thesis in Medieval Studies

Central European University

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May 2009

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Irina Savinetskaya

(Russia)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
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Chair, Examination Committee

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I, the undersigned, **Irina Savinetskaya**, candidate for the MA degree in Medieval Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

Budapest, 25 May 2009

Signature

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE.....	8
Crusading Theory	8
Proposing <i>Passagium Generale</i> . The “Ideal” Crusade.....	9
<i>Passagium Particulare</i> and the “Real” Crusade.....	16
Proposals on the Reformation of the Crusading Army	23
CHAPTER TWO.....	27
Participating in the Crusade	27
CHAPTER THREE	34
Crusades as a Social Interaction among Knights.....	34
CONCLUSION.....	45
Crusading – an Enterprise of Contrasts?	45
BIBLIOGRAPHY	47

INTRODUCTION

Even after the Christian world had lost Acre, its last bastion in Palestine in 1291, the crusading idea did not lose its attractiveness in the West. Its influence on European thought was so intensive that Alphonse Dupront insisted on the existence of elements of the crusading phenomenon at least until the seventeenth century.¹ Although no military expeditions to Palestine were launched after the fall of Acre, the recovery of the Holy Land remained a prominent idea in crusading theory. Military crusading activity following the fall of Acre moved from the Holy Land to the lands of the Baltic pagans, Moors, Mamluks and Turks. The higher nobility and gentry began to join either the Christian rulers in Spain in their raids against the Moors, or the Prussian knights against their pagan neighbors (*reise*). After 1291 a number of large scale expeditions against unbelievers were launched.

For a long time in the scholarship, these military campaigns were not regarded as crusading activity but as separate wars which had nothing to do with the classic age of crusades. Aziz Atiya, however, wrote the first general treatment on the crusading movement in the Late Middle Ages and introduced a new notion for these military campaigns – *later crusades*.² His followers, Kenneth M. Setton, Harry Hazard, and others at the end of the 1960s undertook the publication of a new history of crusades in many volumes. This new edition along with the classic crusades included the crusades of the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries.³ In 1992 Norman Housley wrote a new edition of the history of the later crusades -- *The Later Crusades, 1274-1580. From Lyon to Alcazar* – a work which summarized all the existing previous studies and became the new handbook of history for the later crusades.⁴ The last twenty to thirty years in the historiography of the later crusades have been marked by the

¹ Alphonse Dupront, *Le Mythe de Croisade* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), vol. 1, 15.

² Aziz Suryal Atiya, *The Crusade in the Latter Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1938).

³ *A History of the Crusades*, ed. Kenneth Setton, Harry Hazard, vol. 2, 3 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975).

⁴ Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274-1580. From Lyon to Alcazar* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

appearance of works about the regional contributions to crusading activity⁵ and of works orientated mainly to defining the notion of *later crusades*.⁶

At the end of the fourteenth century France was preoccupied with the Great Schism, the Hundred Years War, and an unstable internal situation caused by the acute madness of King Charles VI of France. At this time, however, the duke of Bourbon launched the Mahdia crusade (1390), the greatest large-scale crusade of this time took place (Nicopolis, 1396) and every year a great number of knights left the country for Prussia in the pursuit of religious battles. The national crusading propaganda by Philippe de Mézières reached its peak and the crusade was generally praised by his contemporaries.

The crusading theorists did not always encourage the efforts of the crusaders, and, however, the latter were a constant subject of criticism not only in the works of clerics (Michel Pintoin, Honoré Bonet), but also in the treatises written by authors with a lay background (Philippe de Mézières, Jean Froissart). At the same time the crusades were perceived as individual activity of the knights; they were supposed to combine crusading with service to their lord or their country. Financing crusading campaigns was generally the knights' responsibility, although sometimes it was covered by donations from generous lords. Despite all the difficulties attending the crusading campaigns, they still tended to be a popular type of "pastime" among knights.

Crusades were not the only "pastime" available for the French nobility. They were also involved in campaigns of the Hundred Years' War, jousts, tournaments, courtly life, military and courteous orders. The nobility was not obliged to take part in these enterprises or

⁵Werner Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen des Europäischen Adels*, 3 vol. (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1989); Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150-1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2001); Jacques Paviot, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne, la Croisade et l'Orient* (Paris: Presse de l'Université de Sorbonne: 2003), etc.

⁶ Hans Eberhard Mayer, *Geschichte des Kreuzzüge* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1965); Jonathan Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?* (London: Macmillan Press, 1977); Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998); *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century. Message and Impact*, ed. Norman Housley (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2004); Norman Housley, *Contesting the Crusades* (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).

to be a member of any order although their participation in such activities was in some cases regulated by the king and dictated by their group identities.

In this work I will try to establish the crusaders' motivations which influenced them to choose this kind of activity despite all the difficulties connected with it. I intend to investigate whether the French crusading campaigns of the end of the fourteenth century were determined by a special kind of crusaders' group consciousness and whether one may actually speak about a particular Crusader Identity.

In the first chapter I describe the existing crusading theory expressed in contemporary sources (treatises, chronicles, knightly biographies, poems).⁷ The crusade was generally perceived as an occupation honorable to God, although, certain expeditions and general weaknesses of the crusaders' army were often criticized in the sources. The second part of my study deals with questions concerning the individual responsibilities of a knight willing to participate in a crusade. The third part presents model of social interactions among crusaders. In this chapter I will try to define individual and social motivations that could have influenced the decision of a knight to leave for a crusade. Special attention in this part is dedicated to the social networks that formed during the crusades or were straightened by the crusades.

French crusading theory of the end of the fourteenth century is generally a well researched subject. Nicolae Iorga started the research in this field with his monograph on Philippe de Mézières.⁸ In the twentieth century Philippe became the center of interest of George Coopland, who published his *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* with a large introduction, annotations and a partial translation⁹, and later published *L'Epistre au roy Richart*¹⁰. Alphonse Dupront researched the crusading ideas of Honoré Bonet, Philippe de Mézières and

⁷ I am aware of the debate going on between the traditionalists' and pluralists' schools on the definition of the "crusade". In the present work I do not make any special distinction between such terms as "crusading campaign" and "crusade" and define as crusades all campaigns that carried the message that they were the Holy War against the infidels.

⁸ Nicolae Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières, et la Croisade au XIV. siècle* (Paris: É. Bouillon 1895).

⁹ *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, ed. George W. Coopland, 2 vol. (London: CUP, 1969).

¹⁰ Philippe de Mézières, *Letter to Richard II: A Plea Made in 1395 for Peace between England and France*, ed. George W. Coopland (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1975).

Eustache Deschamps.¹¹ A large part of this topic was studied in connection to the Great Schism.¹² Nevertheless, no complete study on the state of crusading ideas in France at the end of the fourteenth century has been made so far.

Individual knightly contributions to the later crusades have been studied by several scholars. Werner Paravicini has authored a fundamental three-volume research on the expeditions to Prussia.¹³ Maurice Keen and Anthony Luttrell have studied the participation of the English knights in the crusading campaigns in connection to Chaucer's Knight.¹⁴ Jacques Paviot researched the contribution of Burgundian knights to the crusading campaigns of the fourteenth century.¹⁵ The most studied individual French crusaders of the end of the fourteenth century are the Marshal of France Jean II Le Meingre Boucicaut,¹⁶ Edward's III's son-in-law Enguerrand de Coucy,¹⁷ Jean de Chateaumorand¹⁸ and the cousin of Charles VI of France, Philippe d'Artois.¹⁹

Jacques Paviot questioned the role of knightly ideals in the desire of knights to join the crusades at the example of the Burgundian knights.²⁰ He suggested that the participation of the Burgundian knights in the crusading campaigns in the second half of the fourteenth

¹¹ Alphonse Dupront, *Le Mythe de Croisade*, vol. 1, 256-298, 220-225, 212-217.

¹² Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378-1417* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Press, 2006).

¹³ Werner Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen des Europäischen Adels*, 3 vol.

¹⁴ Anthony Luttrell, "Chaucer's Knight and Holy War" (in publication); Maurice Keen, "Chaucer's Knight, the English Aristocracy and the Crusade," in *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Vincent Scattergood (London: Duckworth, 1983), 49-61; Idem, "Chaucer and Chivalry Revisited," in *Armies Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval England and France*, ed. Matthew Strickland. (Stamford: Paul Watkins Press, 1998), 1-12.

¹⁵ Jacques Paviot, "La croisade bourguignonne aux XIVe et XVe siècles: un idéal chevaleresque?" *Francia* 33/1 (2006), 33-68.

¹⁶ Joseph Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIVe siècle. Expéditions du Maréchal Boucicaut*, 2 vol. (Paris: Thorin, 1886); Denis Lalande, *Jean II Meingre, dit Boucicaut (1366-1421). Etude d'une Biographie heroique* (Geneve: Droz, 1988); Norman Housley, "One man and his wars: the depiction of warfare by Marshal's Boucicaut biographer," *Journal of Medieval Studies* 29 (2003), 27-40.

¹⁷ Jacques Paviot, "Noblesse et la Croisade à la fin du Moyen Âge," *Cahiers des recherches médiévales* 13 (2006), 69-84.

¹⁸ Gustav Schlumberger, "Jean de Chateaumorand: un des principaux héros français des arriere-croisades en Orient à la fin du XIVe siècle et à l'aurore du XVe," *Byzance et Croisade* (Paris: P.Geuthner, 1927), 282-326.

¹⁹ Émilie Lebailly, "Le connétable d'Eu et son circle nobiliaire," *Cahiers des recherches médiévales* 13 (2006), 41-52.

²⁰ Jacques Paviot, "La croisade bourguignonne aux XIVe et XVe siècles: un idéal chevaleresque?"

century was to a large extent influenced by the level of pragmatic interest of the Burgundian dukes in these expeditions.

I intend to further the studies in this field of research with a case study of the state of crusading ideas, crusading practice, and crusaders' motivations in France in the end of the fourteenth century. This work a contribution to the study of group identity in the Middle Ages. I believe that group consciousness is an important construction matter of history and needs to be studied comparatively on the examples of various institutions and enterprises. Crusades are excellent material for such analyses.

The sources of my work are chronicles, treatises, biographies, and poems. All these works were written by contemporaries, who lived in the second half of the fourteenth to the beginning of the fifteenth century. The sources can conditionally be divided into three parts. The first part is includes works expressing the knightly culture and written mainly for knights. They include *La Chronique du bon duc Loys de Bourbon*, *Les Chroniques de Froissart*, *Le Livre des Fais du bon Messire Jean le Meingre II dit Boucicaut* (*The Book of Deeds of Jean Le Meingre Boucicaut*), and the poems of Eustache Deschamps. *La Chronique du bon duc Loys de Bourbon* was written in 1429 by Jean Cabaret d'Orville. Its editor A.-M. Chazaud identified Jean Chateaumorand, the chamberlain to Louis de Bourbon, as the co-author of the chronicle. *Les Chroniques du sire Froissart* were composed by Jean Froissart in 1369-1400. The chronicles cover the period from 1322 to 1400 and emphasize the history of England and France. *Le Livre des Fais du bon Messire Jean le Meingre II dit Boucicaut* is the central source for the third chapter. It was written around 1409 by an anonymous author sometimes identified as Nicolas de Gonesse.²¹ It is a biography of the marshal of France Jean le Meingre II Boucicaut.

²¹ On the debates concerning the authorship of *Le Livre des Fais*: H. Millet, "Qui a écrit le *Livre des fais de Boucicaut* ?" *Pratiques de la Culture écrite en France au XV^e siècle*, Actes du Colloque International du CNRS, Paris, 18-21 mai 1992, ed. E. Omato et N. Pons (Louvain-la-Neuve: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Etudes Médiévales, 1995).

The second group of sources is formed by the official chronicle of King Charles VI of France. *La Chronique du Religieux de Saint Denis* that was ordered to the abbey of Saint-Denis. It was composed by Michel Pintoin between 1388 and 1421.²² The chronicle often criticizes the crusaders and particular crusades.

The third group of sources is constituted by treatises on matters of war and crusading. Two works of Honoré Bonet – *L'Arbre des Batailles* (*The Tree of Battles*) (1387) and *L'Apparicion de Jean de Meun* (*The Vision of Master Jean de Meung*) (1398) are studied in the first chapter. Three works by Philippe de Mézières will be dealt with below: *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* (*The Old Pilgrim's Dream*) from ca. 1389, *L'Epistre au roy Richart* (*Letter to the King Richard*), written in 1395, and *L'Epistre Lamentable et Consolatoire* (*Lamentational and Consolatory Letter*), his last work, written in 1397, directly after the fall of Nicopolis.

In my discussion I compare evaluations of the authors from the first two groups concerning certain crusades and crusaders. By close reading I try to identify the state of crusading ideas in France at the end of the fourteenth century. The sources help me to establish the relationships of knights going on crusades and to analyze their activities during these expeditions. I am not looking for the descriptions of battles, but for the role of the crusaders in these expeditions. Certain disproportions between the overseas crusades and the Baltic crusades will be noted by the reader. This disproportion derives from the necessity to research as many knightly interactions during the crusades as possible. The Nicopolis and Mahdia Crusade material does not give enough space for such an analysis. At the same time, not much information on the French theory concerning the crusades to Prussia can be found in

²² Bernard Guenée, *L'Opinion Publique à la fin du Moyen Âge d'après la "Chronique de Charles VI" du Religieux de Saint-Denis* (Paris: Perrin, 2002); Élisabeth Gaucher, "Deux Regards sur une Défaite: Nicopolis (d'après la *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis* et le *Livre des faits de Boucicaut*)," *Cahiers de Recherches médiévales* 1 (1996), 93-104. On the authorship of the chronicle of Saint Denis: N. Grévy-Pons et E. Ornato, "Qui est l'Auteur de la Chronique latine de Charles VI dite du Religieux de Saint-Denis?" *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 134 (1976), 85-102.

the sources. By the structure of the thesis I imply that the theory expressed in the first part of the present thesis can also be applied to the Baltic crusades.

The proposed analysis aims to research the crusading activity through the prism of crusaders' group consciousness. This approach may shed light on the sources of sustainability of such phenomena as the later crusades, which were still a prominent idea in the West even in the fifteenth century, "when all the regions of Europe moved towards the "new world" of Reformation, consolidated military structures, and the practice of *Realpolitik*."²³

²³ Norman Housley, *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century*, 12.

CHAPTER ONE

Crusading Theory

At the end of the fourteenth century the idea of a crusade was still prominent in France. Philippe de Mézières, Honoré Bonnet, Michel Pintoin, Eustache Deschamps, Jean Froissart, the anonymous biographer of Marshal Jean II le Meingre Boucicaut were propagating crusading ideals in their works. Not only the recovery of the Holy Land was considered to be an occupation favorable to God, but also the expeditions against Turks, Moors and Baltic pagans. However, despite the general praise of the idea of a crusade, one can find in their works extensive critique on the knighthood of the time participating in the crusades and of certain crusades. It is clear that the crusaders themselves gave the material for such critique. The expedition of the duke of Bourbon to the shores of Tunis in 1390²⁴ was not successful, as the crusaders did not succeed in securing their positions. The largest crusade of the time - the crusade of Nicopolis (1396),²⁵ which ended with the disastrous defeat of the Christian army, the imprisonment of the flower of the French chivalry - brought about the most negative reflections on the weaknesses of the French army in the contemporary sources.

Philippe de Mézières (1327-1405), a veteran of the Smyrna (1344) and Alexandrian campaigns (1363), was the chief promoter of the crusade in the end of the fourteenth century in France. His involvement in Near Eastern politics earned him fame as a person brilliantly acknowledged with Levantine affairs. At the same time he played an important role at the court of the king of Cyprus as a chancellor, as “an adviser, a familiar and a commensal”²⁶ to Charles V of France, and as a tutor to his son, the future king Charles VI. He composed his

²⁴ About the expedition: Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, vol. 1, 166-200 ; Léon Mirot, “Une expédition française en Tunisie au XIV^e siècle Le Siège de Mahdia (1390),” *Revue des études historiques* 97 (1931); Aziz Atiya, *The Crusade in Later Middle Ages*, 398-434; Keneth Setton, *A History of the Crusades*, vol. 1, 327-340; Jacques Paviot, “La croisade bourguignonne aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles: un idéal chevaleresque?”

²⁵ Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, vol. 1, 291-327; Aziz Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (London: Methuen, 1934); Kenett Setton, *A History of the Crusades*, vol. 3, 21-32; *Nicopolis, 1396-1996. Actes du colloque international, Annales de Bourgogne* 68/3 (1997); Jacques Paviot, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne et la Croisade en Orient*.

²⁶ Nicolae Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières (1327-1405) et la Croisade au. XIV^e. siècle*, 421.

major works on the crusading activity in the Celestine church in Paris, where he settled in 1380 and where he died in 1405.

In his *L'Epistre Lamentable et Consolatoire* he describes himself in his youth seeking the recovery of the Holy Land:

Il est vérité que ledit solitaire en sa jeunesse avoit parfait désir, selon la capacité de son jeune sens et fèble entendement, c'est-assavoir pour la douleur qu'il avoit que la sainte cité de Jhérusalem et la Terre-Sainte estoit en la main des ennemis de la foy, que une guerre se fist par crestiens contre les Sarrasins pour recouvrer la dicte Terre Sainte. Cestui grant désir lui fu tellement incorporé ou insipé que c'est la chose qu'il plus désiré en ce monde, comme le scet Dieu...²⁷

Contemporaries of Philippe de Mézières were also preoccupied with the crusading rethorics. Honoré Bonnet²⁸, Michel Pintoin and the anonymous author of *Le Livre des Fais*, Jean Froissart²⁹ and Eustache Deschamps³⁰ made a significant contribution to the crusading discourse of their time.

Proposing *Passagium Generale*. The “Ideal” Crusade

The “ideal” crusade was meant to be general, that is to involve all Christian rulers and its major aim was the recovery of the Holy Land. This kind of military expedition was known under the name *passagium generale* as opposed to the *passagium particulare*. *Passagium particulare* referred to a small expedition which was often locally or nationally organized.

²⁷ “It is true that this recluse in his youth had a perfect desire, according to the capacity of his young sense and his weak reason, namely, for the sorrow that he had because the saintly city of Jerusalem and the Holy Land were in the hands of the enemies of the faith, that a war will be made by Christians against the Saracens for the recovery of the mentioned Holy Land. This great desire inosculated with him so much and made him so inspired that he wanted in mostly in this world, as God knows it...” *Œuvres de Froissart*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Bruxelles: Comptoir Universel d’Imprimerie et de Librairie Victor Devaux, 1872), vol. 16, 507. [Where bilingual text is given, translations are mine, in all other cases the translation is made by the editor – I.S.]

²⁸ Honoré Bonnet (ca. 1345- ca.1405), prior of the abbey Sallonné in Provance.

²⁹ Jean Froissart (1337-1404), one of the most significant chroniclers of his times, worked at the courts of English and French kings. His statue is displayed among the most significant French chroniclers at the Louvre’s portal.

³⁰ Eustache Deschamps (1346-1406), medieval French poet, occupied important offices at the French court. Poet of Philippe of Burgundy and Louis de Tourraine. (*Eustache Deschamps et son temps*, ed. Jean-Patrice Boudet and Hélène Millet (Paris: Publications de Sorbonne, 1997).

The *passagium particulare* was usually perceived as a preparation for the final recovery of the Holy Land.³¹

At the end of the fourteenth century the idea of a crusade was closely related to lamentations about the discord between the Christian states and to the restoration of Christian unity. On the one hand, theologians and politicians alike were preoccupied with putting an end to the Great Schism in the Western Church. On the other hand, the rise of the Ottoman Turks evoked the sensation of an imminent Apocalypse. All the calamities of the Christian world, as the Hundred Years War, the unstable political situation in Italy and so on were regarded as signs of the end of the world. As such, therefore, the crusade was meant to be a core action of the whole Christian community that would unite it, end the discord and save it from the sins it was believed to be sinking in.³²

In *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* Philippe de Mézières offers a lamentable picture of the Christian world led by two popes. The Schism disrupted the unity of the Church which now became a two headed body.³³ According to Philippe, it was necessary to unite the lost *sheep* under the power of one pastor on earth – under one pope:

...pour conforter et ramener les chievres, aigneus, moutons et brebiz a vraye et delicieuse pasture, et recognoistre sans nulle sispicion la voix de leur souverain pasteur en terre, dont France, Espagne, Arragon et Ytalie, Allemaigne et Hongrie, l'une avecques l'autre ensemble soit unie, Navarre, Escose et Angletterre³⁴.

To achieve unity, a ceasefire between *le jeune Blanc Sanglier* and *le Cerf Volant*, that is between the English and the French king should be established. Only after they concluded

³¹ Schein Sylvia, *Fidelis Crucis. The Papacy, the West, and the Recovery of the Holy Land, 1274-1314* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 16-19.

³² Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski. *Poets, Saints and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378-1417*.

³³ Philippe de Mézières. *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, vol. 1, 354.

³⁴ “to comfort and to lead the goats, lambs, rams, sheep to the true and wonderful pastor, and to recognize without any distrust the voice of the supreme pastor on earth, under whom France, Spain, Aragon and Italy, Germany and Hungary, Navarre, Spain and England one with another together will be united”. *Idid.*, 360.

peace there would be a possibility to launch a united expedition including all the Christians against the unbelievers.³⁵

In 1395 Philippe de Mézières addressed a letter to Richard II – *L'Epistre au Roi Richart* – a treatise which attempted to persuade the latter to cease the war with France, to put an end to the Schism in the Church and to marry the daughter of Charles VI. One of the arguments designed by Philippe to appeal to the views of Richard II is represented by an allegorical contrast between two gardens. If the war continues, a garden of horror will appear, a place of suffering, where there is no justice, love, law or order. Peace, however, will create an orchard, where the people will prosper materially and spiritually under the rule of a king. After the letter was commissioned Richard II did marry the daughter of Charles VI and agreed to the peace. According to J.J.N. Palmer, Philippe's crusading campaign of which *L'Epistre* became a culmination, played an important role in the Anglo-French negotiations.³⁶

Eustache Deschamps in the balade *Voeu pour la paix* urges the Frenchmen to cease the war with England and to concentrate on the war against the Saracens:

Querons ailleurs guerre qui nous afiere;
Sur Sarrazins levons nostre banniere.³⁷

The same motive arises in his *Chansons Royaulx*:

Ne guerriez l'un l'autre desormais
Sarrazins soit vos guerre remise.³⁸

The war between England and France must be put to an end, as it helps the unbelievers in their war against Christians. In the second volume of his chronicle Michel Pintoin mentions among the first reasons for the signing of the treaty between the king of England and the king of France in 1396 the desire to help the Christianity against *the bad intentions and deterrent*

³⁵ Ibid., 402.

³⁶ John J. Norman Palmer, *England, France and Christendom, 1377-1399* (London: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 187-8.

³⁷ "Let's find elsewhere the war which makes us proud/ Let's raise our banner for Saracens." Eustache Deschamps, *Oeuvres complètes de Eustache Deschamps* (Paris: Firmin Didrot, 1889), vol. 5, 68.

³⁸ "Never fight one another/Saracens would be your new war." Ibid., vol 3, 172.

*enterprises of the unbelievers.*³⁹ Another reason for the treaty was meant to be the possibility for two nations to work together for the establishment of the unity within the Church.⁴⁰ The signing of the treaty frightened the sultan of the Ottoman Empire Bayezid I (ca. 1354-1403) so much that *he fled to his possessions to make up new armies.*⁴¹

Just as the war between England and France the Schism makes the Christians weak in front of the unbelievers. In the treatise *La dolente et pitieuse complainte de l'Eglise moult desolée au jour d'ui* written on the 13th of April, 1393 Eustache Deschamps urges the Christians to achieve the unity in the Church so that:

...per bonam unione, que inter vos hujus religions cristiane erit reformata, in magna devocione vindictam inimicorum Patris vestri totis amplexibus comprehendere possitis, sepulcrum cujus tenent Saraceni in magna vilitate.⁴²

Michel Pintoin reports about a message of the Hungarian magnates addressed to the king of France concerning the attack on Hungary by the Turks in 1393. According to this message, the discord in the Church made the Hungarians so vulnerable in front of their enemies that the Turks decided immediately to profit from the situation. The end of the message warns that if the French refused to help the Hungarians in their war against Turks, the unbelievers, who had already conquered a significant part of Bulgaria and Walachia would soon “penetrate without obstacles until the heart of Christianity.”⁴³

In *L'Apparicion de Jehan de Meun* of Honoré Bonet a Saracen among others appears to Master Jean de Meung in a dream and explains to him that he was sent to France by the Sultan to study the Christians, especially the French, as among the Christians they are the

³⁹ *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis contenant le règne de Charles VI, de 1380 à 1422*, ed. M. Bellaguet (Paris: Crapelet, 1889) vol. 2, 364.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 389.

⁴² «By the good peace which will be reformed by you in this Christian religion, you could perform with great devotion the vengeance of the enemies of your Father and his law, the Sepulcher which the Saracens keep in great disrespect...» Eustache Deschamps, *Oeuvres complètes de Eustache Deschamps*, vol. 7, 306-307.

⁴³ *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, vol. 2, 112.

most valiant knights.⁴⁴ Jean de Meung asks the Saracen to tell him what he has learned about the French. The Saracen gives the story of his travel from the Orient to Europe and about his arrival in Rome, where he knew about the Schism. The Saracen tells Jean de Meung that the Schism encourages him, as the Muslims do not have such weakness.

From Philippe de Mézières' perspective, the discord in the Christian world was caused by the vices of the Christian community. In *L'Epistre Lamentable et Consolatoire* he develops the idea of the "sickness" of the Christian world which spread because of four most important virtues Rule, Chivalric Discipline, Obedience and Justice replaced by Pride, Envy and Discord, Disobedience, Levity, Impudence, Luxury, and others. The same motive of *sickness* of the world appears in Honoré Bonnet's introduction to *L'Arbre des Batailles*. In chapter 29 of *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* a queen appears who recites the prophecy of the end of the world, which was written by Ephraim and concerns the vices of the Romans⁴⁵. This theme is repeated in the description of the vices of the Genoese. Genoa, thanks to the mercy of God, was a prosperous and successful state. But avarice and pride became their masters and for love of profit they had acted as agents for Mahomet in Egypt, Syria, Turkey and Barbaria. The Genoese are compared to Attila, the "Scourge of God". Just as Attila, they will come to final damnation for all the calamities they brought to the Christians⁴⁶.

Philippe de Mézières as well as Honoré Bonnet consider the French king the natural leader of the crusading movement: they both address their works to the king and they both set hopes on him as the only person who is able to put an end to the Schism and to unite the Christian world. Thus, Honoré Bonnet mentions as the most important reason for writing *L'Arbre des Batailles* the desire to instruct the king how to give the "healing to an age which

⁴⁴Honoré Bonet, *L'Apparicion de Maistre Jehan de Meun* (Paris: Faculte des Lettres de l'Universite de Strasbourg, 1926), vv. 315 ff.

⁴⁵ *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, vol. 1, 274-277.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 300-302.

is in such travail and disease.”⁴⁷ Honoré establishes the leadership in the process of the unification of the Christian world under the French king by mentioning some “ancient prophecies” which point to the present great evils and claims that, as “a member of the high lineage of France, healing will be given to the age.”⁴⁸ Philippe de Mézières dedicates to the duties of the king the largest part of *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*. In this part he evokes his famous parable of a chessboard. The four sides of this object are Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace. The practice of these four virtues leads to the attainment of the virtue and great joy of true peace. There are sixty points of the chessboard and four quarters of the board. The first one deals with the king in person; the second with the king and the Church; the third with the relations of the king and his officers with his subjects; and the fourth - with certain moral teachings touching the common weal of France and the common good of Christianity.

Philippe de Mézières explains the meaning of the parable of the chessboard to the king:

All I have said, as to the moral significance of the chessboard has been said with one aim, and has been intended to prepare for one great conclusion, namely that you should play the royal game of chess to the exaltation of the Holy Catholic Faith. That Faith through the failings of Christian princes, both cleric and secular, is, as it were, perishes from the earth and especially from the Orient. I repeat that my whole aim has been that you should be persuaded to undertake the holy journey to the lands beyond the sea.⁴⁹

Eustache Deschamps also urges Charles VI to recover the Holy Land. In the end of each verse in the Ballade *Sur Charles VI et son fils* he states:

...porter son ensaigne
Sus Sarrasins, et ceuls doit subjeger;
Jherusalem doit faire premeraine
Et conqueror la terre d’oultre mer.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Honoré Bonnet, *The Tree of Battles*, ed. George W. Coopland (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1949), 79.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, vol. 2, 96-97.

⁵⁰ «Bring your banner to the Saracnes/ And they should subject to it; He should make Jerusalem the first/ And conquer the overseas land». Eustache Deschamps, *Ballade MCXLII*, vol. 6, 69-70.

French crusading theory is significantly marked by a national discourse. In Philippe de Mézières' opinion, it is the French chivalry and the French king who were predestinated to liberate the world from the law of Mahomet.⁵¹ According to the author of *Le livre des Fais*, the French knights are the “most courageous, the most dashing, steadfast and the most chivalrous” among all other nations.⁵² Michel Pintoin gives the reply of the admiral Jean de Vienne on the proposal of the king of Hungary to organize the positioning of the troops according to his plan at the eve of the battle of Nicopolis which he then criticizes: “The French are used not to follow anyone; they always give example.”⁵³

In the third book of *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* Philippe laments about the state of the crusading activity in the Christian world during the last two centuries. According to the author there were only two attempts to conquer the Holy Land during this time, undertaken by Philippe de Valois and by his son Jean⁵⁴, while there is a certain necessity to organize such expeditions in order to help the remaining Christians in the Near East and Greece. In *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* in Venice, in front of the travelers suddenly appears an old woman, with torn clothes and grey, disordered hair. She leans on a stick and carries a little book, which was partially eaten by rats. Her name was once *Devocion*, but now her name is *Desperée* and she comes to plight the despair of the Greek islands of the Archipelago and to ask help and protection against Turks and the Saracens, who destroyed all the Christian world of the East. She states, that “some of them have perished, others are in slavery to Mohammed, others await the expected disappearance of a Christian faith”.⁵⁵

⁵¹ *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, vol. 2, 161.

⁵² *Le Livre des Fais du Bon Messire Jehan le Maingre, dit Boucicaut, Mareschal de France et Gouverneur de Jennes*, Ed. Denis Lalande (Genève: Droz, 1985), 107-108.

⁵³ *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, vol. 2, 488.

⁵⁴ *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, vol. 1, 398-399. Philippe VI of France took the cross in 1332, his son Jean II le Bon of France - in 1363. Both crusades did not take place.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 258.

***Passagium Particulare* and the “Real” Crusade**

While the idea of a *passagium generale* was never put under question by the above mentioned authors, the particular crusades and the crusaders’ behavior were often criticized. The general criticizing of the crusaders was undertaken in the stream of contemporary knightly critics. They were usually accused of a lack of military skill, their effeminacy and bad organization on the battlefield.

Honoré Bonnet is the only author among the above studied ideologists of crusade who explicitly discourages *passagium particulare*. He urges to abandon the passages with a small company undertaken by a king because they would only bring blame to the Christians and there would be a great risk of oppressing the Catholic Faith rather than increasing it⁵⁶.

The crusade of Nicopolis was the central event in the crusading activity of the end of the fourteenth century and it was mostly criticized in the sources. Through Michel Pintoin’s account on the battle of Nicopolis runs an exposed aversion to the crusaders. First, he accuses them of not listening to the advice of the ecclesiastical men concerning their way of life at war.⁵⁷ Secondly, he blames them for their pride and of the constant chase of honor which deprived them of military rationality. He calls “insolent bravado” the reply of the constable and the marshal of France before the battle of Nicopolis, which had as its aim the rejection of the military plans of the king of Hungary. Michel Pintoin included into the speech of the French commanders such expressions of their arrogance, as

Istis igitur attentis, quia hucusque, ut nostis, marcius ardor nos traxit ad honoris et strenuitatis titulum acquirendum, ipsi regi notum fieri volumus quod, si hostes contingat accedere, quotquot ex christianis convenerunt, procul dubio preveniemus in aggressu.⁵⁸

He even states that the crusaders due to their vices were unworthy of mercy and therefore the masses which were served in their absence in Paris according to the instructions

⁵⁶ *The Tree of Battles*, 127.

⁵⁷ *La Chronique du Religieux de Saint Denis*, vol. 2, 484.

⁵⁸ “everyone knows that it was our military ardor which led us here and that we came only to gain glory and underscore our valor. Therefore we want that it will be made known to the king that if the enemy appears, we will be the first among all the Christians gathered here to attack him”. *Ibid.*, 490.

of the king did not reach the God of Mercy.⁵⁹ According to Michel Pintoin, the defeat of the Christians was the celestial vengeance for the numerous crimes of the Christian army and the requital for their reluctance to listen to any advices, except the advices of youngsters.⁶⁰

Michel Pintoin strongly criticizes the crusaders for the massacre of the Greek population of the city Rahowa and for the execution of nearly a thousand prisoners. According to *Le Livre des Fais*, during the siege of Rahowa, the Greeks made an agreement with king Sigismund of Hungary that they would open the gates of the city under the condition that the Christian army would leave in safety their possessions. After the Christian army was let in, the knights brought all the Turks found in the city to Sigismund. According to *Le Livre des Fais*, the Christian population not only did not suffer from the crusaders' army, but was even put under personal protection of marshal Boucicaut.⁶¹ This account is contradicted by the Chronicle of Saint-Denis. Michel Pintoin also confirms that the Greek population established the conditions, but as the Christians already started to gain advantage in the siege, they were rejected. According to the chronicle, when the gates of the city were opened, the crusaders undertook a great carnage regardless of sex or age of the citizens.⁶²

Michel Pintoin, as well as *Le Livre des Fais*, report that around thousand citizens of Rahowa of noble origin were taken by the Christian army as prisoners. Most probably, the Christians wanted to profit from ransom, which they were hoping to receive for the noble captives.⁶³ Their plans were changed by the immediate approach of the Turkish army to their camp near Nicopolis. Probably, they were afraid that the prisoners would join the side of the Turks and they decided to execute them. *Le Livre des Fais* passes over in silence this episode of the Nicopolis crusade, while *La Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis* explicitly states what happened:

⁵⁹ Ibid., 496.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 510.

⁶¹ *Le Livre des Fais*, 94-97.

⁶² *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, vol. 2, 494.

⁶³ Ibid.

Unde nostris ad iracundiam provocati, ut fidelium relacione notum fuit, ex concepto dolore iniquitatem inauditam pepererunt, quam scribere siccis occis non valemus. Tunc illis excidit fidelitatis tenor, lucusque eciam infidelibus inviolabiliter observatus; nam quotquot ex adversariis se fidelitati eorum submiserant, spretis condicionibus cum juramento firmatis, o Deus ulcionum et humanorum actuum censor equissime, occidi crudeliter preceperunt.⁶⁴

The reaction of Michel Pintoin is supported by the war regulations, announced by Honoré Bonet in *L'Arbre des Batailles*:

...to kill an enemy in battle is allowed by law and by the lord, but out of battle no man may kill another save in self-defence, except the lord, after trial... written laws allows that, so soon as a man has surrendered, and is a prisoner, mercy should be shown to him, unless there were a risk of his escaping, with the result of prolonged war, damage, or mischief.⁶⁵

Jean Froissart also criticizes the deeds of the crusaders at the battle of Nicopolis. Before the battle the king of Hungary ordered the Frenchmen to postpone the attack on the Turks for two hours, while they would get more information about the coming Turkish army. The constable of France Philip of Artois urged the knights not to obey the order of the king of Hungary. Jean explains his decision by his excessive pride and desire for fame. In the Chronicle Philippe d'Artois says:

Oyl, Oyl, le roy de Honguerie veult avoir le bruit et l'honneur de la journée ; toutefois il nous a donné l'avant-garde, ainsi qu'il appartient à nous, et ne le nous doit oster. Mais pour la saint Georges, qui m'en créra, aussi aurons-nous la première bataille sur nos ennemis...⁶⁶

All Frenchmen agreed with the words of the constable, separated from the rest of the Christian army and attacked the Turks:

Or notons icy ung pou comment par l'orgeuil du connestable ils furent contrains pour leur honneur d'eulx tous mettre en ce grant péril; car ils furent tous mors et prins et cause de la perdition de la journée, de laquelle ils

⁶⁴ "Forgetting the duties of the sworn faith, that they followed religiously till that moment even in respect to the unbelievers, and neglecting the engagements which they took and sanctioned by their oath, they slaughtered without pity (oh God, judge justly the vengeance and actions of men!) all prisoners who put themselves on their mercy." Ibid., 500.

⁶⁵ *The Tree of Battles*, 152.

⁶⁶ Yes, yes, the King of Hungary want to have the bruit and chief honor of the journey; however, he gave us the avant-guard, therefore it belongs to us and does not have to dare us. But for Saint George, who inspired me for this, we also will fight first our enemies... Jean Froissart, *Oeuvres de Jean Froissart. Les Chroniques*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Bruxelles: Comptoir Universel d'Imprimerie et de Librairie Victor Devaux, 1872), vol. 14, 474.

eussent bien eu la victoire, à l'aide de Dieu, s'ils eussent voulu croire bon conseil et attendre le roy de Hoguerie et sa compagnie, qui estoient bien LXm bons combatans. Mais ils ne furent pas si advisés, ains par grant orgeul et oultrage ils se frappèrent en la bataille sans attendre le roy, ne aultre, et si n'estoient point tous ensemble VII mille, dont ils furent cause de la douloureuse perte et tellement qu'oncques depuis la bataille de Rainchevaux où les XII pers de France morurèrent...⁶⁷

Jean Froissart criticizes not only the crusade of Nicopolis, but other crusades too for their lack of spiritual devoutness. He speaks about the son of Philippe de Valois, Jean II le Bon, who took the Cross in 1363 at the great desire of the king of Cyprus, who was travelling throughout Europe seeking aid against the Turks. According to Froissart, Jean decided to go on a crusade for two reasons:

li une estoit que li rois Philippes ses peres l'avoit jadis voé et prommis; la seconde pour traire hors du royaume toutes manières de gens d'armes nommés compaignes, qui pilloient et détruisoient sans nul titre de raison son royaume, et pour sauver leurs ames.⁶⁸

Boucicaut's biographer is alien to any critique concerning Boucicaut or chivalry. He presents all marshal's crusading activity which was not always successful as a chain of valiant deeds. In the beginning of the account concerning the battle at Nicopolis he states his desire to tell all the truth about the events at the battle, because "lots of people desired and desire to know all the manner of the affair and the pure truth of it".⁶⁹ Although the account is full of inaccuracies and minor factual errors, its main canvas corresponds with other sources concerning the event. Most interesting in the account of Boucicaut's biographer is the complete absence of any critique, which is often met in other contemporary sources. He

⁶⁷ "Now let's record for a while how due to the pride of the constable they were all compelled for their honor to be put into such a great danger; as they were all killed and taken [as prisoners] and became the reason of the loss of the day, on which they could have had likely a victory with the help of God, if they would have wanted to trust the good advice and to listen to the king of Hungary and his company, which was of sixty thousand good soldiers. But they did not decide like this, but by their pride and outrage they rushed to the attack without waiting for the king or any one else, and they were together no more than seven thousand; from that they became the reason of the deplorable loss, which was the greatest since the battle of Roncevalles, where twelve peers of France died..." Ibid., 475.

⁶⁸ "One was, that King Philipp, his father, had formerly made a vow to do the same; the order was to draw out of his kingdom all those men at arms called free companions, who pillaged and robbed his subjects without any shadow of right, and to save their souls". Jean Froissart, *Oeuvres de Jean Froissart. Chroniques*, vol. 6, 372.

⁶⁹ *Le Livre des Fais*, 89.

presents to his readers the battle of Nicopolis as a collection of separated examples of knightly courage which ends up with the vast reasoning concerning the qualities of the French army:

...si comme il appert par toutes les histories qui de fais de batailles ou Francois ayent este font mencion, et mesmement celle des Rommains et maintes autres qui certiffient, par les espreuves de leur granz fils, que nulles gens du monde oncques ne furent trouvez plus hardis ne mieulx combatans, plus constants ne plus chevalereux des Francois ; et pou treuve l'en de batailles ou ilz ayeant este vaincus que ce n'ait este par trahisons ou par la faulte de leurs chevetains ou par ceulx qui les doivent conduire.⁷⁰

The author also tries to explain the defeat of the Christian army at Nicopolis. In general, at this time there were three ways of explaining the victory of the Turks over the Christians. The first consisted of ascertaining the numerical superiority of the Turkish army. Often the responsibility for the defeat was put on the crusaders with their vices and strategical errors. The third way was to blame a concrete person for the misfortunes of the expedition.⁷¹ The Hungarians were also blamed for escaping from the battlefield and for leaving the remaining Christians face to face with the Turkish army (according to *Le Livre des Fais* only the contingent of the palsgrave Nicolaus Gara remained with the French).

Boucicaut's biographer tries to restore the chivalric reputation and mainly the reputation of the marshal of France, Boucicaut, who was one of the chief army commanders during the expedition. After giving the common arguments of his time, the author proposes to the readers his own one. According to him, the main reason for the defeat of the Christians against the Muslims was the unfavorable Fortune. In order to strengthen his argument, the biographer appeals to the history of Troy, to the battle between Hector and Achilles; to the misfortunes of Hannibal, king of Cartage and to the inconstancy of the success of Pompey⁷². He links Boucicaut's biography with the lives of the virtuous heroes of the past, which were a

⁷⁰ "As it becomes clear from all the stories of the battles where the Frenchmen are mentioned, and especially from the stories of the Romans and many others that certify, by the experience of their grandchildren, that no other people in the world appeared to be more valiant, or to be better warriors, more steadfast or more chivalrous than the French; and there are few battles where they were defeated not because of the treason or because of the faults of their chefs or of those, who had to conduct them.» Ibid., 107-108.

⁷¹ Norman Housley, *Crusading and Warfare in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*, 92-93.

⁷² *Le Livre des Fais*, 99-101.

common heritage of chivalric culture, and therefore places the battle of Nicopolis in the context of the famous wars of the past. As a result the author relieves Boucicaut and his war companions of the responsibility for the defeat at Nicopolis and contextualizes it as one of the greatest battles in the history of chivalry.

Philippe de Mézières criticizes the arrogance of the crusaders. *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* starts with a scene, where the author finds himself half awake and half asleep with his sister Good Hope in the chapel of the Virgin in the convent of the Celestines. To them appears Divine Providence in the entourage of Loving Pity and Flexible Equity. A scene follows which describes the present state of the world: Charity and Wisdom left the world because of the sins of mankind; Truth, Peace, Mercy and Justice followed them. The author (Ardant Desir, as he is now to be called) and his sister decide to find the escaped virtues and to persuade them to return. The author and Good Hope receive advice to look for a guide who is able to lead them to Queen Truth and her fellows and in the quest of the guide they set out on a journey.

In the end of *L'Epistre Lamentable et Consolatoire* Philippe speaks about a mysterious and noble woman sent to the army of the king of Hungary for its salvation. The woman suddenly appears in the army. She is dressed in a golden hauberk with a green girdle and wears a laurel crown. In the right hand she has a drawn sword and a straight golden ruler and in the left hand – a small *brachet couchant*. After arriving she starts accomplishing her duties, but finds no obedience among the knights. A sudden Northern wind comes and turns out to be so rapid that the laurel crown of the noble dame loses its form and becomes black, her sword is turned into pieces and her shiny golden hauberk - into a rotten black sack. Finally, the noble dame, after having been disfigured in such a way, disappears from the army. Later Philippe explains the parable. According to his idea, the woman represents the Discipline of Chivalry. Her laurel crown indicates that she is the “mother of victories”, *brachet couchant* – that she

possesses divine and moral Obedience; the straight golden ruler signifies the virtue of the Rule; the drawn sword is an allusion to the virtue of Justice; the golden hauberk indicated that she is always prepared to lead a battle; the green girdle is a mark of her discretion. Therefore the Northern wind represents the knightly Pride which replaced all the virtues of the noble lady.⁷³

Luxury is another constant subject of criticism in the sources. Michel Pintoin gives a picture of the crusaders' activities on the eve of the battle of Nicopolis. The knights were wearing pointed shoes and embroidered clothes, were eating and drinking the most delicate food, which they brought from France not even trying to observe a simple economy. Every day they were visiting one another while exchanging courtesies.⁷⁴

Philippe de Mézières at the same time appeals to chivalry to abstain from overeating and overdrinking and from luxury exposed to the public (clothes, etc.) and to avoid costly plates, jewels and rich clothing at war. In *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* he gives a list of thirty rules that should be observed by the knights for performing a successful crusade. This list mentions such rules as:

- The chivalry of France must learn to eat coarse food and even great lords must be content with two simple courses;
- sobriety;
- Frenchmen should learn to water the wine (half wine, half water);
- a limit must be put to their costly clothing and other luxuries.⁷⁵

The list of Philippe de Mézières also includes dice games and all manner of dainty. On the same matter insists Michel Pintoin.⁷⁶ Along with the games they both urge the crusaders

⁷³Philippe de Mézières, "L'Epistre Lametable et Consolatoire," *Œuvres de Froissart*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, vol. 16 (Bruxelles: Comptoir Universel d'Imprimerie et de Librairie Victor Devaux, 1872), 516-521. A new edition of *L'Epistre* appeared in 2008, but I unfortunately I was not able to get access to it: Philippe de Mézières, *Une epistre lamentable et consolatoire adressée en 1397 à Philippe le Hardi, duc de Bourgogne, sur la défaite de Nicopolis (1396)*, ed. Philippe Contamine and Jacques Paviot (Paris: SHF, 2008)

⁷⁴ *La Chronique du Religieux de Saint Denis*, vol. 2, 497.

⁷⁵ *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, vol. 1, 430-40.

to cease the practice of keeping women in the army, of orgies and of bawls.⁷⁷ Philippe proposes that the main body of troops should have only a reasonable number of women to attend on them and those women should be modestly and decently dressed, for “they are not going abroad to display their beauty, but to serve God's soldiers”.⁷⁸

Honoré Bonet accuses the crusaders of excessive effeminacy. In *Apparicion Maistre Jehan de Meun* the Saracen, appearing to the Master in a dream tells him that the Saracens never feared the Christian knights, because they are too coddled by food, wine and luxury and cannot live without them at war, which makes them delicate, and they cannot stand hunger or cold, and when they sleep in the open, they lose their strength and health.⁷⁹ The life of a Moslem warrior greatly contrasts with that of a Christian. His only meal is water and little bread, he cannot hope for wine or meat in season. He always sleeps undressed and on the ground. He gives a description of the display of wealth shown at the Nicopolis expedition. Everything was made of gold and silver; the weapons were specially embossed; the tents were of satin and elaborately furnished.⁸⁰

Proposals on the Reformation of the Crusading Army

In *Apparicion Maistre Jehan de Meun* Honoré Bonet introduces a proposal for the improvement of the crusading army. The Saracen in his speech to the Master Jean de Meung proposes to take the peasants to the war against Saracens – the strong men who can survive any privation, because they have not been accustomed to luxury.⁸¹

Another project of reforming the crusading army was introduced by Philippe de Mézières. While criticizing the crusaders, he always underlined the special mission of the crusaders and their sacrifice in the war against the unbelievers. The realization of the

⁷⁶ *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, vol. 2, 484.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 484, 496-98; *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, vol. 1, 430-40.

⁷⁸ *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, vol. 2, 102.

⁷⁹ *L'Apparicion de Maistre Jehan de Meun*, I, 287 ff.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, vv, 517 ff.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, vv. 543 ff.

importance of the role of the crusaders in the successful crusade led him to the elaboration of ideas concerning improvements which could be applied to the order of chivalry. He developed his ideas in the project of a new Order of chivalry – the Order of the Passion of Christ. Four times during thirty years he composed treatises with which he tried to justify the importance of the Order and which he circulated throughout Europe, in 1367-68 and 1384, in 1389-1394 and in 1396.⁸²

This order was supposed to be the crucial element in the united crusade. Philippe wrote that the Turks and the enemies of Faith would never be defeated by an undisciplined army and that only a well-ordered and disciplined Christian chivalry, dedicated to Christ and the Holy War for the love of God could actually fight the well-organized army of the Turks.⁸³

The new chivalry was supposed to avoid all the vices for which it was usually criticized by Philippe. The knights were meant to live according to the common rule and without committing deadly sins. One of the most significant features of the Order of Passion was its strong religious context. It was centered on the knights' connection to the sufferings and love – of the Savior to mankind and of mankind to the Savior. The banner which Philippe designed for the Order represented the golden lamb (the lamb of God) on a black background superimposed by a red cross.⁸⁴ Philippe explains that the black background signifies the Passion of Christ, while the golden lamb is the symbol for the glory of the risen Christ. The knights of the Order were supposed to have the Passion of Christ constantly in front of their eyes. Their crusade was to be motivated not by such knightly virtues as valour and prowess, but by the desire to sacrifice themselves to Christ.

The new Order, according to Philippe's idea, was meant to unite the soldiers of Christ all over the world, under the commandment of all Christian kings and princes into *le corps*

⁸² Adrea Tarnowski, "Material Examples: Philippe de Mézières' Order of Passion" *Yale French Studies* (110), 165.

⁸³ *L'Epistre Lamentable et Consolatoire*, 489.

⁸⁴ Andrea Tarnowski, "Material Examples: Philippe de Mézières' Order of Passion": 166.

mystique.⁸⁵ This unity should consist of three congregations. The first one was to be located in France and should include also the knights from England, Scotland and Italy. The second “assembly” was to be composed from the knights from Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Prussia, Poland, Hungary and from the surrounding lands. The third group of chivalry was to include the knights from the kingdoms of Castile, Portugal, Aragon, Navarre and Majorca. Philippe was planning to use these three divisions as three fronts of the crusading army. The first one was to go from Venice to Turkey, the second one to go directly to Constantinople from where it was supposed to unite with the forces of the “Western” chivalry and travel to the promised land, while the third one was to fight the Saracens of Granada, of the kingdoms of *Bellemarine* and *Barbarie* (present-day Tunisia) and afterwards join the two first contingents in their expedition to the Holy Land.⁸⁶ The knights of the order were not only destined to fulfill the united crusade. In Philippe’s perception, they were meant to become *la cité portative de Dieu*.⁸⁷ The members of the order were supposed to become “the new people of Israel”.⁸⁸ They were meant to settle in the Holy Land and to establish the City of God in the recovered territories, as for “the time has come to build the City of God, according to Saint Augustine”.⁸⁹ The newly occupied territories were supposed to be governed by a military force, while the new order – *monarchie militaire*⁹⁰ or a “Christian Sparta”.⁹¹

The religious emphasis of the Order and the absence of its knightly bravado distinguish it from other Orders, appearing at this time (Order of the Sword, Order of the Golden Shield, Order of the Star, etc.)⁹². However, most probably not all the members of the

⁸⁵ *L’Epistre Lamentable et Consolatoire*, 490.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 491-498.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 473, 490.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 500, 503.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 458

⁹¹ Nicolae Iorga, *Philippe de Mézières, et la croisade au XIV. siècle*, 455.

⁹² Boulton, Dacre. *The knights of the crown: the monarchical orders of knighthood in later medieval Europe, 1325-1520*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000.

Order fully meet the expectations of Philippe. According to the list of the participants, among its members were Marshal Jean Boucicaut and Admiral Jean de Vienne⁹³, who were significant representatives of the chivalric culture of their time and who were often criticized for their knightly bravado by Michel Pintoin and others, as has been showed above. John Holland, earl of Huntingdon, half-brother of Richard II, was a patron of the Order, while being an approved murderer who redeemed his reputation on Gaunt's crusade to Spain in 1386.⁹⁴

Not only crusaders' critique could discourage the knights to fight the unbelievers. The participation in a crusading campaign was mated with obvious difficulties. The funding lied on the knights' responsibility, the combination of the crusading activity with the military service to the lords posed problems. Nevertheless, a large number of knights left France every year to participate in the crusading expeditions.

⁹³ Arsenal MS 225i, fos, 112v-114v.

⁹⁴ Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588*, 263.

CHAPTER TWO

Participating in the Crusade

Participation in a crusade was a matter of a knight's. It was a kind of activity that not everyone could afford. The crusaders were supposed to participate in a crusade at their own expense and only in special cases could the knights count on donations from their masters.⁹⁵ Donations were also guaranteed for knights who distinguished themselves on the battlefield. However, the system of donations did not work for all knights and in most cases the individual crusaders were participating in the crusading expeditions at their own responsibility. The crusades not only demanded travelling expenses. They were always expected to put on a demonstration of wealth and there were extra expenses on for gaming, food, and on the exchange of courtesies between knights that not everyone could afford.

Cabaret d'Orville in *Chronique du bon duc Loys de Bourbon* gives the most detailed account of the expedition to *Barbarie* (1390). The Mahdia crusade of the duke of Bourbon to the shores of Africa was the largest crusading expedition since the Alexandrian Crusade led by Peter I of Cyprus (1365). It was launched at the request of Genoa, which suffered from the marine robbery attacks of the Saracens. The army of the duke of Bourbon was organized at the expense of the individual noble volunteer participants and only transportation and provision was offered by the other. The news about the organization of a new large-scale crusade spread around Europe and knights from different regions offered their contingents to the duke of Bourbon. A knight, Souldich de l'Estrau from Bourdelois sent a request to the duke asking him for permission to join the crusade with other ten *gentilshommes*; the nobility of Castile and Rhodes were also willing to participate in the crusade; Enguerrand VII, lord of Coucy, and Philippe d'Artois informed Louis of Bourbon that they would put on his disposal two hundred men at arms; a nobleman from Normandy, Sire de Graille, asked permission to join the army with three hundred men at arms; several English knights from Calais with twenty-five noblemen and one hundred archers on their disposal also sent their request to the

⁹⁵ Jacques Paviot, "La croisade bourguignonne aux XIVE et XVE siècles: un idéal chevaleresque? ": 33-69.

duke of Bourbon; a nobleman Sire de Saint Georges, from the county of Bourgone also pledged twenty-five noblemen; the dukes of Orléans, of Berri and of Bourgone also offered their help. Altogether the army of the duke of Bourbon, according to Cabaret d'Orville, had one thousand five hundred noblemen.⁹⁶ Delaville le Roulx increases the number by taking into the consideration the limit for the French knights established by Charles VI (one thousand and five hundred men) and adding to this number the foreign knights.⁹⁷ Genoa as the side that requested the help was supposed to offer the transportation and the provision for the expedition. However, at the last moment, the Genoese Doge Antoniotto Adorno informed the duke of Bourbon about the poverty of Genoa and the impossibility to providing provisions and asked the duke to negotiate help from the Charles VI of France.⁹⁸ The king promised his help to the duke of Bourbon, but not because of the Genoese, as “he did not like them very much”, but for the sake of the honor of an expedition against the Saracens.⁹⁹ Jacques Paviot points out that for the small contingent of knights of the duke of Burgundy the duke granted fourteen donations, four of which were given to them before the departure which suggests that they were solicited for by the knights.¹⁰⁰

The crusading knights at Nicopolis (1396) were partially financed by the duke of Burgundy and mostly – by themselves. According to Jean Froissart, the duke of Burgundy asked the noblemen to join his crusade at their own expense or, in case they were not willing to join the crusade, to donate some means for the organization of the crusade. Thus, the old knights donated sums of money and the young knights joined the expedition.¹⁰¹ According to *Le Livre des Fais*, everyone went on the crusade on his own expenses, except knights and

⁹⁶ Cabaret d'Orville, *La Chronique du bon Duc Loys de Bourbon*, ed. A-M. Chazaud (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1876), 222-223. More complete list of the participants in: Joseph Delaville le Roulx. *La France en Orient*, vol. 1, 173-176.

⁹⁷ J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, vol. 1, 177.

⁹⁸ *La Chronique du bon Duc Loys de Bourbon*, 224-225.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 225-226.

¹⁰⁰ Jacques Paviot, “La Croisade bourguignonne aux XIVe et XVe siècles: un Idéal chevaleresque? ” : 35-36, 59.

¹⁰¹ Jean Froissart, *Oeuvres de Froissart. Chronique*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Bruxelles: Comptoir Universel d'Imprimerie et de Librairie Victor Devaux, 1872), vol. 15, 447-448.

esquires who accompanied higher ranked warriors.¹⁰² Boucicaut's biographer reports that the marshal took with him seventy *gentilshommes* out of whom fifteen were knights of his parents.¹⁰³ Some crusaders received donations from the organizer of the crusade, the duke of Burgundy, Philippe le Hardi, before the departure and upon their arrival.¹⁰⁴

The funding of the expeditions to Prussia was also the knight's responsibility.¹⁰⁵ In some cases they were supplied with resources by generous noblemen. According to Cabaret d'Orville, in 1384 Luis de Bourbon went to Savoy to visit his sister with his closest entourage of knights. Before he returned from Savoy to Paris several knights asked him for permission to spend the winter of 1385 abroad, precisely in Prussia as "many knights from different countries were going there,"¹⁰⁶ promising to come back shortly after Easter. "Do you have money?" – asked the duke of Bourbon. The knights answered him that the duke of Anjou already had given them money and transport before the departure.¹⁰⁷

Jean Boucicaut, upon his appointment to the office of the governor of Genoa, found himself in direct proximity to Mamluks territories. During the nine years of his government (1401-1409) he never missed the opportunity to fight "the enemies of the faith" and engaged in several expeditions against the neighboring unbelievers at the expense of the citizens of Genoa. Boucicaut's first expedition took place in 1403 after the defeat of Bayezid by Tamerlane at the battle of Ankara. At the end of March Boucicaut left Genoa and headed to Cyprus. The cause for the expedition was the attempt of Janus of Cyprus to capture Famagusta, which was in the hands of the Genoese, under the terms of a treaty concluded at the end of the war between Genoa and Cyprus (1373-74), following which Famagusta was to be returned to its former holders only after the final payment of reparations and after making

¹⁰² *Le Livre des Fais*, 91.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Jacques Paviot, "La Croisade bourguignonne aux XIVe et XVe siècles: un Idéal chevaleresque?" : 46-54.

¹⁰⁵ Detailed analysis of the financial issues, concerning the crusades to Prussia: Werner Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen des Europäischen Adels*, vol. 2, 163-310.

¹⁰⁶ *La Chronique du bon Duc Loys de Bourbon*, 63.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

amends. Long negotiations did not lead to any result and Boucicaut, according to *Le Livre des Fais*, was forced to go to the king of Cyprus by himself and to fight the Saracens on his way back.¹⁰⁸

During the expedition Boucicaut attacked Latakiah, Tripoli, Botron, Beirut, and Sidon. In Beirut he ransacked the possessions of Venetian merchants, after having heard that Venice was informing the Saracens about the advances of his army. In reply, on Boucicaut's way back to Genoa, Venice attacked the remaining forces of Boucicaut at Modon. Boucicaut's campaign turned out to be a complete disaster for Genoa. He returned there with only half of his vessels and wonly a part of his army. According to the Venetian chronicler Antonio Morosini, Genoa was filled with tears and lamentations.¹⁰⁹ Boucicaut not only lost half of the resources which he took for the expedition, he also drew Genoa into a conflict with Venice.¹¹⁰

Despite the obvious failure of the expedition Boucicaut made an attempt to launch a new crusading campaign in 1407, this time to Alexandria. He tried to persuade the king of Cyprus to join his expedition. The detailed instructions composed by Boucicaut to the ambassadors sent to the king of Cyprus show how much he actually wanted to persuade Janus of Cyprus to take part in his campaign.¹¹¹ From the instructions it becomes clear that the Genoese were not going to support the expedition. The basis for these conclusions is the indication in the instructions that the army would be composed only of Frenchmen and Boucicaut's desperate attempt to persuade Janus of Cyprus to take part in the expedition at his own cost. However, the king did not meet Boucicaut's expectations and the crusade did not take place.

¹⁰⁸ *Le Livre des Fais*, 207.

¹⁰⁹ *Chronique d'Antonio Morosini: extraits relatifs à l'histoire de France*, ed. Léon Dorez (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1896), vol. 1, 92.

¹¹⁰ *Le Livre des Fais*, 206-209, 218-267; *Chronique d'Antonio Morosini*, vol. 1, 36-70; J. Delaville Le Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIV^e siècle*, vol. 1, 399-458; Camillo Manfroni, "Lo scontro di Modone. Episodio della lotta veneto-genovese (1403)" *Rivista Marittima* 30 (1897): 75-99, 319-341; Michel Bœüard, *Les origines des guerres d'Italie* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1936).

¹¹¹ *Le Livre des Fais*, 352-356.

From dreadful accusations the archbishop of Genoa, Pileo di Marini made in a letter to Charles VI of France about Boucicaut's activities in the office of the governor, it becomes clear that Boucicaut took the means for his expedition from the Genoese treasury. In the letter the archbishop blames Boucicaut for the pushing of Genoa into wars and peculation of the treasury for war purposes. He does not explicitly accuse Boucicaut for his crusading activity, but his general lamentations concerning the ruin of the treasury and the great loss of Genoese citizens in the wars without doubt can also be applied to his expeditions against the Saracens:

Iste igitur, tamquam existimaret se non paci servande aut querende, sed ad excitanda bella gubernatorem datum, nec ad nostra commoda, sed ad opes sibi, nobis vero inopiam et privatim et publice procurandam, undique nobis conquerens tribulationes et guerras...¹¹²

The limitation of the knights allowed to take part in the expedition may suggest the preoccupation of the king with the rational use of warriors in state affairs such as Hundred Years' War and his desire to limit their crusading ardor. Jean Boucicaut was not allowed to join the expedition according to the limits established by Charles VI. Boucicaut's biographer describes Boucicaut's disappointment and his vexation with the prohibition of Charles VI:

...quant il en demanda congié du roy, il lui vea baudement ne nullement laisser aler ne lui volt, don't moult grandement pesa a Boucicaut; et tel desplaisir en ot que il ne se voutt tenir a court pour chose que le roy lui deist.¹¹³

However, Boucicaut soon received the permission to join the crusade to the Baltic lands, which may have been regarded by the king as a less dangerous enterprise. But the story does not end there, as while waiting for the beginning of the campaign in Prussia Boucicaut was urged by the king's messages to come back to Paris for another expedition. Boucicaut, not daring to disobey, prepared himself for the journey, but was suddenly stopped by another message allowing him to continue his campaign in Prussia. Boucicaut's obedience to the

¹¹² So he was appointed governor not for our profit, but for his enrichment and not to keep the peace or to seek for it, and to lead us the need, on matter of which it is spoken everywhere officially and privately along with the complains on the tortures and wars...Dino Puncuh, "Il governo Genovese del Boucicaut nella lettera di Pileo di Marini a Carlo VI di Francia (1409)," *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome* 90/2 (1978), 657-687: 680.

¹¹³ "When he asked the king for the congié, he did not let him go and did not want him [to do so], that aggrieved Boucicaut very much; and he was so displeased about it that he did not want anymore to stay at the court because of the words, which the king told him." *Le Livre des Fais*, 74.

king's orders justified the priority of the king's service under the crusading activity. However, as Norman Housley suggested, this episode shows the tension which existed between the king's service and the crusading activity which was regarded in a way as individual.¹¹⁴ The example of Boucicaut shows that it was hard, although still possible, to combine these two types of activities.

The number of knights traveling to Prussia increased during the peaceful periods of the Hundred Years' War. According to Christopher Tyerman, the highest peaks of crusading activity in Prussia followed the truces and peaces of the Hundred Years' War, notably in 1347-52, 1362-68, and 1390-1398.¹¹⁵ The tables of the crusaders who went to Prussia composed by Werner Paravicini show the same tendency for French knights in the years 1390 to 1395 making the greatest number of expeditions to Prussia.¹¹⁶ This pattern suggests that the involvement of Western knights in crusading campaigns in the Baltic lands highly depended on the level of their occupation at home affairs.

A knight willing to participate in a crusade was supposed to ask special permission from his master to leave the country – *congié*. Upon receiving the permission the knight became officially free from service to his master and could offer himself for the service to other noblemen. Thus, Boucicaut and Renaud du Roy took *congié* from the duke of Bourbon and went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Soon they arrived in Venice, from where they traveled to Constantinople. They stayed in Constantinople for the Lent period waiting for the permission of Sultan Murad I to make their pilgrimage on his territory. Murad I organized a solemn reception for the knights at his court and as a reply Boucicaut and Renaud offered their service to Murad I if he should decide to fight the Saracens. Murad accepted their proposal and they stayed at his court.¹¹⁷ However, at this time he did not lead any wars

¹¹⁴ Norman Housley, "One man and his wars: the depiction of warfare by Marshal's Boucicaut biographer".

¹¹⁵ Christopher Tyerman, *England and Crusades, 1095-1588*, 268.

¹¹⁶ Werner Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen des Europäischen Adels*, vol. 1, 99-101.

¹¹⁷ *Le Livre des Fais*, 61-2.

against the Saracens and soon the knights left. Shortly after this episode they arrived at the court of the king of Hungary and stayed there for three months. Probably during this period they were considered his knights, because Boucicaut's biographer indicates that upon their departure they received *congié* from him.¹¹⁸

This suggests that the crusades bore a strong individual character. Being performed at the knight's own responsibility, even though with a hope of receiving a reward in the form of a donation or part of the booty, they were perceived as activities beyond service to their lords or country. Individual knightly interests bound together French noblemen in enterprises and determined group consciousness of a cosmopolitan military élite seeking adventure, entertainment, experience and honor.

¹¹⁸ *Le Livre des Fais*, 62.

CHAPTER THREE

Crusades as a Social Interaction among Knights

For a French knight in the end of the fourteenth century the common crusading destinations were the lands of the Baltic pagans, Moors, Mamluks and Turks. The campaigns in Prussia were the most popular campaigns among the knights, as they were constantly going on and were easy to access.

Expeditions to Prussia were a unique experience for the European chivalry, because the Teutonic knights had developed, according to Christopher Tyerman's expression, "a knightly package tour", which included feasting, hunting, military action, and a system of prizes for the most successful combatants.¹¹⁹ In only a matter of several weeks spent in Prussia, knights could participate in a military campaign, in a feast and then return home with honor, reputation, and spiritual reward.

At this time the military campaigns to the Baltic lands can hardly be called crusades: they were military expeditions in aid of a friendly power brought about by political necessities. In 1386 Grand Duke Jogaila of Lithuania was baptized; this event started the official conversion of Lithuania to Christianity. Although crusading was supposed to cease with this event, the Teutonic Order's wars against Lithuania continued until the fifteenth century.

Raymond Kilgour states that "a crusade seemed to be in fashion only when there was nothing else to do".¹²⁰ The most frequent explanations in the primary sources for joining a Baltic crusade are a knight's boredom and the lack of occupation at home. The duke of Guerles, in order "to employ his time, while he didn't know what to do at home, went to Prussia."¹²¹ The same story is told by the anonymous author of *Le Livre des Fais*. When all the elite of the French army went on the Mahdia Crusade in 1390 leaving Boucicaut in Paris,

¹¹⁹ Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588*, 267.

¹²⁰ Raymond Kilgour, *Decline of Chivalry as Shown in the French Literature of the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), 77.

¹²¹ Jean Froissart, *Les chroniques du sire Jean Froissart*, vol. 2, 751.

as the king had not allowed him to join, he became upset and not willing to stay at court, left France as soon as possible in order to join a crusade in Prussia;¹²² another time he left France for Prussia because “it seemed to him that he was not needed anymore in France on the battlefield.”¹²³ Henry Lancaster, earl of Derby, also had his own special motives for participating in two crusades to Prussia in 1390-91 and in 1392. Probably, his almost constant absence from England in 1388-1393 (an expedition to Spain, two crusades, and one pilgrimage to the Holy Land) was dictated by his desire to avoid the political intrigues of his father and uncles in contesting the reign of his cousin, Richard II. John Capgrave explains his travels by the dangers to which he had been exposed at home: “Henry, therefore, seeing that he was himself threatened with danger, converted worldly strife, as far as he was concerned, to a holy pilgrimage”.¹²⁴

Not only propaganda instigated crusaders to leave their countries. The hearty welcome provided for crusaders on their arrival in the lands of the Teutonic Order was an important attraction for knights. The crusaders usually enjoyed their stay at the Grand Master’s; this is attested by the fact that usually crusaders went there several times during their careers. One of these knights was Jean Boucicaut. In a seven-year period of time (1384 to 1391) he went to Prussia three times, and planned one more expedition, but decided to postpone it.¹²⁵ Henry Lancaster traveled to Prussia twice, in 1390-91 and 1392, with a short break between the two expeditions; the duke of Guerles went to Prussia twice, in 1386 and in 1388. The count d’Eu traveled to Prussia at least twice, in 1385 and in 1386.¹²⁶

¹²² *Le Livre des Fais*, 74.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹²⁴ John Capgrave, *History of the Illustrious Henries*, ed. Francis Charles Hingeston (London: Longman and Roberts, 1858), 104.

¹²⁵ *Le Livre des Fais*, 63.

¹²⁶ The first time in January-February 1385 in the company of the knights from the entourage of duke of Bourbon (see below) and sometime in 1386. *La Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois* gives an account of the jousts in 1386 organized on the occasion of the marriage between the children of duke Alberta and duke of Bourgogne and mentions among the guests of the feast the Count d’Eu “who has just arrived from Prussia” (*La Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois (1327-1393)*, ed. Simeon Luce (Paris: Société de l’histoire de France, 1862), 313).

The crusade to Prussia in January-February of 1385 was one of the finest expressions of crusading identity. The most detailed account of this crusade appears in *La Chronique du bon duc Loys de Bourbon*,¹²⁷ but the expedition is also mentioned in *Le Livre des Fais*.¹²⁸ Among the knights who were allowed to go on the crusade were Jean de Chateumorand, Ouldray de la Foret, Aymard e Marcilly, Odin de Rollat, Jehan de Saint-Priest, Pierre de la Bussiere, Perrien d'Ussel, Guyon Gouffier. From Savoy the knights went to Lorraine through Germany and then to Prague. At the court of the queen of Bohemia they met several knights in the king's service, "who felt great joy for those who were following the road to Prussia."¹²⁹ From Prague the company set out for Marienburg, the capital of Prussia. Here they met Renaud du Roye, Jean Boucicaut, L'Ermite de la Faye and others. After the warm welcome offered by the Grand Master of Prussia the knights attacked Castle Endrach. The siege lasted for eight days; on the ninth day the Christian army started negotiations with Grand Duke Jogaila of Lithuania. According to the peace treaty between the Teutonic Order and the Grand Duke, the Christians promised not to burn the sacred forests of the pagans, where they buried their dead, while the pagans agreed not to destroy nor pillage churches.

The Grand Master of Prussia, Conrad Zöllner of Rothenstein, was so satisfied with the results of the expedition that on Candlemas Day (February 2) he honoured the members of the expedition in his palace in Marienburg with a "table d'honneur." The grand master set twelve knights from different kingdoms - two from each - around the table. Cabaret d'Orville mentions only the knights from France, Hutin de Vermeilles and Tristan de Magneliers, who were honored to represent the French kingdom. During the feast the knights exchanged gifts: a badge on which was written in golden letters: "Honneur vainc tout!" ("Honour defeats everything!"). The crusader's consciousness was frequently proclaimed on material objects;

¹²⁷ *La Chronique du Bon Duc Loys de Bourbon*, 62-64.

¹²⁸ *Le Livre des Fais*, 42.

¹²⁹ *La Chronique du bon Duc Loys de Bourbon*, 63.

the stained glass windows in the Church of St. Mary in Königsberg represented the coats of arms of especially virtuous knights.¹³⁰

When the welcome was less hearty than the crusaders expected they usually left the battle. Henry Lancaster, traveled to Prussia in 1390-91 and returned there in 1392. Having arrived, “when he found out that the reception which was given to him by the lords of the country was not as friendly as he had wished, he left them and proceeded to Venice, and from thence to Jerusalem.”¹³¹ Another amusing story is told in Froissart’s *Chronicles*. In 1388 the duke of Guerles planned a crusade to Prussia. On his way, he was captured by Wenceslas, duke of Pomerania; he was released from captivity only with the help of the Grand Master of Prussia Conrad Zoellner von Rotenstein. This incident made the duke of Guerles so “melancholious” that he decided not to stay in Königsberg and left.¹³²

The warm welcome played an important role not only in case of the crusades undertaken to Prussia. *Le Livre des Fais* testifies that one of the reasons for Philippe d’Artois to launch a crusade to Hungary was the fact that he already had been at the court of the king Sigismund once and his stay there pleased him so much, that he decided to join the king of Hungary in his crusade against the Turks.¹³³

Crusades were usually accompanied by the exhibition of a crusader’s wealth and status, which played a great role in constructing their identities. According to the wardrobe account of the Earl of Derby, on his expeditions to Prussia and Jerusalem in 1390-91 and 1392-93 he spent 4,438 pounds on the first journey and 4,915 on the second one. Henry and his household did not suffer from a lack of food or drink; the pruce was presented repeatedly with horses and hawks, with deer, three young bears, and a wild bull, perhaps a red deer. The members of his court had to be provided with clothing. The amount of music he had to listen

¹³⁰ Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274-1580. From Lyon to Alcazar*, 399.

¹³¹ John Capgrave, *History of the Illustrious Henries*, 104.

¹³² Jean Froissart, *Les Chroniques du Sire Jean Froissart*, vol. 2, 751-753.

¹³³ *Le Livre des Fais*, 88-89.

to seems amazing, for minstrels, fiddlers and musicians of all sorts were almost continually in attendance upon him.¹³⁴

Another well-known example of this kind of representation can be found in the *Chronicle of the Monk of Saint-Denis* that describes the knightly occupations in the fifteen days spent under the walls of Nicopolis before the battle:

Nam interim dum sic hostes importabiliter premerentur, in statibis fiebant liberi commeatus. Nostrates, qui auctoritate et claritate generis ceteros superabant, in tentoriis depictis summis ediis vacantes, ad convivial splendida mutuo se invitabant; cotidianas visitaciones et salutaciones invicem curialiter persolvebant, in vestimentis recentibus fimbriatis et manicatis superflue, et unde plus hostes captive mirabantur, semper calciamenta rostrata longitudinis duorum pedum et quandoque amplius differebant; que repprehensibilis dissolucio inter nobiles, et specialiter Francie, tunc vigeat. Exquisitis eciam vinis et depibus de navibus, que in littore Danubii stabant, habunde reficiebantur; sed ubertate concessa abutentes, ubique abjecta parsymonia, noxiis voluptatibus majorem dabant operam quam disciplina militaris aut expeditionis lex exposceret.¹³⁵

During the crusades not only did the knights not abandon their fondness for food, drink, and clothes. They also stuck to their usual occupations. Henry Lancaster spent ca. 69 pounds¹³⁶ on gambling on his first journey and only 12 pounds on alms.¹³⁷ Before the battle of Nicopolis the crusaders were mainly occupied with gambling and women:

In castris eciam quedam fatue et animo leves muliercule habebantur, cum quibus adulteria et omne fornicacionis genus nonnulli exercebant. Erant et alii qui absque erubescencie velo commessacionibus et ebrietatibus, periculosoque taxillorum ludo, qui perjuriorum et mediquorum pater est, noctes insompnes ducebant.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ *Expeditions to Prussia and the Holy Land Made by Henry Earl of Derby (afterwards King Henry IV.) in the Years 1390-1 and 1392-3. Being the Accounts Kept by His Treasurer During Two Years*, ed. Lucy Smith (London: Camden Society, 1894), xxxii.

¹³⁵ "In fact, while the besieged city was put under pressure, the Christians in their camp were devoting themselves to a licentious life. Our knights, who outweighed all others with their power and nobility, were eating well and were invited by turns to splendid feasts in their tents ornamented by paintings. Daily they visited each other and exchanged courtesies with each other; they always appeared in new embroidered dress with sleeves of unbearable length. But what most astonished the Turkish prisoners were their shoes with pointed toes, two feet long and sometimes more: an extravagant fashion, which then prevailed among the nobility and especially among the lords of France. They took from ships, which were situated on the banks of Danube, the most rare wines and dishes abusing the abundance which they had and not thinking to spare the resources according to some wise economy". *La Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, vol. 2, 496, 498.

¹³⁶ *Expeditions to Prussia and the Holy Land made by Henry Earl of Derby*, 115.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 118.

¹³⁸ "In the camp there were women and girls of ill repute, with whom many of them committed all sorts of adultery and libertinism. Some of them were not ashamed of spending the whole nights in debauchery and orgy,

Crusaders from different countries came into contact easily during the crusades. Such an example of knightly interaction is given in *Le Livre des Fais*. An incident between an English and a French knight happened in Königsberg in the spring to summer of 1391. That winter, the newly elected Grand Master of the Teutonic Order Konrad of Wallenrode, tried to launch a new expedition against the Saracens and called crusading armies to Königsberg. Some of the crusaders arrived there directly from the crusade of Barbary led by the duke of Bourbon, among them - the brother of Jean Boucicaut Geoffroy Boucicaut.¹³⁹ Others, like Jean Boucicaut and Henry Lancaster came from their home countries. Boucicaut and Lancaster were also planning to join the duke of Bourbon's crusade, but Boucicaut did not get the king's permission for this campaign¹⁴⁰ and Lancaster, having left England, suddenly changed his mind, arrived in Prussia in August 1390, and stayed there until the beginning of April 1391.¹⁴¹

An incident occurred between the Scottish knight William Douglas and a certain English knight, which resulted in the death of the Scot. On hearing the news, Boucicaut, as his biographer wrote:

...non obstant que a cellui messier Guillaume de Duglas n'eust eue nulle acointance, mais tout par la vaillance de son noble courage, pour ce que le fait si lui sembla si lait que ne deust ester souffert de dissimulé sans vengeance, et pour ce que il ne vid la nul chevalier ne escuyer qui la querelle en voulsist prendre, non obstant y eust il grant foison de gentilz hommes du pays s'Escoce, ains s'en taisoient tous, il fist assavoir et dire a tous les Anglais qui la estoient que, se il y avoit nul d'eulx qui voulsist dire que le dit chevalier n'eust esté par eulx tué faulcement et traytreusement, qui il disoit et vouloit soustenir par son corps que si avoit, et estoit prest de soustenir la querelle du chevalier occis. A ceste chose ne voudrent les Anglais tiens respondre ains distrent que, se les Escos qui la estoient leur vouloient de ce ausune chose dire, quie ilz leur en responroient, mais a lui ne vouldroient riens avoir a faire.¹⁴²

and passionately devoted themselves to playing at dice – the game that is the father of all perjuries and falsehood.” *La Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, 498.

¹³⁹ *Le Livre des Fais*, 76.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁴¹ *Expeditions to Prussia and the Holy Land Made by Henry Earl of Derby*, xxvii.

¹⁴² “...in spite of the fact that he never even met William Douglas, being guided by the prowess of his noble courage, and that this act seemed to be so shabby, it was impossible to bear it, nor to hide it without revenge and because he did not see any knight or young soldier who was capable of taking the quarrel upon him, although

The knights presumably were allied in friends' circles when going on crusades. From time to time small groups of crusaders going from one expedition to another are mentioned in the sources. Below I will give several examples of such relationships of Marshal Jean Boucicaut selected from his biography, *Le Livre des Fais*.

A small group was formed by Jean Boucicaut and Renaud de Roye. Jean Boucicaut was descended from a noble family from Touraine. His mother, Fleurie de Liniers was one of the wealthiest women in Touraine; his father, Jean I le Meingre Boucicaut, the marshal of France played an important role at the court of the Kings John II and Charles V. During his service, he made a brilliant career as a marshal of France and governor of Genoa. Renaud de Roye's parents, Mathieu de Roye called Flement, and Jeanne de Cherisy, were also of high position. He was chamberlain to Charles VI and the duke of Touraine. Jean Boucicaut and Renaud de Roye are mentioned together several times in the sources. The first time they appear together in Poitou guarding the frontier during the winter of 1385-1386. To procure provisions they were making raids on nearby villages together with other knights.¹⁴³ In 1390 Jean Boucicaut, Renaud de Roye and Jean de Sempy organized the famous jousts of St. Inglebert near Calais, which were supposed to last for 30 days from 20 March to 20 April. Any knight was able to take part in the jousting and had to fight one of the organizers of the jousts.¹⁴⁴ The third time Renaud de Roye and Jean Boucicaut appear together is on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in November 1388. Renaud accompanied Boucicaut to Hungary, where he left him; Renaud continued on to Prussia, while Boucicaut proceeded to the Holy

there were many Scots who were keeping silence, he announced to the Englishmen present there that if there was no one among them who would be willing to say that the above-mentioned knight was not killed by them in vain or fully, then he will announce it and prove it by his body and that he is able to defend the incident of the killed knight. The Englishmen did not want to answer anything on this but they stressed that if the Scots who were present there were willing to say anything about it, the Englishmen would answer them, but they did not want to have any business with him". *Le Livre des Fais*, 76.

¹⁴³ *Le Livre des Fais*, 47-49; *Chronique du bon Duc Loys de Bourbon*, 154-157.

¹⁴⁴ *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, vol. 2, 672-676; *Le Livre des Fais*, 65-74; Richard Barber, Juliet Baker, *Tournaments: Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998), 104-107, 145.

Land. After his pilgrimage Boucicaut was to join Renaud in Prussia, but by chance on his way he met Philippe d'Eu, constable of France (from 1391), and stayed with him.¹⁴⁵ The last time Renaud and Boucicaut met was at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396, where Renaud du Roie died.

On their way, Renaud and Boucicaut met Henry Lancaster, the future Henry IV, king of England, several times. The first time they met at the jousts of St. Inglebert. Boucicaut fought with Henry Lancaster ten times, breaking his promise not to fight with any knight more than five times after the Lancaster's father asked it of him.¹⁴⁶ Lucy Smith assumes that at the jousts of St. Inglebert Lancaster and his half brother, Jean de Beaumont, learnt about the preparation for the Mahdia Crusade (1390) and hurried back to England to start preparing for departure.¹⁴⁷ Henry Lancaster's arrangements are recorded in his Treasurer's Accounts. From this source it is clear that he planned to go first on the crusade to Africa and then to Prussia. However, the king did not give his permission for the duke of Bourbon's crusade and Lancaster went directly to Prussia. Neither did Boucicaut get the king's permission to go on the crusade organized by the duke of Bourbon. According to *Le Livre des Fais*, the rejection of his request "severely grieved Boucicaut, and he experienced such disappointment that he did not want to stay at court any longer"¹⁴⁸ and rapidly left Paris for Prussia, where he must have met Henry Lancaster with Jean de Beaumont. Boucicaut's disillusionment was evidently caused to a large extent by the fact that most of his war companions took part in this crusade: his brother Jeoffroy Boucicaut, Sire de Coucy, Thomas de Clifford with whom he had jousted just several months before at St. Inglebert, and many other knights.

¹⁴⁵ *Le Livre des Fais*, 61-64; J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, vol.1, 159-165.

¹⁴⁶ *Le Livre des Fais*, 73.

¹⁴⁷ *Expeditions to Prussia and the Holy Land Made by Henry Earl of Derby*, xxxviii-ix.

¹⁴⁸ *Le Livre des Fais*: 74.

Philippe d'Eu also took part in the expedition to the coasts of Africa. Boucicaut knew him from the expedition of the duke of Burgundy against the duke of Buckingham in 1380.¹⁴⁹ In the winter of 1387-88 Philippe d'Eu went on a crusade to Prussia¹⁵⁰ and afterwards on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where he met Boucicaut again. Boucicaut's pilgrimage was already coming to an end when he accidentally heard that Philippe d'Eu had been arrested in Damascus by the sultan of Egypt. Boucicaut decided to join the count of Eu in spite of the fact that he had to leave his ship full of provisions for the crusade in Prussia. Instead of crusading with his friend Renaud de Roye, Boucicaut preferred to stay four months in captivity with Philippe, the relative of Charles VI.¹⁵¹ In captivity, Boucicaut, Philippe d'Eu and his companions Jean de Cresque and seneschal d'Eu composed *Les Cent Ballades*¹⁵² – a poem about pure love and devotion. Finally, Boucicaut and Philippe d'Eu participated together at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396. The Count of Eu died in captivity in the Ottoman Empire a year later.

Philippe d'Eu, Enguerrand de Coucy and Henry de Bar, known to Boucicaut from his adolescent years spent at the court of the dauphin, future king Charles VI and through the Order of *Baboue* which Boucicaut and his brother were also members of,¹⁵³ probably represented another small group of knights alike. On their departure to the Mahdia Crusade in 1390 Eustache Deschamps composed a comic poem about their wives waiting for them from the crusade¹⁵⁴. Henry de Bar was married to the daughter of Sire de Coucy. In 1396 Henry de Bar died at the battlefield of Nicopolis, while Enguerrand de Coucy died at Mikalidsch on the 18th of February, 1397.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 21-23.

¹⁵⁰ Werner Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen des Europäischen Adels*, vol. 1, 98.

¹⁵¹ *Le Livre des Fais*, 61-64; J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient*, vol.1, 159-165.

¹⁵² *Les Cent Ballades*, ed. Gaston Raynaud (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1905).

¹⁵³ *Oeuvres d'Eustache Deschamps*, Ballade DCCCCXXVII "Sur l'ordre de la Baboue", vol. 5, 134.

¹⁵⁴ *Oeuvres d'Eustache Deschamps*, Ballade DCCLXIX "Sur l'expédition de Barbarie", vol. 4, 266-67.

¹⁵⁵ "Index des noms propres", *Le Livre des Fais*.

Another knight who crossed Boucicaut's path fairly often was Thomas de Clifford, an English knight, a nephew of William de Beauchamp, chamberlain of Richard II and captain of Calais from 1383. The first time they are seen together is at single combat in 1386; Thomas de Clifford challenged Boucicaut to a duel. Despite the custom which dictated that the challenger had to find his opponent, Boucicaut went to Calais to meet Thomas de Clifford fearing that the king and other French nobles would stop an Englishman if they knew the reason for his travel.¹⁵⁶ Secondly, Boucicaut met Sire de Clifford at the jousts of St. Inglebert in 1390. As mentioned above, Boucicaut was one of the organizers of the jousts and probably Thomas de Clifford wanted to fight back. They appeared together in Prussia in spring 1391.¹⁵⁷ Before this expedition Thomas de Clifford appears in the sources on the Mahdia expedition (1390),¹⁵⁸ along with Boucicaut's brother Geoffroy le Meingre, who was also in Prussia that winter.¹⁵⁹

Jean Chateaumorand (1352-1429), chamberlain of the duke of Bourbon, was one of the most devoted friends of Boucicaut. For the first time they are mentioned together in Prussia in January-February 1385.¹⁶⁰ In 1385-1386 they spent winter in Poitou guarding the frontiers together with Renaud du Roy mentioned above and other knights. They survived during the battle of Nicopolis and in 1399 Chateaumorand participated under the commandment of Boucicaut in the expedition against the Turks in favor of Manuel II Palaeologus, Byzantine emperor.¹⁶¹ In 1401 Chateaumorand became one of the thirteen members of the Order of the White Lady on the Green Field, founded by Boucicaut.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁶ *Le Livre des Fais*, 54-55.

¹⁵⁷ *Die Preussenreisen des Europäischen Adels*, vol. 1, 126.

¹⁵⁸ *Chronique du bon Duc Loys de Bourbon*, 238.

¹⁵⁹ *Le Livre des Fais*, 75.

¹⁶⁰ *Le Livre des Fais*, 40; *La Chronique du Bon Duc Loys de Bourbon*, 62-64.

¹⁶¹ *Le Livre des Fais*, 133-147; *La Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, vol. 2, 558-564.

¹⁶² *Le Livre des Fais*, 150-171.

Relationships established during these crusades seem to have been long-lasting. Thus, Froissart reports that on the death of Wautier de Zelles, sire de Balastre in 1387, the duke of Guerles was very upset because a year before they had been together in Prussia on a crusade:

...de laquelle mort et aventure le duc de Guerles, quand on lui conta, fut trop durement courroucé; et le plaignit, et vien le montra; et dit que la mort du jeune chevalier déplaisoit à lui grandement, car il étoit fracieux homme, habile, courtois et jolie; et aussi ledit chevalier, l'année devant, avoit été en Prusse avec le duc et sa compagnie; pourquoi da la mort de lui il en fut plus tendre.¹⁶³

¹⁶³ "... of whose death and adventure the Duke of Guerles, when he was told about it, became very sad and began to cry, which he easily showed; and he said that the death of the young knight displeased him greatly because he was a graceful man, skilled, courteous and beautiful, and also this knight the year before had been in Prussia with the Duke and his company; that's why his death made him sad." Jean Froissart, *Les chroniques du sire Jean Froissart*, ed. J. A. C. Bouchon (Paris: F. Wattelier et Libraires, 1837), vol. 2, 711. [Due to the technical reasons, I was not able to adjust the footnote to the edition of the Froissart's Chronicles made by Kervyn de Lettenhove, which I am using in this work].

CONCLUSION

Crusading – an Enterprise of Contrasts?

At the end of the fourteenth century crusading was generally praised, but also criticized in particular concerning the *passagium particulare*. The campaign of Nicopolis (1396) made the weaknesses of the French crusading army obvious and brought about an extensive critique of the French knighthood.

Crusading activity (if was not organized or propagated by the king) was mostly considered as somehow marginal activity in regard to the participation in the state affairs. Therefore, it was not easy for knights to combine crusading activity with the service to their lords or to their country. Being to some extent a business enterprise, crusades needed investment, which in most cases were not compensated. Crusades were not only associated with travel and military expenses; they were also supposed to be a demonstration of knightly wealth. Despite these necessities, French crusaders contributed much to the crusading campaigns of the Late Middle Ages.

At the end of the fourteenth century crusading was a matter of prestige. The crusaders were not provincial gentry lacking occupation at home. Most of them were outstanding warriors with significant military experience, occupying excellent offices and being acknowledged at the European courts. French crusading knights constituted a cosmopolitan chivalric elite along with the knights from England, Germany, Italy, and other regions.

As a crusade was an expensive expedition, not everyone could afford to go, even though knightly consciousness and culture dictated participation. Anthony Luttrell gives the example of an English knight, Sir Walter Malebyse who had to mortgage his lands before he could afford to set out for the crusade in 1366.¹⁶⁴

In the present work I have shown that crusaders were motivated by several aspects:

¹⁶⁴ Anthony Luttrell, “Chaucer’s Knight and Holy War”, 25.

1. Crusade was still an honorable expedition as a confirmation of knightly reputation and as a religious exercise.
2. Crusading campaigns were a field of social interactions among knights along with the orders, jousts and tournaments. Participation in these activities constituted the success of noblemen at court.
3. Knights were motivated by the entertainment aspects, provided by leaders of the crusading campaigns.

Thus, crusades were one of the constructive elements of knightly identity. Based on the results of this study one cannot speak about a special Crusader Identity, but about Crusader Consciousness, which was an indispensable part of the identity of late medieval knights.

This analysis is certainly incomplete. A closer study of primary and secondary sources would broaden the horizons of research. In particular, the study of archival documents could raise the analysis to another level. A comparison between the French and English crusading chivalry could strengthen the arguments of the present study. Nevertheless, I do hope that the present analysis may be seen as a contribution to the better understanding of the crusading movement in the Late Middle Ages, “a persisting icon of western culture,”¹⁶⁵ and the contrasting patterns of its evaluation.

¹⁶⁵ Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 1.

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