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Family Memory

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Introduction

Standing at the forefront of modern understandings of memory, theories of “social” and “collective” memory hold that understandings of and attitudes toward the past are not primarily individual, but inherently social: living within, and at the interstices between, groups and networks. Studies of social memory have highlighted the wide variety of different contexts in which collective memory can inhere (what Pierre Nora called the “organizations found in nature”),¹ but for Maurice Halbwachs, the theorist who first introduced the concept of social memory, the family always occupied a special place.² Because, “[o]ur kin communicate to us our first notions about people and things,” the family was always the fundamental framework (*cadre*) of memory for Halbwachs.³ As distinct from other groups, Halbwachs believed, families have specific mnemonic practices, are concerned with certain types of memories, and are likely to invoke the past to certain didactic and normative ends.⁴ In the pre-modern world of the crusades, the kin-group occupied a central place at the core of other social structures, in politics and in other cultural traditions.⁵ Therefore, if we are to understand how aspects of the crusading phenomenon were remembered or how aspects of the crusades were constructed and represented within different communities, kinship must always occupy a special place in our inquiries.

The importance of family memory extends across many communities and cultures influenced or affected by the crusades. Whether we choose to examine the elderly Syrian Arab aristocrat Usamah ibn

¹ Pierre Nora, *Rethinking France: Les lieux de mémoire*, tr. Mary Trouille, under the direction of David P. Jordan and Pierre Nora (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), xx.

² What follows is taken from the analysis of Halbwachs views of family memory by Astrid Erll, “Locating Family in Cultural Memory Studies,” *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 42 (2011): 303-318.

³ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, tr. Lewis A Coser (Chicago, 1992), cited in Erll, “Locating Family,” 305.

⁴ Erll, “Locating Family,” 306-8.

⁵ For some classic functionalist approaches see the essays in Jack Goody, ed., *The Character of Kinship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973). For the centrality of family to the memories of peasant societies in Europe see Chris Wickham and James Fentress, *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 100, 112.

Munquidh who collected his autobiographical reflections in a treatise on fortune in c. 1183, the Rhineland rabbi Ephraim of Bonn who chronicled massacres of the Jews in 1146, the Byzantine princess Anna Komnene who fiercely defended her father's handling of the First Crusade as Byzantium faced its sequel, or the villagers who told their stories to inquisitors following the conquest of Occitania by the Albigensian crusade: all either explicitly or implicitly recall the implications of the crusades for different communities through the framework of kinship.⁶ As these examples teach us, it was within families that the destruction wreaked by crusades was remembered, and within families that strategies for survival and resistance were negotiated.

It is from the perspective of Latin Christian Europe, however, that family memory has been seen to have played the greatest role not only in the memorialization of crusades, but in shaping the very institutions of crusading. Crusade expeditions were enormously complex, expensive, risky, and potentially traumatic ventures, and so deciding whether to participate in these ventures and determining how to undertake them required the involvement of the immediate and sometimes also the more extended kin group. Given both the unfolding of the crusades over time and the way in which crusading could be interpreted within the broader sweep of Christian salvation history, families were also critical in the transmission of ideas about the crusades not only within but also between generations, defining institutions and shaping attitudes over time. Hence, in the Latin West, kinship structures were critical both practically and ideologically to the success and endurance of the crusades. This chapter will track the most recent developments in scholarship concerning the family, memory, and the crusades in a western European context.

⁶ For Usamah ibn Munquidh see *The Book of Contemplation: Islam and the Crusades*, tr. Paul M. Cobb (London: Penguin, 2008); for Ephraim of Bonn's account of the massacres of 1146 see Chaviva Levin, "Constructing Memories of Martyrdom: Contrasting Portrayals of Martyrdom in the Hebrew Narratives of the First and Second Crusade," in *Remembering the Crusades: Myth, Image, and Identity*, ed. Nicholas Paul and Suzanne Yaeger (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012): 50-68; for the villagers before the inquisition see Megan Cassidy-Welch, "Refugees: Views from Thirteenth-Century France," in *Why the Middle Ages Matter: Medieval Light on Modern Injustice*, ed. Celia Chazelle, Simon Doubleday, Felice Lifshitz, and Amy G. Remensnyder (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), pp. 141-53.

What is a “family”? Kinship network, lineage, and familia

Before we talk about family memory, it seems prudent to say a few words about what medieval European societies and the historians who study them believed “the family” to be. Prudent, because the meaning the Latin noun *familia* to describe the medieval nuclear family as well as its legally subservient household is quite different from that of its modern English translation “family,” which commonly describes the nuclear unit formed by a husband and wife and their closest blood relatives; but also because our understanding of how medieval families (in the modern sense of the word) were structured and perceived of themselves has undergone drastic change over the last century. The historiographical arguments underpinning this change have been summarized brilliantly by David Crouch and others, and there is no need to outline them in detail here.⁷ Suffice to say that the model for conceptualizing “family” has developed from one subjecting it entirely to the pressure of outside social and economic forces, which led to the progressive nuclearisation of families,⁸ to one dismissive of external influences and emphasizing continuity and complexity. The difference between the two models is enormous. Whereas the former – mainly the work of Karl Schmid and, most of all, George Duby – postulated a radical societal change around the year 1000, which transformed medieval aristocratic families (in France and Germany) from horizontally structured groups of individuals related by agnatic and cognatic kinship to a common ancestor into much narrower defined patrilineal ones with strict inheritance rules based on primogeniture, the latter acknowledges no such societal change and is generally more skeptical about the importance (and existence) of patrilineal primogeniture *strictu sensu*.

There are two main reasons for this paradigm shift from the Duby/Schmid model to its antithesis. The first is that the societal transformations postulated by Duby for France (especially the Mâconnais) and by Schmid for the Rhine region, which allegedly had caused families to change, have been called into

⁷ David Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 87-170.

⁸ Émile Durkheim, “La famille conjugale,” *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger* 91 (1921): 1-14; Marcel Mauss, “Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques,” *L'Année Sociologique* (1925), tr. by Ian Cunnison as *The Gift. Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (London: Cohen & West, 1954); David Herlihy, *Medieval Households* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985)

question. In large parts of Europe (France and Germany included) they simply cannot be detected, rendering the thesis of a universal mutation of society around the year 1000 untenable.⁹ The second is that the claim that around the same time families abandoned their horizontal structure and became strictly patrilinear now seems to be an exaggeration, or at least gross generalization, founded on disparate evidence and insufficient understanding of the relevant terminology.¹⁰ There is no evidence, for example, that strict primogeniture was ever enforced in eleventh and twelfth-century Champagne, where family structures continued to extend along maternal and paternal lines and where, therefore, “both the organization of aristocratic families and the ways in which they distributed property were far more complex and contingent than patrilineage with strict primogeniture would have allowed in practice”.¹¹ Instead, it has been argued, ideas of family fluctuated during the High Middle Ages, depending on circumstance and the family “life cycle”. Aristocrats tended to think about family in very narrow terms where property was concerned and after a married couple had produced legitimate children, for example, but they were perfectly willing to extend the notion of family to a wider circle of agnatic and cognatic relatives - the broader kinship - if they expected to gain social, political or economic benefit from it.¹²

Family traditions of crusading

More recently historians interested in how aristocratic families shaped and expressed their dynastic identities have turned their attention to the impulses and shared strategies shaping collective

⁹ Dominique Barthélemy, *La société dans le comté de Vendôme de l'an mil au XIV siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1993) and (by the same author) *La mutation de l'an mil a-t-elle eu lieu? Servage et chevalerie dans la France des Xe et XIe siècles* (Paris: Fayard, 1997).

¹⁰ For horizontal family structures not replaced by linear structures see David Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London: Routledge, 1992), 10-11.

¹¹ Theodore Evergates, *Aristocracy in the County of Champagne, 1100-1300* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 83; see also Bouchard, *Those of my Blood: Constructing Noble Families in Medieval Francia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 164. Research by James Holt and Simon Barton have demonstrated that the same could be said for eleventh and twelfth-century England, Castile and Léon. J. C. Holt, “Politics and Property in Early Medieval England,” *Past and Present* 57 (1972): 3–52; Simon Barton, *The Aristocracy in Twelfth-Century Léon and Castile* (Cambridge, 1997), 38-46. In England at least, even afterwards primogeniture *strictu sensu* may have remained more a legal ideal than practical reality. See Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, esp. 120–21.

¹² Stephen D. White, *Custom, Kinship, and Gifts to Saints: The Laudatio Parentum in Western France, 1050-1150* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Bouchard, *Those of My Blood*.

behavior and family consciousness. With regard to our subject they have discovered, for example, that enthusiasm for crusading and support for military orders disseminated vertically within families but also horizontally across kinship groups, and that women (in their roles as wives and mothers) played an important part in communicating the religious sentiments associated with both. Key studies in this field, more often than not taking a prosopographical approach, have pointed out the amount of collective effort (material as well as spiritual) that went into the preparation of individual crusaders, the often close biological ties between crusaders travelling and acting together, and the longstanding personal ties and emotional bonds between families and the Holy Land which sometimes developed as a consequence.¹³ The most extensive crusader kinship network uncovered so far centers on the French seigneurial families of Monthléry, Courtenay and Le Puiset. It extended over large parts of central and northern France and deep into aristocratic society in the Latin East, producing more than thirty crusaders by the middle of the twelfth century, among them one king of Jerusalem, one count of Edessa, and one count of Jaffa.¹⁴ Other networks which scholars have discussed centered on the earls of Warwick in England, the counts of Perche in northwestern France, the counts of Berg in the Rhineland, and the counts of Schwarzburg in Thuringia, although traditions of crusading have been established for many more individual dynasties and regional nobilities stretching across Europe from Spain to Austria.¹⁵

The counts of Brienne in Champagne are one example of a noble family whose intense involvement in the crusades over several generations placed them both at the heart of politics in the eastern Mediterranean and within a wide-ranging network of other committed crusading families from

¹³ On the popularity of prosopography as an approach to identify common features in social groups see George Beech, "Prosopography," in *Medieval Studies: An Introduction*, ed. James M. Powell (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992), 185-226.

¹⁴ Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders: 1095-1131* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 169-95.

¹⁵ Emma Mason, "Fact and Fiction in the English Crusading Tradition: the Earls of Warwick in the Twelfth Century," *Journal of Medieval History* 14 (1988): 81-95; Friedrich Lundgreen, "Die Beteiligung des Hauses Schwarzburg an den Kreuzzügen", in *Gymnasium Fridericianum: Festschrift zur Feier seines 250jährigen Bestehens am 2. April 1914* (Rudolstadt, 1914), 103-51. See e.g. Jonathan Phillips, "The Murder of Charles the Good and the Second Crusade: Household, Nobility, and Traditions of Crusading in Medieval Flanders," *Medieval Prosopography* 19 (1998): 55-75; Alexander Berner, *Kreuzzug und regionale Herrschaft. Die älteren Grafen von Berg 1147-1225* (Vienna, Cologne & Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2014); Jochen Schenk, *Templar Families: Landowning Families and the Order of the Temple, c. 1120-1307* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Champagne and Burgundy.¹⁶ The Brienne crusading tradition began with Count Erard I, who endowed the abbey of Montier-en-Der with a church and prebends before embarking on the First Crusade.¹⁷ Erard's son Walter went on the Second Crusade in June 1147,¹⁸ whereas Erard II of Brienne and his brother Andrew of Ramerupt both took the cross in 1189 (and died at Acre soon after, Andrew in October 1189, Erard early in 1191). Erard II's son Walter died as a crusader in southern Italy in 1205. Another son, John, embarked on a brilliant political career that saw him ascending the royal throne of Jerusalem in 1208 and the imperial throne of Constantinople in 1229, thus catapulting the counts of Brienne to the highest ranks of nobility.¹⁹

The counts of Brienne and their relatives the lords of Ramerupt continued to produce crusaders throughout the thirteenth century, among them Erard II of Ramerupt and his brother Henry of Vénizy, who both died during the Seventh Crusade (Henry en route, Erard II at Mansurah).²⁰ Perhaps the most prominent of all of this generation of Brienne crusaders, however, was John of Brienne's nephew, Walter IV of Brienne, who inherited the counties of Jaffa and Ascalon on the crusading frontier from his uncle. Captured at La Forbie in 1244, Walter was publicly tortured outside the walls of Jaffa before being transported to Cairo, where he died at the hands of disgruntled Muslim merchants whose caravans he once had raided. After the intervention of the French king Louis IX, Walter's remains were released and transported to Acre where in 1251 his cousin Margaret of Reynel had them buried in the local Hospitaller church. Walter's association with the Hospital reminds us that in addition to his crusading activity Walter, like other members of his family, was an active supporter of the crusading military orders, including the Templars and the Teutonic Knights both at home in Champagne and overseas.²¹

¹⁶ The authors are much obliged to Dr Karol Polejowski for his insights into Brienne family history.

¹⁷ Marie Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville, "Catalogue d'actes des comtes de Brienne, 950–1356," *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes* 33 (1872): 141–86, at 145 (no. 20) and 149 (no. 36).

¹⁸ Marie Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville, "Les premiers seigneurs de Ramerupt," *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes* 22 (1861): 440–58, at 456–7 (no. 3).

¹⁹ On John of Brienne see Guy Perry, *John of Brienne: King of Jerusalem, Emperor of Constantinople, c. 1175–1237* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)

²⁰ Jubainville, "Les premiers seigneurs de Ramerupt" : 450

²¹ Karol Polejowski, "The Counts of Brienne and the Military Orders in the Thirteenth Century," in *The Military Orders, Volume 5: Politics and Power*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 285–95.

That all of this activity can be observed within a particular family is clearly not the result of random chance. The Brienne case is illustrative of a much wider phenomenon: across the medieval West, participation in the crusades and support for crusading institutions like the military orders was seen to be a fundamental expression of membership in a given noble family. Indeed, this sense that crusading could lie at the heart of family identity is communicated by a variety of documents written or dictated by members of these families. One of the most eloquent testimonials to the place of crusading at the heart of a dynasty's identity is the epitaph composed in 1311 by the seneschal of Champagne, John of Joinville, and intended for the tomb of his great-grandfather Geoffrey III of Joinville (*d.* 1188) at the abbey of Clairvaux. In the epitaph, Joinville names many members of his family who were crusaders, alluding also to his own participation in the Seventh Crusade, during which he undertook to recover a piece of family memorabilia, the shield left in Syria by his uncle Geoffrey V (*d.* 1204).²² Another example of a clear expression of family consciousness, this time in the context of crusading institutions, is the charter enacted by the Burgundian lord Odo II of Grancey in favor of the Templar commandery of Bure in 1197. The garrulous document recapitulates Odo's family's long tradition of support for the Templars beginning in the 1130s, the time of his great-grandfather Raynald, and it closes with an affirmation of Odo's wish to uphold this tradition.²³ Because (as was often the case), the Grancey family's support for the military orders went hand-in-hand with participation in crusade expedition (another Raynald of Grancey, for example, had made extensive donations to the Templars during the siege of Acre in 1189), it is possible to see the charter as an affirmation of both of these intertwined traditions.²⁴

Honour, obligation, and status

²² John of Joinville and Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Chronicles of the Crusades*, tr. Caroline Smith (New York and London: Penguin Classics, 2008), 346–47. For discussion see Nicholas Paul, *To Follow in Their Footsteps: the Crusades and Family Memory in the High Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 121–23

²³ Schenk, *Templar Families*, 141–42.

²⁴ Schenk, *Templar Families*, 238–49. For Raynald's donation at Acre see *Cartulaire général de l'Yonne*, ed. Maximilien Quantin, 2 vols. (Auxerre, 1854–60), ii, no. 405 (pp. 411–12).

When they took the cross or made gifts to crusading institutions, members of medieval noble families believed that they were upholding responsibilities that came with membership in a particular kin-group or lineage. This was precisely the message embedded at the heart of appeals to take the cross that emanated from central ecclesiastical authorities in the middle of the twelfth century. Borrowing from didactic language that was also used at grassroots level by monks, clerics, and by knights themselves to talk about the responsibilities that came with lordship, popes beginning with Eugenius III encouraged nobles to “follow in the footsteps” and uphold the “virtues” and “achievements” of their ancestors.²⁵ As popes and troubadours made clear in their calls for crusade, not fulfilling the expectations put in place by previous generations could have very serious consequences for an individual’s honour and reputation. Where resources were stored for the purposes of prosecuting the Holy War by one generation, canon law eventually said it was the responsibility of heirs to make good on the crusading promise.

The perception that an individual was descended from a lineage of crusaders and that he or she actively sought to uphold that tradition also offered benefits. In the period following the First Crusade, legitimacy and status were increasingly associated with claims to heroic and even mythic ancestors.²⁶ These claims manifested in the sudden emergence and rapid proliferation of new statements of dynastic identity in the form of heraldry, elaborate sepulchral architecture, and a variety of forms of dynastic literature.²⁷ Whether they highlighted a patrilineal line of descent from the founder of a local lordship or pointed to a family’s shared ancestral associations with higher-status dynasties, all of these texts and artworks had in common an emphasis on ancestors who were not only founding figures but models for moral instruction and political guidance. Their past behaviour offered a template for future conduct as well as justification for one’s past and present deeds and judgments. For the warrior aristocracy, violence represented a particularly important part of these fictional pasts such that, as Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner

²⁵ For Eugenius III’s strategy, see Jonathan Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 37-60; for the papal letters more generally see William Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia, c.1095–c.1187* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2008), 90-4, 112-19, 162-63, 181. For the discourse of ancestry and responsibility among the nobility see Paul, *To Follow*, 21-54.

²⁶ Jean Dunbabin, “Discovering a Past For the French Aristocracy,” in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Paul Magdalino (London & Rio Grande: Hambledon Press, 1992), 1-14.

²⁷ David Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, 156-70.

has observed, the “memory of violence”, even in the form of fictitious narratives and mythical family histories, could act “as a model for past, present, and future”, leaving a “strong impact on human emotions... a key link to memory’s imprint”.²⁸ In a process echoing the “imaginative memory” through which monastic houses generated fictionalized origin stories, some families, such as the royal dynasty of England, began to trace their origins back to the Trojans, and others claimed descent or associations with Charlemagne and his relatives.

Because the crusades represented a narrative space in which the lives of the European aristocracy intersected with an epic stage of heroic warfare with salvific and even eschatological implications, the crusading past was a source from which even the most modest families could reach to draw out exemplary ancestors. So while the Capetian royal dynasty might emphasize their associations with Charlemagne, world ruler and mythic founder of the crusade in Spain, the lords of Ardres in the Pas-de-Calais, Amboise in the Loire valley, and Lastours in the Limousin could point to heroes of the First Crusade among their ancestors. This they did, and as they did so their social status rose to place all three families in positions of regional prominence by the end of the twelfth century. Was crusading memory the driving force behind fortune’s wheel in these cases? It is impossible to tell, although it is undeniable that the crusades provided opportunities for political service and a basis for powerful shared experiences which could be invoked later in the forging of marriage alliances and bonds of political friendship. To return to the family of Brienne, there can be no doubt that crusading provided the family with opportunities to gain honor and real political advantage. Clearly, it was in the context of crusading that men like John of Brienne and his nephew Walter came to hold claims on major Mediterranean principalities, but the groundwork for their international careers had been laid during a century in which their ancestors had participated in crusades to the Holy Land.²⁹

²⁸ Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner, “Remembering the Trojan War: Violence Past, Present, and Future in Benoît de Sainte-Maure’s *Roman de Troie*,” *Speculum* 90:2 (2015): 366-90, at 367.

²⁹ Guy Perry, *John of Brienne: King of Jerusalem, Emperor of Constantinople, 1175-1237* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 24.

Gears of tradition: the mechanics of family memory

A vast array of ideas and images relating to the crusading past circulated within medieval kinship networks. Some of these related to the lived experiences of crusaders, transmitted either directly or from second-hand knowledge; others were completely unrelated to the “real” historical crusading experience, emerging in response to cultural and political imperatives. The mechanisms which facilitated the transmission of these memories, and which in turn potentially shaped and selected the contents of family’s discourse about the crusading past were probably more complex than we will ever, with a limited number of surviving sources, completely understand. Yet those surviving testimonials demonstrate unequivocally that certain pathways and contexts for transmission were critical to the formation of strong commemorative traditions associated with crusading.

In considering the varying ways that the crusading past was present for medieval families, it is possible to identify two general modes of remembrance which, although they were ultimately interrelated, can be distinguished for us by the way that they appear in our sources. The first mode was related to the continuous, usually peripatetic practice of medieval lordship, its calendar punctuated by rituals of feudal obedience, calls for judicial arbitration, and the maintenance of relationships with religious communities. The second mode was celebratory and instructional, and appears most often in the context of the liturgical commemoration of the dead, the education of young members of the household, and as part of the articulation of familial identity over and against a threat or challenge. In a very general way, these two modes might be related to the twofold division of collective memory proposed by Jan Assman into “communicative memory” (living, autobiographical memories of the recent past passed through everyday communication) and “cultural memory” (formal, ceremonially communicated memories of the distant and mythic past, often textually mediated or ritually performed by special memory carriers).³⁰ The

³⁰ Jan Assman, “Kollektives Gedächtnis und kulturelle Identität,” in *Kultur und Gedächtnis*, ed. Jan Assman and Antonio Hölscher (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988), 9-19; tr. as “Collective Memory and Cultural Identity,” in *New German Critique* 65 (1995): 125-33; “Communicative and Cultural Memory,” in *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies: an International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (New York, 2008), 109-18. The applicability of Assman’s model of cultural memory to dynastic historical narratives has recently been proposed by Benjamin Pohl,

vicissitudes of memory studies dictate that the terms of analysis often shift depending on the group under consideration, and with regard to the medieval noble family, we find that while the two modes can be observed separately, they often also worked in concert with each other.

The experience of aristocratic life in the central Middle Ages was above all associated with the daily practice of lordship, usually in the context of the ceaseless itineration. As they moved throughout and occasionally beyond the bounds of their domains, the medieval noble household came into contact with people, places, and communities, any of which could serve as the family's *lieux de mémoire*. This is most apparent in the context of religious communities which preserved the liturgical memory of ancestors through prayer and the observation of anniversaries. Anniversaries were of course special times when the attention of living descendants would be directed to the life and example of an ancestor and commemoration was enhanced through the use of tomb monuments, epitaphs, and liturgical ceremonies. Epitaphs and *planctus* hymns sung in memory of the dead were both genres in which crusading deeds were celebrated and held up as examples for subsequent generations to follow.³¹ We have already seen how the epitaph composed by John of Joinville for his great-grandfather provided an opportunity for him to reflect on his family's crusading tradition. Another epitaph of roughly the same period which was placed at the tomb of John, lord of Eppes (*d.* 1293), in the cathedral of Laon compared his crusading feats favorably to the epic heroes Roland and Oliver and was written, appropriately enough, in Old French verse.³² If the form of John of Eppes' epitaph is highly suggestive of performance, the survival of the *planctus* composed for Raymond Berengar IV of Barcelona (*d.* 1162) among many other commemorative materials composed at the Benedictine abbey of Ripoll where he was buried makes it clear that songs

Dudo of Saint-Quentin's Historia Normannorum: Tradition, Innovation, and Memory (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2015), 9-17.

³¹ Nicholas L. Paul, "The Fruits of Penitence and The Laurel of the Cross: the Poetics of Crusade and Conquest in the Memorials of Santa Maria de Ripoll," in *A Storm Against the Infidel: Crusading in the Iberian Peninsula and the Baltic Region*, ed. Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt and Torben K. Nielsen (Turnout: Brepols, forthcoming 2016).

³² Caroline Smith, *Crusading in the Age of Joinville* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 130-31.

were composed which celebrated the memory of dead crusaders explicitly in terms of their martial achievements in the theatre of Holy War.³³

While visits by the laity to religious institutions and other interactions with religious communities did not always co-incide with opportunities to observe anniversaries, this did not diminish the significance of these occasions for the invocation of a family's crusading past. The presence of the lord in close proximity to a religious community also provided an opportunity for the community to ask for a review and confirmation of the rights and privileges granted them by the lord's ancestors and relatives. As in the example of Odo II of Grancey cited above, the charters of confirmation and pancartes that resulted from these processes often explicitly state the invocation of the memory of proceeding generations of the family. Especially the charter collections of the military orders, which because of their close association with the holy land proved particularly attractive for prospective as well as returning crusaders, soon became veritable repositories of crusader memory. When read out to subsequent generations of family members, charters issued in support of the holy land and in recognition of the help and friendship received on crusade invited the relatives of crusaders to imagine and act upon their ancestors' past deeds.³⁴ Thus, for example, in 1284 Milo IV of Noyers and his wife Mary of Crécy endowed the Templars with the village and lordship of Vermenton,

considering and addressing all the great selfless and charitable acts performed daily by the brothers of the knighthood of the Temple both this side and beyond the sea, never fearing to spill their blood against the enemies of the Faith to avenge the shame (*la honte*) of Jesus Christ, and especially the courteous and honorable deeds which the mentioned brothers have performed for our predecessors and for us, and which they still perform, have performed, and perform often.³⁵

³³ Paul, "The Fruits of Penitence."

³⁴ See for example *Le premier cartulaire de l'abbaye cistercienne de Pontigny (XIIe–XIIIe siècles)*, ed. Martine Garrigues (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1981), 344, no. 342; *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des hospitaliers de St-Jean de Jérusalem (1100–1310)*, ed. Joseph Delaville Le Roulx, 4. vols. (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1894–1906), ii: 308-9, no. 1760

³⁵ Paris, Archives nationales, S 5241, dossier 66, no. 4. See also Schenk, *Templar Families*, 231–32.

The approbation which the religious community offered the lord in return for their upholding of dynastic traditions of patronage, moreover, could subtly reinforce other patterns of ancestral behavior. The clauses in medieval charters which signal an individual's decision to take the cross as a crusader or (much more rarely) chronicling some aspect of their crusading experience are eye-catching to the modern historian. To that individual's descendants and heirs, however, who heard those words read aloud to them before they placed an image of their lordly identity in the form of a seal alongside the image of their ancestor the message was clear: you are next in line.

The landscape in many regions was thick with markers of a family's crusading past, much of it in the form of physical memorabilia of crusaders and their exploits. In the Limousin we find references to the tower of a castle named after a family's famous crusading ancestor and decorated with the memorabilia he brought back from crusade.³⁶ In Anjou, objects associated with several generations of the crusading comital family were deliberately enshrined within the family's own proprietary spaces, such as castle chapels and collegiate foundations. Places, names, and objects associated with the crusading past are suggestive of the many opportunities for the more casual "communicative" invocation of the past that must have featured in the daily lives of those living in these commemorative landscapes. But it is striking that many of these objects, for instance those in Anjou, were also embedded within rituals. A golden flower given to Count Fulk IV le Réchin of Anjou by Pope Urban II in 1096 during the preaching of the First Crusade, for instance, was meant to be carried before the counts of Anjou every Easter. The ivory tau given to Count Fulk V of Anjou as a gift by the Fatimid emir of Egypt was processed out to meet the count when he first arrived at his palace in Angers. We cannot be sure how often these rites were observed, but the survival of prescriptive instructions regarding their use written by the counts themselves and reiterating their links with the crusades reveal active efforts to render solemn and institutional or "cultural" (to use Assman's term) the place of the crusades within family memory.³⁷

³⁶ Paul, *To Follow*, 90-95.

³⁷ Paul, *To Follow*, 125-28. For further discussion of the political significance of crusading memory and memorabilia in Anjou see Kathryn Dutton, "Crusading and Political Culture Under Geoffrey, Count of Anjou and Duke of Normandy, 1129-51," *French History* 29:4 (2015): 419-44.

Relics represented the most powerful and precious of objects that returned with crusaders. Relics of the holy places, and especially relics of the Passion, helped to direct the minds of the faithful toward the Holy Land. While some of these were seen to be properly enshrined in religious communities, especially in the houses of the Templars or the Cistercian order, others were fiercely guarded within more private familial environments.³⁸ This behavior, exemplified by the prolonged struggle between the children of the crusader Manasses of Hierges and the Benedictine abbey of Brogne over possession of a major relic of the True Cross that returned with Manasses from the East, is highly suggestive of the special significance of such crusading objects within noble families.³⁹ These objects presumably had manifold meanings, many of them deeply personal. Anne Lester has argued that aristocratic women, in particular, may have treasured Passion relics secured by their crusading husbands as remembrances not only of the suffering of Christ, but of the suffering of their husbands and families in the context of crusading.⁴⁰

We have seen that medieval lords, as they moved through their lordships, encountered a stream of references that pointed both backwards to their ancestors' crusading past and hence also forwards to their own potential involvement. It would seem to be a safe assumption that the celebration of crusaders' anniversaries, the confirmation of their customs, and the handling and adoration of their objects would at least sometimes inspire conversation – a discourse about the ancestral crusading past. But do we have any access to that discourse? Always acknowledging the profound limitations of our evidence, sources do survive which claim to represent the shared understanding of the past of particular noble dynasties. These dynastic historical narratives were written throughout Latin Christian Europe, with the majority composed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. These were, almost universally, “living texts” circulated,

³⁸ Schenk, *Templar Families*, 205-208, and idem, “The Cult of the Cross in the Order of the Temple,” in *As ordens militares: Freires, guerreiros, cavaleiros*, ed. Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, 2 vols. (Palmela: GEOS / Município de Palmela), i: 207-19.

³⁹ An edition of the texts chronicling the dispute is currently in preparation. See Paul, *To Follow*, 114-15.

⁴⁰ Anne E. Lester, “What Remains: Women, Relics, and Remembrance in the Aftermath of the Fourth Crusade,” *Journal of Medieval History* 40:3 (2014): 311-28.

continued, and adapted for generations after their composition. As major monuments to the family's past, they give a clear indication of the place of the crusades within the "cultural memory" of particular medieval families. Many of these texts, however, either explicitly describe or more generally allude to the existence of vibrant cultures of storytelling within the medieval household, the place where "communicative memory" most often resided.

Dynastic histories, such as those written for the ruling families of Anjou, Amboise, Guines, Hainaut, and Poland advertise the presence at the noble court and in the household of *relatores* – storytellers whose responsibility is to pass on wisdom about the family past. According to one narrative, Lambert of Ardres' *History of the Counts of Guines and Lords of Ardres*, the young heir to the lordships of Guines and Ardres Arnold II (*d.* 1220) was accompanied by older men who could recite dynastic history alongside a variety of other genres, including Arthurian romance and the history of the crusades.⁴¹ Even though, in the case of the Guines and Ardres example, the storyteller is sought out for the purposes of entertainment to pass a wintry night in the castle of Ardres, here as in other dynastic histories, the primary function of family storytelling was to educate – especially to help younger generations to discern good and bad examples from their family's past.⁴² Stories about crusading ancestors were thus primarily didactic, but their message was not only that young men should take the cross and fight as crusaders, nor were the stories concerned only with the experiences of male family members. Clearly drawing, in some instances, upon the memories of women in the household, the dynastic narratives reveal the real dangers that crusading could pose to the noble regime due to the absence of the lord from his domains and the tremendous uncertainty and instability generated by the great distances crusaders needed to travel. These were challenges that had to be confronted by women of the family, and dynastic histories reveal the

⁴¹ Lambert of Ardres, *The History of the Counts of Guines and Lords of Ardres*, tr. Leah Shopkow (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 129-31.

⁴² Nicholas L. Paul, "Origo Consulm: Rumours of Murder, A Crisis of Lordship, and the Legendary Origins of the Counts of Anjou," *French History* 29:2 (2015): 139-60. For discernment see also Aleidis Plassman, "Norm und Devianz in hochmittelalterlichen Adelsfamilien West-und Mitteleuropas: Der Umgang mit 'Schwarzen Schafen' der Familie", in *Geschichtsvorstellungen: Bilder, Texte und Begriffe aus dem Mittelalter*, ed. Steffen Patzold, Anja Rathmann-Lutz, and Volker Scior (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2012), 431–59.

wisdom that was passed along to them from their mothers and grandmothers about how to survive such awful circumstances as the death or (much worse) disappearance of a husband on crusade.⁴³

Perhaps the most telling element of the crusading stories that can be found in dynastic narratives is the way that these stories are often in dialogue with larger narratives of crusading history already in circulation. Both the writers of dynastic history and the *relatores* that they imagine declaiming their stories before the lords invoke the names of the crusade chroniclers such as Robert the Monk, Baldric of Bourgueil and the “singer of the the Song of Antioch” either as further proof of an ancestor’s heroism or (in the absence of such proof) as evidence that stories told outside the community are false. While these are primarily textual responses – authors positioning their works with reference to other, widely circulated written works – they are a clear analogue to the way that the memory of the crusades was contested and negotiated between families and communities. When we read, in Lambert of Ardres, that the lords of Ardres angrily rejected the singer of the *Chanson d’Antioche* for not including the name of their ancestor in his work, we may imagine precisely the historical dissonance that would have existed in the early thirteenth century between the Guines-Ardres family and the family of the counts of St. Pol who, it has recently been argued, may have commissioned an early version of the *Antioche*.⁴⁴ The version of the crusade chronicle of Baudri of Bourgueil known as variant *G* similarly seems to reflect an attempt to write a history of the First Crusade consonant with the memories of communities from the Angevin Touraine and against their enemies in Blois.⁴⁵ Here it is a redactor of the Latin manuscripts, rather than the storyteller, who is on the attack on the family’s behalf.

Conclusions

The evidence collected above is intended to illustrate some of the mechanics of family memory as it related to the transmission of ideas about the crusading past. For the majority of medieval aristocratic

⁴³ Paul, *To Follow*, 134-170.

⁴⁴ *The Chanson d’Antioche: an Old French Account of the First Crusade*, tr. Susan Edgington and Carol Sweetenham (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 20-24.

⁴⁵ Nicholas L. Paul, “Crusade, Memory, and Regional Politics in Twelfth-Century Amboise,” *Journal of Medieval History* 31:2 (2005): 127-41.

families, very little evidence exists that allow us to access either the matter of what was remembered or the precise pathways along which that memory moved. Hence it is necessary to extrapolate, from the sources we do possess, the basic mechanisms through which ideas about and attitudes toward the crusading past were transmitted. The Brienne family, for example, are a more typical case. No memorial survives, either in the form of a dynastic historical narrative, a kinship tomb or necropolis, or a family archive or cartulary that claims to speak on behalf of the family or bears witness to the self-conscious crusading tradition of the Brienne lineage. That the family was deeply committed to crusading, generation after generation, is unequivocal. That commitment, the very action of repeatedly taking the cross and undertaking hardships and travel to distant lands is a clear statement of culture and identity itself— a ritual act enforcing a cultural memory. A discourse *about* the Briennes and their crusading past, at the communicative level of reported speech and imaginative responses, also survives in the writing of contemporaries such as John of Joinville, who saw the Brienne as his kin, and the monastic chronicler Alberic of Trois Fontaines from the Brienne’s home region of Champagne.

It was ultimately this living discourse about the Briennes that led the monks of the abbey of Foucarmont in Normandy to decorate the walls of the abbot’s chapel with a series of genealogical portraits, which do not survive but which are described in a dynastic narrative written at the abbey in the late fourteenth century.⁴⁶ At the top was John of Brienne, depicted saying the words “I am the king of Jerusalem, and I begat the following offspring” (*Rex ego Jerusalem, sobolem genuique sequentem*). Below the image of the king are portraits of his son Alphone and Alphonse’s wife Marie of Issoudun, whose family, the counts of Eu, were the patrons of Foucarmont. The painting series continued with their children, one of whom (John I, count of Eu) identifies himself as “the grandson of the king”. Now Norman counts, the family continued to emphasize their connections to the crusader king. Through kinship networks, the memory of one family’s crusading past came to stretch across disparate regions of Europe, to be placed at the center of new cultural monuments and, potentially, new crusading traditions.

⁴⁶ “Chronique des comtes d’Eu,” ed. Martin Bouquet in *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France* 23 (Paris: H. Welter, 1894), 446.

Through these commemorative mechanisms, the families helped to construct the movement that we call the crusades and were, like the families of their adversaries and the countless families caught in between, constructed by them.

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