



CRUSADE;
THE USES OF A WORD
FROM THE MIDDLE AGES
TO THE PRESENT

CRUSADES – SUBSIDIA

EDITED BY
BENJAMIN WEBER



Crusade: The Uses of a Word from the Middle Ages to the Present

The word 'crusade' covers today a wide variety of meanings in most European languages. The link between these uses and the historical phenomenon labelled as 'crusade' by historians is often very narrow and particularly changing. Understanding the real meaning of the word 'crusade', its connotations and implications, and thus the conscious or unconscious intentions of its uses requires a precise knowledge of the historical evolutions of the word, from its first appearance in the 13th century until nowadays.

This book offers the first comprehensive view of the historical construction of the meaning of the word 'crusade' through comparative perspectives from the Middle Ages to the 21st century. Its 11 articles, introduction and conclusion examine different uses of the word, in a single language or within a specific context, and analyse each of them as a different conceptualisation of the crusading phenomenon. The book explains the progressive widening of the meaning of the term, from a military expedition to Jerusalem to the most metaphorical uses. It demonstrates the differences between the connotations of the word in various languages and cultures and, thus, the variety of its possible uses. It insists on the reluctance and reticence that 'crusade' has always provoked since the Middle Ages, precisely because the conceptualisation it implied was not shared by all.

The book will be of interest not only for crusade scholars and for diachronic linguists but also for anyone interested in understanding better modern discourses and references to the 'crusade' by politicians, activists, and journalists, through a precise inquiry on the historical developments of the word and the variety of its meanings.

Benjamin Weber, PhD in medieval history, is an associate researcher at the University of Toulouse, France and at the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Stockholm, Sweden. He has published several books and articles on the history of the crusades in the end of the Middle Ages, and, more recently, on historical linguistics of the word 'crusade'.

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1 Introduction

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Who really decided in the beginning what all the words should mean? Tonny wondered. – Probably a bunch of old professors, said Pippi.¹

What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.²

From the most trivial children’s book to the most famous artwork, the precise meaning of words and the exact nature of the relationship between the lexicon and the item it designates are everlasting questions. In the end of the 19th century, these questions gave birth to semantics, the study of words’ signification. Several authors, such as Émile Littré, Michel Bréal, and Ferdinand Brunot, adopted a diachronic approach, assuming that the evolution of vocabulary throughout history was a crucial aspect of understanding its meaning.³ However, the very influential Ferdinand de Saussure acknowledged that time could lead to “a shift in the relationship between the signified and signifier”⁴ (a phenomenon and the word to designate it), but he also considered that taking into consideration the evolution of every single word in order to understand a given language was “a chimeric undertaking [...] so we can only vaguely overlook the changing of meaning within the entire language”.⁵ The chapter of his *Cours de linguistique générale* on “diachronic linguistic” was

- 1 “Vem är det egentligen som har hittat på fråan början, vad ordena ska betyda”, undrade Tonny. “Antgligen en hoper gamla professorer”, sa Pippi, Astrid Lindgren, “Pippi hittar en spunk” in *Pippi Långstrump I Söderhavet* (Stockholm: Rabén&Sjögren, 1948), 29.
- 2 William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, 1597.
- 3 Émile Littré, *Comment les mots changent de sens* (Paris: Ch. Delagrave, 1888), a posthumous edition by Michel Bréal, as well as the first volumes of Ferdinand Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française des origines à 1900*, 11 vol. (Paris: Armand Colin, 1905–1938) remain rather descriptive; Antoine Meillet, “Comment les mots changent de sens”, *L’année sociologique* 9 (1905–1906): 1–38 proposes a much more theoretical approach.
- 4 Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), 141. The *Cours de linguistique générale* was actually not written by F. de Saussure but by two of his students, after their notes from his lessons.
- 5 Simon Bouquet and Rudolph Enger, ed., *Éléments de Linguistique Générale de Ferdinand de Saussure* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002), 41.

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entirely devoted to the study of the construction of words and the evolution of their phonetical and graphical form, leaving apart the changing of their meaning.

In the 20th century, Saussure's theory provided the basis for what is called "structural linguistics". Aimed at a global understanding of the functioning of human language rather than a detailed study of individual utterances, structuralism mostly looked for permanent laws and fixed relations between signified and signifier.⁶ Still, former diachronic studies as well as influences from psychology and sociology allowed a more nuanced approach, focusing on the illocutive context. Understanding the meaning of a word implies taking into account the connotations – that is the mental associations it provokes in the addressee's mind – and the complexity of the communication process, shaped by the conscious and unconscious intentions of the speaker and the mental reappraisal by its audience. All these parameters evolve over time and semantics have to resort to a diachronic analysis.⁷ Roland Barthes, Pierre Bourdieu, or Quentin Skinner have brilliantly demonstrated the richness of this sociolinguistic approach and favoured its diffusion outside linguistic circles.⁸

Linguistic methods were indeed adopted by historians as early as the 1950s and offered a renewed understanding of historical discourses.⁹ Paradoxically, however, the influence of structuralism has often led historians to dismiss diachronic approaches. Several studies have been led by medievalists on the appearance of a single word, in order to understand the social transformation which induced this linguistic evolution.¹⁰ But very few of them, if any, went further and led a detailed analysis of how the meaning of a word could evolve after it was born. Moreover, these studies were all based, more or less explicitly, on the assumption that vocabulary offered a faithful image of social evolution. The words appeared after the social phenomenon they were used to designate; studying their first uses could then lead to an exact view of changing social realities. Since the last decades of the

6 Such a very broad presentation does not pretend to cover all the nuances of the so-called structural approach. A more comprehensive view can easily be found in most textbooks as for example Jacques Moeschler and Antoine Auchlin, *Introduction à la linguistique contemporaine* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2018), particularly 39–47.

7 Roman Jakobson, *Essai de linguistique générale*, vol. 1 (Paris: Edition de Minuit, 1963). Synthetic view in William Croft and Alan Cruse, *Cognitive linguistics*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

8 Pierre Bourdieu, *Ce que parler veut dire. L'économie des échanges linguistiques* (Paris: Fayard, 1982); Quentin Skinner, "Interpretation and the Understanding of Speech Acts," in id., *Visions of Politics*, vol. 1, *Regarding Methods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 103–127.

9 A thorough summary can be found in Jean-Philippe Genet, "Langue et histoire: des rapports nouveaux," in *Langue et Histoire*, ed. Jean-Marie Bertrand et alii (Paris: édition de la Sorbonne, 2012): 13–31. See also Régine Robin, *Histoire et linguistique* (Paris: Armand Colin, 19783) or Jacques Guilhaumou, *Discours et événement. L'histoire langagière des concepts* (Besançon: Presses Universitaires de Franche Comté, 2006).

10 For example: Marc Bloch, *La société féodale: les classes et le gouvernement des hommes* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1940); Jean Flori, "Sémantique et société médiévale. Le verbe adouber et son évolution au XII^e siècle," *Annales* 31 (1976): 915–940; Philippe Sénac, "La frontière aragonaise entre le XI^e et le XIII^e siècles: le mot et la chose. *Pro defensionem christianorum et confusionem sarracenorum*," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 42 (1999): 259–272.

20th century, the influence of Bourdieu or Skinner has led to a more precise understanding of the lexicon and a more contextualised analysis of the language of historical sources.¹¹ Diachronic approaches to examining the historical evolution of a single word remain rare, however. Sociolinguistics and historical linguistic studies are almost always based on a unique author or corpus and do not extend their research beyond a single epoch. Although several research studies have been conducted on the development of languages as a whole,¹² the evolution of individual words has seldom been looked at. In 1989, the late Alain Rey published his master study “*Révolution*” : *Histoire d’un mot* in which he proposed a brilliant overview of the evolution of the word, from its original astronomical meaning to its present political sense, with a detailed attention to the intellectual and political developments as causes as well as consequences of the lexical changes. Each usage of the word was considered as a separate case study because “every discursive use of the word is inserted into a precise historical situation, trapped into a network of ideological references, summoned by an appropriated rhetoric”.¹³ Three years later, Alain Rey paved the way for further diachronic semantics studies with his *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*.¹⁴ But the path remained poorly followed in spite of – or precisely because of – Alain Rey’s immense renown. The publication and easy accessibility online of historical lexicons or compilations of literary texts for most of the European languages¹⁵ seem to have convinced historians that nothing more was to be done on this matter. On the contrary, dictionaries only provide a skeleton which still needs to be understood by dressing it with muscles and joints. Véronica Thiéry-Riboulot has recently undertaken such analysis on some French words such as *laïcité*, *libertin*, and *confinement*, based on the principle that “it is not possible

11 For example Jean Flori, “Lexicologie et société: les dénominations des *milites* normands d’Italie chez Geoffroy Malaterra,” in *Les sociétés méridionales à l’âge féodal (Espagne, Italie et sud de la France, Xe-XIIIe siècle)*. *Hommage à Pierre Bonassie*, ed. Hélène Debax (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Midi, 1999): 271–278; Sylvain Piron, “L’apparition du *resicum* en Méditerranée occidentale, XIIe-XIIIe siècle,” in *Pour une histoire culturelle du risque. Genèse, évolution, actualité du concept dans les sociétés occidentales*, ed. Emmanuelle Collas-Heddeland et alii (Strasbourg: Éditions Histoire et Anthropologie, 2004): 59–76. See also the articles collected in Bertrand, ed., *Langue et Histoire* and in the issues of the review *Mots. Les langages du politique* (previously *MOTS. Mots, Ordinateurs, Textes, Sociétés*).

12 For the case of French, see Anthony Lodge, *Le Français: histoire d’un dialecte devenu langue* (Paris: Fayard, 1997); Christiane Marchello-Nizia, *Le Français en diachronie. Douze siècles d’évolution* (Gap: Ophrys, 1999); Serge Lusignan, *La langue des rois au Moyen Âge. Le français en France et en Angleterre* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004) gives a more social and political perspective.

13 *Chaque usage discursif du mot est inséré dans une situation historique précise, pris dans un réseau de références idéologiques, mobilisé par une rhétorique propre*, Alain Rey, “*Révolution*”. *Histoire d’un mot* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 133–134.

14 Alain Rey, ed., *Dictionnaire Historique de la langue française, édition ultime*, 2 vol. (Paris: le Robert, 2022).

15 For example TLFi (*Trésor de la Langue Française informatisé*), accessed 23 April 2023, <http://www.atilf.fr/tlfi> or TLIO (*Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini*), accessed 23 April 2023, <http://tlio.ovi.cnr.it/TLIO/>.

to reduce a word to an immutable signification; one must analyse its linguistic, psychologic, historical, and social aspects in order to describe the semantics characters of each period”.¹⁶ But her work nonetheless remains isolated. The insistence of cognitive linguistics on the illocutive context seems to have convinced scholars that a study of historical background is useless for a precise comprehension of a specific utterance. Linguistic methods are commonly applied to ancient sources but in a strictly historical perspective, in order to understand their original meaning. Diachronic analyses, studying the evolution of a specific vocable in historical texts for a clearer comprehension of its current meaning, still require further research.

No one can claim to be imitating Alain Rey and this volume does not pretend to offer a theoretical overview as thorough as Véronica Thiéry-Riboulot does. Following their footsteps, however, like dwarves standing on the shoulders of giants, and guided by sociolinguistic methods, this volume would like to propose new interpretations on an old debate: the history of the word ‘crusade’ in various languages since the Middle Ages. Crusading vocabulary has long been examined according to linguistic methods and concepts, precisely because it did not fit in the intuitive conception of the correspondence between social and linguistic evolutions. The First Crusade was indeed proclaimed by Urban II in 1095, and crusading immediately became a very popular form of religious devotion in the West. But the word ‘crusade’ was not attested before the first decades of the 13th century and only became common in early modern times. Michel Villey was probably one of the first to engage with these questions in his doctoral dissertation, defended and published in 1942, followed by several influential historians such as David Trotter and Christopher Tyerman.¹⁷ The debate on the origins of the word has now become an almost mandatory section of any text book on the crusades.¹⁸ Most of these discussions, however, are founded on a biased view of structural linguistics. Explicitly or not, they are mainly aimed at understanding the late appearance of the word, considering it as a “linguistic anomaly”. Although linguistic studies have long demonstrated that neology is a very complicated process, crusade historians remained focused on a very static conception of language, in which a new social phenomenon should have been named with a new word. Such views often led to

- 16 *On ne peut réduire un mot à une signification immuable mais qu’il faut analyser les facettes linguistiques, psychologiques, historiques et sociales de ses emplois pour en décrire les contours sémantiques propres à chaque époque*: Véronica Thiéry-Riboulot, *Laïcité: histoire d’un mot* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2022), 13. See also, id., “Une étude de sémantique historique du mot *confinement*”, *Mots. Les langages du politique*, 124 (2020), 127–144; id., “Sur la conception linéaire des évolutions lexico-sémantiques, le cas du mot *libertin*”, *cahiers de lexicologie* 120 (2022): 167–187.
- 17 Michel Villey, *La croisade. Essai sur la formation d’une théorie juridique* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1942); David Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades, 1100–1300* (Genève: Droz, 1988); Christopher Tyerman, “Were there any Crusades in the Twelfth Century?,” *English Historical Review* 110 (1995): 553–577, reprint in id., *The Invention of the Crusades* (Toronto: Bloomsbury, 1998), 8–29.
- 18 For example Jonathan Riley-Smith, *What were the Crusades?*, London, 1977, 12; Franco Cardini, *Le Crociate in Terrasanta nel Medioevo* (Rimini, 2003), 5–9; Alain Demurger, *Croisades et Croisés au Moyen-Âge* (Paris, 2006), 8–11, Christopher Tyerman, *The World of the Crusades: An Illustrated History* (New Haven, 2019), 20–24.

quite fruitless debates over the definition of crusading, and the search for an atemporal prototypical concept suitable for every epoch and context. I have recently tried to propose a new approach to this problem, considering the vocabulary as a sign of a new conceptualisation of an already existing phenomenon, induced by social and political motives.¹⁹ As long as crusading remained an armed penitential expedition towards Jerusalem, it was easier to understand it by naming it after already well-defined phenomena such as pilgrimages or holy wars. The meaning of pre-existent words was enlarged in order to include the military expeditions towards Jerusalem, the illocutive context being sufficient to distinguish them from other pilgrimages or holy wars. In the second half of the 12th century, crusading practice and privileges were expanded in the Iberian Peninsula against the Moors, in Occitania against the Cathars or around the Baltic against the Pagans. Confronting the conceptualisation of this diversified crusading movement, some contemporaries thus felt the necessity to gather all these various military expeditions into a single mental category and resort to a new concept, ‘crusade’.

Why and how the word was diffused and was used or not in different regions, different social categories, or different sources still need to be precisely explored in order to understand better the causes, motives, and consequences of this new conceptualisation of the crusading movement. ‘Crusade’ is not as rare as it is often assumed in medieval documents, but the uses and evolution of the word after the 13th century have received very little attention or raised similar debates as its first appearance. In 1956, Alphonse Dupront devoted a large part of his dissertation on the survival and expressions of crusading ideals in the early modern and modern periods to the history of the word ‘crusade’ and its historical uses.²⁰ Thanks to an impressive examination of primary sources, Dupront identified the main phases of the chronological evolution of the word, beginning with the first uses of ‘crusade’ outside its strict historical significance during the French Revolution and then the progressive diffusion of such metaphor around the second half of the 19th century to its common use in the 20th century. Although he claims to observe rather than explain, he points out, for example, how ‘crusade’ could be used during the First World War as an attempt to give a signification to the atrocious fight, or how the quest for absolutes of totalitarian regimes automatically prompted to refer to the word, for themselves as well as for their opponents. Dupront is particularly attentive to the reluctances to use the word, the long “modesty (*pudeur*) of the word”, opposed to its current “proliferation”.²¹ His views, however, remained strongly

19 Benjamin Weber, “El término ‘cruzada’ y sus usos en la edad media: un proceso de asimilación lingüística”, in C. de Ayala Martínez, P. Henriët and S. Palacios (eds.), *Orígenes y desarrollo de la guerra santa en la Península Ibérica: palabras e imágenes para una legitimación* (Madrid, 2016): 221–233; id., “When and Where did the Word ‘crusade’ appear in the Middle Ages? And Why?,” in *The Crusades: History and Memory. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, vol. 2, ed Kurt V. Jensen and Torben K. Nielsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021): 199–220.

20 Alphonse Dupront, *Le mythe de croisade* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), vol. 2, 1113–1249.

21 Dupront, *Le mythe de croisade*, vol. 2, 1185, 1216, 1225.

influenced by the then-dominant structural linguistics approach, in which language is a tool whose use reveals intellectual developments and the collective unconscious of Western minds. That enabled him to study crusading mentalities in situations where the word was not in use but could (or should?) have been. “The word does not run after the fact (*la chose*). It comes when the fact is commonly accepted”.²² This idea led to an analysis of the uses of ‘crusade’ as signs of the otherwise submerged permanency of the crusading myth. The performative aspect of language, that is, the concrete consequences of using a word rather than another, is never really taken into account. In any case, Dupront’s dissertation remained very poorly diffused until its edition in 1998. Even since then, its length and abstruse style make it difficult to read, even for a native speaker. Dupront’s work has received very little attention among crusade scholars and its influence on further studies has remained restricted, even in France.

About the same time when Alphonse Dupront’s *Le mythe de croisade* was published, the political consequences of uttering the word ‘crusade’ became more and more obvious. Many scholars have been impressed by George W. Bush proclaiming a “crusade on terrorism” on 12 September 2001.²³ Together with the growing concern about the references to the crusading past by far-right extremists as well as Muslim fundamentalists, it led to a renewed attention to the transformations of the meanings of the word ‘crusade’ in modern times and to various studies on the purpose and impact of such uses. Several scholars, some of them originating from crusading history, such as Mike Horswell or Jason Roche, have been inquiring on modern references to crusading, although they have not always focused their attention on the meaning of the word itself but rather on the presence of crusading references in modern discourses.²⁴ In 2020, Daniele Menozzi has proposed a stimulating synthesis, a comprehensive view of the successive *risemantisations* (that is, the successive meanings of a word) explained in their historical contexts and described as a living phenomenon with its supporters, opponents, and social consequences.²⁵ Starting, as Dupront had done, with the French Revolution, Menozzi investigates the various efforts to renew the crusade in modern contexts with close attention to the papal attitude towards these attempts and to the secularisation it denotes, the gradual replacement of religious values by patriotic ones. Contrarily to Dupront, Menozzi pays great attention to the performative consequences of

22 *Le mot ne court pas après la chose. Il vient quand la chose est communément acceptée*, Dupront, *Le mythe de croisade*, vol. 2, 1161.

23 This discourse explicitly led to the writing of Jean Flori, *La croix, la tiare et l'épée. La croisade confisquée* (Paris, 2010) and to Phillipe Buc, *Holy War, Martyrdom and Terror: Christianity, Violence and the West*, (Philadelphia, 2015).

24 See in particular the series *Engaging the Crusades*, 8 vols. (Abingdon-New-York: Routledge, 2018–2022) or the special issue of the *International Journal of Military History and Historiography* 41.2 (2021) directed by Jason Roche. The bibliography at the end of this book tries to gather all the studies specifically dedicated to the history of the word ‘crusade’.

25 Daniele Menozzi, “Crocciata”, *Storia di un ideologia dall Rivoluzione Francese a Bergoglio* (Roma: Carocci editore, 2020).

uttering the word ‘crusade’, to the “mobilising capacity attributed to the capacity of the term to evoke a pre-modern past”.²⁶ Menozzi’s synthesis does not definitively close the study of the modern uses of ‘crusade’, because many aspects are necessarily overlooked in a relatively brief volume. It is not really interested in the most metaphorical uses of the word, the ones with a thinner reference to any military or religious movement. It gives, however, a precious methodological frame and a clear ending horizon for any further study on the topic.

The present book thus aims at bridging these two fields: the works on the birth of the word and those dedicated to its contemporary uses. A single volume cannot entirely fill an 800-year-long gap. Considering the current state of the field, it would be illusory to try covering such a long and complex lexical evolution since, as exposed before, each utterance would require a specific case-study to understand it in its social and political context. The articles gathered here nonetheless intend to offer global coherence to this question. They aim at demonstrating the necessity of a single comprehensive theoretical approach towards the study of ‘crusade’. Modern utterances must not be considered as “misuses” or “abuses” opposed to “sincere” medieval usages. All of them must be studied from a similar point of view, based on semantics’ methods. From its first uses in the 13th century, ‘crusade’ had a strong evocative power because of the holiness it was associated with, serving Christ as well as obeying the pope. This connotation has never disappeared. Later uses of the term both reinforced it, when the word became common in papal language in the 15th century,²⁷ and inverted it, when it was used with negative connotations by anti-papist preachers or philosophers. In the 13th as well as the 21st centuries the study of any utterance of ‘crusade’ must be done by taking into account its presumed and real effects on the audience and the mental blending it provoked. At any time, the use of ‘crusade’ had its supporters, who advocated that the phenomenon designated as such could or should be linguistically associated with the redemptive expeditions in Palestine. It also had its detractors, arguing that both had to be clearly distinguished and could not be labelled using the same term. The French Revolution possibly represented an acceleration in the frequency of ‘crusade’ and in its use without any direct reference to the holy war or military enterprises towards Jerusalem. But it must not be considered as a breaking point, even less a starting point. Metaphorisation, that is the use of a single concept to designate two distinct phenomena, is a progressive process made of successive *risemantisations*; it goes back to the designation of the Iberian *Reconquista* as *cruzada* in 1212 and continues through to the present, with Greta Thunberg’s activism

26 *Un vocabolo alla cui capacità evocativa di un passato permoderno si attribuisce valore mobilisante*, Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 10.

27 Benjamin Weber, “Nouveau mot ou nouvelle réalité? Le terme *cruciata* et son utilisation dans les textes pontificaux,” in *La papauté et les croisades / The Papacy and the Crusades. Actes du VII^e congrès de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East/Proceedings of the VIIth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, ed. Michel Balard (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011): 11–25.

being labelled as ‘crusade’, without any clear disruption, even if the movement was neither continuous nor linear.

In order to address such a global theoretical understanding of the meanings of ‘crusade’, this volume proposes two different approaches. The first part is composed of articles offering a diachronic overview of the uses of the word in a single language, beginning with Christoph Maier’s investigation of the German sources. Unlike Iberian languages, Occitan or French, German did not develop a specific crusading vocabulary in the 13th century, although the global context of the diversification of crusading was broadly similar and the specific terminology for taking and preaching the cross, from which *cruzada* or *croiserie* derived, also existed in German. Specific words for ‘crusade’ did exist, *Kriuzvart* and *Cruzevart*, but were almost never used, at least in written evidence accessible to historians. The word – under another form, *Kreuzzug* – only gradually became common in the 18th century, probably starting with the translation of Louis de Maimbourg’s French *Histoire des croisades* in 1776. In that case, however, the lexical evolution seems quite similar to what can be observed in French or English, namely historiographical writings playing a leading role in the diffusion of the word, always feeling the necessity to explain what this “new” word could mean.

The situation in Italian, studied by Daniele d’Aguanno, differs from this German situation. *Crociata* appears in the last decade of the 13th century, at a time when the Italian language already made common use of cross-related vocabulary to refer to the crusader or crusading activities. The diffusion of the word was slow, but not as much as in German. It had become relatively frequent by the end of the 15th century, with a large spectrum of meanings, ranging from fiscal devices to military expeditions against the Turks or against Papal enemies. The Iberian use of *cruzada* probably had a strong influence on this diffusion, as indicated by the appearance of the form *cruciata* alongside the former *crociata*. As in German, however, the use of the word by Niccolò Machiavelli in his *Istorie Fiorentine* (1522–1525) or by Giovanni Francesco Negri in his Bolognese translation of the *Gerusalemme liberata* (1658) still needed some detailed explanation in order to justify such terminology. From the end of the 18th century, *crociata* followed in Italian a similar pattern as in English or French, with multiple shifts of meaning both in Catholic and anti-Catholic discourses and a balance between spiritual and military significations. Modern debates on the uses of the word to qualify the war against terrorism or any charitable Catholic campaign surely sound familiar to any European or American citizen.

Polish offers another interesting case of evolution, examined by Paul Srodecki. The word does not seem to exist in the Middle Ages and at the beginning of the early modern period, although the scarcity of sources in Old Polish does not allow any definitive conclusion. As in German, the translation of Louis de Maimbourg’s *Histoire des croisades* in 1707 played a major role. ‘Crusade’ was thus a loan word from French, but Polish adopted the Latin-originated form *krucjata*. Its use remained occasional in the 18th century, mostly limited to translations of other French historiographical works. It nonetheless became widespread in the 19th century and became a “widely used metaphor”, as in all other European languages. However, its understanding differed because it was entangled with the

romantic and nationalist rhetoric of Poland as a bulwark for Christendom (against the Turks, the Russians, the Nazis, the Communists, etc.) and, along with the crusading movement as a whole, suffered from assimilation with the Teutonic Knights' expansion, denounced since the 15th century as a German aggression. The specificities of the term's connotations in Polish probably also explain its current use, mostly by far-right Catholic extremists in order to fuel their anti-LGBT, anti-Islamic, or anti-European Union discourses.

These first three papers demonstrate that a full understanding of the uses of the word 'crusade' requires comparative studies. German, Italian, and Polish might have met some similar developments but followed very different attitudes towards the diffusion or neglect of the word since the Middle Ages. Further enquiries are necessary to understand how much of these variances are due to differences in documentary evidence and how much can be linked to social, political, or literary contexts. The impact of these ancient uses on modern understanding and diffusion of the word is also still to be examined. Fatma Ahmad takes such an approach when comparing the uses of *croisade* and *Salibia* in French and Arabic. By a careful comparison between the definition given in dictionaries and the uses of crusade in large, digitalised corpus in both languages, he demonstrates that the word in Arabic is a direct translation from French, but that this lexical transfer never went with an exact transmission of meaning. In particular, the metaphorisation of the word – the shift from a specific military expedition to a generic use which has become so common in French as to be considered the main definition of the word – never took place in Arabic. Moreover, although *croisade* has very often a positive connotation in French, it is always used in a negative sense in Arabic. Such differences are rooted in the different historical meanings of the expeditions towards Jerusalem, Syria, and Egypt for French- and Arabic-speaking interlocutors in the Middle Ages. But they must also be understood by looking at the linguistic context, the strong emotional connotation that 'crusade' has acquired in French with its frequent and varied uses, and by taking into account the political uses of the word, both by Arab nationalists from the 1950s and by Western leaders in the 1990s and 2000s.

In order to carry out a thorough study of the meanings and effects of 'crusade' in a specific context, it is thus fundamental to have a precise idea of its linguistic background, the way it is understood by contemporaries and the mental blending it can provoke in the addressee's minds. The two following articles, by Caroline Savagnac and Rosa Cetro, provide such a study for French, with an examination of the definition of *croisade* in French dictionaries. They show that the exact meaning of a word, that is, the way it is understood by those who receive it, is a long diachronic elaboration made of successive shifts in meanings and *risemantisations*, the study of which can be done by a comparison of the successive editions of dictionaries. Caroline Salagnac focuses on a single corpus, the nine editions of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française*, between 1694 and nowadays. Each definition is a choice, a "semantic commitment" (*partis-pris sémantique*), focusing on some aspects of the multi-faceted crusading movement, which reveals a specific conceptualisation of the crusade. Although the first editions insisted on the military confrontation and glorified the crusaders, the religious characters of the crusades faded in the

second half of the 18th century, but Jerusalem was only mentioned in the current edition. The evolution of the definition is not only a sign of the transformation of the perception of the crusades; it is a “militant lexicography”, aimed at proposing a specific understanding of the crusading movement as a whole.

On the contrary, Rosa Cetro compares almost 20 dictionaries, written by various authors between the 17th and 20th centuries. She also demonstrates that, far from being a neutral writing down of a common meaning, dictionaries play an active role in proposing and diffusing a specific conception of a word, its scope of application, and its connotation. The choice of the defining word (*voyage*, *guerre*, *entreprise* or *pelerinage*) is already significant. In encyclopaedic dictionaries, it is completed and made more explicit by developments taken from previous historiographers, the choice of which has a direct impact on the perception of the word and thus of the crusading phenomenon as a whole by the reader/receptor. Rosa Cetro points out the role of Diderot and d’Alembert *Encyclopédie* in producing a very negative *contre-définition*, based on Voltaire’s analysis, which allowed an allegorical use of the word as “crusade against”, side by side with the classic “crusade for”.

The first six articles show the importance of comparative studies from a diachronic (between different epochs) and geographic (between different languages) point of view. On the contrary, the second part of the volume focuses on precise case studies of the uses of ‘crusade’ in their historical and sociological context. Carol Sweetenham re-examines medieval crusading vocabulary, focusing on Old French *chansons de geste*, which are probably the closest available sources to the language actually spoken by medieval French aristocracy. Although the symbolism of the cross and the centrality of crucifixion are obvious in these texts, the cross-related vocabulary remains relatively rare and, most of all, interchangeable: *prendre la croix*, *croisié* or even *crozada* in the Occitan *Canso de la Crozada*, does not seem to convey any specific meaning compared to the previously used terminology such as *expedition*, *pelerin*, etc. The entire corpus of the *chansons de geste* thus shows a clear “reticence about the terminology of crusade and crusading”, particularly visible when compared to other vernacular texts, such as historiography. This difference might be linked to the specificity of these sources, aimed at narrating the crusades inside a fantasy universe. Words such as ‘crusade’ and the questions about the conceptualisation of the crusading movement they conveyed could not find their place in texts mainly written for the entertainment of a lay audience.

As already noticed for German, Polish, and, to a lesser degree, Italian, this reluctance endured throughout the early modern period. It is probably one of the greatest lacks of this volume not to be able to furnish new evidence or a detailed reflection on the uses of ‘crusade’ between the 15th and 18th centuries. Indeed, Elisabeth Siberry focuses on the French Revolution period, traditionally pointed out as the beginning of the “modern” use of ‘crusade’.²⁸ However, using a very large body of sources, from political discourses to letters or poems, she shows that ‘crusade’ was widely used in English since the beginning of the 1790s, both by supporters

28 Dupront, *Le mythe de croisade*, vol. 2, 1118–1135; Menozzi, “Crocciata”, 24–29.

and opponents of the Revolution. The radicalisation of political positions induced by the military context probably played a major role in promoting the metaphorisation of the word, but the *risemantisation* itself, from medieval sanctifying expeditions to any kind of actively engaged military activity, predated the political troubles in France and the diffusion of war in Europe. Elisabeth Siberry also points out numerous criticisms, arguing against the use of the word. As in the 12th century, the mental blending at stake when uttering the word ‘crusade’ necessarily raised doubts and disapprovals and the debates upon the use of the word cannot be considered as a consequence of modern abuses.

Philippe Fache examines a similar case of refusal of the word ‘crusade’ in France. The numerous leagues fighting against immorality and moral decadency in the first decades of the Third Republic (ca. 1880–1900) carefully and explicitly avoided using this term to designate their action. Their aims and methods were similar to a large number of other movements commonly labelled as such at this time: *croisade contre l’alcoolisme*, *croisade contre la tuberculose* and others. The word was only used by their opponents in order to disqualify them. This attitude of “avoidance and stigmatisation” must be understood within the context of a diffused anti-Catholicism in French society. In order to gather as many supporters as possible, the leagues rejected the word for its alleged religious connotations; on the contrary, their enemies wanted their actions to be perceived as useless as the expeditions in Palestine had been, at least according to the image forged by Voltaire and Diderot. Historians can point out that the metaphorisation of ‘crusade’ and its shift from a religious to a civil meaning were over at the end of the 19th century.²⁹ Contemporaries obviously didn’t have the same feeling: the uses of a word do not have a direct and simple effect on its understanding, and the mental operation at stake when reading or listening to the word ‘crusade’ is deeply rooted in time. Philippe Fache also studies this distortion between contemporary and scholarly views of a phenomenon, by showing that the leagues against immorality were perceived by sociologists in the 1960s as an archetype to define the “moral crusades”. But he also demonstrates the continuity in the understanding of the word, since this concept was never really able to divorce itself from the stigmatising connotation it already had in the 1880s.

Francesco Cutolo also focuses on an example of reluctance to use the term ‘crusade’ but in a very different historical and linguistic context. The conquest of Jerusalem by General Allenby in 1917 was widely celebrated in Great Britain as a “new crusade”. The metaphor was also diffused in Italy, but it was not unanimously accepted. Interestingly, the Catholic clergy revealed itself to be more hesitant than the secular authorities to use the word, precisely because it refused the new “political” sense given to the term. French leagues of virtue had feared the religious connotation of the word in the 1890s; three decades later, Italian Catholics were afraid it might be too associated with a political meaning. This difference is due to the political context, the competition between the newly founded Italian state

29 Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 56–63, 96–102.

and the Vatican, the various attempts to proclaim a crusade from both sides and the reluctance of the papacy to use the crusading tools against its political enemy. It also had a cultural explanation: the romantic positive perception of the crusade, well diffused in England and (to a lesser degree) in France, was not popular in Italy.

The current uses of the word, examined by Paul Srodecki in his second article, are the consequences of this accumulation of different, often opposed, meanings and understandings. Since the middle of the 20th century, ‘crusade’ has been labelled as a “polymetaphor” which can fit in almost any situation or context, praising or condemning a social fight as well as supporting or dismissing a military offensive. This “creativity and liberty with which the crusade metaphor is being used in modern political and publicist language” is self-fuelled: the more a term is uttered, the more it can be reused in a different, albeit partly similar, illocutive context. But it is also the last stage of a long historical metaphorisation process. The qualification of the Russo-Ukrainian war as a ‘crusade’, by supporters of both Putin and Zelensky, is made possible by a similar qualification of Bush’s war in Afghanistan both by the American president and his al-Qaida enemies, which was itself the consequence of the competing use of the word by the Nazis and the Allies during the Second World War.

As linguistic studies have long demonstrated, the meaning of a word must be studied by placing its utterance in context and by analysing its current political and social implications. But the principle of language is to be differently understood by any addressee, precisely because each of them bears a different linguistic background based on all the earlier mentions of the words he has been exposed to. The understanding of a word implies a historical diachronic study, a precise knowledge of the various connotations that a single word can bear and of the evolutions of all its previous uses. One can be shocked by G. W. Bush qualifying his war as a ‘crusade’, terrorised by al-Baghdadi denouncing Western ‘crusade’, or exasperated by environmental activists’ ‘crusade’ against oil companies. These reactions are only partly moved by the real knowledge of these concrete phenomena; they are mostly provoked by the way they are labelled. Such linguistic characteristics are evolutive; they change with time and societies. Google Ngram Viewer allows you to examine the chronological evolution of the occurrences of a single word in Google Books’ database. Although it cannot be considered as an image of the uses of a word in a specific society, it provides a visual representation of this linguistic evolution.³⁰

The absolutely non-linear occurrences of *croisade* in French must be explained by incorporating many different factors. The peaks between 1812 and 1848 are partly caused by the successive editions of Joseph Michaud’s *Histoire des croisades*³¹; the 1942–1945 uses are evidently linked to Philippe Pétain’s “croisade

30 Patrick Peccatte, “L’interprétation des graphiques produits par Ngram Viewer,” in *Read/Write books 2. Une introduction aux humanités numériques*, ed. P. Mounier (Marseille: Open Edition Press, 2012), accessed 23 April 2023, doi: [10.4000/books.oep.226](https://doi.org/10.4000/books.oep.226).

31 Joseph Michaud, *Histoire des Croisades* (Paris: Furne et cie, 1812–1822).

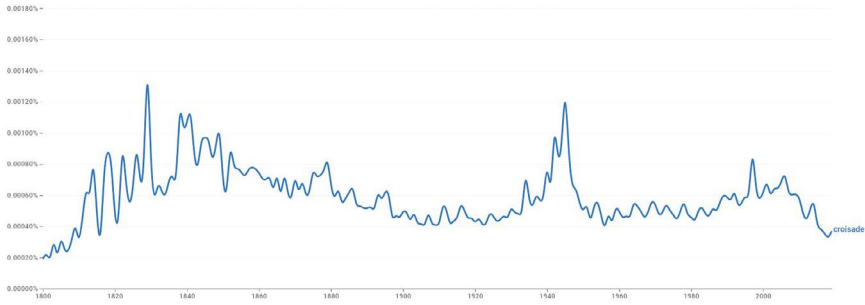


Figure 1.1 Occurrences of ‘croisade’ in the French digitalised books of the Google Books database by Google Books Ngram Viewer https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=croisade&year_start=1800&year_end=2019&corpus=fr-2019&smoothing=0 [accessed 23 April 2023].

contre le communisme” and Eisenhower’s “Crusade in Europe”³², the current setback is a consequence of a post-colonialist rejection of American wars in the Middle East and a will to be distanced from the use of the word by far-right as well as Muslim extremists. In spite of its inaccuracy and difficult interpretation, the graph demonstrates how historical the use of a term can be and thus what historical research can bring to the understanding of discourses. Studying the history of the word ‘crusade’ will never prevent anybody from starting a war and naming it after the medieval expeditions in Palestine. If it could help our contemporaries to analyse such conflict for what it is and not for how it is called, this book would have fully reached its final goal.

32 See the second contribution of Paul Srodecki in this volume.

2 From *Kriuzvart* to *Kreuzzug*

German words for crusade and their usage from the 13th to the 18th centuries

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German is a complicated language. Whereas English has one standard expression for referring to the crusade, German has two: *Kreuzfahrt* and *Kreuzzug*. This has probably to do with the way in which the Latin *cruciata* or the Romance *crozada/crozeia/crozea/croiserie* were translated and absorbed into the two languages. Aided by its partly Romance roots, English merely transformed the Latin viz. Romance term by anglicising it to the word ‘crusade’. In contrast, German translated the term by using its own lexical pool. In doing so, two alternative terms emerged: *Kreuzfahrt* and *Kreuzzug*. *Kreuzfahrt* is an earlier word dating back to medieval times. It has also had several meanings, including ‘pleasure cruise’ and ‘Way of the Cross,’ some of which have been preserved to the present day. *Kreuzzug*, on the other hand, does not appear until after the Middle Ages and is more narrowly defined. It is now the preferred term in German for referring to what the English language describes as ‘crusade.’ Nevertheless, today *Kreuzfahrt*, too, is still being used as a less frequent synonym for *Kreuzzug*.

The history of the use of the words *Kreuzfahrt* and *Kreuzzug* has so far not been investigated in any systematic fashion. This article presents some aspects of this history with the aim of pointing possible paths towards a more comprehensive treatment of the question of how the German language has conceptualised what in English is referred to as ‘crusade.’ The following survey is far from complete. It highlights two key moments in the history of German crusade terminology: firstly, its medieval origins in vernacular texts of the 12th to the 14th centuries, culminating in the first known occurrence of the word *kriuzvart/cruzevart* in the late 13th century; and secondly, the first use of the terms *Kreuzzug* and *Kreuzfahrt* for referring to the events and phenomenon we now conceptualise as the crusades in 17th- and 18th-century texts, which gradually began using the two terms in a systematic manner.

Middle High German terms for ‘crusade’ and ‘crusading’

According to Benjamin Weber’s research, the term *cruciata* did not appear in Latin papal documents until the year 1300.¹ Even after this date, *cruciata* was hardly ever used by the papal chancery until the second half of the 15th century, when the term began to appear more frequently in papal documents.² The earliest vernacular equivalents to the modern term ‘crusade’, again according to Benjamin Weber, appear in the 1210s in Navarro-Aragonese (*crozada*) and Occitan (*cruzada*, *crozeia*, *corzea*) in contexts relating to the Reconquista and the Albigensian Crusade.³ Middle High German (MHG) texts of the 13th century have no such equivalents. So how did they refer to what we now call the crusade? An interesting document from the 1260s sheds some light on this. The text in question is a translation of the papal letter *Expansis in cruce* of 1265, in which Pope Clement IV commissioned the preaching of the cross to the Holy Land in Germany.⁴ A contemporary copy of this letter, in which a MHG translation accompanied the Latin text, has survived in the archives of the University of Freiburg i. Br.⁵ This copy originally belonged to the Freiburg Dominicans, who must have used it for their crusade propaganda activities. The German text was added to the original Latin version on the reverse of the parchment so that crusade preachers might read it out to audiences during recruitment events.⁶ This document provides a unique opportunity for investigating how Latin words connected with crusade and crusading were translated into MHG in the middle of the 13th century.

By then, MHG had not developed a specific vocabulary for the crusade. The most frequently used term for referring to the military campaign in the MHG translation of *Expansis in cruce* was *vart* (gen. and pl. *vert*), while joining or being on a crusade campaign was called *varen*, being the verb that goes with *vart*.

- 1 Benjamin Weber, “Nouveau mot ou nouvelle réalité? Le terme *cruciata* et son utilisation dans les textes pontificaux,” in *La papauté et les croisades/The Papacy and the Crusades. Actes du VIIe congrès de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East/Proceedings of the VIIth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, ed. Michel Balard (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011): 11–25, at pages 14–15.
- 2 Benjamin Weber, *Lutter contre les Turcs. Les formes nouvelles de la croisade pontificale au XVe siècle* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2013), 509–517.
- 3 Benjamin Weber, “When and Where did the Word ‘crusade’ appear in the Middle Ages? And Why?,” in *The Crusades: History and Memory. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, vol. 2, ed. Kurt V. Jensen and Torben K. Nielsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021): 199–220.
- 4 Christoph T. Maier, *Preaching the Crusades. Mendicant Friars and the Cross in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 80–81.
- 5 Ms. Universitätsarchiv der Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg i. Br., A 106,65. The text has been published in Friedrich Wilhelm, ed., *Corpus der altdutschen Originalurkunden bis zum Jahr 1300* (Lahr: Schauenburg, 1932), vol. 1, 133–143. See also Helmut de Boor and Diether Haacke, ed., *Corpus der altdutschen Originalurkunden bis zum Jahr 1300. Regesten zu den Bänden I-IV* (Lahr: Schauenburg, 1963), 11.
- 6 See Christoph T. Maier, “Ritual, what else? Papal Letters, Sermons and the Making of Crusaders,” *Journal of Medieval History* 44 (2018): 333–346, at pages 335–337.

In the following comparative table, the relevant text passages using *vart* and *varen* are shown:

| <i>Latin</i> ⁷ | <i>MHG</i> | <i>Modern English translation of MHG</i> |
|--|--|---|
| deligenter exequi studeatis omnes quos ad hoc utiles fore putaueritis instantius inducendo ut suscipientes cum reuerentia signum crucis ipsamque suis cordis et humeris affigentes ad terre memorate succursum uiriliter se ac ipsius negocium fideliter exequantur (134, ll. 43–46) | Vn manet alle die die vch dvnkent nvzze sin <u>ze varende</u> in ds heilige lant mit aller uwirre wizze vn gnade so vch het got getan vn tvt vn ds sie das zeichen an sich nemmen vn offenlich tragen vn vrumecliche ds cruce vuren inds lant da got selbe ds cruce da man in martirete trvc vns zi ainem bilde Vn manent sie ds sie sich snellecliche bereiten <u>ze varende</u> (138, ll. 38–43) | And order all those whom you deem useful to go to this holy land, with the wisdom and grace which God has given you and still gives you, and that they take up the sign and wear it openly and fittingly carry the cross to this land where God himself bore the cross on which he was martyred as an example for us, and exhort them speedily to prepare to go |
| Eis autem qui non in personis propriis illuc accesserint sed in suis dumtaxat expensis iuxta qualitates et facultates suas uiros ydoneos destinaverint illic iuxta prouidentie nostre arbitrium moraturos (135, ll. 6–8) | Vn die mit ir selbes libe da hin niht mygent kommen! vn aber mit ir koste nah irs gytes maht vn nah irn staten vur sich sendent andire dahin die vrummy sint <u>ze varnde</u> Vn da nah rate ze blibende (139, ll. 7–10) | And those who cannot go there bodily by themselves but, in accordance with their wealth and standing, at their own expense send others for themselves who are worthy to go and then remain there as it is deemed necessary |
| Vt autem predicti cruvesignati eo exsequantur libentius et feruentius uotum suum (135, ll. 23–24) | Vn ds die seligen die ds cruce alsus nemment ansich vrolich vn willich ir <u>vart</u> leisten (139, ll. 25–26) | And that those who thus take up the cross shall fulfil their journey eagerly and willingly |
| Concedimus insuper ut si aliqui crucesignatorum infra tempus a nobis ad votum exequendum huiusmodi assignandum decesserint illarum indulgentiarum et gratiarum sint plene particeps que obeuntibus in eiusdem terre seruicio sunt concesse. | So tvn wir och allen den die sich crucigent Vn lihte sterbent e ds div <u>vart</u> beginne oder ende die gnade ds sie tailhaftic sin aller der gnade so hie vor ist genemmet Vn die den beschilt die inds heilige | We grant all those who take the cross and perchance die before the journey starts or ends the favour that they obtain all the aforesaid grace which is bestowed upon those who reach the Holy Land and die there or |

(Continued)

7 Here and in the following table, page and line numbers added in brackets refer to the edition of the Latin and MHG texts in *Corpus der altheutschen Originalurkunden*. Both the Latin and the MHG texts are rendered here without diacritics. For easier reading, the two different letters for ‘s’ (s, ſ) have been normalised to ‘s.’ This also goes for quotes from other MHG and post-medieval texts throughout this article.

| Latin | MHG | Modern English translation of MHG |
|---|--|---|
| Commutandi at hec Theutonicis emissum ieuniorum atque cuiuslibet peregrinationis votum in negocij sepedicti subsidium ac etiam per censuram ecclesiasticam crvcessignatos quoslibet cuiuscunq[ue] dignitatis uel conditionis fuerint compellendi ut infra certum terminum a vobis eisdemque commissariis prefigendum illud executurj at terram predictam accedant uel ipsum redimant si legitimo fuerint impedimento detenti! et uos uel ijdem commissarij pensatis personarum at aliis circumstantiis illud uideritis redimendum (136, ll. 13–21) | lant komment vn da oder vndirwegen sterbent in dirre <u>verte</u> Vn gebent uch gewalt ze twingende alle tivtsche livte mit deme banne beide man vn wib die antheize hant getan an vasten oder an swelre hande bitverte sie entheizen hant ds sie die antheize wandelen zi dirre <u>verte</u> vbir mere Vn die gecruciget sint oder werdent, swer die sint hohe oder nidere edele vn vnedele pfaffen vn leien och ze twingenne ds sie die <u>vart</u> leisten ob sie niht ehaftige not irret zv deme zil so ir in sezzent oder den irs bevelhent oder die <u>vart</u> vn die antheize losen nah uwirme rate zu helfe dem lande nah deme ds ir sehent die maht vn die statte an den personen un an irme gyte (140, ll. 5–15) | on the way during this journey; and we grant you the power to force all German people, both men and women who have taken vows to fast or whatever pilgrimage they have vowed to change their vows to this journey across the sea and also to force those who are or will be signed with the cross, whoever they are, high or low, noble or non-noble, cleric or layperson, to fulfil this journey, unless legitimate affliction stops them, towards the objective that you set and whom you command it or else discharge the journey and the vow following your instruction of how to support the land after having assessed the wealth and standing according to their possessions |

In the MHG version of *Expansis in cruce*, the words *vart* and *varen* thus described various aspects of crusading. *Vart* primarily denoted the military expeditions to the Holy Land (“*ds div vart beginne*” [140, l. 6],⁸ “*in dirre verte*” [140, l. 8], “*ze dirre verte vbir mere*” [140, ll. 10–11]). It was also used to refer to the military service as an obligation of the vow, i.e. the promise to join the military expedition (“*ir vart leisten*” [139, l. 26], “*die vart leisten*” [140, l. 13]). Correspondingly, the verb *varen* signified participation in the military campaign (“*ze varnde*” [139, l. 9]). *Vart* and *varen* were, however, not terms specific to crusading. The word *vart* was otherwise used in many different contexts generally signifying a journey, including a military campaign or a pilgrimage.⁹ Equally, *varen* was used as a general term for making a journey.¹⁰

The MHG translation of *Expansis in cruce* also used several other non-crusade-specific expressions in order to render Latin passages describing various elements of the act of crusading. The Latin “*ad bella [...] accingantur*” [134, l. 15] (i.e.

8 References in square brackets are to the edition of the text in *Corpus der altdutschen Originalurkunden*.

9 Matthias Lexer, ed., *Mittelhochdeutsches Handwörterbuch* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1872), digitalised in Wörterbuchnetz des Trier Center for Digital Humanities, Version 01/21: <https://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/Lexer>, s.v. *vart* [accessed 06 November 2023].

10 Ibid., s.v. *varn*, *varen*.

they should prepare for war) was translated “*nu zieren [...] un strittent*” [138, ll. 19–20] (i.e. they should get ready and fight). The Latin “*que personaliter in terre predictae subsidium transfretantibus*” [136, l. 28] (i.e. to those who travel across for the aid of said land in person) was rendered in MHG as “*die sich selbe mit irme libe vber mer erbetent*” [140, l. 20] (i.e. to those who offer to go themselves bodily across the sea). Another expression used was “*ir helfe vber mer tvnt*” [140, l. 5] (i.e. they send their aid across the sea) as a translation of “*pro ipsius negocij subsidio*” [136, l. 8] (i.e. for the aid of this business). None of these expressions describing participation in a military crusading campaign use crusade-specific vocabulary.

The MHG translation of *Expansis in cruce* suggests that, like Latin, MHG generally did not seem to have developed its own terminology for the crusade as a military campaign. The words used for referring to the crusade as a military campaign, also in other MHG texts, are largely non-crusade-specific. This is confirmed by a rough survey of the evidence from late-12th to early-14th-century poems and songs. Here, too, the most frequent word for referring to the military campaign of the crusade was *vart*, sometimes extended as *hervart* (i.e. journey of an army), *mervart* (i.e. sea journey), *gotes vart* (i.e. God’s journey) or *vart über mer* (i.e. journey across the sea), etc.¹¹ Like in the MHG version of *Expansis in cruce*, the individual act of crusading was usually described as *varen*.¹² Less frequently, the crusade was called *reise* (i.e. journey), once also as *kristes reise* (i.e. Christ’s journey), *reise* being another MHG term generally referring to travelling.¹³

The MHG translation of *Expansis in cruce*, however, also employed terminology for describing the participation in the crusade which connoted the specific penitential character of the crusade as a war of the cross. Expressions based on the Latin root *cruce*, rather than MHG *kriuz/criuz*, were used to describe both the act of crusading as a military activity and the various preparatory stages from the preaching of the cross to the taking of the vow; in addition, this included terms referring to the crusader:

| <i>Latin</i> | <i>MHG</i> | <i>Modern English translation of MHG</i> |
|---|--|--|
| Nos de omnipotentia sperantes illius qui potens est de lapidibus abrahe filios suscitare! qui uocem uirtutis tribuit uoci sue! uerbum crucis in terre memorate succursum fidelibus Regni predicti decreuimus proponendum! (134, ll. 35–37). | so heizen wir vffen die zvirsiht die wir zi unsirme herren han der gewalt het vzir steinen lvte zi machenne des wort craft vn tvgende geben allen den die in an rvfent vnde vch vn de irs bevelhent sine gnade tvt vn git <u>zi predigenne ds cruce</u> (138, ll. 30–33) | Based on the trust that we have in our Lord, who has the power to make men from stones, who gives the power and virtue of the word to all those who worship him and who grants and gives his grace to you and to all those to whom you command it, we order to preach the cross. |

(Continued)

11 Ulrich Müller, ed., *Kreuzzugsdichtung*, 3rd edn. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1985), no.25, 26, 27, 29, 37, 45, 60, 61, 63, 68, 73, 80, 81, 82, 91.

12 Müller, *Kreuzzugsdichtung*, no. 8, 17, 28, 30, 31, 32, 36, 38, 44, 49, 51, 55, 67, 68, 72, 73.

13 Müller, *Kreuzzugsdichtung*, no. 51, 60.

| <i>Latin</i> | <i>MHG</i> | <i>Modern English translation of MHG</i> |
|--|---|---|
| ut suscipientes cum reuerentia signum crucis ipsamque suis cordis et humeris affigentes ad terre memorate succursum uiriliter se accingant ac ipsius negocium fideliter exequantur. (134, ll. 45–46) | vn <u>ds sie das zeichen an sich nemmen</u> vn offentlich tragen vn <u>vrumecliche ds cruce vvren</u> inds lant da got selbe ds cruce da man in martirete trvc vns zi ainem bilde Vn manent sie ds sie sich snellecliche bereiten ze varende (138, ll. 40–43) | and that they take up the sign and wear it openly and fittingly carry the cross to this land where God himself bore the cross on which he was martyred as an example for us, and exhort them speedily to prepare to go. |
| qui huiusmodi laborem salutifere crvcis signo suscepto in personis propriis subierint (135, ll. 3–4) | allen den die <u>ds cruce emfahent</u> in ds lant zi ierim zu vurende (139, l. 4) | to all those who receive the cross to carry it to the land of Jerusalem |
| Personas insuper familias et bona eorum ex quo crvcem susceperint sub beati petri et nostram protectionem suscipimus (135, ll. 12–14) | vn alle die alsvs <u>ds cruce enphahent</u> die vn ir gesinde vn ir gvt nemmen wir in den schirm vnsirs herren ihu xpi vn Sci petri vn unsiren (139, ll. 12–14) | and we take all those who thus take the cross and their household and their possessions under the protection of our Lord Jesus Christ and St. Peter and our own |
| eos [...] ut autem predicti crvcesignati (135, ll. 19, 23–24) | allen den die <u>ds cruce nemment</u> [...] Vn ds die seligen die <u>ds cruce alsus nemment</u> (139, ll. 21, 25) | and all those who take the cross [...] and that those who thus take up the cross |
| crvcesignatorum indulgentia (135, l. 26) | diz <u>gebottes von deme cruce</u> (139, l. 30) | this decree of that cross |
| et ibidem verbum crvcis proponere (135, l. 34) | ze <u>predienne ds cruce</u> (139, l. 34) | to preach the cross |
| tam clericos quam laycos crvcesignandos (135, l. 43) | pfaffen vn leien, <u>die ds cruce nement</u> (139, l. 39) | clerics and laypeople who take the cross |
| conuertere subsidium per se ipsos (136, ll. 9–10) | die <u>das cruce nement</u> vnde ir helfe vber mer tvnt (140, ll. 4–5) | those who take the cross and send aid across the sea |
| aliqui crvcesignatorum (136, l. 13) | allen den die sich <u>crucigent</u> (140, ll. 5–6) | to all those who cross themselves |
| crvcesignatos quoslibet (140, l. 17) | die <u>gecruciget</u> sint oder werdent (140, l. 11) | those who have been or will be crossed |

The MHG translation of *Expansis in cruce* primarily used the word *cruce* to refer to the crusade vow. *Predi(g)enne ds cruce* meant to preach the cross in order to make people take up the crusade vow, which in turn was called *ds cruce nemmen/enfahen*, to take or receive the cross. The act of crusading was rendered as *ds cruce vuren* in the sense of carrying out the vow of the cross. The act of receiving the vow was designated by the verb *crucegen*, to cross oneself. Using these expressions for taking the crusade vow based on the word *cruce*, the translator employed crusade-specific terminology that can also be found in MHG poems and songs since the late 12th century, where the word for cross, *kriuz*, occurred in phrasal expressions describing the act of taking the crusading vow.¹⁴ It is, however, interesting that the MHG translation of *Expansis in cruce* did not choose the standard word for cross, *kriuz/cruiz*, but adopted the Latinised form of *cruce*. But using the Latinised form *cruce* instead of *kriuz* did not change the way an audience to whom the MHG version of *Expansis in cruce* was read out understood the text. It in fact seems that, by the mid-1260s, there was more or less well-established crusade-specific terminology in MHG for referring to the taking of the crusade vow based on the word for cross, both in its latinised form of *cruce* and its German form of *kriuz/cruiz*.

Although MHG used crusade-specific terminology based on *kriuz* or *cruce* frequently, actual words for crusade or crusader were not adopted for general use. According to the *Mittelhochdeutsches Wörterbuch*, the only two occurrences of a MHG equivalent for ‘crusade’ appeared in two texts of the late 13th century and the 1330s, respectively.¹⁵ In Jan Jansen Enikels *Fürstenbuch*, written ca. 1280–1290, the author described Duke Leopold of Austria joining Frederick Barbarossa’s crusade, writing: “*derselbe fuor ein kriuzvart mit dem keiser über mer*” (i.e. he went on a crusade across the sea with the emperor).¹⁶ Nicolaus von Jeroschin’s *Kronike von Pruzinlant*, being a MHG translation of Peter of Dusburg’s Latin *Chronicon Terrae Prussiae* written in the 1330s, also used the word *cruzevart* once.¹⁷ It is mentioned in connection with the preaching of the cross, saying that the papal legate “*predigte offinbar eine cruzevart*” (i.e. apparently preached a crusade).¹⁸ But,

14 Müller, *Kreuzzugsdichtung*, 29 [no.17]: “*daz wir durch in das kriuze nemen;*” 40 [no.24]: “*do ich daz kriuze in gotes ere nam;*” 42 [no.26]: “*swerz kriuze nam;*” 43 [no.28]: “*do diu wolgetane gesach an min kleide daz kriuze;*” 47 [no.31]: “*ich han dur got daz kriuze an mich genomen;*” 49, 50 [no.32]: “*swer nu daz kriuze nemet, nu nement daz kriuze und varent da hin;*” 58 [no.39]: “*des tages do ich daz kriuze nam.*”

15 *Mittelhochdeutsches Handwörterbuch*, s.v. *kriuze-vart*.

16 Philipp Strauch, ed., *Jansen Enikels Werke*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Deutsche Chroniken und andere Geschichtsbücher des Mittelalters* (Hanover, 1900), vol. 3, 621, lines 1152–1153.

17 For Jeroschin’s *Kronike von Pruzinlant* see Stefan Vander Elst, *The Knight, the Cross, and the Song. Crusade Propaganda and Chivalric Literature, 1100–1400* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), 136–149. For an English translation see *The Chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von Jeroschin: A History of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia, 1190–1331*, transl. and ed. Mary Fischer (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).

18 Nicolaus von Jeroschin, *Di Kronike von Pruzinlant*, ed. Ernst Strehle, in *Scriptores Rerum Prusicarum* 1 (Leipzig, 1861), 391, lines 7666–7676: “*Und do di mer irkande der vogenante legat, zuhant er selbe uftrat und predigte offinbar eine cruzevart vorwar wider den vil argen hunt und gebot ouch in der stunt von des pabistis gewalt, daz man predigte vil bald daz cruze gemeinlichin in al den ummerichin*”.

generally speaking, it seems that at the time, like Latin, MHG texts hardly ever used a specific word for ‘crusade’. The same is also true for the MHG word for crusader. Again, Nicolaus von Jeroschin once only employed a MHG word for crusader, i.e. *cruzigerin*, in his *Kronike von Pruzinlant*.¹⁹ But this word is not known to have occurred elsewhere. The only alternative word used to describe the crusader is *pilgerne/bilgerne*,²⁰ the MHG equivalent of the Latin *peregrinus*.

The fact that only these very occasional occurrences of MHG equivalents of ‘crusade’ and ‘crusader’ are known confirms that MHG usage normally seems to have relied on the terminology of non-crusade-specific words for describing the crusade as a military campaign and phrasal constructions around the concept of cross for the individual penitential act of crusading. Nicolaus von Jeroschin’s use of the word *cruzevart* in connection with the preaching of the cross also recalls similar observations in early French texts and in papal documents of the 15th century. According to David Trotter, in 13th-century French texts, occasional expressions like *croiserie* or *croisement* were mostly used in the context of crusade recruitment and the preaching of the cross.²¹ Likewise, when in the 15th-century papal texts occasionally use the term *cruciata*, it is, according to Benjamin Weber, often connected with designating the preparatory stages of a crusade, namely the preaching of the cross and the collection of money.²² It seems that in such contexts *cruciata*, *cruzevart*, *croiserie* or *croisement* were thus not necessarily employed to denote a specific type of war but were simply describing moments and events in which crusaders appeared collectively, either during the recruitment of crusaders or during military campaigns of the cross.

In conclusion to this first part, we can state that MHG seems to be comparable to Latin, as it did not, with very few exceptions, use an equivalent term to describe the type of war that is signified by the modern word ‘crusade.’ The specific crusade terminology developed in MHG concerns crusading as an individual penitential activity and is based on the word ‘cross,’ i.e. *cruce* or *kriuz*. In most of these phrases, *cruce* or *kriuz* were used to connote the taking of the crusade vow: for example, *ds cruce nemmen* (i.e. to take the cross) or *ds cruce predigenne* (i.e. to preach the cross) as a way of making people take the vow. The imagery of the cross in these phrases was not primarily conjuring up a military enterprise or a type of war, but the devotional and penitential act of becoming a religious warrior. Establishing a clear terminology for the individual act of crusading was important since becoming a crusader changed an individual’s legal status, societal standing and state of salvation, which in turn had consequences for that individual’s social relations. In contrast, there seemed to have been no equivalent necessity in the Middle Ages for labelling certain wars against religious opponents as ‘crusades’ in the way that modern usage has done since the 17th century.²³

19 Ibid., 554, l. 21717: “[...] *Petrus, den ich hab genant, mit den gotis geweren nuwen cruzigerin* [...].”

20 Müller, *Kreuzzugsdichtung*, no. 56, 70, 72, 79.

21 David A. Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades (1100–1300)* (Geneva: Droz, 1988), 58–61.

22 Weber, *Lutter contre les Turcs*, 509–517.

23 See also Christoph T. Maier, “When Was the First History of the Crusades Written?” in *The Crusades: History and Memory*; 13–28, at pages 23–25.

The first occurrences of *Kreuzfahrt* and *Kreuzzug*

The generic use of the words *crusade/croisade/Kreuzzug/etc.* is a post-medieval phenomenon. Even though research on the topic has by no means been exhausted, the use of a generic term in the sense of the modern concept of ‘crusade’ seems to have started in France at the beginning of the 17th century. When Étienne Pasquier in his *Recherches de la France*, first published in 1607, and Pierre d’Outreman in his *La Vie du Venerable Pierre l’Hermitte* of 1631 began using the term *croisade* to denote the wars we today call ‘crusade’, both offered explanatory passages to tell their readers what this “new” word meant.²⁴ There is an as yet untested hypothesis that the introduction of the word *croisade* as a generic term was tied to the introduction of French instead of Latin as the leading language of historiography in France. If proven, this hypothesis may well describe a plausible development in which French-speaking historians of the early 17th century made use of the occasional survival of the Romance crusade-related vocabulary discussed by David Trotter and Benjamin Weber, which first appeared in the 13th century.²⁵ There is, however, as yet insufficient understanding of the use of these Romance terms between the 13th and 16th centuries.

It seems that Louis Maimbourg’s *Histoire des croisades* of 1675 played a decisive role in popularising the generic use of the concept of crusade in languages other than French.²⁶ Apart from the second edition of the English translation of Maimbourg’s *Histoire*, which reverted to the more traditional title of *History of the Holy War*, the translations into English, Polish and German of Maimbourg’s work adopted the terms *crusade/krucjata/Kreuzzug* as the generic term for the wars we now refer to as ‘crusades’.²⁷ As Maimbourg’s *Histoire* became the authoritative crusade history of the late 17th and early 18th centuries throughout Europe, this work and its translations into other vernacular languages may have been instrumental in establishing a generic term for what we now call a ‘crusade’.²⁸

For the German-speaking world, there are indications that, just as in France, the adoption of a generic term for ‘crusade’ was not a sudden process but a gradual one. In addition, as has already been explained, German has two words for

24 Maier, “When Was the First History of the Crusades Written?” 17–21. The same is true for the entry on ‘croisade’ in Jean Nicot, *Thresor de la langue francoyse, tant ancienne que moderne* (Paris, 1606), 196: “*Croisade* [...] *C’est l’assemblée & expeditiones chevalliers Chrestiens pour aller contre les infideles, ainsi dites parce que chacun d’eux prend sur ses habillemens de guerre une crois blanche selon la bulle du Pape.*” Many thanks to Benjamin Weber for this reference.

25 Weber, “Nouveau mot ou nouvelle réalité?,”; id., “When and where did the word ‘crusade’ appear,”; Trotter, *Medieval French Literature*.

26 Louis Maimbourg, *Histoire des croisades pour la délivrance de la Terre Sainte*, 2 vol. (Paris: Sebastien Mabre-Cramoisy, 1675–76 [1st ed.], 1676 [2nd ed.], 1677 [3rd ed.], 1686 [4th ed.]).

27 Louis Maimbourg, *The History of the Crusade* (London: Thomas Dring, 1685); id., *The History of the Holy War* (London: Thomas Dring, 1686); id., *Hystoria o krucyatach ná wyzwolenie Ziemie Świętej* (Cracow: Drukarnia Fránciřka Cezárego, 1707); id., *Geschichte von den Kreuzzügen in das heilige Land* (Augsburg: Johann Jacob Mauracher, 1776).

28 See Christoph T. Maier, “Historiography of the Crusades,” in *Cambridge History of the Crusades*, ed. Jonathan Phillips et al., 2 vols. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming): vol. 1.

‘crusade,’ *Kreuzzug* and *Kreuzfahrt*, which complicates the situation. A search of the *Deutsches Textarchiv* in the *Digitales Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (DWDS) allows us to trace some elements of the process of introducing a generic term for ‘crusade’ in German.²⁹ *Kreuzfahrt* is the more complicated term because it has several meanings. Over the years, it was used to denote ‘crusade’ as well as ‘cruise’ and “Way of the Cross.” According to DWDS, *Kreuzfahrt* was the first German word used in the sense of the modern concept of crusade in post-medieval texts.³⁰ It first cropped up in Johann Micraelius’ history of Pomerania, published in 1639.³¹ As with similar French examples, the author seems to have been aware that his readers were unfamiliar with the word *Kreuzfahrt*. Having mentioned the military campaigns of what we now call the First Crusade, he explained that, because people on these campaigns wore red crosses on their right shoulders, the campaign was also called *Creutz-fahrt oder Cruciata*.³² The same explanation was put forward by Pasquier and d’Outreman.³³ Might this suggest that Micraelius had perhaps read the two French authors? However, the reference to the Latin *cruciata* might also point towards the adoption of German *Kreuzfahrt* as a result of a straightforward translation from Latin.

According to the data of DWDS, *Kreuzfahrt* was not commonly used to denote a crusade in the modern sense until the latter decades of the 18th century. The word *Kreuzfahrt* was also used in the sense of the modern *Kreuzweg*, meaning the Way of the Cross, i.e. Christ’s progress from his arrest and condemnation to his death on the cross. This use of the term *Kreuzfahrt*, however, largely disappeared in the course of the 17th century. The third meaning of *Kreuzfahrt* did not appear until around 1800, namely the journey of a ship ‘crossing’ from port to port or in different directions. In more recent times, *Kreuzfahrt*, in this sense of the word, has become the German word for passenger ship cruises.

The term *Kreuzzug*, again according to the DWDS data, appeared in print a little after *Kreuzfahrt*.³⁴ In Erasmus Francisci’s *Schau- und Ehren-Platz Schriftlicher Tapfferkeit*, published in 1685, a portrait of János Zápolyai, who became King John

29 This is a searchable database of various collections of German texts since 1465 including over 50 million text documents. The selection of texts is not systematic but is based on single collections of text corpora: <https://www.dwds.de> [accessed 06 November 2023].

30 https://www.dwds.de/r?q=Kreuzfahrt&corpus=dt&date-start=1473&date-end=1927&genre=Belletristik&genre=Wissenschaft&genre=Gebrauchsliteratur&genre=Zeitung&format=full&sort=date_asc&limit=50 [accessed 06 November 2023].

31 Johann Micraelius, *Ander Buch deß alten wendischen Pommerlands. Bd. 2* (Stettin, 1639).

32 *Ibid.*, p. 273: “Vnter dessen ward der Teutsche Orden in Preussen mächtig/ vnnd das zwar durch diese Gelegenheit. Es führeten die Christliche Potentaten/aus Anstiftung Bapst Vrbani/im Jahr mx-cvj. eine vngleubliche Macht wider die Saracenen/jhnen die Stadt Jerusalem/vnnd das heilige Grab/ da so viele Pilgrimschafften zu der Zeit angestellet warden/abzunehmen. Vnnd zu solchem Ende reiseten acht grosse Armeen/theils zu Wasser/theils zu Lande in Asien/ das Werck zu vollenbringen/ vnd trugen alle/die in diesem Zuge sich schreiben liessen/rothe Creutzen auff der rechten Schulter. Dannenher ward auch dieser Zugk Creutz-farth/oder Cruciata genennet.”

33 Maier, “When Was the First History of the Crusades Written?,” 18–20.

34 https://www.dwds.de/r?q=Kreuzzug&corpus=dt&date-start=1473&date-end=1927&genre=Belletristik&genre=Wissenschaft&genre=Gebrauchsliteratur&genre=Zeitung&format=full&sort=date_asc&limit=50 [accessed 06 November 2023].

I of Hungary in 1526, mentioned his military successes, among which Francisci counted his campaign “*wider die Türken und wider den aufrührischen Kreuz-Zug*” (i.e. against the Turks and against the seditious crusade).³⁵ The *Kreuz-Zug* referred to in this passage is the popular crusade of 1514, which turned into a social revolt against sections of the Hungarian nobility and was eventually put down by Zápolyai.³⁶ In this instance, *Kreuzzug* was not used to denote the crusades against the Turks, which were simply called “*Feldzüge[n] wider die Türken*” (i.e. military expedition against the Turks), but to mark an apparent exception among the wars against enemies of the faith, namely a crusade which was subverted into a social revolt and fought against Christians.

The same applies to the second mention in the *DWDS* data collection. In his *Philosophische Oratorie* of 1724, Johann Andreas Fabricius mentions John Capistranus’ crusade of 1456, which followed a very similar pattern of social revolt as the 1514 crusade³⁷: “*Capistranus, ein Päbstischer knecht, welcher zu denen Creutz-zügen durch seine predigten die leute bereden sollte, konte auch diejenigen, so ihn nicht höreten, sondern nur sahen also rühren, daß sie bitterlich weineten*” (i.e. Capistranus, the papal servant, who was to draw people to the crusades through his sermons, was able to touch people to such an extent that those who did not hear him but only saw him wept bitterly).³⁸ It may simply be a coincidence that the two earliest uses of *Kreuzzug* mentioned in *DWDS* both denote popular crusades against Christians. An early 18th-century encyclopaedia entry in Johann Hübner’s *Reales Staats- und Zeitungs-Lexicon* of 1704 clearly states that *Kreuzzug* was used for denoting crusades against non-Christians as well as heretics.³⁹ Equally, Friedrich Gladov’s dictionary of contemporary loanwords used in

35 Erasmus Francisci, *Schau und Ehren Platz Schriftilicher Tapfferkeit* (Nürnberg, 1685), 75–76: “*Als nun nachmals der unglückselige König Ludwig/ in der Niederlage vor Mohatz/ unter seinem Pferde im Morast erstickt war: that der Siebenbürgische Weywod/ Johannes Zapoliai / ein überaus ehrgeitziger Mensch/ sein Möglichstes/ daß er die Gemüter der Ungarischen Magnaten an sich ziehen mögte/ mit reichen Geschenken/ und weiteren Versprechungen: angemerkt/ er ein trefflich-begüterter/ und Land-reicher Herr war/ zudem auch/ in unterschiedlichen Feldzügen/ wider die Türken und wider den aufrührischen Kreuz-Zug der Kron ziemlich-gute Dienste gethan hatte.*”

36 For this crusade see Norman Housley, “Crusading as Social Revolt: The Hungarian Peasant Uprising of 1514,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 49 (1998): 1–28.

37 For Capistranus’ crusade see Norman Housley, “Giovanni da Capistrano and the Crusade of 1456,” in *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century. Message and Impact*, ed. Norman Housley (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004): 94–115.

38 Johannes Andreas Fabricius, *Philosophische Oratorie* (Leipzig, 1724), 426.

39 Johann Hübner, *Reales Staats- und Zeitungs-Lexicon* (Leipzig, 1704), cols. 321–323: “*Creutz-Zug suche Croisade [...] Croisade, ein Ver[b]ündniß, krafft dessen man in der Römisch-Catholischen Kirche das Zeichen des Creutzes auff seine Kleider geheftet hat, mit dem Vorsatz, wieder die Ungläubigen oder so genanten Ketzler zu Felde zuziehen. Man zehlet acht Croisaden, deren die erste gegen das Ende des eilfften Jahr-hundert geschehen. Die letzte aber trug sich Anno 1270. zu, und verrichtete selbige Ludwig der Heilige, König in Franckreich*” (i.e. *Creutz-Zug* see *Croisade*. [...]) *Croisade*, an agreement by which people in the Roman-Catholic church fixed the sign of the cross on their clothes with the intention to go to war against the unbelievers and so-called heretics. One counts eight *croisades*, the first of which happened at the end of the eleventh century. The last one took place in the year 1270, and it was St. Louis, king of France, who led it).

German in this period, which was published in 1727, has an entry for *croisade* in which the French word is explained as both “*Creutz-Zug, Creutzfahrt, oder Feldzug gegen die Ungläubgen, dahero also genennet, weil diejenigen so mitzogen, ein Kreuz auf ihren Kleidern und Fahnen führten*” (i.e. *Creutz-Zug, Creutzfahrt*, or military expedition against non-believers, called such because those who took part had a cross on their clothes and their banners).⁴⁰ This suggests that both *Kreuzzug* and *Kreuzfahrt* were used synonymously in the 18th century. Both encyclopaedia entries also referred their readers to the French *croisade* as the origin of the German words. This strongly suggests that *Kreuzzug* and *Kreuzfahrt* were most likely translations or adaptations from the French, which probably followed the introduction of *croisade* as a generic term for ‘crusade’ in French 17th-century crusade histories.

To sum up, both *Kreuzfahrt* and *Kreuzzug* became established terms for what we today call a ‘crusade’ in the course of the 18th century. This included all kinds of crusades against Muslims or heretics, but also the Baltic crusades of the Late Middle Ages. According to the *DWDS* data, *Kreuzzug* was by far the most frequently used word. Like *Kreuzfahrt*, *Kreuzzug*, too, was in rare cases used with the second meaning of ‘cruise’ in the sense of a ship’s journey.⁴¹ The adoption of these two generic terms in German for what we today call ‘crusade’ in English is comparable to the process in French, even though it seems that French preceded German. There is a possibility that German historians followed the example of French historians and that the decisive push towards the adoption of a generic term for ‘crusade’, probably throughout Europe, was heavily influenced by the popularity and the translations of Louis Maimbourg’s *Histoire des Croisades* of the late 17th century.

While up until the 19th century both *Kreuzzug* and *Kreuzfahrt* were used as terms for crusade in German, both words developed their own separate meanings in the course of the 20th century. With the establishment and increasing popularity of touristic pleasure cruises, the word *Kreuzfahrt* largely stopped being used to denote ‘crusade.’⁴² At the latest since the beginning of the 20th century, *Kreuzzug* has thus become the standard German word for ‘crusade,’ at least in most academic contexts.⁴³ There are rare exceptions, like, for example, the translation of Jacques Le Goff’s *Saint Louis* by Grete Osterwald, which uses *Kreuzfahrt*.⁴⁴ As concerns

40 Freidrich Gladov, *A la Mode-Sprach der Teutschen oder Compendieuses Hand-Lexicon* (Nürnberg, 1727), 171–172.

41 Cf. the data provided by the search in note 34.

42 Cf. the data provided by the search in note 31.

43 For texts between 1465 and 1969 see, https://www.dwds.de/t/?q=Kreuzfahrer&corpus=dtaxl&date-start=1465&date-end=1969&sc=dingler&sc=dsdk&sc=dtae&sc=dtak&sc=gartenlaube&sc=gei_digital&sc=grenzboten&sc=textberg_hist&format=full&sort=date_asc&limit=10 (7,940 mentions); for texts between 1900 and 1999 see, https://www.dwds.de/t/?q=Kreuzfahrer&corpus=kern&date-start=1900&date-end=1999&genre=Belletristik&genre=Wissenschaft&genre=Gebrauchsliteratur&genre=Zeitung&format=full&sort=date_asc&limit=10 (91 mentions) [both accessed 06 November 2023].

44 Jacques Le Goff, *Ludwig der Heilige*, transl. Grete Osterwald (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2000).

the German word for “crusader,” *Kreuzfahrer* is still the standard word used in academic scholarship and most other contexts.⁴⁵ The neologism *Kreuzzügler*, rarely used in the 19th century, has primarily been adopted in journalistic texts since the Second World War and plays no role in academic writings.⁴⁶

Conclusion

It is difficult to draw general conclusions from a limited amount of evidence. Research to date into the language of crusading in MHG and early modern German texts is far from comprehensive. The texts analysed here concern isolated examples which need to be complemented by further, more systematic inquiries into a larger corpus of texts. Nevertheless, the preliminary results obtained here may be used tentatively to formulate some hypotheses which might be used as guidelines for future research:

- 1 By the middle of the 13th century, like Latin and, to some extent, also the Romance languages, MHG had developed a terminology of crusading centred around the word “cross.” This terminology was focused on describing the individual’s penitential act of crusading, i.e. the taking and execution of a crusade vow.
- 2 MHG also reflects Latin in that a word for ‘crusade’ meaning a type of war only appears towards the end of the 13th century and is rarely used thereafter. It seems that, generally speaking, there was little specific need, and thus also no specific context, for categorising certain wars as ‘crusades.’
- 3 The use of *kriuzvart* when it appeared was ambiguous. Like in many instances of the use of equivalent terms in Latin and the Romance languages, MHG terms for ‘crusade’ do not necessarily categorise a certain type of war. They rather describe the collective occurrence of crusaders either in the context of a war campaign or during the recruitment of crusaders and the preaching of the crusade indulgence.
- 4 Such a purely descriptive rather than a categorising function of medieval crusade terminology is also echoed in the explanations put forward in the

45 For texts between 1465 and 1969 see, https://www.dwds.de/r/?q=Kreuzfahrer&corpus=dt&date-start=1473&date-end=1969&genre=Belletristik&genre=Wissenschaft&genre=Gebrauchsliteratur&genre=Zeitung&format=full&sort=date_asc&limit=50; for texts between 1900 and 1999 see, https://www.dwds.de/r/?q=Kreuzfahrer&corpus=kern&date-start=1900&date-end=1999&genre=Belletristik&genre=Wissenschaft&genre=Gebrauchsliteratur&genre=Zeitung&format=full&sort=date_asc&limit=10 [both accessed 06 November 2023].

46 For texts between 1465 and 1969 see, <https://www.dwds.de/r/?corpus=dt&l&q=Kreuzzügler> (35 mentions); for texts between 1900–1999 see, https://www.dwds.de/r/?q=Kreuzzügler&corpus=kern&date-start=1900&date-end=1999&genre=Belletristik&genre=Wissenschaft&genre=Gebrauchsliteratur&genre=Zeitung&format=full&sort=date_asc&limit=10 (2 mentions); for texts from the German weekly *Die Zeit* between 1946 and 2018 see, <https://www.dwds.de/r/?corpus=zeit&q=Kreuzzügler> (132 mentions) [all accessed 06 November 2023].

17th century, when the respective words for ‘crusade’ were introduced as generic terms in many European languages. Like in French historiography of the early 17th century, German historians a little later began using the words *Kreuzzug* and *Kreuzfahrt* for categorising the wars, which we know as ‘crusades’ today. But like in French, the explanation given for the introduction of a generic term in German was descriptive rather than analytic. It was solely based on the participation in certain wars of individual crusaders wearing crosses on their garments and did not include any other institutional aspects of the wars labelled ‘crusade.’

3 Some notes on the history of *crociata* in the Italian language

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The earliest attestation of the Italian word *crociata* ('crusade') dates back to the late 13th century. Surprisingly, it is found in a comic poem written by the Sienese playful poet Cecco Angiolieri (c.1260–1312). Angiolieri used the expression *fare una crociata* ("carry out a crusade") for one of the hyperboles of the sonnet *Chi dice del suo padre altro ch'onore*:

Chi dice del suo padre altro ch'onore
la lingua gli dovrebbe esser tagliata
perché son sette le morta' peccata
ma infra gli altri quell'è il maggiore.
S'i' fussi prete o ver frate minore
al papa fôra la prima mia andata,
e direi: "Padre santo, una *crociata*
si faccia indosso a cui lor fa disnore".¹

The sonnet has to be read from an antiphrastic perspective. The *vituperium* against his father is among the main motifs of Cecco Angiolieri's caustic poetry. To disclose the full irony of this particular call to a crusade, it is interesting to note that Cecco's father was the wealthy Angioliero, banker of Gregory IX. Angioliero financed a pope who resorted extensively to the crusade to impose ecclesiastical authority.²

* I would like to thank Fabien Montcher for reading the text and for the corrections he suggested.

- 1 "Whoever says of his own father anything but good / his tongue should be cut out / for there are seven deadly sins / but among the others [venial ones] / that [speaking evil of the father] is the greatest. / If I were priest or friar minor / I would make the pope my first visit, / and I would say: 'Holy Father, let there be a crusade / against those who dishonor the fathers'". I quote the quatrains from the forthcoming critical edition by Fabio Jermini, whom I thank for allowing me to read the text he established. For the figure and poetry of Cecco Angiolieri see Fabien Alfie, *Comedy and Culture: Cecco Angiolieri's Poetry and Late Medieval Society* (Leeds: Northern Universities Press, 2001); Francesco Carapezza, "Cecco Angiolieri," in *Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies*, ed. Gaetana Marrone, Paolo Puppa, Luca Somigli (New York, London: Routledge, 2007): 43–45.
- 2 Christopher Tyerman, *God's war: A new History of the Crusades* (Cambridge MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 756–762; Michael Lower, *The Barons' Crusade: A Call to Arms and Its Consequences* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

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The Italian word denoting the medieval expeditions made by Christians against Muslims or heretics thus emerges in written form about two centuries after the first armed pilgrimages that followed the pope's sermon in Clermont (Cecco Angiolieri is supposed to have composed his rhymes in the last decade of the 13th century). Regarding older attestations, it must be remembered that not too many Italian vernacular texts from the 12th century have come down to us. It should be noted, however, that the cognate noun and adjective *crociato* ("crusader") have attestations that precede by about two decades those of the noun *crociata* in Cecco Angiolieri's sonnet. As a noun, *crociato* is first attested in the plural form *crociate* in another poetic text, an anonymous *serventese* transcribed on a Ravenna parchment and composed in the third to last decade of the 13th century. In this text, a Ghibelline jester invites Guido da Montefeltro to command a military expedition against the Guelphs in Bologna. The terse sixth stanza of the poem contains a reference to some '*oltremare crusate*' ("Outremer crusaders") who helped the Bolognese in the military expedition against Forlì between 1273 and 1274.³ As an adjective, *crociato* emerges instead in texts that are proceeding from the Tuscany coeval with or slightly older than Cecco Angiolieri's sonnets. With the clear meaning of "participant in the crusade", *crociato* is used in an anonymous Florentine *Cronica* dating from the late 13th century. Here the reference is to Bohemond of Altavilla: "*nel costui tempo Baimondo, nobile duca di [Puglia], con li cristiani, crociato, andò oltremare e racquistò il sancto sepulcro di Cristo*".⁴ Further on in this text, we also find the mention of the '*crociati d'Italia*' ("crusaders of Italy") who left for Acre.⁵ Some '*cristiani crociati*' following Emperor Baldwin II are also mentioned in the *Leggenda di Messer Gianni di Procida* ("Legend of Sir John of Procida"), a chronicle derived from a lost text composed in the first years of the 14th century, and also from the Tuscan area, which fancifully recasts the role of Baron John of Procida in the Sicilian revolt against Charles of Anjou in 1282.⁶

3 Angelo Eugenio Mecca, "Dante e il serventese romagnolo del 1277", *Nuova rivista di letteratura italiana* 8 (2005): 9–18.

4 "In his time [of pope Urban II] Bohemond, noble duke of Apulia, with the Christians, crusader, went overseas and recaptured the holy sepulchre of Christ" See *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini*, accessed 26 February 2023, <http://tlio.ovi.cnr.it/TLIO/> (=TLIO). For this chronicle see Colette Gros, "Cronica Fiorentina compilata nel secolo XIII," in *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. Graeme Dunphy and Cristian Bratu, accessed 26 February 2023, doi: 10.1163/2213-2139_emc_SIM_00196. The text is edited in Alfredo Schiaffini, ed., *Testi fiorentini del Duecento e dei primi del Trecento* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1954).

5 See TLIO. Schiaffini, *Testi fiorentini*, 110.

6 Marcello Barbato, ed., *Cronache volgari del vespro* (Roma: Istituto storico per il Medio Evo, 2012), 96. The manuscript can be dated shortly after 1325: The occurrence of *crociato* in one of the Iacopone da Todi's *lauda* reported by the TLIO does not appear to be a reference to those participating in one of the historical crusades. In the laude *O Francesco povero* ("O Poor Francis"), the image of the cross is central, since seven appearances of the cross in the life of Francis of Assisi are recalled in this mystic text. Therefore, the expression *popolo crociato* ("crusade people") may simply indicate the overall group of Christians evoked in the final part of this apocalyptic vision. In verse 9, the occurrence of the adjective *crociato* in *scuta crociate* ("shields with the sign of the cross") is also a reference to the arms of Christ in a vision of the cross described in Bonaventura's *Legenda maior* which is the main source of the composition. See text and comments in Iacopone da Todi, *Laudi. Trattato e detti*, ed. Franca Ageno. Premessa alla ristampa di Lino Leonardi (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2013), 244, 249.

It is possible to hypothesise an even earlier use of the noun or adjective *crociato* thanks to a particular attestation of the Latin form *cruciatus* that has so far not been commented on. The occurrence is located in a text dated between 1177 and 1180, which is already well known to historians. These are the depositions collected by Cardinal Laborante to settle the long dispute over the possession of certain *pievi* between the dioceses of Siena and Arezzo. In the document, the deposition made by the witness “*Froncio de sancto Quirico*” ends with these words: “*fuit autem ego natus tempore quo cruciati christiani revicerunt sepulchrum domini, cum esset tunc captus a sarracenis Girardus magister hospitalis*”. Before commenting on this occurrence, it should be noted that here the word *cruciati* is the correction made by the 19th-century editor of the erroneous lesson *cruciani* in the manuscript.⁷ Froncio’s deposition, with the vague reference to the “*cruciati christiani*” and to Blessed Gerard, is likely to have been issued in the vernacular language. Therefore, in the Latin translation, it is not impossible to glimpse the reproduction of a vernacular word such as *crociati* uttered by a peasant of San Quirico d’Orcia in the late 12th century.⁸

Not only the word *crociato* but also the cognate verb *crociare* (i.e. “to take the cross, to join the crusade”) benefits from older attestations to the word *crociata*. Used as a reflexive, this verb of ancient usage (but still present in the early 20th century in the poetic language of Giovanni Pascoli and Gabriele D’Annunzio) first appeared in a letter written in 1265 from Troyes, France, by another Siense, the merchant Andrea de’ Tolomei.⁹ In a report addressed to his family members, Tolomei mentions the good people who still have to join King Charles of Anjou in the crusade against Manfred launched first by Urban IV and then by Clement IV: “*molta buona gente di questo paese si die anchora crociare*” (“lot of this country good people still has to join the crusade”). In the same letter, Andrea de’ Tolomei

7 I found this attestation thanks to the Archivio della Latinità Italiana del Medioevo, accessed 26 February 2023, <http://alim.unisi.it/> (=ALIM). The text of the document, preserved in the Diocesan Archive of Arezzo (ms. n. 435), is published in *Documenti per la storia della città di Arezzo nel Medio Evo, raccolti per cura di Ubaldo Pasqui Volume primo. Codice diplomatico (an. 650?–1180)* (Firenze: Viesseux, 1899), 531. See also Enrico Faini, “Le memorie del territorio nella Tuscia dei secoli XII–XIII: strategie di condizionamento nei *dicta testium*,” *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome - Moyen Âge*, 123–2 (2011): 487–497, and Chris Wickham, *Courts and Conflict in Twelfth-century Tuscany* (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 286–289.

8 Another evident sign of a deposition made in the vernacular is the presence in the Latin text of a word like *strichia* “strip, piece”: “*et episcopus ivit [...] ad plebem de Cosana, et abstulit unam strichiam de porta plebis*” (*Documenti*, 530). Note that the first attestation of the Italian form *striscia* is in Dante’s Comedy, but the Latin form of the word, a probable vulgarism, is already employed in 11th century Tuscan texts written in Latin, see Arrigo Castellani, “Striscia,” in Gabriella Del Lungo Camiciotti et al., ed., *Studi in onore di Carlo Alberto Mastrelli. Scritti di allievi e amici fiorentini*, in *Quaderni del Dipartimento di Linguistica*, Studi 1 (Padova: Unipress, 1994), 63–65; Pär Larson, *Glossario diplomatico toscano avanti il 1220* (Firenze: Accademia della Crusca, 1995). In Larson’s repertoire of Latin words derived from vulgar forms, *cruciatus* is absent, even if the texts edited by Pasqui are part of the reference corpus (see Larson, *Glossario*, xvii).

9 *TLIO and Grande Dizionario della Lingua Italiana*, accessed 26 February 2023, <https://www.gdli.it/> (=GDLI).

also uses the rare term *croceria*, ‘crusade’, which in Italian medieval texts is attested again only in Giovanni Villani’s *Nuova Cronica*, written almost a century later. Villani uses *croceria* to refer to the crusader host, the “innumerable people on horseback and foot” following Lord Edward, the future king of England, on crusade in 1270.¹⁰ Given Andrea de’ Tolomei’s stay in France and Villani’s knowledge of French (he also travelled for years in France and Flanders), one might also think that this sporadic word is an adapted loan from the French *croiserie*, attested from the second decade of the 13th century.¹¹

The few occurrences of *crociato* in the extant Italian 13th century texts and the unique attestation of *crociata* in Cecco Angiolieri’s sonnet certainly do not allow one to establish the extent of such a vocabulary at this time. However, these few attestations prove that these words were already in use. In the Sieneese area, as early as the late 12th century, it is even possible to assume a quite common use of the term *crociato* in reference to those who participated in the expeditions to the Holy Land, while about a century later, a comic poet of great flair could use the expression *fare la crociata* in an ironic sense. After all, the involvement of Tuscans in crusading expeditions was considerable, and the preaching of the Third Crusade was concentrated around Tuscan cities.¹²

It is more difficult to affirm how widespread the use of *crociato* or *crociata* was during the 12th century, partly because, as aforesaid, the preserved Italian vernacular texts from this period are scarce. In addition, it is difficult to find other attestations of Latin words in Italian sources on the basis of which to make the same assumptions about the *cruciatus* we find in the depositions collected by the archbishop Laborante. We should add that even the periphrases built on the word *croce* (“cross”) – to indicate the calling of a crusade – have few attestations in the coeval Italian texts: the expressions *predicare* or *bandire la croce* or *le croci* (“preaching/proclaiming the cross”, “calling for a crusade”) appear equally in Tuscan texts written between the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century. These expressions both have more occurrences in 14th-century texts, where we find *dare*, *pigliare* or *prendere* and *ricevere la croce* (“giving, taking, receiving the cross”, i.e. the crusaders’ insignia).

Starting from the second half of the 13th century, *bandire la croce* occurs in a figurative way for expressive purposes in a narrative: both Boccaccio in his masterpiece and his imitator Franco Sacchetti write about priests and other men who have proclaimed the cross against some wives in order to seduce them (*Decameron*,

10 Text edited in Arrigo Castellani, ed., *La prosa italiana delle origini: I, Testi toscani di carattere pratico* (Bologna: Pàtron, 1982), 401–7. See also *Lettere volgari del secolo XIII scritte da senesi pubblicate e illustrate con documenti e annotazioni da Cesare Paoli e da Enea Piccolomini* (Bologna: Romagnoli, 1871), 49–58. For Villani’s chronicle see Giovanni Villani, *Nuova Cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta, 3 vol., (Milano: Guanda, 2007), vol. 1, 469.

11 *Dictionnaire Étymologique de l’Ancien Français*: “croiserie”, accessed 26 February 2023, <https://deaf-server.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/lemme/croiz#croiserie>.

12 Giuseppe Ligato, “*Oriens Pugnati!*”. *Aspetti del movimento crociato* (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro Italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 2016): 129–141.

VIII, 2; Franco Sacchetti, *Trecento Novelle*, 25).¹³ We can also find attestations of the vernacular forms *crocesegnati*, *crocisegnati* and *crucesignati* to refer to crusaders in 14th-century texts coming from Florence and Umbria-Romagna.¹⁴

The word *crociata* occurs only in five out of the 3,443 texts that make up the current corpus of Old Italian.¹⁵ In the 14th century, the other expressions to refer to the crusades in the Holy Land, such as *santo passaggio* (“holy passage”) or *passaggio d’oltremare* o *generale* (“outremer, general passage”), have more attestations than *crociata*, not only in Tuscan texts but also in those from Veneto and the central area.¹⁶ In her letters, Catherine of Siena, who intensely promoted the crusade throughout society as a sacred mission, calls the expeditions *santo* or *dolce passaggio*.¹⁷ Still, *passaggio generale* is the expression that Boccaccio used in the *Decameron* to refer to the Third Crusade, the one crusade evoked in his book as the historical backdrop for some of the novellas. *Crociata* is used in the anonymous *Chronica senese* of 1362, relating the history of the city between 1202 and 1391.¹⁸ The author first recalls that in 1331 “*venne uno cardinale leghato e perdonava cholpa e pena a chi voleva pigliare la croce*”,¹⁹ then at the time of “*Ufredi di Fondi, nipote del papa Bonifazio*” (Roffredo III di Pietro II

13 Cfr. *TLIO*. Franco Sacchetti, *Le Trecento Novelle*, ed. Michelangelo Zaccarello (Firenze: Edizioni del Galluzzo per la Fondazione Ezio Franceschini, 2014), 57.

14 The corresponding Latin term had entered institutional use with the letters of Innocent III, and at least from 1208 onward also in reference to those who fought against the Albigensians: Michael Markowski, “Crucesignatus. Its origins and early usage,” *Journal of Medieval History* 10 (1984): 157–165.

15 Corpus OVI dell’Italiano antico, accessed 26 February 2023, <http://gattoweb.ovi.cnr.it/>.

16 *TLIO* s. v. *generale e oltremare*. *Passaggio d’oltremare* is first attested with explicit reference to expeditions to the Holy Land in the will of Countess Beatrice Di Capraia (1279), who left one hundred pounds, precisely “*per lo passaggio d’oltremare, il quale si fa in aiutorio dela Terra Santa*” (“for the outremer passage, which is made in aid of the Holy Land”), see Schiaffini, *Testi fiorentini*, 240. *Passaggio generale (d’Oltre mare)* is instead an expression that we find for the first time in the *Croniche della città di Firenze* composed by Paolino Pieri beginning in 1302: the reference is to the crusade called by Gregory X during the Council of Lyons, see Paolino Pieri, *Croniche della città di Firenze*, ed. Chiara Coluccia (Lecce-Rovato: Pensa MultiMedia, 2013), 47. The word *passagium* was then the later Latin term used to refer to expeditions to the Holy Land, see Franco Cardini, “Ripensare la crociata,” in *Scrinium Berolinense. Tilo Brandis zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Peter J. Becker et al. (Beiträge aus der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Band 10, 2000): 103–13. In Italian sources, the word with the same meaning has several occurrences in Salimbene de Adam’s *Cronica*, see *ALIM* and Salimbene de Adam de Parma, *Cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Scalia, transl. Beardo Rossi, 2 vol. (Parma: Monte Università Parma Editore, 1966) vol. 2, 653, 655.

17 Massimo Viglione, “*...Rizzate el gonfalone della Santissima Croce*”. *L’idea di Crociata in santa Caterina da Siena* (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2007), 84–87.

18 Alessandro Lisini, Fabio Iacometti, ed., *Cronache senesi* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1939), 122. See also Matteo Pace, “Cronaca senese di autore anonimo del secolo XIV,” in *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, accessed 26 February 2023, doi: [10.1163/2213-2139_emc_SIM_00792](https://doi.org/10.1163/2213-2139_emc_SIM_00792).

19 “a cardinal legate came and forgave guilt and punishment to those who wanted to take up the cross”.

Caetani, nephew of Pope Boniface VIII)²⁰ a legate arrived in Siena who, by the pope's mandate "*perdonava di cholpa e di pena a qualunque persona pigliava la croce per andare inverso il turco e a chombattare per la santa fede cristiana*".²¹ Next, the chronicler also tells us that "*duciento chavalieri, e' quai erano iti cho' la crociata*"²² returned to Siena, thus using the noun *crociata* in the clear meaning of an "armed expedition".

With the same meaning, but in the form *cruciata*, the word occurs four times in the ground-breaking *Cronica aquilana* written in the Abruzzese vernacular by Iacobuccio (Buccio) di Ranallo da Popplito, a member of L'Aquila's aristocracy. In a moralistic work in verse, the author tells the story of the city up to 1362, recalling the crusade called in 1344 by Pope Clement VI and headed by Umberto II of Vienna. He dwelled on the sentiments that drove the people to take up the cross:

Su innello mare fare ci aparse uno sengiale,
che paria che struccassese tucto lo nostro male;
fo facta la *cruciata*, questo fo in generale,
l'uno co' l'altro amavase como frate carnale.
Grande *Cruciata* fecese per gire na Turchia,
multe genti la presero et tucti a compangia;
multe però se strussero ché lo lor se vennia;
chi volze Dio gabare, prese la mala via.²³

We also find the word *crociata* in another chronicle from the Tuscan area, written almost twenty years after the Sienese chronicle mentioned above. The author, Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, used the word in the expression *predicare la crociata* with reference to the call for the Third Crusade made by the Apostolic Legate, the

20 Daniel Waley, "Caetani, Roffredo" in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 16 (Roma: Treccani, 1973) and Emiliano Bultrini, *I Caetani dopo Bonifacio VIII. Roffredo III e Benedetto III (1303–1308)*, in « *Pazzi innocui che consumano il tempo a frugare vecchie carte* ». *Raccolta di saggi per il centenario dei Comuni di Campagna e Marittima di Giorgio Falco*, 2 vol. (Roma: UniversItalia, 2021), vol. 2, 9, n. 7.

21 "Forgave guilt and punishment to any person who took up the cross to go against the Turk to fight for the holy Christian faith".

22 "Two hundred knights who had gone to the crusade".

23 "While so much evil was being committed, a sign appeared to us / which seemed to put an end to all our evil, the crusade was made / this concerned the whole of Christendom, / one with another loved as carnal brother / a great crusade was made to go to Turkey / many people undertook it and all going together / many however became impoverished because they sold their possessions / those who wanted to deceive God [pretending to repent] / took a bad path [ended badly]", Buccio di Ranallo, *Cronica*, ed. Carlo de Matteis (Firenze: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2008), 193–94. I quote the text from Carlo de Matteis's recent edition, despite the several philological problems of the work highlighted by Vittorio Formentin, "Sfortuna di Buccio," *Lingua e stile*, 45.2 (2010): 185–222, since the choices to be corrected do not seem to affect the quoted verses. For the *Cronica aquilana* see also Pierluigi Terenzi, "Buccio di Ranallo," in *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, accessed 26 February 2023, doi: [10.1163/2213-2139_etc_SIM_000847](https://doi.org/10.1163/2213-2139_etc_SIM_000847).

bishop of Ravenna Gerardo. In this case, the meaning of the word could be “expedition”, as well as “content of the bull by which the crusade is proclaimed”:

Avvenne che essendo negli anni di Cristo 1188 di settembre arrivato in Firenze l'Arcivescovo di Ravenna a predicare la crociata, di che si commosse molta gente di Firenze a piede ed a cavallo.²⁴

The earliest 14th-century chronicle that attests to the word is the remarkable *Cronica di'Anonimo romano*, written firstly in Latin and then translated into the ancient vernacular of Rome by an educated, aristocratic author who recounts the events that took place in the city between 1327 and 1357, with particular reference to the rise and fall of the tribune Cola di Rienzo.²⁵ In the vivid account of the Anonymous, the word *crociata* occurs several times, including in the form *cruciata*. It appears again with the clear meaning of “armed expedition” both in [Chapter 11](#) and in [Chapter 13](#), in which the events surrounding the conquest of Smyrna (1344) by the league promoted by Clement VI are reported:

L'ambasciata de Veneziani fu denanti allo papa in Avignone e domannaoli umilmente la *crociata* sopra Turchi. Papa Chimento recipéo graziosamente questi ambasciatori e offerze soa voluntate bona. Allora vao la voce per tutta Cristianitate della *crociata* fare: remissione de pena e de colpa a chi serviva, chi se moriva deritto ne iva alli piedi de Dio non piecanno né da lato manco né da lato ritto. Predicata non fu questa *crociata* per li puosti dalla Chiesa, né servato l'ordine lo quale se devea servare, se non che sola tanto la voce mosse la iente.²⁶

More interesting are the occurrences in the expression *bandire la crociata* that we find in [Chapter 26](#). Here the Anonymous presents the clash between the prefect of Viterbo, Giovanni da Vico, and the man that Pope Innocent VI chose for the reconquest of Italy, Cardinal Egidio de Albornoz. The author tells us that despite the opposition of the prefect, described as a treacherous man who had occupied the Church lands, the legate decided not to launch a crusade against him: “*puoi che lo*

24 “It happened that in September of the years of Christ 1188, the archbishop of Ravenna having arrived in Florence to preach the crusade, many people of Florence were excited, walking or riding horses”, Niccolò Rodolico, ed., *Cronaca fiorentina di Marchionne di Coppo Stefani*, (Città di Castello: Lapi, 1903), 26. See Flavio Boggi, “Marchionne di Coppo Stefani,” in *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, accessed 24 April 2023, doi: [10.1163/2213-2139_emc_SIM_01774](https://doi.org/10.1163/2213-2139_emc_SIM_01774).

25 Anonimo romano, *Cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta (Milano: Adelphi, 1979). See Giovanni Spani, “Anonimo Romano,” in *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, accessed 04 November 2022, doi: [10.1163/2213-2139_emc_SIM_00197](https://doi.org/10.1163/2213-2139_emc_SIM_00197).

26 Anonimo romano, *Cronica*, 114: “The embassy of the Venetians was before the pope in Avignon and they humbly asked him for the crusade over Turks. Pope Clement graciously received these ambassadors and offered his good will. Then the news of the crusade went throughout Christendom: remission of penalty and guilt to those who served, those who died went straight to the feet of God not deviating either from the left or the right side. This crusade was not preached for the places of the Church, nor was the order that was to be preserved, the voice alone moved people”.

legato conubbe l'animo dello profietto indurato, vidde la perverza mente ostinata, crociata non li bannio sopra (no-lli pareva da tanto)".²⁷ Next, the Anonymous relates that the same papal legate chose instead to launch a crusade against "*the dog captain of Forlì*", the excommunicated Francesco degli Ordelauffi. In reference to the clash between the "*schismatic*" Ordelauffi and the Church, the Anonymous repeatedly uses the expression *bandire la crociata*.²⁸ He says explicitly that the cardinal had the remission of sins preached both for those who would take up the cross against Ordelauffi and for those who would offer financial support to the expedition ("*aiutorio*"). He also refers to those who fought on the pope's side as *crociati*:

Don Gilio Conchese de Spagna fece sio fonnamento e residenza in Ancona. E per avere più fortezza *bannio la crociata*. Io la odii predicare. Remissione de pena e colpa a chi prenneva la croce o chi faceva aiutorio. Ora ne veo lo legato sopra allo cane capitano de Forlì, Francesco delli Ordelauffi. [...] Dodici milia fuoro li crociati, trenta milia li sollati [...] Per moiti anni *vannio la crociata*, e fu predicata la croce per tutta Italia. [...] In questo assedio sopra Forlì fuoro presi assai voite delli *crociati*, li quali per meritare erano iti a commettere contra de quelli scismatici. Li *crociati* presi erano menati denanti a Francesco, lo quale diceva queste paravole.²⁹

The occurrences of the word *crociata* in this Roman *Cronica* are meaningful. Indeed, this is the first known Italian vernacular text in which *crociata* e *crociato* are words repeatedly used to denote, respectively, a war against a single (Christian) political enemy of the pope and those who participate in this war that grants indulgences. Moreover, being the object of the verb *bandire*, here *crociata* could also have the meaning of the "bull" proclaiming, by means of preaching, the indulgences granted to those who take part in the war or give money to support it.

In Italian 15th-century literary texts, quickly searchable thanks to the *corpora*, the word *crociata* continues to have few attestations.³⁰ The only occurrence we can find for this period is nonetheless relevant, because it backdates the written emergence of the clear meaning of "collection or contribution of money". The main historical dictionary of the Italian language reports the first attestation with this

27 Anonimo romano, *Cronica*, 223: "When the legate recognised the prefect's hard spirit and saw his obstinate mind, he did not call a crusade on him (it did not seem necessary to him)".

28 See Leardo Mascanzoni, *La crociata contro Francesco II Oderlauffi (1356–1359) nello specchio della storiografia. Exurgant Insuper Christi Milites* (Bologna: Pàtron, 2017).

29 Anonimo romano, *Cronica*, 228-235: "Don Egidio Conchese of Spain established his residence in Ancona and to have more strength he banished the crusade. I heard it preached. Remission of penalty and guilt to those who took the cross or those who gave financial help. Now I see the legate over the capitano de Forlì, Francesco delli Ordelauffi. [...] Twelve thousand were the crusaders, thirty thousand the soldiers. For many years he banned the crusade, and the cross was preached throughout Italy. [...] In this siege above Forlì they were assailed many times by the crusaders [...] The captured crusaders were led before Francis, who said these words".

30 LIZ 4.0. *Biblioteca Italiana Zanichelli. DVD-ROM per Windows per la ricerca in testi, biografie, trame e concordanze della Letteratura italiana*, ed. Pasquale Stoppelli (Bologna: Zanichelli, 2010) and *Biblioteca italiana*, accessed 23 April 2023, <http://www.bibliotecaitaliana.it/>.

meaning in Francesco Guicciardini's *Relazione di Spagna* (1512), where the reference is evidently to the typically Spanish fiscal device of the *crusada*.³¹ However, in the form *cruciata* and in this particular sense, the word is already found in a narrative work composed in the Kingdom of Naples after 1450. This is the *Novellino* (first printed edition of 1476), a collection of tales written by the anticlerical Masuccio Salernitano (Tommaso Guardati, 1410–1475). In the novella about the greedy friar Girolamo da Spoleto, who passes off the bone of a dead knight for the arm of St. Luke in order to enrich himself and become a high prelate, Masuccio relates that Girolamo thought of how many other friars had secured their careers through money, one becoming inquisitor, the other one “*de la cruciata collettore*” (“collector of the *cruciata*”).³² As Benjamin Weber has shown, it was in the 15th century that the Latin term *cruciata* was established in pontifical documents. The term had various meanings: it may mean a “bull” or “letter offering indulgence in exchange for participation in a holy war”, or refer to the “content” of a bull, that is, the indulgence to be preached. It may also have the meaning of a “financial device”, that is, an official means of raising money, or it may simply mean an “armed expedition”. It is important to note that in Italian, this latter meaning of the word appears well before the Latin term used in official curia texts with this same meaning from the 15th century onward.³³ Moreover, it is during the pontificate of Pius II (1458–64) that the Latin word *cruciata* is affirmed as an administrative and cultural institution of the Church. It is meaningful that the institution managed by a particular custodian of the crusade was called by Pius II with the specific name “*Camera of the Holy Crusade*”. The vernacular terms, therefore, began to be used in Europe, including Naples, with the meaning of money raised with the permission of the Church to finance war against enemies, a *sancta expeditio*. Institutionally, this was now called a *cruciata* made to affirm Christian European identity and to defend the territory of Christendom, especially in eastern Europe.³⁴

In the 16th century, we observe a greater spread of the word. The attestations increase along with the number of texts in which to look for them, which now include printed texts. As for the occurrences in which the word has its primary meaning, we must note that in the first half of the century, we can find for the first time the word *crociata* in a historical work and in the plural form to refer retrospectively to all

31 *GDLI*. See Massimo Carlo Gianni, *Religione, fiscalità e politica: i tentativi d'introdurre la bolla della crociata nel Regno di Napoli nel XVII secolo*, in *I linguaggi del potere nell'età barocca*, 2 vol., vol. 1, *Politica e religione* (Roma: Viella, 2009), 320–326.

32 Masuccio Salernitano, *Il Novellino*, nell'edizione di Luigi Settembrini, ed. Salvatore S. Nigro (Milano: BUR, 1990), 151. The expression has already been reported, without comment on the particular meaning of the name, by Donato Pirovano, *Modi narrativi e stile del “Novellino” di Masuccio Salernitano* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1996), 236.

33 Benjamin Weber, “Nouveau mot ou nouvelle réalité? Le terme *cruciata* et son utilisation dans les textes pontificaux,” in *La Papauté et les croisades/The Papacy and the Crusades. Actes du VII^e Congrès de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East / Proceedings of the VIIth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East* by Michel Balard (London: Routledge, 2011), 11–25.

34 Marco Pellegrini, *La crociata nel Rinascimento. Mutazioni di un mito 1400–1600* (Firenze: Le Lettere, 2014): 42–48.

medieval expeditions against infidels. Niccolò Machiavelli used the word with this connotation in his *Istorie fiorentine*, written between 1522 and 1525 and dedicated to the future pope Clement VII, Giuliano de' Medici. In his work, Machiavelli recalls the Council of Clermont and presents a particular relationship between the pope's insecurity and the call of what would be the First Crusade. Moreover, he gives the etymological explanation of the specific term used to define the Christian expeditions against *Saracenes*, a word, he points out, that came into use only later:

Era pervenuto al pontificato Urbano II, il quale era in Roma odiato; e non gli parendo anche potere stare, per le disunioni, in Italia sicuro, si volse ad una generosa impresa, e se ne andò in Francia con tutto il clero, e ragunò in Auverna molti popoli, a' quali fece una orazione contro agli infideli; per la quale intanto accese gli animi loro, che deliberarono di fare la impresa di Asia contro a' Saraceni; la quale impresa con tutte le altre simili furono di poi chiamate *crociate*, perché tutti quelli che vi andorono erano segnati sopra le armi e sopra i vestimenti di una croce rossa.³⁵

In this period, the word *crociata* seems to be, thus, a quite normal word to indicate a military enterprise against the Turks or other enemies of the Christendom. We can find it both in a domestic chronicle, the *Diary* of the Florentine apothecary Luca Landucci (registrations for the years 1509 and 1518),³⁶ and in a later historical and popular work about the Ottoman Empire, Francesco Sansovino's *Historia universale dell'origine, guerre et imperio de' Turchi*, as well as, preceded by the adjective *santissima*, on a frontispiece of a modest literary work, like that of the Neapolitan marquis Ferrante Carafa, who celebrated the victory of Lepanto and wrote an oration "*alla Santità di Gregorio XIII intorno all'accrescimento della Lega e all'espeditone della Santissima Crociata*" (1573).³⁷ The common use of the word is also indicated by the fact that *crociata* does not belong to the vocabulary

35 "Urban II, who was hated in Rome, had come to the pontificate. And as it appeared to him that because of the disunities in Italy he could not be secure, he turned his attention to a generous enterprise, went away to France with all the clergy, and in Auvergne gathered up many peoples to whom he made a speech against the infidels. This speech so inflamed their spirits that they decided to make a campaign in Asia against the Saracens. This campaign along with all the others like it were later called the crusades because all those who went on them had their arms and clothes marked with a red cross", Niccolò Machiavelli, *Florentine histories. Newly translated edition*, trans. Laura F. Banfield and Harvey C. Mansfield jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 27–28. For the Italian text see Niccolò Machiavelli, *Opere storiche*, ed. Alessandro Montevicchi and Carlo Varotti, 2 vol. (Roma: Salerno, 2010), vol. 1, 136–137.

36 Luca Landucci, *A Florentine diary from 1450 to 1516*, trans. Alice de Rosen Jervis, (London/New York: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1927), 223, 289. Italian text in Luca Landucci, *Diario fiorentino dal 1450 al 1516* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1985), 293, 365.

37 "For our holiness Gregory XIII, concerning the growth of the league and the expedition of the most holy crusade", Ferrante Carafa, *L'Austria dell'illustrissimo S. Ferrante Carrafa marchese di S. Lucido. Dove si contiene la vittoria della Santa Lega all'Hechinadi nell'anno 1571* (L'Aquila, Gioseppe Cacchij, 1573). The expression *santissima crociata* is also found in the text of the oration *For Ferrante Carafa*, see Gaspare De Caro, "Carafa, Ferrante," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 19 (1976).

used in a masterpiece such as the *Gerusalemme liberata* (1st ed. 1581), one of the books that would influence the European vision of the Crusades.³⁸ Indeed, for his epic poem, which was soon popular and translated into several languages, Torquato Tasso sought an epic style and a language far from common usage. It is probably for this reason that he still preferred the expression *gran passaggio* and never used *crociata* in the poetic account of the exploits and adventures of Christian heroes during the First Crusade. In 16th-century Italian texts, the word *crociata* has several occurrences that refer to a financial device, that is, a public grant given by a papal bull in order to finance enterprises against the Moors. With this meaning, the word occurs in particular in the Venetian ambassadors' reports and, as noted above, in Francesco Guicciardini's work, specifically in the *Storia d'Italia*.

In the 17th century, the word *crociata* continued to be used mainly with the two meanings of "armed expedition" and with that of a fiscal device. The word appears both in the frontispiece and text of the historical work expressly dedicated to the First Crusade by the Bolognese painter, poet, and historian, Giovanni Francesco Negri, known for translating *Gerusalemme liberata* into the Bolognese dialect. His *Prima Crociata, ovvero Lega di Militie Christiane* ("First Crusade, or League of Christiane Militias") was printed at the expense of Pope Alexander VII, to whom the work is dedicated. It is therefore interesting to find in the text a note on the continuous and common use of the term to refer to all military enterprises against Infidels and enemies of the Church:

perché i guerrieri che la dovevano essercitare furono dal Vicario di Christo segnalati di Croce, intitolossi crociata, e questo degno titolo si è poi sempre usato in tutte le guerre promosse da' Romani Pastori alli Maomettani e altri nemici della Cattolica Chiesa.³⁹

Thanks to Daniele Menozzi's recent book on crusading ideology in the modern era,⁴⁰ it is now possible to highlight some relevant moments concerning the use of the word in Italy from the late 18th century to the present, especially among Catholics and as part of official Church communication. First, it is worth recalling that in France, the Jacobin Jacques-Pierre Brissot de Warville spoke about a "crusade for freedom" to foment the battle against the enemies of the Revolution. The Italian

38 Luigi Russo, "Constantinople pillage, Venice risen and *Gerusalemme liberata* – a view from Italy," in *Controversial Histories – Current Views on the Crusades*, ed. F. Hinz and J. Meyer-Hamme (London: Routledge, 2020), 87–88.

39 "because the warriors who were to make it [the "formidable enterprise"] were marked with the Cross by the Vicar of Christ, it was called *crociata*, and this worthy title was then always used in all the wars promoted by the Roman Pastors against the Mohammedans and other enemies of the Catholic Church", Giovanni Francesco Negri, *Alla Santità di nostro signore Papa Alessandro settimo. Prima Crociata, ovvero Lega di Militie Christiane segnalate di Croce, liberatrice del Sacro Sepolcro di Giesù Christo e del Regno di Terra Santa* (Bologna: Battista Ferroni, 1658), vii. For Giovanni Francesco Negri see Nicola Catelli, "Negri, Giovanni Francesco," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 78 (2013).

40 Daniele Menozzi, "*Crociata*". *Storia di un'ideologia dalla Rivoluzione francese a Bergoglio* (Roma, Carocci, 2020).

Jacobins instead used the term *crociata* in reference to Catholic opposition.⁴¹ Indeed, a counter-revolutionary book such as the one composed by the Jesuit Francisco Gustà entitled *Saggio critico sulle crociate* (“Critical Essay on the Crusades”, 1794) was not only an apology for the medieval crusades but a general call for a crusade, issued in Italian, against the Enlightened Revolutions. With Gustà’s work as well as texts by other Catholic polemicists, it was at the end of the 18th century that the word *crociata* again became part of the Italian Catholic political lexicon, indicating an intervention against the threat of modernity.⁴²

In the 19th century, attestations of the word *crociata* multiplied, even in poetic language. For example, the Romantic poet Tommaso Grossi uses it both in his medieval setting verse novel *Ildegonda* (1820) and, as the title shows, in the poem *I lombardi alla prima crociata* (1826). This last work inspired the homonymous libretto by Temistocle Solera for Giuseppe Verdi’s opera, in which the public of the time recognised a patriotic intent.⁴³ The choice of Giuseppe Mazzini calling the war of independence a *santa crociata* in his appeal to King Charles Albert (1831) should instead be traced back to the religion of the homeland. But Mazzini is not the only Italian Risorgimento patriot to sacralise the struggle for political independence, calling it the *crociata*. The fight against Habsburg Austria was also called *santa crociata* by several figures (religious and otherwise) engaged in the propaganda for the Italian war of independence. Even some military departments were registered under the name of *crociata* at the Royal Army Historical Office. On the other hand, in later years, the battle to defend ecclesiastical sovereignty started to be referred to with the word *crociata* in public discourse, even though the pope did not issue a specific *bullà cruciatae*, nor did he ever explicitly speak of a crusade. In fact, in the journal *La Civiltà Cattolica*, Jesuit Giovanni Giuseppe Franco wrote an account of the battle won at Mentana by papal troops, titling the last chapter *I Monumenti della crociata* (“Monuments of the Crusade”) and calling *crociata* the clash against Garibaldi’s troops.⁴⁴

To grasp the vitality of the word in this period, it is worth considering its use with references other than to war. We cite here the writer and essayist from Turin, Ludovico Di Breme, who in 1818 wrote an article about Vincenzo Monti’s linguistic essay *Proposta di alcune correzioni e giunte al Vocabolario della Crusca* (“Proposal of some corrections and additions to the Vocabolario della Crusca”), saying that Monti had called for a *crociata* against the most important Italian dictionary.⁴⁵ But it is at the end of the century, and again in Catholic circles, that a relevant semantic shift affects the word. A *crociata* now denoted a fervent political and social

41 See Erasmo Leso, *Lingua e rivoluzione. Ricerche sul vocabolario politico italiano del triennio rivoluzionario 1796–1799* (Venezia: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1991), 151, 157, 493, 730, and Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 22–23.

42 Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 24–39.

43 Franco Cardini, “Dai ‘Lombardi’ al ‘Jérusalem’”. Fra mito romantico e realtà storica,” in Id., *L’invenzione del nemico* (Palermo: Sellerio, 2006): 232–247.

44 Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 47.

45 Di Breme’s article is in the edition of the romantic literary journal *Il Conciliatore* from 6 January 1818.

action against secularisation. Suffice it to say here that the young priest who would later found the *Partito Popolare Italiano*, Luigi Sturzo, wrote in an 1897 article that “*una nuova crociata*” should be preached against the revolution and the freemasonry that want to destroy religion and the homeland.⁴⁶

Entering the 20th century, it should be remembered that even in various Italian circles, the First World War was called a *crociata*. The word was also widely used in Italy – not only by Catholics – to expressively refer to the Italo-Turkish war. The Vatican publicly opposed the reference to the crusades for this conflict, and later Benedict XV did not favour it for the First World War, but the word continued to be used to emphasise the righteousness of the war that was being fought. Italian religious booklets written for soldiers document the use of the crusade idea and vocabulary to comfort troops. As Menozzi notes, with this language, the cause of the nation was equated with the cause of faith, and the homeland was sacralised, especially by the Catholic nationalists. After the conflict, the word *crociata* is again used by Catholics in a spiritual sense, especially in reference to non-military contexts. Between 1929 and 1931, Pius XI himself promoted a “*crociata di carità e di soccorso*” (“crusade of charity and aid”) for assistance to be given to the society impoverished by the Great Depression, and he also started evoking a spiritual (and political) crusade of prayers against communism.⁴⁷

As for the first half of the 20th century, it is worth mentioning that among the few Catholic voices that criticised the use of the word ‘crusade’ to designate the Spanish Civil War, we can find Luigi Sturzo. As aforesaid, Sturzo had evoked the medieval crusades in relation to countering secularisation. Nevertheless, he later condemned the definition of the Francoist war as an anti-communist crusade, seeing in this recalling the negation of Christian charity. Likewise, it should also be remembered that during the Second World War, after the Barbarossa operation, the Catholic and anti-Fascist professor of Roman law Giorgio La Pira reframed the word ‘crusade’ in reference to opposition to the Nazis. This happened shortly before references to the anti-Bolshevik *crociata* spread in various fascist Catholic circles, including through military chaplains. Many in Italy expected the pope to proclaim the crusade for the ongoing war. Pressure from the fascist press and diplomacy and the spread in the Catholic world of mass adherence to the propaganda of the Nazi-fascist crusade prompted Pius XII to launch a “*crociata sociale*” to oppose the military crusade. The pope did this by means of the Christmas radio message of 1942, thus spiritualising again the word *crociata* while still directing it against the ideas of modernity, above all communism. Even when Eisenhower evoked the medieval crusades with references to the Normandy landings, the Pope avoided politicising the word, using it rather in expressions that always connoted a spiritual sense of the word. The most frequent was *crociata di preghiere* (“crusade of prayers”), by which the pontiff called on the faithful people to pray for Christian ideals to be affirmed in the world, and later as well for the rights of Catholics in Palestine and for the Hungarian uprising against the communist regime. In the

46 Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 96–102.

47 Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 114–129.

latter case, what should be emphasised is that Pius XII would take the opportunity to reiterate that the proclamation of a military crusade was still among the possibilities of the Church.⁴⁸

As for the post-war period, it is worth mentioning the radio preaching of the *crociata della bontà* (“crusade of goodness”) by Jesuit Riccardo Lombardi. Supported by the pope, the preaching contributed to the Christian party’s electoral success in 1948. The word *crociata* was, in this case, at the service of Christian Democrat propaganda, which promoted the election campaign as a crusade against communism. Later still, while the American Crusade for Freedom was taking place in Korea, Catholic Action in Italy organised the spiritual “*crociata del grande ritorno*” (“crusade for the great return”) of Christian values (1950).⁴⁹

During the pontificate of John Paul II, the word continued to be used in a spiritual sense (“crusade of the Gospel, of prayers, anti-blasphemy, and Eucharist”). In the Angelus of 12 February 1995, however, the pope, without mentioning the word, confined the crusades to a medieval past to be condemned in order instead to affirm the dialogue between religions and cultures. This affirmation became even stronger during the Jubilee of 2000 in the solemn request for forgiveness for the faults that the Church had committed. However, as Menozzi notes again, the crusades are not explicitly mentioned in the Church’s solemn request for forgiveness; resistance against the condemnation of the crusades by more traditionalist Catholics might have influenced this omission. The request for pardon for the crusades, which John Paul II publicly invoked again in 2001, execrating the sacking of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade during the meeting with the head of the Orthodox Church, thus remains unfinished, although the historical revision of the crusades by the Church has begun.⁵⁰

The use of the word ‘crusade’, as is well known, became widespread during the war and the tension that followed the 9/11 terrorist attacks. For what concerns Italian communication during this period, Menozzi appropriately refers to both the use of the word *crociata* by atheist journalists like Oriana Fallaci to account for the conflict and the new Catholic apologetics that presented the medieval crusade as an integral part of Christian identity under the pontificate of Benedict XVI. The ambiguous stance on the crusades by Benedict XVI is highlighted in Menozzi’s study, as well as the necessary overcoming of the crusade-related vocabulary affirmed by Pope Francis, who instead recognises it as a language contrary to Christian mercy. However, the sentiment that presents the medieval expeditions to Palestine as a foundational identity trait to be displayed politically is still alive among the more traditionalist sectors of the Church.⁵¹

48 Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 131–165.

49 Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 165–167.

50 Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 174–177.

51 Menozzi, “*Crociata*”, 177–192. See also Marco Giardini, “The reception of the crusades in the contemporary Catholic Church. ‘Purification of memory’ or medieval nostalgia?,” in *The Crusades in the Modern World. Engaging the Crusades*, ed. Mike Horswell and Akil Awan (London: Routledge, 2019): 75–90.

4 *Krucjata, wyprawa krzyżowa, krzyżowcy, krzyżacy*

A short outline of Polish crusading terminology and crusade rhetoric

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In this essay, I will briefly outline the genesis of Polish crusading terminology as well as crusade metaphors and rhetoric. Using approaches taken from the *Begriffsgeschichte*, I will focus in particular on loan words from Latin and other (largely Western) European languages and the linguistic, cultural, and political contexts in which these terms have been used in the Polish language throughout the centuries. The focus will be not only on the medieval and early modern periods (during which Polish as a language of literature gradually became increasingly popular) but, in particular, on the Late Modern and Postmodern eras. Covering the entire range of this topic exhaustively, however, would fill entire books. This chapter therefore seeks to provide a helpful baseline and a short historical overview, building a springboard for future discussions.

Terminological roots

The Polish word *krucjata* is relatively recent when compared to the German (*Kreuzzug*) or French (*croisade*) equivalents. The borrowing from Middle Latin becomes tangible for the first time in Jędrzej Wincenty Ustrzycki's 1707 translation of Louis Maimbourg's famous work, *Histoire des croisades pour la délivrance de la Terre-Sainte* ("The History of the Crusades for the Deliverance of the Holy Land", 1675–76)—a book that, besides Polish, was also translated into several other languages, such as English and Italian (Figure 4.1).¹ Indeed, in the early 17th century, the word *cruciata* could still only be found in Polish

1 Louis Maimbourg, *Histoire des croisades pour la délivrance de la Terre Sainte*, 4 vol. (Paris: Sebastien Mabre-Cramoisy, 1675–76); id., *Historia o krucyatach Ną wyzwolenie Zięmie Świętey*, trans. Jędrzej Wincenty Ustrzycki (Kraków: Drukarnia Frącińska Cezarego, 1707); id., *The History of the Crusade; or, the Expeditions of the Christian Princes for the Conquest of the Holy Land*, trans. John Nalson (London: Thomas Dring, 1685); id., *Istoria delle cruciate per la liberazione di Terra Santa*, trans. Gabrielle d'Emilliane (Piazzola: Luoco delle Vergini, 1684). See Franciszek Sławski, *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego*, 5 vol. (Kraków: Towarzystwo Miłośników Języka Polskiego, 1952–82), vol. 3, 168. For Jędrzej Wincenty Ustrzycki and his oeuvre, see Barbara Milewska-Ważbińska, "Między literaturą a historią: Uwagi o 'Sobiesciados carminum libri quinque' Andrzeja Wincentego Ustrzyckiego", *Meander* 49.7–8 (1994): 359–364.

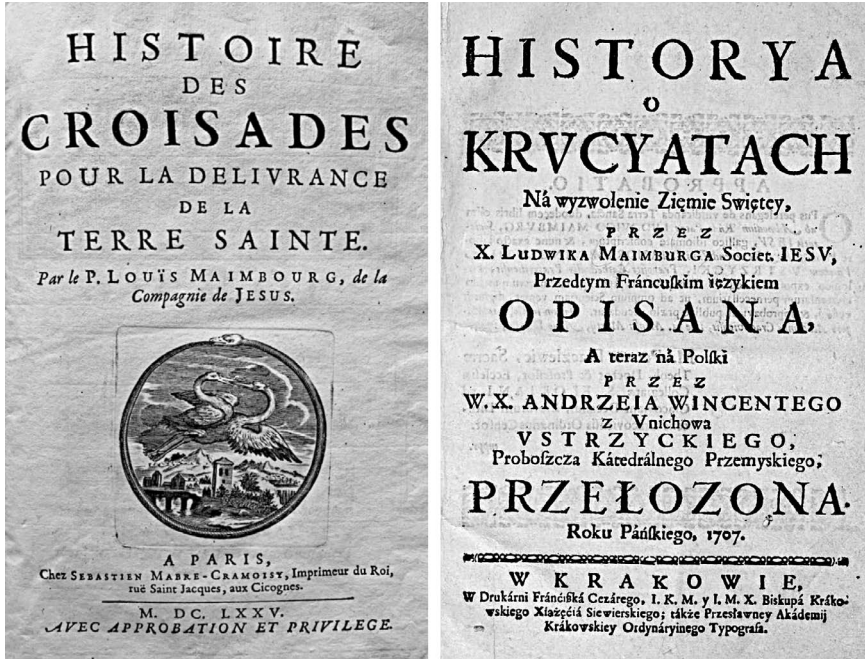


Figure 4.1 Louis Maimbourg's *Histoire des croisades* (1675–76) and its Polish translation from 1707.

dictionaries as the Latin word for the flowering plant “crossword” (the botanical term for which is *cruciata laevipes*).² How the crusades had been referred to before the 16th century in Polish must remain a field for speculation since, up to about 1500, testimonies written in Old Polish are extremely rare, and none of them make any reference whatsoever to crusades and crusading. It was not until the flowering of Renaissance humanism in the early 16th century that Polish became more and more established, slowly replacing Latin as the written language.³ Just

- 2 Grzegorz Knapski, *Thesavrvs polonolatinogræcvs seu Promptuarium lingue Latine et Græcae, Polonorum usui accomodatvm* (Cracovia: Franciscus Caesarius, 1621), 1217.
- 3 Piotr Wilczek, *Polonice et Latine: Studia o literaturze staropolskiej* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2007); Irena Szczepanowska, “Języki prawa w państwie polsko-litewskim (od XVI do XVIII wieku) z perspektywy komunikacji międzykulturowej i praktyk translatorskich,” *Legilingwistyka Porównawcza* 3 (2010): 119–131; Maria Teresa Lizisowa, *Język Kodeksu Olszewskiego (1550): Z recepcji staropolskiego języka prawno-sądowego w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w szesnastym wieku* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej, 2000). On Latin as the language of the elites in pre-modern Poland, see Jerzy Axer, ed., *Latina jako język elit* (Warszawa: DiG, 2004); Giovanna Siedina, ed., *Latinitas in the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: Its Impact on the Development of Identities* (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2014).

like French, English or German terms for crusading in late medieval and early modern writings, historiographical works in Polish in the 16th and 17th centuries mostly spoke of a journey or an expedition (Pol. *wyprawa* – cf. Middle French and Middle English *voyage*, Middle High and Early New High German *Reise*) under the sign of the cross. It is notable that, alongside *krucjata*, the word pair *wyprawa krzyżowa* has remained the most frequently used term for crusades in Polish up to the present day.

Following the introduction of *krucyata* (vel *krucjata*) into the Polish language in the 18th century, the term can occasionally be found in some publications, e.g. in Karol Nepomucen Orłowski's *Defensa Biskupstwa y Dyecezyi Kiiowskiej* ("A Defence of the Bishopric and Diocese of Kyiv"), in Gaudenty Pikulski's *Sukcess swiata czyli historia uniwersalna* ("The Success of the World or Universal History"), in Michał Abraham Troc's (also Trotz) Polono-German-French dictionary or in Ignacy Krasicki's encyclopaedical work *Zbior potrzebniejszych wiadomości* ("A Collection of Most Useful News"), to name just a few examples.⁴ The accumulation of *krucyata* in Polish-language translations of historiographical publications originally written in French is striking, once again underlining that it was largely borrowed from the French: Polish versions of books such as Pierre-Joseph d'Orléans's *Histoire des révolutions d'Espagne* translated by Kazimierz Gołecky, Pierre Joseph de la Pimpie Solignac's *Histoire générale de Pologne* translated by Ignacy Pokubiatio and Bernard Ludwik Marcin Szymon Siruć or Claude-François-Xavier Millot's multi-volume historiographical opus *Éléments de l'histoire d'Angleterre* translated by Norbert Jodłowski's contributed significantly to the popularisation and establishment of the word in Polish.⁵ However, it was not until the 19th century that

- 4 Karol Nepomucen Orłowski, *Defensa Biskupstwa y Dyecezyi Kiiowskiej Rzetelnym opisaniem, z przydatkami nie ktoremi dla niej potrzebnymi* (Lwów: SSS. Troycy 1748), 305; Gaudenty Pikulski, *Sukcess swiata czyli historia uniwersalna: O pierwszych Rodzicach Adamie y Ewie, początku Monarchij Krolestw, y Miast sławniejszych, zaczqwszy od Stworzenia Świata aż do terażniejszych czasów* (Lwów Jan Szlichtyn, 1763), 283–284; Michał Abraham Troc, *Nowy Dykcyonarz to iest mownik polsko-niemiecko-francuski z przydatkiem przysłów potocznych, przestrog gramatycznych, lekarskich, matematycznych, fortyfikacyjnych, żeglarskich, łowczych i inszym Naukom przywoitych wyrazow* (Lipsk: Ian Fryderyk Gładycz, 1779), vol. 3, col. 682; Ignacy Krasicki, *Zbior potrzebniejszych wiadomości, porządkiem alfabetu ułożonych*, (Warszawa: Michał Gröll, 1781–83), vol. 1: 65, 489. Cf. Jadwiga Puzynina, "Obraz swiata w dziele leksykograficznym M. A. Troca (1764)," in *Studien zur polnischen Literatur-, Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte im 18. Jahrhundert: Vorträge der 3. deutsch-polnischen Polonistenkonferenz, Tübingen, April 1991*, ed. Ilse Kunert (Köln: Böhlau, 1993): 71–87; Aleksandra Iwanowska, "Michał Abraham Troc w kulturze naukowej lat czterdziestych XVIII wieku," *Kwartalnik Nauki i Techniki* 38.3 (1993): 35–60; Maciej Parkitny, "Ignacego Krasickiego świadomość historyczności", in *Ignacy Krasicki: Nowe spojrzenia*, ed. Zbigniew Galiński, Teresa Kostkiewiczowa and Krystyna Stasiewicz (Warszawa: DiG, 2001): 221–242.
- 5 Pierre-Joseph d'Orléans, *Histoire des révolutions d'Espagne, depuis la destruction de l'empire des Goths, jusqu'à l'entière et parfaite réunion des royaumes de Castille et d'Aragon en une seule monarchie*, 3 vol. (La Haye: Henri Scheurleer, 1734); *Historia hiszpańska czyli Dzieie odmian i przypadków zaszłych w Hiszpanii Od wtargnienia Maurów do tego Królestwa aż do zupełnego ich wykorzenia za czasów Ferdynanda i Izabelli Prawdziwey Epoki Naywyższego wzrostu Korony Hiszpańskiej*, trans. Kazimierz Gołecky, 3 vol. (Poznań : Dekier i jego Kompania, 1799), vol. 3:

krucjata became a widespread term in the Polish language, since it is from this era onward that it can be found in numerous historical works.⁶ Remarkably, and again analogously to other European languages, ‘crusade’ also became a widely used metaphor in non-historical publications during the same period. It occurs as a rhetorical device in a multitude of political, socio-critical, theological, etc. works, as well as in profane ones.⁷

Eternal crusaders: the entanglement of bulwark and crusading rhetoric with Polish messianism

The degree of popularity of the term *krucjata* in 19th-century Polish is probably best mirrored in the poem *Krucjaty*, written in the early 1850s by the famous poet, novelist and salonnière Jadwiga Łuszczewska.⁸ The latter was also no exception in Polish literary circles at the time, frequently using both crusade terms and motifs in her artistic composition: traditionally ranked alongside Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki as one of the Three Bards, i.e. the finest poets of Polish Romantic literature, for Zygmunt Krasiński, Polish history was nothing more than “an eternal crusade war” (*wieczna wojna krzyżowa*). The poet emphasised that Poles had fought under the sign of the cross for centuries against Orthodox Moscow, the Muslim Turks and Tatars and other real and alleged “enemies” of the Catholic Church. In his opinion, this “holy” task of the Polish nation had not been extinguished by the Third Partition of Poland-Lithuania by Prussia, Russia and Austria in 1795 and the

369; Pierre Joseph de la Pimpie Solignac, *Histoire generale de Pologne*, 3 vol. (Paris: Jean-Baptiste Coignard, 1747): *Historia polska*, trans. Ignacy Pokubiatto and Bernard Ludwik Marcin Szymon Siruć, 3 vol. (Wilno : J.K.M. y Rzeczyposp, 1763), vol. 2: 169; Claude-François-Xavier Milot, *Éléments de l'histoire d'Angleterre, depuis son origine sous les Romains, jusqu'au règne de George II*, 3 vol. (Paris : P.E.G. Durand, 1769): *Historia angielska od czasu podbicia tej wyspy od Rzymian, aż do naszego wieku doprowadzona*, trans. Norbert Jodłowski, 3 vol. (Warszawa : J.K. Mci i Rzeczypospolitey, 1789), vol. 1: 142. Cf. Antoni Krawczyk, “‘Historia Polski’ Pierre’a Solignaca—nieznany podręcznik szkół pijarskich,” in *Historia: Poznanie i przekaz*, ed. Barbara Jakubowska (Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej, 2000): 83–94; Jarosław Kurkowski, “Między Wschodem a Zachodem: Bernard Syruć (Siruć) 1731–1784,” *Analecta: Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Nauki* 18.1–2 (2009): 7–50.

- 6 Few examples: Kazimierz Stadnicki, *Piasty: Rys historyczny* (Paryż : Bourgogne i Martinet, 1842), 89, 149–150; Jan Wincenty Bandtkie Steżyński, *Historia prawa polskiego* (Warszawa : Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, 1850), 287; Ignacy Daniłowicz, ed., *Skarbiec dyplomatów papieżkich, cesarskich, królewskich, książęcych; uchwał narodowych, postanowień różnych władz i urzędów posługujących do krytycznego wyjaśnienia dziejów Litwy, Rusi Litewskiej i ościennych im krajów* (Wilno : Jan Sidorowicz, 1860), vol. 1, n°167, 96; Ludwik Grossé, *Stosunki Polski z soborem bazylejski* (Warszawa : Gebethner i Wolff, 1885).
- 7 Few examples: Mieczysław Pawlikowski, *Ultramontanie i Moderanci* (Kraków : Kraj, 1871), 58; *Przegląd Katolicki* (1870), VII, 204; Zygmunt Librowicz, *Polacy w Syberji* (Kraków : G. Gebethner i Spółka, 1884), 245–246.
- 8 Jadwiga Łuszczewska, “Krucjaty,” in ead., *Improwizacje i poezje Deotymy* (Warszawa : Józef Unger, 1854–1858), 177–181. Cf. Izabela Woszczak, “Deotyma (Jadwiga Łuszczewska) w wityrinie artystycznej ewaluacji pierwszego okresu twórczości (1851–1863): prasa, wspomnienia, korespondencja,” *Prace Polonistyczne* 69 (2014): 47–63 at page 48.

subsequent loss of Polish statehood for a period of 123 years. Krasiński pointed out that, in those difficult times of the 19th century, it had fallen to the Poles to “constantly and every day fulfil what the West tried several times on its way to Palestine”, e.g. “to spill blood for the [Roman-Catholic] Church and the civilisation spread by the Church”.⁹ Guided by the spirit of Romanticism, Krasiński was strongly interested in medieval history (with a particular and obvious focus on the Polish Middle Ages) and the history of Latin Christianity, and he therefore placed a substantial amount of his writing in a historical setting. Further crusade motifs can be found in Krasiński’s *Niedokończony poemat* (“Unfinished Poem”)¹⁰ as well as in Cyprian Kamil Norwid’s oeuvre, in which the latter emphasised the importance of the crusades for the West. For Norwid, the medieval campaigns conducted under the sign of the cross were as constitutive for Latin Christian identity as the Trojan War had been for the ancient Greeks.¹¹ Furthermore, crusades and crusading also run like a thread through the works of Adam Mickiewicz, and references to holy war occur in such famous works as *Do Joachima Lelewela* (“To Joachim Lelewel”, 1822), *Grażyna* (1823), *Konrad Wallenrod* (1828) or *Do Matki Polki* (“To a Polish Mother”, 1830).¹²

This motif of Poland’s sacred crusade mission was readily intertwined by Polish Romanticism with two further national topoi: bulwark rhetoric and Polish messianism. Essentially, the bulwark topos represents the dizygotic twin of the crusade motif, both forming two sides of the same coin—the former representing the defensive, the latter the offensive aspects of the Latin Christian holy war. From the shield allegories of the high Middle Ages to the well-known motif of the late medieval and early modern *antemurale Christianitatis* (“forewall of Christianity”), Poland’s bulwark attributions are deeply rooted in the collective consciousness of the nation.¹³ In the 19th century, they served as an important reference point. In this respect, a further important poet from the Romanticist era, i.e. Konstanty Gaszyński, is representative of the entanglement of Polish crusade and

9 Zygmunt Krasiński, “O stanowisku Polski z Bożych i ludzkich względów,” in id., *Pisma Zygmunta Krasińskiego: Wydanie jubileuszowe. vol. 7: Pisma filozoficzne i polityczne*, (Kraków: Gebthner i Spółka, 1912): 25–131 at page 130. Cf. Janusz Ruskowski, “Adam Mickiewicz i ostatnia krucjata?,” *Pamiętnik Literacki: Czasopismo kwartalne poświęcone historii i krytyce literatury polskiej* 84.3–4 (1993): 41–62 at page 45.

10 Zygmunt Krasiński, *Niedokończony poemat (z pośmiertelnych rękopismów)* (Paryż: Księgarnia Polska, 1860), 120. Cf. Jerzy Fiecko, “Co zrobić z Niedokończonym poematem Zygmunta Krasińskiego?,” *Sztuka Edycji* 6.1–2 (2014), 23–28; Tadeusz Pini, *Zygmunt Krasińskiego tak zwany “Niedokończony poemat” (próba genezy)* (Lwów: Gubrynowicz i Schmidt, 1896).

11 Cyprian Kamil Norwid, *Pisma wybrane*, ed. Juliusz Wiktor Gomulicki, (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1968), vol. 4: 511. Cf. Ruskowski, “Adam Mickiewicz”, 45.

12 For an overview with references to Mickiewicz’s works, see Ruskowski, “Adam Mickiewicz”, 46–62; id., *Adam Mickiewicz i ostatnia krucjata: Studium romantycznego millenaryzmu* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996).

13 For an overview on bulwark rhetoric and its roots in the medieval and early modern periods, see Paul Srodecki, *Antemurale Christianitatis: Zur Genese der Bollwerksrhetorik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit* (Husum: Matthiesen, 2015).

bulwark metaphors. In his *Reszty pamiętników Macieja Rogowskiego, rotmistrza konfederacji barskiej* (“The Rests of the Memoirs of Maciej Rogowski, Cavalry Captain of the Bar Confederation”, 1847), he argued:

What was the history of Poland or what else was it supposed to be other than a continuous crusade, a crusade destined to defend the tomb of the Saviour against the attack of false prophets. Did not the eastern schism lie for a long time at her feet in shackles? Did you not pay homage to her, strongest support of northern captivity? Was not Poland a wall for Christianity against which pagan waves broke?¹⁴

Messianism complements both the topoi of the crusading nation, which has always been fighting against the enemies of the faith whilst serving the Latin West as its firmest bulwark. The martyr role ascribed to Poland by the Polish messianists was most clearly seen in the still very popular slogan *Polska Chrystusem narodów* (“Poland, Christ of Nations”). The Catholic right in Poland incorporated these images into their own ideas of the Polish bulwark and crusading topoi. In their eyes, Poland was an altruistic *antemurale*, fighting for Christian values and the liberty of Europe against the despotism and barbarity of the Russian East without any help from the West. The interweaving of all crusade, bulwark and messianic motives was very clearly reflected in the then popular presentation of the Polish Legion, formed by Mickiewicz in Rome in March 1848, as the “Polish crusaders” (Pol. *Krzyżowcy polscy*, Ital. *crociati polacchi*), whose mission was to support continuing libertarian-revolutionary movements outside of Poland and, if necessary, to sacrifice their lives as martyrs of national liberty.¹⁵

14 Konstanty Gaszyński, *Reszty pamiętników Macieja Rogowskiego, rotmistrza konfederacji barskiej* (Paryż: Księgarnia Katolicka Polska, 1847), 92; numerous other crusade references can be found on pages 78–79, 89, 91, 146, 149–151, 183, 192. Even if Gaszyński assures in the foreword of his work that this pastiche is a reworked version of what has survived of the unpublished diaries of Maciej Rogowski, a supposed friend of the Gaszyński family—a person who we only know of from this very work—the authenticity of the book has long been questioned by Polish literary scholars and historians and is nowadays generally classified as having been written solely by Gaszyński himself, who sought to lend his patriotic thoughts a historical setting and legitimation. On this issue, see, with further references, Jacek Lyszczyna, *Pielgrzym w kraju rozkoszy: O poezji Konstantego Gaszyńskiego* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2000), 23, 168, 192, 196–198, 202; Wiesław Bienkowski, “Korespondencja Władysława Konopczyńskiego z Mieczysławem Haimanem z lat 1931–1947,” *Rocznik Biblioteki Polskiej Akademii Nauk w Krakowie* 44 (1999): 425–444 at page 429.

15 See Mickiewicz’s various writings from this time supporting the formation of the Polish Legion in Italy as well as the accompanying newspaper articles in Italian, French etc. press: Adam Mickiewicz, *Legion polski: Trybuna Ludów*, ed. Stefan Kieniewicz (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1997); id. *Legion Mickiewicza: Wybór źródeł*, ed. Henryk Batowski and Alina Szklarska-Lohmannowa (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy, 1958). Cf. Paweł Kamza and Janusz Ruskowski, *Wiara i propaganda: Legion Mickiewicza 1848–1998* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, 1999); Ruskowski, “Adam Mickiewicz,” 53–62.

The confluence of this triumvirate of Polish national topoi constituted one of the popular rhetorical devices in the years that followed. The Polish national uprisings against Russia (1830–31 and 1863–64) were portrayed in both internal and foreign depictions as “Polish crusades for the Church and the liberty” against Russian despotism and tyranny.¹⁶ Mixed with antisemitic slogans, in the wake of Polish Pan-Slavism, Michał Suchorowski, a Slavophile and eulogist of the Habsburg Empire, published a poem named *Ślawiańska krucjata* (“The Slavonic Crusade”) in which he called on all the Slavs to unite for a joint fight against the late Ottoman Empire.¹⁷ Defending the European West against the “barbarian” East in general and “despotic” Russia in particular also remained a popular topos in Polish collective identity well into the 20th century. For example, Polish independence activists during and directly after the First World War did never tire of emphasising Poland’s historical mission and geostrategic position as Europe’s rampart against Russian tyranny and German militarism.¹⁸ The Soviet-Polish War (1919–21) was praised not only in Polish but also in French and British propaganda as a self-sacrificing struggle by Poland against the non-Christian Bolsheviks.¹⁹ In the same spirit and, as in other European countries, there were other similar calls to join a pan-European anti-communist crusade against “Bolshevik Russia—the state of the Antichrist” in the interwar period, which were often enough augmented with antisemitic slogans.²⁰ After the Second World War, the activities of Polish dissidents under the Polish People’s Republic were also often stylised as a sacred struggle of the world of faith

16 Adrien Boudou, *Le Saint-Siège et la Russie: Leurs relations diplomatiques aux XIXe siècle*, (Paris : Plon, 1922–25), vol. 1: 179, 181.

17 Michał Suchorowski, “Ślawiańska krucjata (Pobudka na Turka),” in id., *Szczytna pieśń Sławianów w dziesięci mowlach pobratymczych na pamiątkę obchodu rocznicy tysiącletniej uroczystości zaprowadzenia chrześcijaństwa przez Sławiańskich wysłanników Ś.Ś. Cyryljusta i Strachotę na rok Pański 1863 w jedno abecadło, w jedną miarę i w jeden śpiew ułożona* (Lwów: J Michał Suchorowski, 1862): 28–32.

18 See Paul Srodecki, “Bollwerk gegen Ost und West – Das Bild eines restituierten polnischen Staates in den Überlegungen polnischer Publizisten vor dem Hintergrund des Ersten Weltkrieges,” in *Die große Furcht: Revolution in Kiel – Revolutionsangst in der Geschichte*, ed. Oliver Auge and Knut-Hinrik Kollex (Kiel: Wachholtz, 2021), 179–208; id., “Die polnische Minderheit in den USA und die Polenfrage zu Beginn des Ersten Weltkriegs im Spiegel der Emigrantenzeitschrift Free Poland,” in *Erster Weltkrieg im östlichen Europa und die russischen Revolutionen 1917*, ed. Alexander Trunk and Nazar Panych (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2019): 69–88; id., “Kwestia polska i wizerunek Polski w publicystyce francuskojęzycznej w okresie I wojny światowej,” in *Kwestia polska w propagandzie w okresie pierwszej wojny światowej*, ed. Witold Molik et al. (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2018), 225–242.

19 See Paul Srodecki, “Bulwarks of Anti-Bolshevism: Russophobic Polemic of the Christian Right in Poland and Hungary in the Interwar Years and Their Roots in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Rampart Nations: Bulwark Myths of East European Multiconfessional Societies in the Age of Nationalism*, ed. Lililya Berezhnaya and Heidi Hein-Kircher (New York: Berghahn Books, 2019): 293–318.

20 Irena Puzynianka, “Przyczyny polityczne upadku rodziny w Polsce,” in *Księga pamiątkowa Zjazdu katolickiego w Warszawie, 28–30 sierpnia 1926* (Warszawa: Główny Komitet Obchodu 200-letniej rocznicy kanonizacji Św. Stanisława i Zjazdu Katolickiego, 1926): 68–85 at page 74; Urszula Ledóchowska, “Krucjata Eucharystyczna dzieci,” in *Księga pamiątkowa*: 136–142, at page 141.

against the world of communist atheism.²¹ Conversely, communist propaganda in Poland never tired of defaming the opposition underground as Western-controlled anti-Polish agents and tools in the anti-communist crusade of the capitalist-imperialist world.²²

Generalised crusade definitions and the obsession with the Teutonic order

What is striking is that, beginning with early modern works, through the Romantic writers of the 19th century, and up to the right-wing and leftist propaganda of the 20th century, Polish crusade references presented and continue to present a very generalised view of the crusade phenomenon. This may not come as a surprise since, in Poland, similar to the rest of East-Central, Eastern, South-Eastern and North-Eastern Europe, a fairly broad definition of the crusades has dominated historical discourses and literary works from the outset. The generalised classification of the crusade movement is also reflected in its conceptual intertwining with the indigenous languages: in Polish as well as in Lithuanian, for instance, the Teutonic Knights are called “knights of the cross” or rather, in its literal meaning, “those of the cross” (Pol.: sg. *krzyżak*, pl. *krzyżacy*; Lith.: sg. *kryžiuotis*, pl. *kryžiuočiai*). It is also no coincidence that the Polish word *krzyżak* is etymologically related to the term crusader (Pol.: sg. *krzyżowiec*, pl. *krzyżowcy*), while the Lithuanian term is also a homonym for it. The examination of the related common noun crusader is at least as interesting as the conceptual-historical re-drawing of the Polish concept of crusade. In the early modern period, numerous related Polish words to describe the *milites* taking the cross can still be found. Interestingly, in Old-Polish sources, there was no distinction between *kryżak* and *krzyżowiec*—with both terms having their etymologic roots in the word *krzyż* (“cross”).²³ *Krzyżak* was used not only for the Teutonic Knights but also for other military orders, such as the Hospitallers, or crusaders in general.²⁴ In the 16th century, Marcin Bielski, for instance, used the word *krzyżak* both for the crusaders who conquered Jerusalem in 1099, for their successors in the 12th and 13th centuries, as

21 Lech Mażewski, “Pomorski model obrony czynnej a powstanie ‘Solidarności’,” in *“Solidarność” i opozycja antykomunistyczna w Gdańsku, 1980–1989*, ed. id. and Wojciech Turek (Gdańsk; Instytut Konserwatywny im. E. Burke’a, 1995): 13–28, at page 23; Andrzej Walicki, “Intelektualiści i totalitarna ‘ideokracja’,” *Przegląd humanistyczny* 36.5 (1992): 1–41 at page 41; Jerzy Krawulski, *Wybór materiałów źródłowych z historii Polski Odrodzonej, 1918–1989* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej w Poznaniu, 1992), 165.

22 Representatively: Janusz Niewitecki, “Fazy działalności polskiej emigracji politycznej,” *Wojsko Ludowe* 11 (1985): 52–56 at page 52; Wiesław Cetera, “Sojusznikiem mógł być każdy,” *Wojsko ludowe* 11 (1985): 91–93 at page 91. See Karol Olejnik, *Historia Polski: Od 1970 do 1989 roku* (Poznań: Fenix, 1997), 223.

23 See Sławski, *Słownik*; vol. 3, 259.

24 Adrian Junge, *Rozwiązanie Piąćdziesiąt y dwu Quæstiy Ministrów Nowoëwangelickich, Jezuitom żądanych: O Kościele Bozym, własności, znakach y nawce iego* (Poznań: Wolrab Jan starszy—Wdowa i Dziedzice, 1593), 307.

well as for the Teutonic Knights fighting against pagans in Prussia and Livonia²⁵; in Bartosz Paprocki's *Ogrod Krolewsky* (1599), however, *krzyżak/krzyżacy* are only used for the Teutonic Knights.²⁶ In Michał Abraham Troc's aforementioned dictionary from the 18th century, *krzyżacka wojna* serves as a synonym for *krucyata*.²⁷

In Poland, similar to Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Russia, starting with the fine arts and the historiography of the 19th century, there has been an unbroken interest in the Baltic crusades and, in particular, the Teutonic Order, which continues to the present day. From the times of Polish Romanticism, this interest in the Teutonic Order turned into a downright obsession in the Polish public with two diametrically opposed faces. On the one hand, the Teutonic Knights served as a semantic placeholder for the "German threat", a *locus* for everything Polish nationalists disliked and feared about Germany (Figure 4.2a); on the other hand, this negativity was always accompanied by a significant fascination, since the order also served as an allegory for Poland's so-called "German complex", i.e. the feeling of being allegedly inferior and willing to copy the well-organised and perfect *Ordnung* of the Teutonic Order in particular, or Germany at large.²⁸ The Teutonic Knights also slotted very neatly into the aforementioned "anti-communist crusade" propaganda of the Polish People's Republic: the German chancellor Konrad Adenauer, for instance, had to pay dearly for being appointed an honorary knight of the Teutonic Order in 1958,

25 Marcin Bielski, *Kronika wszystkiego swyata, na ssesc wyekow, Monarchie cztery rozdzielona, s Kozmogrąphią nową y z rozmáitami krolestwy ták pogáńskimi, Zydowskyemi yako y Krzesciáńskiyemi, s Sybillami y prorocctwy ich, po Polsku pisána s figurami: Wktorey teź żywoty Cesarzskye, Papyeskyē [...] (Kraków: s. n., 1551), 92r, 193r.*

26 Bartosz Paprocki, *Ogrod Krolewsky W Ktorem o początku Cesarzów Rzymskich, Arcyxiążąt Rakuskich Krolow, Polskich, Czeskich, Xiążąt Slaskich, Ruskich, Litewskich, Pruskich, rozodżienia ich krotko opisane naidziess* (Praha: Daniel Sedlčanský, 1599), 161r, 163v, 164r, 168v, 226r–235r.

27 Michel Abram Troc, *Vollständiges Deutsches und Polnisches Wörter-Buch* (Leipzig, J.F. Gleditsch, 1800), col. 349.

28 Izabela Surynt, "Krzyżak," in *Interakcje: Leksykon komunikowania polsko-niemieckiego*, accessed 27 February 2023, <https://t1p.de/mts38>; Michael Burleigh, "The Knights, Nationalists and the Historians: Images of Medieval Prussia from the Enlightenment to 1945," *European History Quarterly* 17.1 (1987): 35–55. On the Polish "German complex", Krzysztof Rak, "Niemiecki kompleks Polaków," *Rzeczpospolita*, 27 August 2015, accessed 27 February 2023, <https://t1p.de/motbk>; Artur Bartkiewicz, "Polski kompleks: Czy Polacy to Niemcy wschodu, czy Rosjanie zachodu?," *Rzeczpospolita*, 20 July 2019, accessed 20 July 2019, <https://t1p.de/j5ujn>; Tadeusz Błażejowski and Heinz Kneip, ed., *Wizerunek Niemca i Rosjanina we współczesnej literaturze polskiej: Rekonesans* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2006). For a general overview on the Polish disaffirmation and fascination with the Teutonic Knights see, with further references, Igor Kałolewski, "Krzyżacy: Przekłeci i bohaterowie," in *Polsko-niemieckie miejsca pamięci. vol. 2: Wspólne/Oddzielne*, ed. Robert Traba and Hans Henning Hahn (Warszawa: Scholar, 2015): 225–48; "Bestialski mnich czy waleczny rycerz? Lokalna pamięć o 'rzezi gdańskiej' w XIX i XX wieku," in *'Rzeź Gdańska' z 1308 roku w świetle najnowszych badań: Materiały z sesji naukowej 12–13 listopada 2008 roku*, ed. Błażej Śliwiński (Gdańsk: Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Gdańska, 2009): 155–166; Marcelli Kosman, "Krzyżacy w polskiej i niemieckiej tradycji: Między prawdą i propagandą," in *Pamięć wieków kształtuje potomość*, ed. Andrzej Paweł Bieś and Beata Topij-Stempińska (Kraków: WAM, 2010), 93–105; Igor Kałolewski, "Czy krzyżacy muszą być złowrodzy?," *Historia.org.pl*, 5 July 2011, accessed 27 February 2023, <https://t1p.de/r4zg0>.



Figure 4.2 (a)–(c) From left to right: (a) Karol Kranikowski, propaganda poster from the period of the Upper Silesian plebiscite in March 1921: *Krzyżak leży powalony, nie dajcie mu wstać. Der Kreuzritter liegt im Staube, lasst ihn nicht aufkommen* (“The crusader [vel Teutonic knight] lies in the dust, do not let him get up”); (b) 1960-poster for Aleksander Ford’s movie *Krzyżacy* (based on Henryk Sienkiewicz’s eponymous novel); (c) Jan Bohusewicz, *Krucjata Przeciwko Polsce* (“A crusade against Poland”); 1982: German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and American president Ronald Reagan, stigmatised on a communist propaganda poster as anti-communist and anti-Polish crusaders.

with a photo of him in a Teutonic cloak serving various propaganda posters in Communist Poland serving as proof of a West Germany that still saw itself as a valid successor of the German *Drang nach Osten* (Figure 4.2b).²⁹ In Aleksander Ford’s monumental movie *Krzyżacy* from 1960, the portrayal of the Teutonic Knights was very reminiscent of the German Nazis and parallels were drawn to the Second World War and the German occupation of Poland (Figure 4.2c).

Crusading bulwarks against LGBTQ+, refugees and the Euro-Kolkhoz

The Polish crusade and bulwark rhetoric were not only excellently suited to fighting and repelling external enemies. Internally, too, these rhetorical devices were and often continue to be used by right-wing nationalist circles in order to defame Poland’s alleged inner enemies. In recent years, the Polish “Independence Marches” (*Marsz Niepodległości*), for instance, were accompanied by numerous references to crusading motifs, whether these are crusades against non-Christian immigrants and/or refugees, against the “Bolshevik” European Union (often denounced as a Euro-kolkhoz) or against LGBTQ+ activists and rights. Remarkably, the crusading motif, which served the extremist right as a key point of reference, was and still is

²⁹ See Sebastian Ligarski, “Wojna plakatowa w początkach stanu wojennego,” *Dzieje.pl—Portal Historyczny*, 19 December 2016, accessed 27 February 2023, <https://t1p.de/qbt6h>.

used in leftist and liberal media as a critical term: right-wing actions and national Catholic propaganda against LGBTQ+ are repeatedly labelled as ‘crusades’, not only by left-liberal politicians, activists, and media but, recently, also by traditionally conservative-liberal newspapers such as the *Rzeczpospolita*.³⁰ The press did not even have to exaggerate or invent anything here either, since Kaczyński and his PiS have constantly added new nuances of hostile speech to their anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric over recent years. In the midst of the COVID pandemic, Kaczyński, as the PiS leader declared that the fight against LGBTQ+ was essential for the continued existence of Europe, since this ideology would “endanger the foundations of our civilisation”. Even if Kaczyński admitted that this fight would have to be “reasonable”, this would not mean that they “fight with some extraordinary gentleness or without readiness to use all the means at the state’s disposal in defence of the law”. Avoiding this conflict with the LGBTQ+ movement and neoliberal ideologies, which in his eyes was inevitable, would turn Poland into Ireland, a country that was once more Catholic than Poland but which, today, “is a Catholic desert with a rampant LGBT ideology”.³¹

A clerical legitimization for the right-wing anti-LGBTQ+ campaign was provided, among others, by the archbishop of Cracow, Marek Jędraszewski. The latter compared the alleged LGBTQ+ threat to the communist threat of the interwar period and the Cold War:

Fortunately, the red plague is no longer walking on our soil, which does not mean that there is not a new one that seeks to take over our souls, hearts, and minds. Not Marxist, nor Bolshevik, but born of the same spirit: neo-Marxist. Not red, but rainbow.³²

In the last years, Jędraszewski and other Polish prelates of his ilk such as Andrzej Dzięga (archbishop of Szczecin-Kamień), Ignacy Dec (bishop of Świdnica) or Mirosław Milewski (auxiliary bishop of Płock)—to name just a few—attracted attention due to similar controversial statements, which earned them the image

30 Paweł Rutkiewicz, “Krucjata przeciw LGBT: Po Łodzi jeździ baner z homofobicznymi hasłami”, *wyborcza.pl*, 26 April 2019, accessed 14 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/r6gci>; Stanisław Obirek and Artur Nowak, “Krucjata przeciw LGBT to misja Don Kichota: Biskupi muszą ją przegrać”, *wyborcza.pl*, 14 August 2019 accessed 14 January 2023; Jarosław Myjak, “Jak dziś rządzący piszą ‘LGBT?’”, *Rzeczpospolita*, 8 September 2020, accessed 14 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/g6ggq>: “The crusade against LGBT people will do for Poland the same evil as did the expulsion of the Jews in 1968” (*Krucjata przeciwko ludziom LGBT robi dla Polski tyle samo złego, co wypędzenie Żydów w 1968 r.*). This view was also adopted in foreign press, see Eric Campbell, “A New Crusade: Poland’s Embrace of Catholicism and Anti LGBT Ideology,” *ABC News In-depth: Foreign Correspondent*, 28 April 2022, accessed 14 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/lqw54>.

31 Dominik Gołdyn, “Kaczyński zapowiada walkę z ideologią LGBT: ‘Gotowość użycia wszystkich środków’”, *Radio Zet Wiadomości*, 14 September 2020, accessed 28 February 2023, <https://t1p.de/9oais>.

32 “Arcybiskup Jędraszewski o ‘tęczowej zarazie’”, *TVN24*, 2 August 2019, accessed 28 February 2023, <https://t1p.de/b4p9k>.

of relentless radicals leading an “ultra-Catholic crusade”³³ For the journalist and People’s Republic-era opposition activist Rafał Andrzej Zakrzewski, this anti-LG-BTQ+ rhetoric of the national-Catholic right bears a lot of parallels with the anti-refugee ‘crusade’ of 2015–2016:

The anti-LGBT crusade is part of Kaczyński’s election scenario. Just as he unleashed anti-refugee demons in the previous parliamentary campaign, today he appeals to the fear of something equally little known to most citizens. He is constructing an enemy that will eat our children and take over civilisation. It disgusts him—the entire propaganda machine of the PiS state is working on it.³⁴

There are indeed a lot of similarities here: in September 2016, Elżbieta Witek, at that time the press officer for the ruling party PiS, equated Poland’s negative attitude to the refugee issue with the country’s perseverance in the days of the early modern anti-Ottoman and anti-Muscovite wars.³⁵ It was the Poles who once protected Europe from external enemies, and it is now once again Poland that is saving Europe from the new “flood of Islam”. Even if generations of Poles had led holy campaigns in defence of the Christian West in the last centuries, in recent years, Poland’s merits and values have been forgotten and repressed by Europe.³⁶ Against the backdrop of the anti-Islamic mood among significant parts of the population as well as the political class, it is not surprising that, in Poland and Hungary, the Pegida (*Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes*, “Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the Occident”) movement, which originated in Germany, quickly found many imitators. In winter 2015–2016, several major demonstrations *Przeciw islamizacji Europy* (“Against the Islamisation of Europe”) took place in the largest Polish cities.³⁷ At one of these demonstrations, held in Warsaw, Robert Winnicki, the leader of the far-right nationalistic party *Ruch Narodowy* (“National Movement”), declared that the goal of all such rallies held in Poland was to defend or repress the “immigrant raid” on Europe.³⁸ In the eyes of the Polish new right-wing movement, Poland now serves as a shining example for the whole of Central

33 Adam Szostkiewicz, “Abp Jędraszewski znów gorszy, prowadząc ultrakatolicką krucjatę,” *Polityka*, 8 April 2019, accessed 28 February 2023, <https://t1p.de/i78nf>; “Kościelnej krucjaty przeciwko LGBT+ ciąg dalszy: Oto naśladowcy abp Jędraszewskiego,” *Newsweek Polska*, 7 August 2019, accessed 28 February 2023: <https://t1p.de/uy0qc>.

34 Rafał Andrzej Zakrzewski, “Propagandowa zbrodnia prezesa przeciw narodowi polskiemu,” *wyborcza.pl*, 3 August 2019, accessed 16 March 2023, <https://t1p.de/cix7x>.

35 For the following paragraphs, see Paul Srodecki, “Concluding Thoughts on Central and Eastern European Bulwark Rhetoric in the Twenty-First Century,” *Rampart Nation*: 374–396.

36 “PiS: To Polska obroniła Europę przed Turkami i bolszewią. O tym trzeba pamiętać!,” *Frona — Portal poświęcony*, 10 September 2015, accessed 16 March 2023, <https://t1p.de/ldu2s>.

37 “By Polska pozostała Polską: Protest przeciw islamskim migrantom z udziałem szefowej niemieckiej PEGIDY,” *TVP Info*, 2 February 2016, accessed 16 March 2023, <https://t1p.de/4v9ow>.

38 “Manifestacje przeciwko imigrantom. W Warszawie pod hasłem ‘przeciw islamizacji’ Europy,” *Polsatnews*, 6 February 2016, accessed 16 March 2023, <https://t1p.de/cn2hs>.

Europe and has taken on the leading role in this region as a defender of European culture and values. Poland in particular—and here Winnicki refers to older crusade and bulwark pictures—will, as in previous centuries, play one of the most important roles on the continent and help “to build Europe into a fortress” and to defend her against external enemies.³⁹ Also representative of the Islamophobic attitude of the demonstrators was the statement by the member of the Sejm (Polish parliament) Adam Andruskiewicz, who said: “we as the Polish people have the right to say whether we want Islamic immigrants or not. We say we do not want them”.⁴⁰

The image of Poland as a forewall of faith has also frequently been shared by Jarosław Kaczyński, who called the refugee crisis the biggest threat that Europe had faced in decades. Simultaneously, in his speeches, he repeatedly spoke of “fortress Poland” and “fortress Europe”—cleverly using these terms as synonyms.⁴¹ Equating both *fortresses* also sought to provide PiS supporters, as well as undecided voters, with an inclusive sense of belonging to something greater. The Euro-sceptic PiS thus instrumentalised Europe in order to appeal to its own voters and suggested that, in their anti-Islamic attitude, they were only seeking the best for the rest of the continent, while Poland’s oppositional left-liberal parties, Brussels, as well as other left-led EU states, were acting against European values. On the other hand, Kaczyński sought to highlight the supposed threats that had repeatedly been propagated in connection to the Polish bulwark and crusade terminology in the preceding centuries: Poland as a “land of freedom” would continue to defend the “freedom of Europe” from the unfree world of Islam in the future, Kaczyński stated.⁴² Interestingly, in continuously portraying Poland and Europe as fortresses against external enemies from the “non-European” East, the Polish right-wing takes up the crusading and bulwark rhetoric of the National-Socialists, who stylised the Third Reich and (in the Second World War) Europe as a bulwark against savage Eastern Judeo-Bolshevism.⁴³

A crusade for national Catholicism

One organisation that, from the outset, acted as a mouthpiece for extremist national-Catholic ideas was—*nomen est omen*—the *Krucjata Różańcowa za Ojczyznę* (KRzO, literally “Rosary Crusade for the Fatherland”). On its website, one can find

39 “W Warszawie odbyła się manifestacja ‘Przeciw islamizacji Europy’,” *Polska Agencja Prasowa*, 6 February 2016, accessed 16 March 2023, <https://t1p.de/yswck>.

40 “Przeciwnicy przyjmowania nielegalnych imigrantów manifestowali w Warszawie,” *wPolityce.pl*, 6 February 2016, accessed 16 March 2023, <https://t1p.de/vzbf0>.

41 See representatively Jarosław Kaczyński’s speech in the Polish Sejm of September 2015, “Mocne przemówienie! Jarosław Kaczyński w Sejmie o imigrantach,” *Portal wPolityce*, 16 September 2015, accessed 16 March 2023, <https://t1p.de/rpfao>.

42 See especially Jarosław Kaczyński’s speech in the Polish Sejm in September 2015: “Mocne przemówienie! Jarosław Kaczyński w Sejmie o imigrantach,” *Portal wPolityce.pl*, 15 September 2015, accessed 16 March 2023, <https://t1p.de/rpfao>.

43 See my chapter “Crusade(s) Reloaded—On the Ideological Use of a Polymetaphor in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries” in this volume.

numerous pertinent examples of modern right-wing crusade ideology in Poland, ranging from reproductions of old prayers from the late 1930s, in which Polish Catholics are called upon to pray for the return of Orthodox believers, Anglicans, Lutherans, and all “the sects in America” to the one true faith, i.e. Catholicism, for the conversion of Jews and Muslims and, last but not least, “for the conquest of the whole world for Christ, the real God and saviour”.⁴⁴ The KRzO names Cardinal August Hlond, archbishop of Poznań from 1926 to 1946, as its main source of ideological inspiration. Indeed, Hlond has proven to be an important figure for extremist national-Catholic circles for almost one hundred years. Filled with explicit hatred for liberals, socialists and communists, his writings, statements, and proclamations from the interwar period mirror very closely the firm anchoring of crusade topoi in Polish nationalist thinking to the present day.⁴⁵

The KRzO’S website allows Hlond’s quotes to speak for themselves but remains very vague in defining what or who the “Rosary Crusade” is against, emphasising only that it is directed against “the failure of the state and the judiciary, [against] corruption, huge debt, demographic collapse, an increasing number of broken families, and finally a complete moral breakdown”.⁴⁶ In April 2016, the Świdnica bishop, Ignacy Dec, was more precise in a speech given on the anniversary of the death of Pope John Paul II and pointed out that the KRzO’s main task was to fight against “the aggression against God, which is being spread throughout Europe”. According to Dec, this “aggression against God” had its beginnings in the French Revolution, and its ideology had been developed within the material and nihilistic philosophies of the 19th century. While it reached an initial peak in the totalitarian movements of the 20th century (such as communism, fascism or Nazism), it has actually only come to full fruition in the 21st century, where the “rebirth of Marxist and libertarian ideologies” has become the sole foundation of the European Union. His solution: “with Europe in danger of being swallowed up by Islam and the collapse of Latin civilisation, should we not resume the rosary crusade?”, Dec asked the audience.⁴⁷

However, the KRzO is leading not only a moral but also a legal and political crusade against different-minded opponents depicted as enemies of Catholic Poland. Thus, in recent years, the organisation has filed several lawsuits as well as organised

44 “Modlitwa o umocnienie jedności Kościoła i nawrócenie błądzących,” *Krucjata Różańcowa za Ojczyznę*, 17 January 2023, accessed 16 March 2023, <https://t1p.de/db7yw>. Original text taken from “Oktawa modlitw o jedność Kościoła,” *Missye Katolickie: Czasopismo miesięczne ilustrowane* 58.1 (1939).

45 For the KRzO, two of Hlond’s speeches from the 1930s serve as defining foundations of what the “new Polish crusade” stands for. See August Hlond, “Fragmenty z przemówienia wygłoszonego w Poznaniu w 1932 r.,” *Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej*, accessed 14 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/pexij>; id., *Listy pasterskie* (Poznań: Naczelny Instytut Akcji Katolickiej, 1936), 60. For Hlond’s ideological impact on the KRzO, see “O Krucjacie — o co się modlimy?,” *Krucjata Różańcowa za Ojczyznę*, accessed 14 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/7nop5>.

46 “O Krucjacie”.

47 “W rocznicę śmierci papieża biskup Dec straszy islamem i wzywa do krucjaty różańcowej,” *wyborcza.pl Wroclaw*, 3 April 2016, accessed 14 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/u9ae6>.

mass protests against what it believes to be un-Christian acts, such as those against the internationally acclaimed Polish extreme metal band Behemoth, which was accused of “insulting God and Mary Queen of Poland, the sacred Catholic faith, St. Adalbert, the patron of Poland, promoting evil and the cult of Satan, breaking the divine and human order and breaking the constitution and the legal order”.⁴⁸

Conclusion

Even if, in comparison to other European languages such as French, German or English, the actual word *krucjata*, as a loan word from French, found its way into the Polish language quite late, rhetorical references to the crusades in Poland are much older. Besides *krucjata*, *wyprawa krzyżowa* remained the most popular term for crusade up to the present day. Intriguingly, the semantical evolution of the nouns *krzyżak* and *krzyżowiec*, or the respective adjectives *krzyżacki* and *krzyżowy*, and the reduction of the latter ones only to the Teutonic Knights mirrors the general association of the crusades in Poland with the Teutonic Order and the Baltic Crusades. What significantly connects Poland to other European crusading terminologies is the polyvalence in the use of crusade terms in political and publicist language, where they serve as a handy metaphor for different situations. Similar to its more popular siblings, i.e. the bulwark rhetoric and Polish messianism, crusade motifs have and continue to serve today as important anchors of orientation for the collective national consciousness and rhetorical tools for political and societal polemics. The topos that arch-Catholic Poland, beset by numerous external and internal enemies, must save Latin Christianity in its holy mission has been in use for centuries, and this idea still enjoys a striking popularity. At the same time, the crusade metaphor was and is often used as a derogatory rhetorical device, mostly by left-wing circles, in order to impute fanaticism, and thus the lack of any reason, to their political opponents.

48 “Krucjata Różańcowa za Ojczyznę kontra Behemoth,” *wyborcza.pl Trójmiasto*, 12 October 2014, accessed 14 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/n1v16>.

5 *Croisade*

Sens et usages entre deux rives encore opposées

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L'évènement référence du mot 'croisade' remonte au Moyen-Âge, à Jérusalem où chrétiens occidentaux et musulmans orientaux s'affrontaient pour la défense de la Terre sainte. La dénomination, pourtant, n'existait pas à l'époque même de l'évènement. D'après Benjamin Weber,¹ une des premières occurrences médiévales du terme se trouve dans un contrat de don de vigne aux Hospitaliers. Mais l'usage du mot dans le sens actuel, selon Christoph T. Maier² remonte au XVII^e siècle où les historiens français furent les premiers à l'employer dans son sens actuel, précédés par quelques prémices au XIII^e siècle avec un usage plus spécifique.

Le mot a toujours sa place aujourd'hui dans les discours, avec une variété de sens dont les connotations diffèrent d'une langue à l'autre. Alors que les usages du vocable en français sont ouverts à un emploi général de campagne pour la défense d'une cause, la langue arabe développe une famille de sens étroitement liée au contexte historique des XI^e et XIII^e siècles : 'croisade' (*Salibia*) exprime une expédition militaire et une lutte idéologique dont la source est toujours occidentale. Les multiples occurrences accumulent des couches de sens dont les connotations sont le plus souvent positives en français et négatives en arabe. Une différence puisée dans l'origine même du mot; chacune des langues est chargée de lourds bagages historiques et culturels dont il est difficile de se débarrasser.

Cet article propose une étude comparative des sens et des usages du mot 'croisade' entre les langues arabe et française. Dans un premier temps, il propose un inventaire des mots de la famille 'croisade' dans les deux langues. Les différentes définitions de ces mots sont ensuite comparées via une étude diachronique qui analyse l'évolution de la conceptualisation du terme. Les données offertes par les dictionnaires sont complétées par certains discours contemporains qui éclairent le parcours du mot depuis sa création jusqu'à nos jours, en s'arrêtant sur quelques

1 Benjamin Weber, « When and Where did the Word 'crusade' appear in the Middle Ages? And Why?, » dans *The Crusades: History and Memory. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, vol.2*, ed Kurt V. Jensen and Torben K. Nielsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021): 199-220.

2 Christoph T. Maier, « When Was the First History of the Crusades Written?, » dans *The Crusades: History and Memory*: 13-28.

moments clés lors desquels le terme était fut employé afin de promouvoir des évènements ou en dénigrer d'autres.

Inventaire des différentes formes et leur analyse grammaticale dans les langues française et arabe

'Croisade' appartient à une famille de mots dont la racine est croix. Parmi les autres dérivés, on trouve « croiser » (verbe transitif), « se croiser » (verbe pronominal) et « croisé » (participe passé, substantif et adjectif). Cet inventaire³ ne prend en compte que les mots en lien lexico-sémantique avec 'croisade' ; sont donc éliminées des formes comme « croisée », « croisement » etc. ainsi que quelques mots nettement moins usuels comme: « crucifier », « crusifix » et « crusifement ». Ces termes décrivant la passion du Christ sont les mêmes dans les deux langues de cette étude et sont utilisés dans ce contexte précis et parfois en usage métaphorique faisant référence directe à la situation d'origine, comme en témoignent les entrées dans les dictionnaires et les exemples qui y sont cités pour illustrer le sens. Ces différentes occurrences reprennent la scène puisée dans les textes saints de la Bible et du Coran.

| Mot en français | Fonction grammaticale |
|-----------------|---|
| <i>Croiser</i> | Verbe transitif |
| <i>Croisé</i> | Participe passé, substantif et adjectif |
| <i>Croisade</i> | Substantif nom féminin |

| Mot en arabe | Traduction littérale ⁴ | Fonction grammaticale |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Salibi</i> | Croisé | Adjectif masculin |
| <i>Salibia</i> | Croisée | Adjectif féminin |

Parmi les mots appartenant à la famille de 'croisade' en langue française, les adjectifs trouvent leur équivalent en langue arabe sous une forme assez proche quant à la construction et à la valeur grammaticale. Ceci a facilité le passage d'une langue à l'autre. En revanche, la forme verbale est absente en langue arabe et des collocations à base nominale ont été créées pour exprimer les substantifs. L'apparition du vocable en français plusieurs siècles avant l'arabe permet de parler de traduction et de transfert culturel et non pas d'un nouvel acte de dénomination en arabe. L'équivalence arabe est donc la traduction de la dénomination originale en langue

3 Les dictionnaires arabes et français qui ont servi à élaborer cette liste de mots sont cités en détail plus loin dans l'article.

4 Afin de garder les mêmes fonctions grammaticales dans la langue d'origine.

étrangère. Une des théories des transferts culturels estime qu'il est « parfois une traduction » et « qu'une traduction n'est en aucun cas un équivalent. Elle l'est encore moins lorsqu'elle ne se déclare pas telle mais s'inspire simplement d'un original ».⁵ C'est en effet le cas des occurrences de 'croisade' en arabe dont la référence ou le créateur ne sont jamais cités. La traduction peut transmettre des sens mais elle ne garantit pas de véhiculer les mêmes effets. Le passage d'une langue à l'autre prouve que celle-ci n'est pas une barrière et qu'elle véhicule les dénominations des événements. Mais derrière les mots, en dépit d'une seule dénomination imposée, il y a une culture masquée avec des horizons culturellement différents.

Dans cet article, nous analyserons les différentes entrées de la liste précédemment citée, dans les dictionnaires de langue arabe et française afin de comparer les différents sens qui leur sont attribués, qu'ils soient originaux ou acquis au fil des usages.

Exploration des dictionnaires

Il existe aujourd'hui deux groupes de sens bien établis et bien distincts pour le vocable 'croisade' en français, comme en témoignent les dictionnaires et les usages récurrents. *Le Robert*, dictionnaire usuel contemporain, définit 'croisade' d'abord sous la rubrique « histoire » comme « chacune des expéditions entreprises par les chrétiens coalisés pour délivrer les Lieux saints qu'occupaient les musulmans ».⁶ Le second sens du mot lui est attribué à titre figuré comme le précise l'abréviation qui précède la définition. Il d'agit d'une « tentative pour créer un mouvement d'opinion dans une lutte (souvent, au nom d'un principe religieux, moral traditionnel) », ayant comme synonyme « campagne ». Les mots équivalents proposés par *Le Robert* au nom féminin 'croisade' font écho aux formules arabes désignant le même événement: guerre, campagne, opération. Il en est de même pour le nom masculin et l'adjectif « croisé: celui qui partait en croisade », avec l'exemple de « l'armée des croisés ».

Quant au sens du verbe pronominal « se croiser », il est directement lié au contexte historique « du temps des guerres saintes » avec une précision que la définition est issue du *Dictionnaire universel de Furetière*, publié en 1690; il convient alors de la « replacer dans le contexte historique et sociétal »⁷ dans lequel elle a été rédigée. Le contexte historique joue en effet un rôle important dans la formation des sens. Il convient donc de consulter quelques dictionnaires de référence afin de remonter le parcours des différentes définitions, dans une perspective diachronique.

Les cinq premières éditions du *Dictionnaire de l'académie française* (de 1694 à 1798) évoquent, à l'entrée 'croisade', le sens de « Ligue sainte, dans laquelle on prenoit la marque de la croix sur ses habits pour aller faire la guerre aux infidèles,

5 Michel Espagne, « La notion de transfert culturel, » *Revue Sciences/Lettres*, 1 (2013), consulté le 14 janvier 2022, DOI : 10.400/rsl.2019.

6 Consulté le 11 février 2022, <https://dictionnaire.lerobert.com/definition/croisade>.

7 Consulté le 11 février 2022, <https://dictionnaire.lerobert.com/definition/croiser>.

ou aux hérétiques ».⁸ Le sens aujourd'hui courant dans les discours quotidiens n'est mentionné qu'à la septième édition (1878) précédé de l'étiquette *Fig*, qui indique un usage au sens figuré: « des efforts concertés entre plusieurs personnes pour combattre des institutions, des idées qui leur paraissent mauvaises ». Le passage du sens figuré à un sens propre se fait souvent graduellement par un usage bien stabilisé. La dernière édition du *Dictionnaire de l'académie française* (neuvième édition actuelle) en témoigne. Les deux sens bien distincts sont donnés à la définition de 'croisade', l'un précédé par l'étiquette *histoire*, retraçant le récit des guerres au Moyen-Âge et le second par l'étiquette *analogie*, exprimant le sens de prêcher une bonne cause sans rapport nécessaire avec la religion.⁹ Dans cette version, le sens des premières éditions se trouve relégué à un emploi par extension.

L'évolution du verbe « croiser » suit un parcours similaire, avec les définitions des premières éditions particulièrement attachées aux croisades du Moyen-Âge. De la première (1694) à la neuvième édition (actuelle), « se croiser » signifie « prendre la croix & s'enrouler pour une guerre sainte ».¹⁰ Le participe passé à la base du substantif a été ajouté à la quatrième édition (1762): « on appelle *Les Croisés*, ceux qui ont pris autrefois la croix pour la guerre sainte ».

L'entrée spécifique comme nom masculin est apparue pour la première fois dans la septième édition (1878): « celui qui se croisait pour combattre les infidèles, les hérétiques. L'armée des croisés. Les croisés s'emparèrent de Jérusalem, le 6 juillet 1099 ». La dernière édition garde le même sens en *histoire* « chrétien qui, au Moyen-Âge, prenait la croix et partait pour la croisade » et y ajoute par analogie « Il s'est fait le croisé de cette cause ».

La cinquième édition (1798) justifie dans une entrée plus spécifique le choix du mot par son rapport au contexte des expéditions du Moyen-Âge et les habits des personnes qui y participaient: « se croiser: s'engager par un vœu solennel dans une Croisade, et, pour marque de ce vœu, porter une croix sur ses habits ». Les ennemis contre qui les croisades sont menées, sont « les infidèles » ou « les hérétiques » d'après la sixième édition (1835). L'édition actuelle cite en sixième et dernière rubrique de sens et sous la marque de domaine Histoire: « prendre la croix; s'engager à partir pour la croisade ».¹¹

Cette évolution des sens ainsi que le changement de leur ordre d'une édition à l'autre sont révélateurs du parcours des mots qui fait renaître des aspects de sens originaux et en relègue d'autres au second plan au fil des usages. C'est ainsi qu'un usage auparavant généralisé regagne le contexte particulier de la religion chrétienne.

Le portail lexical du CNRTL (Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales), réalisé d'après le Trésor de la Langue Française Informatisé, propose une entrée assez détaillée sous deux grandes rubriques. *Histoire*: « expédition dont les

8 Consulté le 5 février 2022, <https://www.dictionnaire-academie.fr/article/A1C0724-01>. Voir à ce sujet l'article de Caroline Salagnac dans ce volume.

9 Consulté le 11 mars 2022, <https://www.dictionnaire-academie.fr/article/A9C5042>.

10 Consulté le 11 mars 2022, <https://www.dictionnaire-academie.fr/article/A1C0724-03>.

11 Consulté le 11 mars 2022, <https://www.dictionnaire-academie.fr/article/A9C5047>.

participants portaient une croix d'étoffe cousue sur leur habit, entreprise au Moyen-Âge par les chrétiens d'Europe pour délivrer la Terre Sainte de l'occupation musulmane. Époque, histoire, temps des croisades » et *Emploi figuré* : « campagne visant à soulever l'opinion en vue d'un résultat d'intérêt commun. Par ext. Lutte armée sous-tendue par un conflit idéologique ». ¹² L'article évoque un mot dont le sens est bien établi et réfère même à une époque. Cette stabilité de sens est confirmée par la création de nouvelles expressions comme « contre-croisade ».

Les définitions de la rubrique *histoire* sont en résonance directe avec les définitions arabes, qui ont recours au même contexte pour expliquer ce qu'est une croisade. En principe, la recherche dans les dictionnaires monolingues arabes se fait par la racine du vocable, souvent la forme simple du verbe/mot dont il est dérivé. En l'occurrence *salib* (« croix ») donne lieu à *salibi* (« croisé ») et *salibia* (« croisade »). Les deux mots sont les formes masculine et féminine du même adjectif. La forme adjectivale est utilisée au masculin pour décrire les personnes qui ont participé à une croisade, quand la forme féminine qualifie la croisade elle-même. Cette dernière est souvent utilisée au pluriel (en arabe, la forme adjectivale au féminin est la même entre singulier et pluriel). Elle est systématiquement précédée par un substantif qui pourrait être traduit par expéditions, guerres, campagnes, attaques, offensives, assauts. *Hamalat salibia* (« campagnes croisées ») ou *horoub salibia* (« guerres croisées ») sont les deux syntagmes les plus fréquents. Faute d'un substantif équivalent, la traduction arabe par une expression formée d'un substantif et d'un adjectif semble la plus adéquate et la plus fidèle au sens d'origine. Mais elle favorise un sens chargé d'un point de vue spécifique. Ainsi, le terme « guerre » est plus agressif que « campagne » et la dimension religieuse n'est citée que par l'adjectif qualificatif qui complète le syntagme nominal. La dénomination est inévitablement subjective.

Cela était déjà souvent le cas dans les usages historiques. On retrouve cet usage dans les récits arabes des voyageurs, chroniqueurs et biographes qui constituent une référence précieuse des contemporains des guerres successives en Syrie-Palestine. Bahā' ad-Dīn Ibn Shaddād, ¹³ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Ġubayr¹⁴ ou Usāma Ibn al-Munqidh, ¹⁵ parmi les exemples des plus connus, furent tous des

12 Consulté le 11 mai 2022, <https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/croisade>.

13 Ibn Shaddād (1145 - 1235) est un des proches de Salah ad-Dīn et avait rédigé sa biographie. Pour des détails sur sa biographie et son œuvre, voir l'article qui lui est consacré par M. Talbi dans Peri J. Bearman et alii, ed., *Encyclopédie de l'Islam en ligne*, (Leiden: Brill, 2010), consulté le 2 décembre 2022, DOI : [10.1163/9789004206106_eifo_SIM_3368](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004206106_eifo_SIM_3368).

14 Connu comme Ibn Ġubayr, (1145 – 1217), un des plus célèbres voyageurs du Moyen-Âge ; il a relaté le long chemin de son pèlerinage à la Mecque en consacrant un chapitre à son passage en Syrie-Palestine. Il est reconnu à l'échelle mondiale depuis la publication de ses récits à Londres, en 1852, par l'orientaliste William Right. Pour des détails sur sa biographie et son œuvre, voir l'article qui lui est consacré par Ch. Pellat dans l'*Encyclopédie de l'Islam en ligne*, consulté le 2 décembre 2022, DOI : [10.1163/9789004206106_eifo_SIM_3145](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004206106_eifo_SIM_3145).

15 Usāma Ibn al-Munqidh (1095-1188), homme des lettres qui a participé aux guerres contre les croisés et fut capturé lors d'une des batailles. Ses mémoires *Kitāb al-I'tibār* sont une source incontournable pour l'histoire des croisades. Pour des détails sur sa biographie et son œuvre, consulter l'article qui lui est consacré par R. S. Humphreys dans l'*Encyclopédie de l'Islam en ligne*, consulté le 2 décembre 2022, DOI : [10.1163/1573-3912_islam_DUM_3480](https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_DUM_3480).

témoins oculaires des croisades. Ces dernières ne sont pas nommées comme telles dans leur œuvre. Ils y parlent plutôt des batailles, des combats et des campagnes en leur attribuant les noms des lieux où se sont déroulés les affrontements comme Tibériade, Galout et Hattin. Ces noms de lieu sont encore aujourd'hui cités dans les discours arabes et constituent une source d'inspiration, la victoire étant perçue comme particulièrement glorieuse.

Afin d'explorer les différentes définitions en langue arabe, de nombreuses bases de données ont été consultées. Vu la proximité des résultats, on se limitera à citer les plus exhaustives. La première est *Baheth*,¹⁶ un site qui présente une version numérique des cinq dictionnaires monolingues classiques unanimement considérés comme fiables et qui ont le statut de sources de la langue arabe: *Maqayiss Allogha* (X^e siècle), *Al Abab Alzakharr* (XIII^e siècle), *Lessan Alarab* (XIV^e siècle), *Alqamous Almoheet* (XV^e siècle) et *Al Sahah Fellogha* (XVI^e siècle). Aucune définition n'est donnée aux variations du mot *Salibi*, par ces dictionnaires, ce qui confirme que l'apparition et l'usage en langue française précèdent la langue arabe.

La deuxième base de données, *Almougem Arabi algama*,¹⁷ regroupe une dizaine de dictionnaires classiques et contemporains ainsi que quelques textes de référence en langue arabe. Deux entrées y sont proposées: la forme féminine qui signifie « guerres menées par les chrétiens européens dans les lieux saints en Palestine entre 1096 et 1291. Ainsi nommées en référence à la croix, leur emblème »¹⁸; le substantif, qui est également la forme adjectivale féminine et masculine, au singulier ou au pluriel, qui est défini brièvement comme celui ou celle qui « a participé aux croisades ».

Une entrée plus détaillée dans un dictionnaire usuel contemporain est donnée par *El Wassit*, dans une édition de 1960 faite par l'Académie arabe au Caire : « croisés : des armées de chrétiens de l'Europe qui ont envahi l'Orient musulman à plusieurs reprises du XI^e au XIII^e siècle appelant à libérer Jérusalem et ses environs ».¹⁹

En interrogeant la base de données à la recherche de toutes les occurrences du mot 'croisade', on trouve que cette dernière est liée aux *Franj*, substantif dont le sens est équivalent aux croisés, d'après le *Dictionnaire de la langue arabe contemporaine*. C'est une dénomination que les Arabes ont adoptée pour désigner les Européens après « les croisades en Orient » ; l'Europe est « les pays des *Franj* ».²⁰ Cette qualification apparaît dans les textes arabes à l'époque médiévales de même que dans des textes de langue française de la même période. En l'adoptant aux règles phonétiques, morphologiques et syntaxiques de la langue d'accueil, elle a le statut d'un emprunt linguistique direct.

16 Consulté le 5 janvier 2022, <http://baheth.info/>.

17 Consulté le 5 janvier 2022, <https://www.arabicterminology.com/?search=%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A&book=All>.

18 Sauf mention contraire, les extraits en langue arabe sont de notre traduction.

19 Consulté le 5 janvier 2022, <https://www.maajim.com/dictionary/%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A>.

20 Consulté le 5 janvier 2022, <https://www.arabicterminology.com/?search=%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A&book=All&page=2>.

Dans une édition plus récente, le *Dictionnaire de la langue arabe contemporaine* ajoute que les expéditions croisées sont « une série d'expéditions militaires par les chrétiens de l'Europe afin de conquérir les terres saintes en Palestine. Ces campagnes ont eu lieu avec l'approbation du Pape et sous l'emblème de la croix. Elles ont été vaincues par Salah ad-Dīn Elayoubi ». ²¹

Une autre plateforme *Sakhr* regroupe deux catégories de dictionnaires, classiques et contemporains, en plus d'un large échantillon de textes religieux, littéraires et médiatiques. Elle a été créée en 1982 et a été mise à jour à plusieurs reprises, la dernière fois en 2007. Ses sources vont des premiers dictionnaires de langue arabe au X^e siècle jusqu'au plus contemporains du XXI^e siècle. Si ces derniers ne font pas l'unanimité, ²² ils témoignent malgré tout d'un usage stable et attesté dans la langue courante. On y trouve la définition classique pour « croisé: qui appartient aux croisades qui ont attaqué le monde musulman au Moyen-Âge ». ²³ Une précision souligne qu'il s'agit à la fois d'une idéologie et d'une croyance qui ont animé une guerre de deux siècles entre l'Orient musulman et l'Occident chrétien.

Ces définitions accentuent le clivage Orient musulman contre Occident chrétien; elles se retrouvent dans le dictionnaire *Mougem alma'any algama'* dans lequel « croisé » désigne les « chrétiens de l'Europe qui ont conquis l'Orient musulman appelant à libérer Jérusalem de la souveraineté des musulmans ». ²⁴ Dans la même perspective, le dictionnaire *Al Ra'ed* les présente comme ceux qui « ont conquis la Palestine en plus d'autres pays arabes. Leur occupation a duré de 1096 jusqu'à 1291 ». ²⁵

On peut terminer cette mise en parallèle entre les deux langues par un dictionnaire bilingue français-arabe ²⁶ dans lequel 'croisade' est traduit par *djihad* et par la suite « croisé » par *almoughahed* (celui qui pratique de *djihad*). Cette traduction exprime une vision récurrente chez quelques chroniqueurs qui ont vu les croisades comme une vraie guerre sainte face à laquelle chaque musulman doit pratiquer son devoir de défense de la religion. Cette binarité de devoir armé à des fins religieuses est critiquée par des théologiens musulmans qui considère le djihad comme un effort personnel dans la voie de Dieu et une lutte spirituelle contre le mal. ²⁷

21 Consulté le 5 janvier 2022, <https://www.maajim.com/dictionary/%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9>.

22 Le plus souvent, à cause de l'introduction de nouveaux mots dont l'usage n'est pas partagé dans tous les pays arabes, chacun ayant son propre dialecte.

23 Consulté le 5 janvier 2022, <https://lexicon.alsharekh.org/result/%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A>.

24 Consulté le 5 janvier 2022, <https://www.almaany.com/ar/dict/ar-ar/%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A/?page=1>.

25 Consulté le 5 janvier 2022, <https://www.almaany.com/ar/dict/ar-ar/%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A/?page=2>.

26 Jean-Baptiste Belot, *Dictionnaire français-arabe* (Beyrouth : Imprimerie catholique, 1913), 278-279.

27 Pour des informations supplémentaires sur les discours arabes à propos du djihad lors des croisades, voir Anne-Marie Eddé, « 'Le paradis à l'ombre des sabres' : discours sur le jihad à l'époque de Saladin, » *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 62 (2009), *La Guerre juste dans le Proche-Orient ancien et médiéval : approches historique, philosophique et juridique* : 149-176.

L'examen des éditions successives des dictionnaires fournit donc un aperçu des usages dans chaque langue. En français, le mot est polysémique et appartient à plusieurs champs sémantiques avec deux acceptions principales, celle de lutte idéologique et celle d'évènement historique. En arabe en revanche, il ne possède qu'un seul sens lié au contexte historique y compris dans ses dimensions idéologiques, même en usage contemporain. Il s'agit d'une traduction calquée qui s'est introduite dans la langue. Cela est confirmé par les dates des premières occurrences des mots, en plus des formes précédemment citées. En dépit des multiples usages en arabe, les croisades ne sont pas devenues un nom d'évènement générique mais se réfèrent toujours à un évènement spécifique.

Ces repères définitoires datés marquent le passage du mot de la langue française à la langue arabe. Le mot a été introduit dans la langue d'accueil en gardant son sens d'origine et n'a pas évolué depuis en dépit des usages courants. La référence historique reste présente mais elle est différemment conçue par les locuteurs de chaque langue. Cette variation est significative de la rencontre des champs sémantiques français et arabe du mot.

Si les définitions des dictionnaires se veulent neutres et objectives et abordent effectivement toutes les façades des mots, la dimension idéologique du vocable 'croisade' ne se cache pas dans les extraits qui précèdent. L'écart de connotations est plus clair dans les usages contemporains du mot : ils sont pour la plupart positifs en langue française et servent à promouvoir des actes, alors qu'ils sont négatifs critiques en langue arabe, afin de dénigrer des actions menées souvent par un Occident qui comprend l'Europe et les États-Unis.

Des croisades contemporaines

De nombreuses sources et bases de données ont été consultées en vue de découvrir quels évènements sont qualifiés de 'croisade', en particulier l'*Encyclopédia Universalis* et *Gallica*. Cette exploration sert de corpus afin d'étudier la dimension interdiscursive et dialogique du mot. Car si les mots ont un sens, c'est le déjà-dit qui les habite qui leur donne leur présence; étudier l'aspect interdiscursif des mots permet de les appréhender dans toute leur complexité. Le déjà-dit englobe la mémoire des mots en tant que sens, significations et connotations implicites ou explicites.

Dans sa définition de la notion de « mémoire discursive » dont il est l'auteur, Jean-Jacques Courtine précise qu'elle « concerne l'existence historique de l'énoncé au sein de pratiques discursives réglées par des appareils idéologiques ». ²⁸ En articulant l'histoire et la mémoire collective au langage, la notion appartient aux études linguistiques aussi bien qu'aux études historiques. L'auteur fait explicitement appel au domaine historique notamment aux « lieux de mémoire » de Pierre Nora. La présence des mots et des énoncés dans les différents discours au fil du temps étant intimement liée à la mémoire, celle-ci décide de leurs usages et de leurs interprétations. L'étude de la mémoire discursive consiste en « l'analyse des

28 Jean-Jacques Courtine, « Quelques problèmes théoriques et méthodologiques en analyse du discours, à propos du discours communiste adressé aux chrétiens, » *Langages* 62 (1981): 9-128.

modes d'existence matériels, langagiers de la mémoire collective dans l'ordre des discours ». ²⁹

La mémoire sémantique des mots, ce qu'ils évoquent, est liée à leurs usages multiples. Les discours antérieurs infléchissent leur sens et leur interprétation. C'est ainsi que tout discours est porteur, implicitement ou explicitement, d'autres discours. Les mots ne sont pas clos sur eux-mêmes mais sont souvent en inter-discours. Ce constat est essentiellement bâti d'après la théorie sur le dialogisme, élaborée par M. Bakhtine dans *Esthétique et théorie du roman*, selon laquelle les discours sont dialogiques par leurs valeurs sémantiques et leur structure stylistique. Ils se croisent sur les chemins menant à leur objet. Le dialogisme témoigne des zones de contact entre des différents discours précédents ou à venir. La dénomination est un lieu privilégié d'émergence du dialogisme, de mémoire collective et des positions idéologiques. Pour Bakhtine, « un énoncé vivant, significativement surgi à un moment historique et dans un milieu social déterminés, ne peut manquer de toucher à des milliers de fils idéologiques vivants, tissés par la conscience socio-idéologique autour de l'objet de tel énoncé et de participer activement du dialogue social ». ³⁰

Utiliser un mot orienté par un déjà-dit historiquement chargé comme 'croisade' rappelle nécessairement des discours passés. La majorité des occurrences dans lesquelles 'croisade' qualifie des événements de l'histoire contemporaine sont une référence directe au Moyen Âge. Le sens reprend la division classique Orient/ Occident et l'étend élastiquement, d'un côté, aux musulmans d'autres horizons géographiques comme l'Afghanistan, et de l'autre à tout ennemi potentiel comme les États-Unis. Parmi les guerres contemporaines considérées comme 'croisades' par la presse arabe, les plus fréquentes sont la guerre de Suez (1956) et la guerre en Irak de 2003. Ces guerres rappellent les croisades médiévales par un Orient (l'Égypte et l'Irak) attaqué et envahi par l'Occident (La France, l'Angleterre et les États-Unis), mais aussi par leurs protagonistes. L'image des présidents égyptien Gamal Abdel Nasser et irakien Saddam Hussein rappelle celle du souverain arabe et musulman qui a osé affronter l'Occident et lui imposer sa volonté: Salah ad-Dīn, symbole de victoire, de résistance et d'un Orient non soumis. Cette qualification de l'invasion de l'Irak en 2003 pourrait être conçue comme réponse aux propos du président américain George W. Bush qui, suite aux attentats du 11 septembre 2001, avait appelé à la mobilisation de la communauté internationale dans une « croisade contre le terrorisme ».

Bush n'est pas le premier président américain à qualifier de 'croisade' une campagne de guerre menée par son pays. En 1948, le général Dwight D. Eisenhower a publié ses mémoires sur la deuxième guerre mondiale sous le titre de *Croisade en Europe*. Le recours au mot 'croisade' en langue anglaise par les locuteurs américains témoigne qu'un « transfert culturel n'a jamais lieu seulement entre deux langues, deux pays ou deux aires culturelles : il y a quasiment toujours des tiers impliqués.

29 Jean-Jacques Courtine, « Le tissu de la mémoire : quelques perspectives de travail historique dans les sciences du langage, » *Langages* 114 (1994): 5-12.

30 Mickaïl Bakhtine, *Esthétique et théorie du roman*. trad. Daria Olivier (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), 100.

On doit donc plutôt se représenter les transferts culturels comme des interactions complexes entre plusieurs pôles, plusieurs aires linguistiques ».³¹

Dans le même contexte de la seconde guerre mondiale, Charles De Gaulle, lors de son appel aux Français pour se mobiliser contre l'occupation allemande, disait: « vous, hommes et femmes de la Résistance française, vous tous croisés à la croix de Lorraine, vous qui êtes le ferment de la nation dans son combat pour l'honneur et pour la liberté, il vous appartiendra demain de l'entraîner, pour son bien, vers l'effort et vers la grandeur ».³² Il évoquait également à propos du modèle américain: « L'élan de croisade qu'inspirait au peuple américain son idéalisme instinctif ».³³ Dans les deux extraits, il s'agit d'une croisade pour la défense de la liberté et de la démocratie.

Ces exemples relèvent de circonstances similaires aux croisades médiévales : une guerre entre deux mondes inconciliables, conçue par l'Occident comme défense nécessaire et par l'Orient comme offensive non justifiée. Ces usages contemporains qui gardent les connotations positives pour une rive et négatives pour l'autre sont ceux qui dominent à quelques exceptions près. Citons à titre d'exemple l'ouvrage de Richard Vassakos, *La croisade de Robert Ménard. Une bataille culturelle d'extrême droite*.³⁴ L'auteur jugeant comment le maire de Béziers manipule l'histoire au service de sa politique municipale, reprend par son titre des critiques déjà émises à l'encontre de Ménard: « Béziers: les nouvelles croisades religieuses de Robert Ménard ».³⁵ De même aux États-Unis, la campagne menée contre les communistes pendant les années de la guerre froide est également conçue comme une « croisade anticommuniste ».³⁶

Quant à la rive sud de la méditerranée, la qualification 'croisade' y est le plus souvent conçue sous un œil négatif. À ce propos, la Revue *Al-Maçarrat*, éditée en arabe par l'Église catholique (le Patriarcat melkite d'Antioche au Liban) offre des exemples très intéressants. En janvier 1957, la revue publie le compte-rendu d'un ouvrage intitulé *Les Capitulations et la protection des Chrétiens au Proche-Orient aux XVI^e, XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*.³⁷ L'auteur du commentaire juge le livre comme unique dans un domaine peu exploré et précieux. Il affirme que « Quand les Arabes ont occupé le Proche-Orient, ils ont régi les peuples chrétiens de ces régions. Ils étaient religieusement tolérants lors du règne des premiers successeurs du prophète ainsi que sous la souveraineté de quelques Omeyyades mais cette tolérance a graduellement disparu avec les Abbâsides, les Fatimides et les Mamelouks. Les Byzantins ont essayé en vain de libérer la Syrie des musulmans. Les nouvelles du mauvais sort subi par les chrétiens de l'Orient sont arrivées en Europe. Alors

31 Espagne, « La notion de transfert culturel ».

32 Charles De Gaulle, *Mémoires de guerre* vol. 3 *Le Salut* (Paris: Plon, 1959), 310.

33 Charles De Gaulle, *Mémoires de guerre* vol. 1 *L'appel* (Paris: Plon, 1954), 192.

34 Paris: Libertalia, 2021.

35 Annie Menras, *La Marseillaise*, 23 octobre 2014, consulté le 29 novembre 2022, <https://www.lamarseillaise.fr/politique/beziers-les-nouvelles-croisades-religieuses-de-robert-menard-GCLM032554>.

36 « Berry John – (1917-1999) », *Encyclopædia Universalis*, consulté le 3 avril 2022, <https://www.universalis.fr/encyclopedie/john-berry/>.

37 Par Mgr Basile Homsy (Harissa : Saint Paul, 1956).

le Pape a appelé aux croisades pour sauver la tombe du Christ et les chrétiens qui vivaient dans le pays du Christ mais ces croisades ont échoué ».³⁸

Cet extrait témoigne que l'Église orientale adopte parfois une position similaire à celle de l'Europe quant à la perception des croisades. Mais ce n'est pas l'emploi le plus fréquent du mot dans la revue. Ainsi le message du Pape Pie XII du Vatican lors de la fête de Noël, le 23 décembre 1956³⁹: « Pour notre part, en tant que chef de l'Église, nous avons évité à présent, comme dans les cas précédents, d'appeler le christianisme à une croisade. On peut cependant exiger de bien comprendre que, là où la religion est un héritage vivant des ancêtres, les hommes conçoivent le combat qui leur est injustement imposé par l'ennemi, fût-ce comme une croisade ».⁴⁰ Il est difficile de savoir qui traduit le sermon du Pape: la note de bas de page en début d'article indique que le message avait été diffusé par la radio du Vatican en 25 langues et qu'il avait été repris par de nombreuses radios européennes et quelques titres de la presse internationale. Ainsi la traduction pourrait être l'œuvre du Vatican mais des phrases d'introduction articulant les différentes parties du message, sont insérées tout au long de l'article. Il est donc difficile de distinguer les propos du Pape des mots de l'éditeur.

Les deux occurrences du mot 'croisade' dans cet extrait du message sont traduites dans la version arabe de la manière suivante: « appeler le christianisme à un djihad religieux ou à une croisade » et « fût-ce comme une croisade et un djihad religieux ». Les deux notions sont donc perçues comme des synonymes. Le mot « le combat » est également traduit par « djihad » dans le texte arabe. Par ces trois occurrences dans le texte arabe, le djihad est conçu comme action et réaction, il est attribué à la chrétienté comme à ses ennemis.

Utiliser la croisade comme synonyme ou équivalent du djihad est particulièrement intéressant, en comparaison avec d'autres références qui confrontent les deux expressions, chacune appartenant à un camp. Cette revue catholique arabophone semble voir le mot dans sa définition arabe et occidentale. En langue arabe, la racine étymologique de *Djihād* signifie faire un effort, « réfère à la notion d'effort dans un but déterminé ». Il est d'abord un devoir individuel et spirituel « le ġihād majeur (al-akbar) n'est pas une guerre mais un effort sur soi pour lutter contre ses mauvais penchants ».⁴¹ Souvent traduit par « guerre sainte » dans les langues occidentales, le djihad a varié au cours des siècles dans sa conception comme dans son application. Il n'y a pas une seule théologie musulmane du djihad mais des tendances qui varient entre deux grandes visions. Une qui le considère comme devoir propre à chaque fidèle et une autre qui l'estime un devoir collectif s'adressant à l'ensemble de la communauté musulmane (*umma*). L'usage binaire de deux termes comme synonyme dans la version arabe du sermon du pape révèle comment la croisade est conçue dans une culture arabe chrétienne contemporaine.

38 Consulté le 7 août 2022, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bd6t5554158c/f380.item.r=%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9>.

39 Cet extrait du message est repris du site du Vatican, traduit en français de l'italien.

40 Consulté le 11 août 2022, https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/it/speeches/1956/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19561223_natale.html.

41 Eddé, « 'Le paradis à l'ombre des sabres' ».

En 1960, sous le titre de « Tribune libre », une critique sévère d'un article d'Alzhar⁴² est publiée: « l'auteur regarde tout en noir foncé, via des lunettes sombres; il considère la chrétienté comme menant une 'croisade' sauvage destinée à chasser l'islam pour l'éliminer et éradiquer les musulmans. Cet homme, pourtant très intelligent, ne fait pas la différence entre la religion chrétienne et quelques pays chrétiens qui œuvrent d'après un agenda purement politique ». Dans sa défense, l'auteur distingue la croisade de la religion chrétienne et prends de la distance vis-à-vis des intérêts qui la mobilisent. Dans le même numéro, sous la rubrique « un nouveau mouvement », un article est consacré au *Per un Mondo Migliore* (« Pour un meilleur monde »): ce mouvement né en Italie sous l'impulsion d'un pape catholique a vite dépassé les frontières de son pays d'origine. « Le mouvement appelle à une quasi-croisade contre tous les maux, une croisade de nouvelle forme dont l'arme n'est ni le fer ni le feu mais l'amour, la justice et la réforme du soi avant la réforme d'autrui ».⁴³

Ces usages dans les discours contemporains font appel à un cadre déjà présent dans la culture discursive du récepteur et ses bagages rhétoriques. Ils tirent leur sens de sa conceptualisation du monde, ils établissent des sens basés sur les expériences des individus. Même si le mot est le même, il engendre des images différentes en fonction du récepteur. Comprendre le sens dépend des bagages culturels, lexicaux et sémantiques du récepteur, il n'existe pas seul indépendamment des individus. Par sa dimension dynamique, le dialogisme indique que les sens des dénominations ne sont pas figés, mais évoluent au fil des usages. Cette évolution des sens est le produit des deux pôles de la communication, l'émetteur et le récepteur. Le dialogisme est interlocutif et interactionnel. Si le dialogisme est, par définition, collectif, il convient de souligner qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une simple reproduction de sens par une suite continue de locuteurs, mais d'une dynamique à double sens où le récepteur garantit le relais des sens produits par l'émetteur et ceci d'après sa propre interprétation. Dans cette mesure, le dialogisme est interactionnel, il est également interlocutif par l'anticipation dans le discours du locuteur des attentes et demandes de l'interlocuteur. C'est un dialogue au sens large du terme. L'émetteur est conçu comme le producteur de la dénomination, souvent très difficile à identifier, et le récepteur présente tous les locuteurs potentiels qui adoptent la dénomination. Les sens sont ainsi configurés d'après un processus complexe à plusieurs étapes. En choisissant un terme polyréférentiel à forte charge dialogique en français, comme 'croisade', le locuteur adopte un dialogisme voulu. Ce faisant, il assume nécessairement le dialogisme subi convoqué par son interlocuteur. Le dialogisme est donc toujours risqué, car rien ne garantit que le sens voulu par le locuteur soit produit à la réception de son discours, notamment quand il est question de traduction. Si par le choix du nom, le locuteur convoque la mémoire de la série des événements ayant eu la même nomination, il convoque également celle du récepteur, d'où la dimension interlocutive du dialogisme. Dans le cas de cette étude, le passage se fait entre différentes langues et cultures, les locuteurs sont issus d'horizons historiques

42 La référence de l'article en question n'est pas mentionnée mais quelques extraits sont cités.

43 *Al-Maçarrat*, janvier 1960, 270, 437.

différents. Les sens sont donc multiples et cette variété manifeste comment les différents locuteurs s'approprient le vocable et par la suite la dénomination, chacun selon sa propre mémoire et culture. Mikhaïl Bakhtine distingue ainsi trois degrés dans la présence du discours d'autrui: « Le premier est celui de la présence pleine, donc du dialogue explicite. À l'autre extrême – troisième degré –, le discours d'autrui n'est attesté par aucun indice matériel, et se trouve pourtant évoqué: c'est qu'il est disponible dans la mémoire collective d'un groupe social déterminé ».⁴⁴

Pourquoi 'croisade' est-il devenu le nom d'évènement référence dans les deux langues française et arabe?

L'histoire est écrite par les vainqueurs :⁴⁵ cette formule met en question l'objectivité des mots retraçant les événements historiques. Car si l'histoire est formée des faits, elle est rédigée selon des points de vue qui, en dépit des tentatives de neutralité, demeurent subjectifs. Les noms des événements sont parfois contestés et font l'objet de débat. En l'occurrence ces guerres du Moyen-Âge qui ont vu s'affronter Orient et Occident pendant environ trois siècles, largement étudiées et commentées, n'ont qu'une seule dénomination quasi-identique dans les deux langues française et arabe. La mémoire collective est unanime quant à la dénomination des croisades, mais tout le reste diverge. Qu'on défende cette guerre ou qu'on la critique, on adopte le même nom pour la désigner. Le vocable en français et la formule en arabe ont avec le temps acquis le statut du nom propre de l'évènement. « Du point de vue lexical, le nom d'évènement peut être érigé en nom propre lorsque sa saillance devient importante au point de devenir un 'designateur rigide' (Kripke 1980), un signe monoréférentiel ».⁴⁶

La mémoire du mot forme des zones de contact traversées par le dialogisme. Ces zones pourraient être considérées comme lieux communs. Mais lieu commun ne se traduit pas par sens commun. Ce dernier doit être universel, ce qui n'est pas le cas puisque le dialogisme des dénominations est collectif mais pas universellement partagé. Nommer l'évènement, c'est aider à sa configuration. Par une dénomination unique, issue d'une traduction littérale, entre les deux langues arabe et française, l'acte de nommer exprime ici un consentement commun, sur un mot dont une langue ne voit que les effets négatifs tandis que l'autre valorise ses aspects positifs. La dénomination s'avère être un lieu de rencontre de différents discours.

Si c'est le vainqueur qui a le dernier mot quant au récit historique, pourquoi les musulmans, de langue arabe, que l'on peut considérer comme les vainqueurs finaux des croisades, ont-ils choisi d'adopter la dénomination du conquérant vaincu ?

44 Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhaïl Bakhtine : le principe dialogique* (Paris: Seuil, 1981), 113.

45 Une affirmation reprise sous des formules approchantes et attribuée à plusieurs auteurs potentiels. Elle est ici citée d'après le philosophe allemand Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) dans sa critique aux chroniqueurs qui adoptent le point de vue du vainqueur vis-à-vis des historiens qui doivent rédiger un récit sans parti pris.

46 Lorella Sini, « Événements, discours, médias : réflexions à partir de quelques travaux récents, » *Argumentation et Analyse du Discours*, 14 (avril 2015), consulté le 7 janvier 2022 : DOI : [10.4000/aad.1912](https://doi.org/10.4000/aad.1912).

Pourquoi garder la traduction d'un mot dont l'origine revient à l'ennemi de langue étrangère ?

Les raisons sont à trouver dans la racine du mot, le noyau qui le forme et qui est à l'origine de la dénomination: la croix qui est au cœur des discours de deux côtés. C'est la croix qui a motivé des milliers des chrétiens à se mobiliser et c'est contre cette invasion croisée que les musulmans se sont dressés pour se défendre. La croix est aussi considérée comme un alibi qui cache les vraies intentions de l'invasion. Délivrer les Lieux saints, aller au secours des chrétiens de l'Orient, combattre les païens tels furent les objectifs annoncés des croisades au XI^e siècle. Le mot 'croisade' inventé plusieurs siècles après l'évènement exprime à la fois les objectifs annoncés de ces expéditions et le projet dissimulé qui garde à l'Église son pouvoir, comme l'affirment les définitions du vocable dans les dictionnaires arabes cités qui ajoutent la dimension belliqueuse aux motifs religieux. Une guerre qui impose la prédominance du pape, qui est considérée comme juste et équivalente à un pèlerinage et offre donc une rémission des péchés. Le mot ainsi que ses usages successifs dans les langues arabe et française traduisent les formules utilisées à l'époque mais aussi la vision que l'histoire a gardée des évènements.

Favoriser cette dénomination, totalement absente à l'origine, confirme sa prédominance dans les discours de l'époque médiévale, comme un passage obligé pour qualifier l'évènement: « dans un certain état des rapports de forces sociaux, des formules surgissent dans le langage par rapport auxquelles l'ensemble des forces sociales, l'ensemble des locuteurs sont contraints de prendre position, de les définir, de les combattre ou de les approuver, mais en tout état de cause, de les faire circuler d'une manière ou d'une autre ».⁴⁷

Contrairement aux dénominations génériques autrefois utilisées et qui exigent aujourd'hui l'addition des informations spatio-temporelles spécifiques, 'croisade' est un mot qui englobe tout ce qui a eu lieu et fait référence à un temps, un lieu et même à des personnes-clés de l'histoire de cette partie de monde à un moment donné. Ce qui indique à quel point le mot est désormais incontournable pour en parler alors qu'il n'est né que bien après. Mais depuis sa création, il a été adopté par la majorité de locuteurs de tous bords.

Le clivage né des croisades perdure aujourd'hui et domine trop souvent la vision de l'autre, alimentant un prétendu « choc des civilisations ». Les croisades sont devenues, de part et d'autre, un mythe que chaque camp cultive d'après sa propre vision et à ses propres fins. Ces deux camps s'accordent sur la dénomination. Malgré ce consentement, la logique du raisonnement qui sous-tend cet accord demeure contraires. Quoi qu'il en soit, il assure au mot sa durabilité au fil du temps.

47 Pierre Fiala et Marianne Ebel, *Langages xénophobes et consensus national en Suisse : 1960-1980* (Lausanne : Cedips, 1983), 174.

6 Histoire du mot *croisade* dans le Dictionnaire de l'Académie française

Un chassé-croisé sémantique et une construction lexicographique tardive

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Un peu d'histoire¹

Il faut rappeler que le mot 'croisade' surgit tardivement dans la langue française vers 1460 et que par conséquent « le mot est postérieur à la chose elle-même »,² la première croisade ayant été prêchée par le pape Urbain II à Clermont en 1095. Selon les historiens, Urbain II avait utilisé la formule *cruce signatus* signifiant par là même le signe à porter par les volontaires.³ Si le mot n'existe pas à proprement parler, l'ancien français recourt à des lexies du type « croisement » (av. 1195) ou encore « croiserie » (av. 1272), « croisière » et « croisée » (1390). Tous dérivés de « croix » (qui lui-même pouvait être traduit par 'croisade') et donc très polysémiques, l'ensemble de ces mots ne permettait pas de rendre compte de la réalité spécifique de la croisade telle qu'envisagée par Urbain II, c'est-à-dire d'une « expédition militaire à l'initiative de l'Église pour la délivrance de la terre sainte et de Jérusalem ».⁴ Avant 1460, les textes qui utilisent les mots « croiserie », « croisière », « croisée », « croix » ne réfèrent que très peu aux éléments soulignés par Urbain II et mettent davantage l'accent sur le signe distinctif (la croix), ou l'exploit.⁵ Pour désigner ce que nous appelons la croisade, on trouve également le mot de *peregrinatio* (« pèlerinage ») qui, à rebours des autres vocables, ne rend compte ni de la dimension belliqueuse ou militaire, ni d'une prouesse, mais insiste sur l'éloignement physique nécessaire, le cheminement spirituel et la valeur pénitentielle du voyage. De fait, ce n'est pas tant l'équilibre précaire entre les deux sémèmes que sont « religion » et « guerre » qui témoigne de la difficulté à définir lexicographiquement la croisade. C'est plutôt le fait de tenir compte ou non, dans le mot, d'un trait sémantique qui renverrait d'une part à l'idée d'une terre sacrée à visiter ou à libérer (on trouve par exemple une histoire de la troisième croisade écrite par le trouvère Ambroise qui s'intitule *Estoire de*

1 Je remercie Madame Agnès Steuckardt qui encadre mes travaux de thèse pour sa relecture efficace et bienveillante.

2 Alain Rey, ed., *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, (Paris: Le Robert, 2006), vol.1, 957.

3 Alain Demurger, *Croisades et croisés au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Flammarion, 2006), 17.

4 Rey, *Dictionnaire historique*, 957.

5 *Ibid.*

la guerre sainte)⁶ et, d'autre part, à l'objectif d'intégrer dans la dimension religieuse, avec le vocabulaire lié au pèlerinage, un trait spirituel, pénitentiel voire rédempteur (pensons ici à l'indulgence accordée au croisé qui lui valait la rémission des peines terrestres) au détriment ou concomitamment aux marques relatives à une entreprise armée. Le surgissement du mot 'croisade' dans la langue française ne règle pas le problème.

Les lexicographes de l'Académie font le choix, dès la première édition du *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* (désormais DA), d'omettre dans le *definiens* de l'entrée 'croisade', la Ville Sainte, de passer sous silence la valeur pénitentielle et d'enregistrer des traits institutionnels et guerriers à la lexie tout en conservant l'idée d'une initiative dévolue à l'Église,⁷ comme le feront d'ailleurs les deux dictionnaires concurrents que sont ceux de Richelet et de Furetière.⁸ Priorité est donc donnée pour un temps à une vision qui entérine la responsabilité (celle de l'Église) et les moyens militaires (ceux des princes).

CROISADE.s.f. : Ligue sainte, dans laquelle on prenoit la marque de la croix sur ses habits pour aller faire la guerre **aux infidelles, ou aux herétiques**. *Prescher la croisade. publier la croisade. à la première croisade. la croisade contre les Albigeois, contre les Maures &c. il estoit Chef de la croisade. Legat de la croisade.* (DA, 1^{ère} édition, 1694)⁹

Mieux, la Terre sainte reste assimilée dans l'esprit des lexicographes à une terre à reconquérir et à reprendre par les armes à des non chrétiens et appartient à la lexie « guerre sainte »

Guerre sainte : on appelle ainsi la guerre qui s'est faite autrefois contre les infidelles pour **reconquerir la Terre sainte**. (DA, 1^{ère} édition, 1694)

Deux mots donc pour circonscrire une réalité complexe: l'idée d'un territoire perdu qui devrait être rendu aux chrétiens appartient à la guerre sainte, la défense de

6 Ambroise, *L'Estoire de la guerre sainte, histoire en vers de la troisième croisade (1190-1192)*, éd. et trad. Gaston Paris (Paris: Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France, 1897), cité par Demurger, *Croisades et croisés*, 50.

7 Sur la conception de la croisade, voir Jean Flori, « L'Église et la guerre sainte: de la 'Paix de Dieu' à la 'croisade', » *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 47.2 (1992): 453-466, consulté le 16 janvier 2022, doi: [10.3406/ahess.1992.27905](https://doi.org/10.3406/ahess.1992.27905) ; id., « Pour une redéfinition de la croisade, » *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 188 (Octobre-décembre 2004): 329-349, consulté le 16 janvier 2022, doi: [10.3406/ccmed.2004.2891](https://doi.org/10.3406/ccmed.2004.2891) ; Jacques Paviot, « L'idée de croisade à la fin du Moyen Âge, » *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 153.2 (2009): 865-875, consulté le 16 janvier 2022, doi: [10.3406/crai.2009.92551](https://doi.org/10.3406/crai.2009.92551).

8 Voir l'article de Rosa Cetro dans ce même volume.

9 Toutes les éditions successives du *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* sont accessibles en ligne : consulté le 24 janvier 2023, <https://www.dictionnaire-academie.fr>. L'ensemble des définitions lexicographiques utilisé dans le présent article est issu de ce corpus. *Guerre sainte* apparaît comme une sous-entrée de *guerre*.

l'idéologie chrétienne à celle de la croisade. Cela ne signifie pas qu'aux yeux des lexicographes de l'Académie au XVII^e siècle la croisade soit enfermée dans une vision dogmatique. Quant à la dimension pénitentielle de la croisade, pourtant évidente pour les historiens et largement prêchée par Urbain II,¹⁰ elle est totalement absente des énoncés définitoires.

Si la croisade n'a plus pour objectif la reconquête d'une terre lointaine, la libération du tombeau du Christ et par là même le salut de l'âme des chevaliers qui y participent, de quoi 'croisade' est-il alors historiquement le nom pour les Académiciens?

La dimension adversative de la croisade: Une guerre vraiment?

Dans l'esprit des lexicographes, la croisade est d'abord et avant tout une guerre. De fait, l'énoncé lexicographique se concentre sur les traits sémantiques du conflit et la caractéristique guerrière de la croisade apparaît dès la première édition (1694) pour disparaître brutalement lors de la troisième édition.

CROISADE. s. f. : **Ligue sainte**, dans laquelle on prenoit la marque de la croix sur ses habits **pour aller faire la guerre** aux infidelles, ou aux heretiques. *Prescher la croisade. publier la croisade. à la premiere croisade. la croisade contre les Albigeois, contre les Maures &c. il estoit Chef de la croisade. Legat de la croisade.* (DA, 1^{ère} édition, 1694)

CROISADE. s. f. : **Ligue sainte** dans laquelle on mettoit une croix sur ses habits & on avoit une croix sur les estendars **pour aller faire la guerre** aux Infideles & aux heretiques. *Prescher la croisade. publier la croisade. à la premiere croisade. la croisade contre les Albigeois, contre les Maures &c. il estoit Chef de la croisade, Legat de la croisade.* (DA, 2^{ème} édition, 1718)

Dans les deux premières éditions, l'écho amplificateur de la dynamique conflictuelle est rendu par la présence des deux lexies concurrentes « *ligue* » et « *guerre* » qui attestent de la nécessité d'attaquer collectivement un ennemi ou de se défendre de lui. Les lexicographes de l'Académie justifient ainsi la nécessité inscrite dans le mot de combattre un adversaire. Pour autant, ils n'estiment pas nécessaire d'en expliquer la raison autrement qu'à l'aune d'un ennemi nommé et disqualifié en vertu de ses croyances ou de ses incroyances. Le référent « ennemi » sera désigné pendant cinq siècles au miroir d'un point de vue dogmatique à adopter, sauf à vouloir être dans le mensonge et l'erreur. Comme on le verra ci-après, il faut attendre l'édition actuelle du DA pour que la désignation de « l'ennemi » soit plus théologique et moins axiologique: « musulmans » et non plus seulement « hérétiques et infidèles ».

10 Jean Flori, *Idées reçues sur les croisades* (Paris: Le Cavalier Bleu, 2018), 66.

La coexistence entre « ligue » et « guerre » ne doit pas être vue comme une redondance vaine d'un travail lexicographique en devenir, mais bien comme un parti pris sémantique. En réalité on voit déjà se dessiner une conception de la croisade qui rendrait compte de la double nécessité d'une autorité qui décide et de l'existence de moyens militaires dont seuls les grands de ce monde disposent ensemble. Le *definiens* formulé donne ainsi déjà corps à une conception dite « pluraliste » de la croisade.¹¹ Cette conception s'oppose à celle plus « traditionaliste » qui privilégie un objectif : Jérusalem que les lexicographes de l'Académie ont, rappelons-le, décidé d'intégrer dans la définition de la « guerre sainte » dès la première édition du DA, et ce, jusqu'à la huitième édition (1935).

Indépendamment de sa nature pluraliste ou traditionaliste, il n'en reste pas moins vrai que du point de vue sémantique, la lexie 'croisade' infère un clivage entre deux parties. Mais au-delà s'opère une opération implicite axiologique qui vise à considérer que l'entité agissante dans la croisade a raison de le faire, que les opposants ont naturellement tort de s'y opposer et qu'en conséquence la croisade est nécessairement du côté du bien. Le parti pris lexicographique fait loi d'un discours aux accents épideictiques d'une religion à louer (la religion chrétienne), d'ennemis à blâmer (les non-chrétiens) et d'hommes à honorer (les croisés). La préférence pour le discours épideictique, héritée de la rhétorique aristotélicienne¹² a de naturelles affinités avec le discours lexicographique, notamment celle d'instruire. La rhétorique lexicographique institutionnelle pèse ici de tout son poids pour inscrire discrètement mais fermement le mot 'croisade' dans le registre démonstratif au sein d'un univers où l'arbitre entre l'éloge (les croisés) et le blâme (les hérétiques) se révèle, pour les premières éditions au moins (1694, 1718 et 1740), être le sacré et la religion chrétienne, conférant à la croisade une fonction moralisante. La croisade est d'autant plus du côté du bien qu'elle se publie (se donne en spectacle) et qu'elle se prêche (se partage dans le sacré) comme le montrent les exemples forgés qui ont vocation à inscrire l'unité lexicale dans le « bon usage ».¹³

11 Comme le rappelle Alain Demurger « les historiens de la croisade se partagent sur [la] définition [de croisade] entre 'traditionalistes' et 'pluralistes' (ce sont naturellement ceux-ci qui ont qualifié ainsi ceux-là). Les premiers s'accordent sur une conception de la croisade qui privilégie l'objectif, Jérusalem ; les seconds pensent que l'origine (le pape) et les institutions (vœu, croix, indulgences) sont primordiales » : Demurger, *Croisades et croisés*, 329.

12 Aristote dans son traité intitulé *La Rhétorique* distingue trois grands genres de discours : le discours judiciaire, le discours délibératif et le discours démonstratif (ou épideictique). Ce dernier a principalement trait à l'admirable (la louange) et à l'exécration (le blâme). Selon Aristote, c'est au travers de la louange ou du blâme, que l'on instruit des choses de la vie.

13 Les autres exemples donnés dans les différentes éditions du DA, sont des exemples destinés à forger une culture historique du lecteur : « croisade contre les Albigeois », « croisade contre les Maures », rappelant ainsi que le dictionnaire de l'Académie française est aussi un objet de culture destiné aux Français autant qu'aux étrangers comme le mentionnent les différentes préfaces des différentes éditions. Voir à ce sujet Bernard Quemada et al., *Préfaces du Dictionnaire de l'Académie française 1694-1992* (Paris : Honoré Champion, 1997).

À partir de la troisième édition, la configuration polémique de la croisade est légitimée linguistiquement par la présence d'une préposition adversative « contre », la mention explicite de la guerre ayant disparu.

CROISADE. s. f. : Ligue sainte faite **contre** les Infidèles & les Hérétiques, ainsi nommez, parce que ceux qui s'y engageoient portoient une croix sur leur habit. Prêcher la Croisade. Publier la Croisade. A la première Croisade. La Croisade contre les Albigeois, contre les Maures, &c. Il étoit Chef de la Croisade, Légat de la Croisade. (DA, 3^{ème} édition, 1740)¹⁴

L'énoncé lexicographique amenuise donc considérablement la dimension conflictuelle mais ouvre la porte à une dimension adversative plus large et à des glissements de sens qui surgiront à partir de la septième édition (1878). La dimension adversative aura donc été organisée d'abord lexicalement. Elle aura ensuite été mise en scène syntaxiquement autour des actants en présence dans une opération où la préposition « contre » agit comme inverseur, en présentant les référents régime de la proposition comme des entités néfastes par opposition à l'entité cible dans un schéma [+ contre -].¹⁵ Le référent « ligue » se voit donc chargé sémantiquement de manière positive et les référents opposants « hérétiques et infidèles » nécessairement négativement¹⁶. Ce schéma adversatif restera en vigueur jusqu'à l'édition actuelle, indépendamment de l'évolution des incluants dans les énoncés définitoires.

Valorisation et disqualification des parties en présence

Dans toute guerre, la construction de l'univers belliqueux suppose de mettre en scène les protagonistes, de construire une image disqualifiante de la figure de l'ennemi et une héroïsation du protagoniste. L'énoncé définitoire du mot 'croisade' montre à ce titre un processus intéressant à étudier.

Ligue sainte **dans laquelle on mettoit une croix sur ses habits & on avoit une croix sur les estendards** pour aller faire la guerre aux Infideles & aux heretiques.

(DA, 2^{ème} édition, 1718)

14 La définition est reprise ici *ad litteram* avec l'accent aigu erroné sur l'exemple *première croisade*. L'erreur sera corrigée lors de l'édition suivante.

15 Georgette Dal, « Arguments pour un préfixe 'contre-' », *Recherches linguistiques* 26 (2003): 172-201, consulté le 24 janvier 2023, hal-01476795.

16 C'est sur ce schéma syntaxique que se construisent en partie les usages contemporains où le référent régime de la préposition « contre » se voit coloré axiologiquement négativement : exemple donné par le DA, huitième édition *Croisade contre l'esclavage*. Mais la lexie *croisade* fonctionne également avec la préposition contraire « pour » qui dans ce cas n'opère pas d'inversion mais renforce au contraire l'axiologie positive de l'entité régime, exemple donné par le DA, édition actuelle, *croisade pour la sauvegarde des forêts*.

La différence de traitement lexical entre les acteurs de ce conflit vise à rendre compte d'un choix délibéré, au point qu'ici, on pourrait penser avoir affaire à une définition de type encyclopédique visant à donner une image du monde, de la chose et pas seulement du mot. L'incursion d'une longue proposition subordonnée à la suite immédiate du premier incluant synonymique, visible dans les deux premières éditions, est aussi celle qui dilue la dimension adversative de la croisade. En séparant par une longue explication l'autorité initiatrice (Ligue sainte) et les ennemis à combattre (Infidèles et Hérétiques), la théâtralisation de l'événement se donne à voir et les individualités appartenant au collectif « ligue », c'est-à-dire les croisés, sont valorisés. Certes, l'organisation morphologique des entrées et la typologie des définitions justifient ce type d'écriture. Il suffit d'observer la répétition de l'étymon « croix » pour s'en persuader (deux occurrences). Ce classement morphologique sera cependant abandonné dès la deuxième édition, en raison de son absence de lisibilité pour revenir à un classement alphabétique mais la typologie des définitions basées sur la morphologie¹⁷ et la prédominance de l'étymon demeurera.

On ne peut s'empêcher d'observer que dans cette séquence définitoire de la deuxième édition, la part belle est aussi laissée au registre épique. L'énoncé lexicographique devient l'occasion d'une narration colorée, d'une description enrichie dans laquelle l'imagination du lecteur peut se déployer. Il peut alors se représenter non seulement les vêtements (déjà mentionnés dans la première édition) mais également les étendards (ajoutés pour la deuxième édition). Pourtant, il ne s'agit pas d'une héroïsation démesurée du croisé qui contreviendrait au style et aux bonnes manières de l'honnête homme mais plutôt d'une description destinée à mettre en avant la mission didactique du dictionnaire¹⁸ à laquelle s'adjoint une esthétique de l'écriture.

Cette mise en scène de la dynamique conflictuelle, autour de ces actants, devient une invitation forte à choisir son camp dans l'adversité religieuse qui s'accompagne nécessairement d'une rhétorique de persuasion par l'éloquence et le style à l'adresse du lecteur, y compris pour un dictionnaire comme celui de l'Académie française dont on a coutume de ne rappeler ou de ne questionner que l'aspect normatif de la langue. La stylistique n'est pas sans faire écho au fait qu'en ce XVII^e siècle, la frontière entre langue, morale et religion est particulièrement ténue. Vaugelas, académicien de la première heure, l'avait déjà considéré dans ses *Remarques sur la langue française* en rappelant que la quête de la perfection de langue est comme celle de la perfection spirituelle.¹⁹ En présentant le croisé de manière favorable, théâtralisé dans son costume et dans ses ornements, dans une

17 Comme le rappelle Odile Leclerc, l'organisation du dictionnaire de l'édition de 1694 et le classement morphologique des entrées unique dans le paysage lexicographique, outre le fait qu'ils contribuent tous deux à faire du dictionnaire de l'Académie un objet singulier, président à un processus définitoire lui aussi morphologique qui justifie au nom du lien morphologique entre croisade et croix (mot vedette de l'édition) d'établir un lien dans l'énoncé. Odile Leclerc, « D'un dictionnaire de l'Académie à l'autre (1694-1718) : deux traitements des mots dérivés, » *Éla. Études de linguistique appliquée* 163, (2011) : 271-284, consulté le 15 janvier 2022, doi: [10.3917/ela.163.0271](https://doi.org/10.3917/ela.163.0271).

18 Jean Dubois, « Dictionnaire et discours didactique, » *Langages*, 19 (1970), *La lexicographie*: 35-47, consulté le 15 janvier 2022, doi: [10.3406/lgge.1970.2590](https://doi.org/10.3406/lgge.1970.2590).

19 Danielle Trudeau, *Les inventeurs du bon usage (1529-1647)* (Paris: Les éditions de Minuit, 1992), 175.

stylistique où l'éloquence a une place de choix, langue et image valorisante vont de pair, spiritualité chrétienne et langue également.

À partir de la troisième édition (1740) et jusqu'à l'édition actuelle, un resserrement syntaxique va se mettre en place qui relèguera les explications du lien morphologique entre le mot vedette et sa définition à la fin de l'énoncé et saturera davantage la dimension adversative et partisane de la lexie.

CROISADE. s. f. : Ligue sainte faite contre les Infidèles & les Hérétiques, **ainsi nommez, parce que ceux** qui s'y engageoient portoient une croix sur leur habit. Prêcher la Croisade. Publier la Croisade. A la première Croisade. La Croisade contre les Albigeois, contre les Maures, &c. Il étoit Chef de la Croisade, Légat de la Croisade. (DA, 3^{ème} édition, 1740)

L'introduction d'un effet de cause à la désignation, avec la présence du syntagme « ainsi nommez, parce que ceux » fait perdre à l'énoncé son caractère spectaculaire pour le normaliser d'un point de vue lexicographique et l'intégrer dans une dimension pédagogique. Cette formule logique et explicative perdure encore aujourd'hui.

Dans les parties prenantes du conflit, l'énoncé définitoire de cette troisième édition construit sur la combinaison lexicale « ligue sainte », comme premier et seul incluant (puisque « guerre » a disparu) témoigne à la fois de l'autorité initiatrice (l'Église), de son caractère concerté et collectif ainsi que des moyens à mettre en œuvre (Les Princes). Mais l'on peut y voir aussi une volonté plus politique. En choisissant cette voix « pluraliste », les Académiciens décident de mettre en avant le rôle des Princes dans l'entreprise. En cette période de renforcement du pouvoir de l'État, ce choix initial (depuis la première édition) et flatteur à l'égard des grands de ce monde se comprend aisément. Il n'est pas non plus interdit d'en déduire l'expression d'une volonté d'objectiver le signifié 'croisade' notamment sous l'influence des Lumières, dont on sait à quel point certains philosophes ont été critiques à l'égard de ces épisodes historiques.²⁰

La définition de la quatrième édition (1762), dernière édition publiée sous l'Ancien Régime, va dans le même sens. Non seulement elle fait disparaître de manière définitive le mot « guerre » de l'énoncé définitoire, mais elle supprime également le caractère religieux de la ligue en supprimant l'adjectif « sainte »

CROISADE. s. f. : **Ligue faite contre** les Infidèles & les Hérétiques, ainsi nommée, parce que ceux qui s'y engageoient portoient une croix sur leur habit. Prêcher la Croisade. Publier la Croisade. À la première Croisade. La Croisade contre les Albigeois, contre les Maures, &c. Il étoit Chef de la Croisade, Légat de la Croisade. (DA, 4^{ème} édition, 1762)

²⁰ Rappelons pour mémoire que quelques années après la parution de la troisième édition du dictionnaire, Voltaire, qui par ailleurs fut élu à l'Académie en 1746, publie pour la première fois son *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations*. Plusieurs chapitres sont consacrés à l'histoire des croisades qui, pour lui, n'ont provoqué que des maux.

Ainsi, l'accent est mis sur les princes et leur rôle fondamental dans la croisade. Ce faisant, le trait religieux s'atténue. Le motif religieux est transféré de l'adjuvant (la ligue) à l'opposant (l'infidèle et l'hérétique) qui reste seul à porter le trait sémantique de la religion. La papauté et l'église sont ainsi évacuées en tant que responsables de la croisade. Ne restent en réalité que les exemples pour rappeler le caractère liturgique de la croisade. Nous avons donc ici une conception de la croisade qui n'est ni pluraliste (le pape a disparu) ni traditionaliste (la Terre sainte n'est pas présente). Si dans les deux premières éditions, l'accumulation de lexies relatives au domaine religieux (ligue sainte vs infidèles et hérétiques) présidait à des confrontations idéologiques, dès lors que l'adjectif « saint » disparaît, l'entreprise croisade apparaît désormais comme une entreprise laïque et politique.

Les ennemis quant à eux, restent désignés sous la double appellation « d'hérétiques » et « d'infidèles ». Le sceau de l'erreur dogmatique et de l'absence de morale pèse sur eux et il s'agit de corriger et de réparer l'erreur grâce à l'entreprise croisade. Ce trait sémantique lié à une fonction correctrice de la lexie 'croisade' participe non seulement à disqualifier les ennemis, mais également à intégrer dans la lexie un trait qui suppose la possibilité d'un renversement positif pour basculer à partir du mal dans le bien. C'est en quelque sorte la désignation des ennemis qui emporte la croisade dans une conception manichéiste.

L'esprit d'abord, Jérusalem enfin

Alors que la définition de 'croisade' a évolué entre la première et la quatrième édition, la lexie « guerre sainte » est restée sémantiquement stable : la dimension conflictuelle est maintenue alors que l'idée de la guerre n'apparaît plus qu'implicitement dans 'croisade'. La reconquête de la Terre sainte appartient toujours à la Guerre sainte et n'est pas encore présente dans la définition de 'croisade'.

On appelle Guerre Sainte, La guerre qui s'est faite autrefois contre les Infidèles pour reconquérir la Terre Sainte.

(DA, 4^{ème} édition, 1762)

Les deux lexies paraissent désormais mener un chemin sémantique séparé et la confusion semble moins possible. Pourtant la sixième édition du DA (1835), va faire réapparaître un trait commun, celui de la guerre, et paradoxalement consacrer le mot 'croisade' autrement que par ce seul aspect.

CROISADE. s. f.: Ligue, **expédition** contre les infidèles ou les hérétiques, ainsi nommée parce que ceux qui s'y engageaient portaient une croix sur leur habit. Prêcher la croisade. Publier la croisade. À la première croisade. La croisade contre les Sarrasins, contre les Albigeois, etc. Il était chef de la croisade, légat de la croisade. Au temps, dans le temps des croisades. Histoire des croisades. (DA, 6^{ème} édition, 1835)

En effet, on voit dans l'énoncé définitoire apparaître l'incluant « expédition » dont la définition est la suivante:

Expédition militaire, ou simplement Expédition, **Entreprise de guerre** qui exige **un voyage, un trajet plus ou moins long**. Faire de grands préparatifs pour une expédition militaire. L'expédition de Xercès contre la Grèce. Saint Louis, au retour de son expédition d'outre-mer... Belle, grande, glorieuse expédition. Expédition lointaine. Il fit une expédition en Égypte. L'expédition d'Égypte. Le succès, le résultat d'une expédition.

(DA, 6^e édition, 1835)

Pour la première fois dans la définition de 'croisade', l'idée de la guerre infère un déplacement, une intention et des préparatifs. Entreprise collective religieuse puis laïque et politique, la croisade devient une opération qui aurait des fondements cognitifs. Elle suppose à tout le moins une intention et une nécessité de s'y préparer (et plus seulement une mise en commun de moyens militaires). En quelque sorte elle réintègre l'esprit (comme un écho à la valeur spirituelle qu'elle n'avait plus). Ce n'est d'ailleurs pas un hasard si dans les exemples forgés par les Académiciens pour témoigner du sens figuré de 'croisade', nous trouvons à partir de la septième édition quelques tournures qui mettent en avant l'esprit:

“Sous le consulat, **quelques esprits** entreprirent une croisade contre les idées de la révolution”

(DA, 7^{ème} édition, 1878)

Un esprit de croisade

(DA, édition actuelle)

Cette montée en puissance d'un trait sémantique supposant une réflexion et une préparation préalable nécessaire à toute entreprise de croisade intellectualise la lexie. Elle n'est pas sans rappeler que le futur croisé accomplit un certain nombre de rites et s'inscrit dans une liturgie générale et collective (l'engagement, la prise de vœu, la publication de ce dernier). On sait par ailleurs qu'une croisade se prépare minutieusement que ce soit d'un point de vue spirituel ou matériel. On pourrait donc aisément considérer qu'en ajoutant le synonyme « expédition » à « ligue » (6^{ème} édition, 1835), puis en le substituant totalement à ce dernier pour l'édition actuelle, les lexicographes ont cherché à réconcilier en quelque sorte les valeurs spirituelle et matérielle de la croisade.

Le trait sémantique relatif au déplacement (dont on rappelle qu'il est inclus également dans le pèlerinage) vient s'ajouter à ce qui était jusque-là placé exclusivement sous le signe de la décision collective, des moyens militaires nécessaires et de l'idéologie. Le théâtre de l'adversité ne se joue pas ici mais dans un ailleurs, non encore nommé par les lexicographes et implicite pour le moment. L'idée de mouvement n'est pas sans rappeler la définition de la première édition qui évoquait le déplacement avec la formule « pour aller faire la guerre » et qui montre à quel point le travail des lexicographes du XVII^e était déjà remarquable de précision. La croisade implique désormais une dynamique.

Mais à quoi ce voyage plus ou moins long peut-il servir dans la croisade? Il faut attendre trois éditions pour obtenir la réponse et consulter l'édition actuellement en cours :

CROISADE : Au Moyen Âge, **expédition faite par les chrétiens contre les musulmans pour libérer le tombeau du Christ à Jérusalem**. La croisade était ainsi nommée parce que ceux qui s'y engageaient portaient une croix sur leur vêtement. La première croisade. La huitième et dernière croisade. Saint Bernard prêcha la deuxième croisade. La croisade des enfants au XIII^e siècle, au XIV^e siècle. Les croisades contre les Sarrasins. Elliptiquement. Les Croisades. Ses ancêtres ont participé aux Croisades. Sa famille remonte aux Croisades. Par extension. Expédition militaire contre les hérétiques. La croisade contre les albigeois, contre les hussites.

Par analogie Campagne menée en vue de soulever l'opinion publique pour la défense d'une cause Partir en croisade contre l'alcoolisme. La croisade pour l'abolition de la peine de mort, pour la sauvegarde des forêts. Un esprit de croisade. (DA, édition actuelle)

Cette définition historiquement plus juste fait pleinement écho aux paroles prononcées à Clermont par Urbain II en 1095. En inscrivant la lexie 'croisade' dans une dynamique de mouvement, les lexicographes peuvent logiquement ajouter un lieu de destination. Mais ce faisant, la confusion avec « guerre sainte » est immédiate. Or selon le principe d'un dictionnaire, deux entrées différentes ne peuvent jouir d'une même définition.

Une opération d'historisation et de spécification du référent

Comment les Académiciens sont-ils alors parvenus à lever l'ambiguïté sémantique avec « guerre sainte » ? L'édition actuelle répond à la question.

Guerre sainte : où l'on appelle les peuples à la défense de leur **religion, des lieux, des personnes, des symboles** qui lui sont attachés. Proclamer la guerre sainte. (DA, édition actuelle)

CROISADE : histoire. Au Moyen Âge, **expédition faite par les chrétiens contre les musulmans pour libérer le tombeau du Christ à Jérusalem**. La croisade était ainsi nommée parce que ceux qui s'y engageaient portaient une croix sur leur vêtement. La première croisade. La huitième et dernière croisade. Saint Bernard prêcha la deuxième croisade. La croisade des enfants au XIII^esiècle, au XIV^e siècle. Les croisades contre les Sarrasins. Elliptiquement. Les Croisades. Ses ancêtres ont participé aux Croisades. Sa famille remonte aux Croisades. Par extension. Expédition militaire contre les hérétiques. La croisade contre les albigeois, contre les hussites.

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Deux opérations discursives sont au cœur du phénomène: les lexicographes de l'Académie ont d'abord procédé à une actualisation du référent « guerre sainte ». Le présent est désormais utilisé dans l'énoncé définitoire et plus aucun adverbe de temps n'apparaît. Jusque-là inscrit dans un temps passé grâce à l'adverbe de temps « autrefois » et une utilisation du passé composé, le référent s'actualise donc.

Dans un mouvement inverse, 'croisade' se voit doté, dans un énoncé définitoire désormais hyper spécifique, d'une marque de domaine: l'histoire et d'une périodisation historique: le Moyen Âge. Cette historisation du référent naît très tôt dans l'esprit des lexicographes et se construit par petites touches successives, notamment grâce à des formulations liées au temps et à la période « Au temps, dans le temps des croisades ». Elle complète de manière claire les exemples qui, eux, sont de nature à rappeler l'événement historique sous des appellations uniques et à compléter de manière didactique la connaissance du lecteur et son repérage dans une fresque historique globale. « L'effet de réel » pour reprendre une expression de Barthes²¹ fiabilise le référent et le circonscrit en même temps:

CROISADE. s. f. : Ligue faite contre les Infidèles et les Hérétiques, ainsi nommée, parce que ceux qui s'y engageoient, portoient une croix sur leur habit. Prêcher la Croisade. Publier la Croisade. À la première Croisade. La Croisade contre les Albigeois, contre les Maures, etc. Il étoit chef de la Croisade, Légat de la Croisade.
Dans le temps des Croisades. (DA, 5^{ème} édition, 1798)

CROISADE. s. f. : Ligue, expédition contre les infidèles ou les hérétiques, ainsi nommée parce que ceux qui s'y engageaient portaient une croix sur leur habit. Prêcher la croisade. Publier la croisade. À la première croisade. La croisade contre les Sarrasins, contre les Albigeois, etc. Il était chef de la croisade, légat de la croisade. **Au temps, dans le temps des croisades. Histoire des croisades.** (DA, 7^{ème} édition, 1878)

En second lieu, « guerre sainte » devient un référent générique dans lequel la religion n'est plus désignée de manière spécifique au travers des ennemis à combattre. On parle de religion, de personnes et plus d'hérétiques, de lieu et plus de Jérusalem, de symbole et plus du tombeau. 'Croisade' au contraire se transforme en un référent spécifique et historique qui désigne un événement unique: l'époque est précisée (le Moyen Âge), les religions sont nommées (chrétiens contre musulmans), le lieu est précisé (Jérusalem), le symbole également (le tombeau du Christ). Par un procédé

21 Roland Barthes, « L'effet de réel, » *Communications*, 11, (1968), *Recherches sémiologiques le vraisemblable*: 84-89, consulté le 15 janvier 2022, doi: [10.3406/comm.1968.1158](https://doi.org/10.3406/comm.1968.1158).

rhétorique quasiment « chiasmique », la relation qui s'établit entre 'croisade' et « guerre sainte » devient pour les Académiciens une relation hyperonymique dans laquelle « guerre sainte » (hyperonyme) renverrait à un grand ensemble de référents dont 'croisade' (hyponyme) ferait alors partie. Ce phénomène de hiérarchisation des lexies entre elles offre la possibilité d'un substrat sémantique commun sans induire de confusion.

Conclusion

Ainsi, la confusion entre guerre sainte et croisade est née d'une vision plurivoque du même évènement: les Académiciens ont fait le choix de laisser au référent « guerre sainte » la primauté du trait sémantique lié à la (re) conquête de la Terre sainte jusqu'à ce que, par le jeu des signifiants, de leur aptitude à s'inscrire dans les changements sociaux, « la fonction référentielle [ait] reculé au profit d'un fonctionnement de nom commun ordinaire qui dépasse l'objet 'croisades' pour s'appliquer à d'autres événements historiques traités comme relevant du même type de guerre ».²²

D'un autre côté, les Académiciens n'ont eu de cesse d'améliorer et de normaliser leur travail pour circonscrire sémantiquement un évènement historique finalement fort controversé et de nature foncièrement politique. Il aura fallu attendre cinq siècles pour que l'idée de la croisade, telle qu'elle était dans l'esprit d'Urbain II en 1095 se traduise par un énoncé lexicographique et par une définition qui rallie à sa cause la Terre sainte et l'Esprit au-delà de la seule dimension adversative et des parties en présence, acteurs religieux ou politiques selon les époques.

Quant aux usages contemporains, leur construction sémantique s'appuie sur un emploi métaphorique opéré à partir des caractéristiques principales de la croisade-histoire notamment sur la nécessité de l'existence d'une collectivité qui met en commun des moyens, du combat et de la défense d'une cause nécessairement noble. Il est toutefois intéressant de noter que si le trait pénitentiel n'est pas repris aujourd'hui dans les sens figurés de la lexie, pas plus qu'il ne l'est d'ailleurs dans la définition première du mot, la moralité et l'aptitude de l'esprit à faire preuve de discernement restent présentes dans les exemples forgés proposés par les lexicographes. Citons à titre d'exemple la définition du sens figuré de 'croisade' dans la septième édition:

Fig., Il se dit Des efforts concertés entre plusieurs personnes pour combattre des institutions, des idées **qui leur paraissent mauvaises**. Sous le consulat, quelques esprits entreprirent une croisade contre les idées de la révolution (DA, 7^{ème} édition, 1878)

Autant dire que le bien et le mal ne sont jamais très loin de la croisade.

22 Sonia Branca-Rosoff, « *Guerre de religion et guerre sainte* dans les dictionnaires français, » *Mots*, 50 (1997), *Israël - Palestine. Mots d'accord et de désaccord*: 151-156, consulté le 11 novembre 2021, doi: [10.3406/mots.1997.2314](https://doi.org/10.3406/mots.1997.2314).

7 Croisade(s) et dictionnaires français

Une étude diachronique (XVII^e-XX^e siècle)

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Introduction

Le *Trésor de la langue française informatisé* attribue au mot ‘croisade’ les acceptions suivantes : 1. Un évènement historique qui a eu lieu pendant le Moyen Âge : l’expédition des Chrétiens à Jérusalem pour la délivrer de l’occupation musulmane. 2. Par analogie, une expédition contre les hérétiques. 3. Par extension, une lutte armée sous-tendue par un conflit idéologique. 4. Un emploi ironique, qui désigne une « campagne non dépourvue d’audace ». 5. Un emploi figuré de « campagne visant à soulever l’opinion en vue d’un résultat d’intérêt commun » (*TLFi*, article *croisade*).¹ Un emploi régional du mot est également indiqué: dans ce cas, le mot ‘croisade’ peut être considéré comme un synonyme de « carrefour, croisée de chemins » (*ibid.*).² Comme on peut l’imaginer, les différentes acceptions du mot n’ont pas vu le jour à la même époque. Néanmoins, il est intéressant de remarquer qu’à ses origines ce mot est déjà polysémique, désignant à la fois les expéditions en Terre sainte et l’expédition militaire contre les Almohades en Péninsule Ibérique et contre les hérétiques dans le Sud de la France au début du XIII^e siècle.³ C’est aux premières décennies de ce dernier que remonteraient les premières attestations du mot, relevé dans un contrat de donation de vigne de la région de la Navarre (1212) et dans la première partie de la *Chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, rédigée vraisemblablement entre les mois de juillet 1212 et septembre 1213.⁴ La superposition entre les deux types d’évènements ne serait pas le fruit du hasard mais répondrait à la volonté de la papauté de leur attribuer

1 Consulté le 9 février 2023, <http://stella.atilf.fr/Dendien/scripts/tlfiv5/visusel.exe?12;s=2506786425;r=1;nat=;sol=1>.

2 Cet emploi ne sera pas retenu dans le cadre de la présente étude.

3 Benjamin Weber, « When and Where did the Word ‘crusade’ appear in the Middle Ages? And Why?, » dans *The Crusades: History and Memory. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, vol.2*, ed Kurt V. Jensen and Torben K. Nielsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021): 199-220.

4 Dans le premier document, écrit en latin, le mot apparaît sous la forme vernaculaire *crozada*, tandis que dans le deuxième, écrit dans une langue mêlant occitan et ancien français, ont été relevées les formes *crozada*, *crozeia* et *crozea* (Weber, « When, » 206-208). Voir aussi l’article de Carol Sweetenham dans ce volume.

la même dignité, répondant ainsi aux questionnements sur l'équivalences des indulgences attribuées à chaque combat.⁵

Dans cette contribution, relevant de la métalexigraphie,⁶ nous nous proposons de retracer l'évolution de la description lexicographique du mot 'croisade' dans un corpus de dictionnaires monolingues français, composé de dictionnaires de langue et de dictionnaires encyclopédiques. Il s'agira non seulement de suivre l'apparition des acceptions citées plus haut, mais aussi d'étudier dans le détail les informations contenues dans la microstructure de ces dictionnaires (définitions, exemples, citations) ainsi que de décrire les éventuelles modifications survenues dans la combinatoire⁷ du mot 'croisade' qui témoignent, entre autres, de faits de société.

Cadre théorique et méthodologie

Dans les études lexicologiques, l'identification des nouvelles unités lexicales est la tâche de la néologie, qui s'attache à relever aussi bien les unités créées *ex novo* (qui sont des néologismes formels) que les nouveaux emplois d'une unité lexicale déjà existante (ou néologismes sémantiques). Sablayrolles définit le phénomène néologique comme « l'identification d'une déviance par rapport à un savoir lexical intégré par les membres de la communauté linguistique, de quelque nature qu'elle soit, qui permet intuitivement de repérer des innovations ».⁸ De difficile délimitation, la néologie sémantique présente plusieurs facettes. Sont exclus de celle-ci les néologismes homonymiques,⁹ les emplois figurés lexicalisés, les syntagmes lexicalisés et les détournements de lexies composées ou complexes.¹⁰ Qui plus est, le changement de sens s'accompagne souvent d'un changement dans la combinatoire d'un mot, d'où le terme de « néologisme syntactico-sémantique ».¹¹ Dans le repérage de ce type de néologismes, qui nous intéressent dans le cadre de la présente étude, les approches phraséologiques s'avèrent être particulièrement pertinentes. Ici, nous faisons référence pour cela à la théorie des classes d'objets.¹²

D'un autre côté, le discours lexicographique sera appréhendé comme « un discours de normalisation »,¹³ ainsi que comme un discours vecteur à la fois d'autres

5 Weber, « When, » 206-208.

6 La métalexigraphie analyse le contenu des dictionnaires.

7 En syntaxe, le terme *combinatoire* désigne la disposition des unités linguistiques entre elles.

8 Jean-François Sablayrolles, « Extraction automatique et types de néologismes : une nécessaire clarification, » *Cahiers de Lexicologie*, 100.1 (2012): 37-53 à la page 38.

9 Jean-François Sablayrolles, « Néologisme homonymique, néologisme polysémique et évolution de sens. Pour une restriction de la néologie sémantique, » dans *Neologia e neologismos em diferentes perspectivas*, ed. Alves Ieda Maria (Paulistana : CNPQ, 2010): 83-100.

10 Sablayrolles, « Extraction, » 39-43.

11 Jean-François Sablayrolles, « De la "néologie syntaxique" à la néologie combinatoire, » *Langages*, 183 (2011): 39-50 à la page 47.

12 Gaston Gross, « Les classes d'objets, » *Lalies*, 28 (2008): 111-165.

13 Sonia Branca-Rosoff, « *Guerre de religion et guerre sainte* dans les dictionnaires français, » *Mots* 50 (1997): 151-156, consulté le 9 février 2023, doi : [10.3406/mots.1997.2314](https://doi.org/10.3406/mots.1997.2314).

discours¹⁴ et de stéréotypes.¹⁵ D'après Anscombe, « le stéréotype d'un terme est une suite ouverte de phrases attachées à ce terme, et en définissant la *signification*. Chaque phrase du stéréotype est, pour le terme considéré, une *phrase stéréotypique* ». ¹⁶ En se cachant derrière « la voix anonyme de la collectivité », ¹⁷ les lexicographes se font « les porte plume de la doxa ». ¹⁸ Par conséquent, les dictionnaires s'avèrent être des observatoires privilégiés des valeurs et des croyances portées par une société. Ceci est particulièrement tangible dans le choix des définisseurs, des exemples et des citations.

La constitution du corpus sur lequel s'appuie cette étude a été guidée par des critères chronologiques et qualitatifs. Le corpus est composé de treize dictionnaires de langue et de cinq dictionnaires encyclopédiques du français, couvrant un arc temporel de quatre siècles (XVII^e-XX^e siècle) et choisis en fonction de leur représentativité dans l'histoire de la lexicographie française monolingue. Sont pourtant exclus de ce corpus les différentes éditions du *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, qui font l'objet de la contribution de C. Salagnac dans le présent volume. Le dépouillement du corpus a été fait manuellement à partir de la base de données en ligne *Gallica* de la Bibliothèque nationale de France¹⁹ et de façon semi-automatique pour les ouvrages disponibles sur la base de données *Dictionnaires d'autrefois* (The ARTFL Project de l'Université de Chicago).²⁰

Pour explorer de façon plus exhaustive l'évolution de la combinatoire du mot 'croisade', nous nous appuyons également sur le corpus généraliste *Les Voisins de Le Monde*, une base lexicale distributionnelle élaborée par l'Équipe de Recherche en Syntaxe et Sémantique (ERSS) de l'Université de Toulouse. Réalisée à partir d'un corpus journalistique de 200 millions de mots, la base lexicale regroupe une centaine de milliers d'articles aux sujets variés du journal *Le Monde*, s'étalant sur une période de dix ans, allant de 1991 à 2000.²¹

Analyse du corpus

Le nom féminin 'croisade', dérivé du nom « croix » par l'ajout du suffixe *-ade*, est un mot formé par métonymie, comme l'attestent déjà les premiers dictionnaires

14 André Collinot and Francine Mazière, *Un prêt-à-parler : le dictionnaire* (Paris: PUF, 1997).

15 Ruth Amossy and Anne Herschberg-Pierrot, *Stéréotypes et clichés : langue, discours, société*, (Paris: Éditions Nathan, 1997).

16 Jean-Claude Anscombe, « Le rôle du lexique dans la théorie des stéréotypes, » *Langages* 142 (2001): 57-76 à la page 60.

17 Amossy et Herschberg-Pierrot, *Stéréotypes*, 99.

18 Francine Mazière, « On dans les dictionnaires, » *Faits de langue* 4 (1994): 229-236 à la page 234.

19 Consulté le 9 février 2023, gallica.bnf.fr.

20 Consulté le 9 février 2023, <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaires-dautrefois>. Il s'agit des dictionnaires de Jean Nicot, de l'abbé Féraud et d'Émile Littré. *L'Encyclopédie* de Diderot et d'Alembert fait également partie du projet ARTFL de l'University of Chicago (consulté le 9 février 2023, <https://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>).

21 Natalie Kübler, « Mettre en œuvre la linguistique de corpus à l'université, » *Recherches en didactique des langues et des cultures*, 11.1(2014), consulté le 9 février 2023, consulté le 9 février 2023, doi: [10.4000/rdlc.1685](https://doi.org/10.4000/rdlc.1685).

monolingues français. Aussi bien Nicot (1606) que Richelet (1680) et Furetière (1690) motivent ce mot par le rapprochement avec la croix dessinée sur les habits des participants aux croisades : à la base du sens premier du substantif il y a donc un rapport de contiguïté.

Dans cette section, nous analyserons l'évolution sémantique du mot 'croisade' dans les dictionnaires du corpus, avant de passer en revue des éléments discursifs relevés dans la description lexicographique qui témoignent de la posture énonciative des auteurs.

Évolution sémantique

Le premier dictionnaire du corpus par ordre chronologique, le *Thresor de la langue françoise tant ancienne que moderne* (1606)²² de Jean Nicot, n'atteste que le sens premier du mot 'croisade', à savoir celui de « expédition contre les infidèles ». Vers la fin du XVII^e siècle, le dictionnaire de Furetière (1690) ajoute une deuxième acception du mot : 'croisade' serait aussi, en termes de marine, « une Constellation qui est vers le Pole Antartique, qui a quatre estoiles disposées en croix, dont on se sert au delà de la Ligne pour discerner le Pole, comme on fait icy par les gardes de la petite Ourse ». Dix ans plus tôt, Richelet avait répertorié ce sens sous l'orthographe *croizade*. Cette acception du mot, qui n'est plus d'actualité aujourd'hui, a été décrite dans les dictionnaires du corpus jusqu'à la fin du XIX^e siècle. Visiblement, cet emploi ne relève pas de la polysémie mais plutôt de l'homonymie, bien que le radical du mot soit le même et le procédé de formation aussi. De plus, ce terme connaît aussi des variantes : les Encyclopédistes, qui le rangent dans le domaine de l'astronomie, fournissent également la variante « croizette », alors que Littré (1863-1873), un siècle plus tard, parlera de « croix du Sud ».

Pour ce qui concerne la définition de 'croisade' relative à la lutte contre l'hérésie ou le paganisme, elle fait son apparition dans les dictionnaires du XVIII^e siècle : la série du *Dictionnaire universel françois et latin*, mieux connu sous le nom de *Dictionnaire de Trévoux*,²³ l'*Encyclopédie* et le *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française* de l'abbé Féraud (1787-88).

Venons-en maintenant à l'emploi de 'croisade' au sens de « lutte idéologique », qui se configure comme un véritable néologisme syntactico-sémantique, puisqu'il affiche à la fois un lien sémantique avec le sens premier et des changements au niveau de la combinatoire syntaxique. Si Voltaire aurait été le premier à utiliser le mot 'croisade' dans ce sens – comme le reportent le *Littré* et le *TLFi* à la

22 Ce dictionnaire n'est pas véritablement un dictionnaire monolingue, mais un faux-bilingue français-latin, reprenant la quatrième édition du *Dictionnaire françois latin* de Robert Estienne, publié pour la première fois en 1539.

23 Les différentes éditions de ce dictionnaire, qui reprend essentiellement le *Dictionnaire Universel de Furetière* et le *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, se poursuivent tout au long du XVIII^e siècle. La première édition date de 1704, la dernière de 1771. Seule cette dernière affiche des changements dans la description des mots par rapport aux éditions précédentes, sans doute en réponse à la publication de l'*Encyclopédie* de Diderot et d'Alembert, comme l'a signalé Isabelle Turcan, éd., *Quand le Dictionnaire de Trévoux rayonne sur l'Europe des Lumières* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2009).

suite de ce dernier – dans une lettre à Catherine de Russie remontant à 1778, cet emploi néologique ne sera répertorié dans les dictionnaires que dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle. Dans notre corpus, c'est le *Dictionnaire national* de Bescherelle (1856, pour la 4^{ème} édition) qui est le premier ouvrage lexicographique à l'enregistrer en fournissant la définition suivante: « manifeste d'un parti en faveur de sa cause ».

Aussi bien Littré que Larousse répertorient un autre emploi du mot 'croisade', marqué comme technique, et qui désigne la « croisure des cocons », une technique de tissure, que nous excluons de notre analyse.

La croisade en tant qu'évènement historique

Si les dictionnaires contiennent grosso modo les mêmes mots, leur façon de les traiter se différencie parfois de façon remarquable d'un dictionnaire – ou pour mieux dire d'un auteur – à l'autre. Cela se manifeste en particulier dans les choix opérés par les lexicographes au niveau des informations fournies à l'intérieur des articles. Le traitement du sens de 'croisade' en tant qu'évènement historique est à cet égard particulièrement intéressant, comme nous le verrons dans les sous-sections suivantes.

Choix des définisseurs

Les définisseurs choisis par les lexicographes pour expliquer le mot 'croisade' au lecteur peuvent appartenir à plusieurs champs sémantiques. Ainsi, les définisseurs génériques relevés dans le corpus sont les mots « assemblée », « entreprise de guerre », « excursion », « expédition », « guerre », « ligue », « pèlerinage », « voyage ». Parmi ceux-ci, les plus fréquents sont « expédition » (sept occurrences²⁴), « entreprise de guerre » (trois occurrences, auxquelles il faut ajouter « entreprise d'une guerre sainte » chez Furetière), « ligue » (trois occurrences). Comme on peut le constater, il y a des noms collectifs comme « assemblée » et « ligue » qui soulignent la dimension sociale des croisades, des noms comme « excursion », « expédition », « pèlerinage » et « voyage » qui insistent davantage sur le trait sémantique de mouvement, alors que le caractère militaire des croisades est véhiculé par les noms *guerre* et *entreprise de guerre*. La présence de définisseurs relatifs aux champs sémantiques du voyage et du pèlerinage avait déjà été soulignée par Trotter (1988) dans son étude sur le vocabulaire des croisades dans la littérature en ancien français des XII^e et XIII^e siècles.²⁵

Il n'est pas rare qu'un même dictionnaire combine deux ou plusieurs définisseurs génériques. Tel est le cas, dans notre corpus, des dictionnaires de Nicot (1606), qui emploie les définisseurs « assemblée » et « expédition », de Richelet

24 Le *Dictionnaire des écoles* (1856) de M. Lachâtre fait suivre le mot *expédition* de l'adjectif *militaire*.

25 David Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades* (Genève: Droz, 1988), 35. Les deux autres catégories identifiées par l'auteur se réfèrent à l'équipement nécessaire pour partir en croisade et aux termes associés à la forme de la croix.

(1680), qui qualifie la croisade à la fois de « voyage » et d'entreprise de « guerre », tout comme le fera Gattel (1857, pour la neuvième édition) en utilisant les mêmes mots. De même, Bescherelle (1856) parle de « ligue, expédition, entreprise de guerre », en développant ainsi un climax ascendant, Dochez (1860) de « ligue, expédition », tandis que Lachâtre (1865) préfère utiliser le syntagme « pèlerinages militaires » et le mot « excursions ».

Doxa et contre-discours

La comparaison entre les articles des différents dictionnaires nous permet d'identifier deux champs idéologiques opposés à l'égard des croisades. D'un côté, les défenseurs de cette entreprise militaire, qui peuvent être considérés comme les porte-parole de la doxa. Celle-ci est définie dans le *Dictionnaire d'analyse du discours* comme « l'opinion, la réputation, ce que l'on dit des choses et des gens ».²⁶ Elle correspondrait donc au sens commun, celui-ci étant « un ensemble de représentations socialement prédominantes ».²⁷ De l'autre côté, les positions qui présentent un écart par rapport au discours dominant – catholique – sur les croisades, peuvent être qualifiées de contre-discours. Au cœur de celui-ci il y aurait l'argumentation polémique,²⁸ « un type particulier de discours [...] basé sur la controverse voire le conflit ».²⁹ De plus, « le contre-discours se construit dans une opposition argumentative vive et émotionnelle, entre réfutation, confrontation et remise en cause, pouvant réactiver les arguments voire les attaques du discours source ».³⁰

Les lexicographes du XVII^e siècle se rangent dans le premier champ. Des indices de ce positionnement sont l'emploi du mot *infidèles* pour désigner les musulmans et l'argument que ceux qui s'engageaient dans les croisades le faisaient « par dévotion », comme en témoignent les définitions données par Richelet et Furetière:

Croisade, s. f. Voiage & entreprise de guerre que les Chretiens faisoient autrefois par devotion, pour recouvrer la Terre sainte sur les Infideles.

(Richelet 1680)

Croisade, s. f. Entreprise d'une guerre sainte contre les Infidelles, contre les Heretiques. On y alloit autrefois par devotion [...].

(Furetière 1690)

26 Patrick Charadeau and Dominique Mainguenu, *Dictionnaire d'analyse du discours* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2002), 197.

27 *Ibidem*.

28 Christian Plantin, *L'argumentation* (Paris: Seuil, 1996).

29 Claudine Moïse and Claire Hugonnier, « Discours homophobe. Le témoignage comme discours alternatif », *Semen* 47 (2019), consulté le 9 février 2023, doi : [10.4000/semn.12795](https://doi.org/10.4000/semn.12795).

30 *Ibidem*.

L'emploi du mot *infidèles* se perpétue dans le *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* jusqu'à l'édition de 1752, avant de disparaître de la dernière édition (1771). En revanche, l'abbé Féraud se sert de ce mot dans son *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française* (1787-88). Il refait surface dans quelques dictionnaires de la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle, comme ceux de Bescherelle (1856) et de Dochez (1860): le premier parle même de « délivrer les lieux saints du joug des infidèles », en justifiant ainsi l'entreprise de guerre par l'argument de la libération de la Terre-Sainte. L'attitude de Bescherelle ne nous devrait pas étonner, puisque cet auteur avait dirigé et publié un volume intitulé *Les grands guerriers des croisades* en 1851. Les lexicographes positivistes du XIX^e siècle, Littré et Larousse, préfèrent quant à eux des formulations plus neutres: le premier se sert du nom propre « les Mahométans », tandis que le deuxième parle de musulmans. Qui plus est, Littré remplace la dénomination de « Terre-sainte » ou de « lieux saints » par le nom propre « Palestine », ce qui confère davantage d'objectivité à sa démarche descriptive. À l'instar de Littré, Lachâtre aussi emploie le nom propre *Palestine* dans ses deux dictionnaires pris en examen ici, mais comme nous le verrons plus loin, ce lexicographe adopte une posture franchement anticléricale.

Pour revenir à Dochez, sa défense de la doxa passe aussi par les citations choisies pour l'article 'croisade', qui se configurent comme des arguments d'autorité indirects. D'après Plantin, « il y a argument d'autorité quand le Proposant donne pour argument en faveur d'une affirmation le fait qu'elle ait été énoncée par un locuteur particulier autorisé, sur lequel il s'appuie ou derrière lequel il se réfugie ». ³¹ Parmi les auteurs choisis par le lexicographe, en figurent certains dont la spiritualité est bien connue, comme le romancier René de Chateaubriand, l'historien Jules Michelet ou le père Alphonse Marie Ratisbonne. ³²

Sur le front opposé, c'est une citation de Voltaire qui sert d'argument d'autorité à la base du contre-discours sur les croisades: « Les croisades coûtèrent à l'Europe plus de deux millions d'habitants », ³³ attestée dans les dictionnaires de Jean-Charles Laveaux ³⁴ (1749-1827) et de Maurice Lachâtre ³⁵ (1814-1900). Les deux auteurs témoignent d'un engagement personnel dans les mouvements révolutionnaires: le premier était, entre autres, journaliste au *Journal de la Montagne* pendant la Terreur, tandis que le deuxième, libraire, éditeur et lexicographe, est proche des idées des socialistes utopiques et des mouvements révolutionnaires du milieu du XIX^e siècle. L'emploi des chiffres dans les discours politiques vise deux objectifs, qui ne sont qu'à l'apparence contradictoires: d'un côté, fournir des données neutres,

31 Plantin, *L'argumentation*, 88.

32 Dochez, « Nouveau dictionnaire », 350.

33 Il s'agit d'un renvoi au chapitre LVIII de l'*Essai sur les Mœurs* de Voltaire. Cependant, les mots exacts employés par le philosophe sont: « on trouvera que l'Orient fut le tombeau de plus de deux millions d'Européens »: Voltaire, *Œuvres de Voltaire. Essai sur les Mœurs*, ed Adrien-Jean-Quentin Beauchot (Paris, 1829), vol.16, 211.

34 Laveaux, *Nouveau dictionnaire*, 509.

35 Lachâtre, *Nouveau dictionnaire universel*, 1170.

objectives et donc incontestables; de l'autre côté, susciter des émotions chez le récepteur. Ainsi, Bacot *et al.* soulignent que

Paradoxalement, les chiffres qui sont présumés neutres, exacts et objectifs [...] et se caractérisent donc par la distance et la froideur, vont – en raison même de ces propriétés – se mettre au service des finalités rhétorique, argumentative et polémique des discours politiques. [...]

Le prestige accordé aux chiffres donne du locuteur l'image de la rigueur, du sérieux, de la maîtrise de soi et du monde. [...] Or, on constate qu'ils sont utilisés dans des discours politiques qui comportent des images, des métaphores, des hyperboles, avec lesquelles ils coexistent et coopèrent harmonieusement à des fins d'expressivité et de persuasion. Plutôt que de viser l'exactitude, les chiffres se mettent parfois au service d'une expression hyperbolique qui fait dériver la quantification, à travers la diversité et l'accumulation des mesures, vers le *trop* [...].³⁶

Ceci est d'autant plus vrai dans la citation de Voltaire, où le chiffre important de deux millions est associé au nombre de morts provoqué par les croisades, suscitant ainsi l'émotion et l'indignation du lecteur/récepteur. Le nombre de morts causé par les croisades est aussi évoqué vers la fin de l'article consacré à ce sujet dans l'*Encyclopédie* et rédigé par Diderot, en se basant sur l'*Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations* de Voltaire et sur le sixième *Discours sur l'Histoire ecclésiastique* de l'abbé Claude Fleury (1640-1723). Celui-ci, prêtre et académicien, est l'auteur d'une *Histoire ecclésiastique* en 20 volumes, publiés entre 1691 et 1720, qui marque entre autres le développement d'une historiographie française sur les croisades. Son regard sur les expéditions en Palestine ne manque pas de critiques. En particulier, il regrette l'attitude de bon nombre de croisés, qui seraient partis plus pour des intérêts matériels que par dévotion, et la violence qu'ils usèrent à l'égard des Musulmans.

Avant de donner le chiffre avancé par Voltaire, Diderot emploie le procédé rhétorique de l'énumération, qui lui permet de détailler le nombre de morts selon la croisade:

On voit par l'histoire abrégée que nous venons de faire, qu'il y eut environ cent mille hommes de sacrifiés dans les deux expéditions de S. Louis.

Cent cinquante mille dans celle de Barberousse.

Trois cents mille dans celle de Philippe-Auguste & de Richard.

Deux cents mille dans celle de Jean de Brienne.

36 Paul Bacot, Dominique Desmarchelier et Sylvianne Rémi-Giraud, « Le langage des chiffres en politique, » *Mots. Les langages du politique* 100 (2014): 5-14 aux pages 10-11, consulté le 9 février 2023, doi: [10.4000/mots.20977](https://doi.org/10.4000/mots.20977).

Seize cents mille qui passerent en Asie dans les *croisades* antérieures.

C'est-à-dire que ces émigrations occasionnées par un esprit mal-entendu de religion, coûtèrent à l'Europe environ deux millions de ses habitants.³⁷

D'où Voltaire puise-t-il ce chiffre final de deux millions d'êtres humains ? Il s'appuie sur des sources hétérogènes, incluant l'*Alexiade* de la princesse byzantine Anne Comnène (1083-1153), des chroniques des croisades connues à son époque, l'*Histoire des croisades pour la délivrance de la Terre Sainte* (1686) de Louis Maimbourg – source principale de l'ouvrage –, le récit de Geoffroi de Villehardouin sur la quatrième croisade et la précitée *Histoire ecclésiastique* de l'abbé Fleury, notamment pour ce qui concerne la vie de Saint Louis.³⁸ Des études récentes comme celle de Jean Flori citée par Michel Balard³⁹ ont cependant montré que ce chiffre final devrait être redimensionné de façon considérable.

Pour revenir à Diderot, peu après dans l'article il recourt de nouveau aux chiffres pour se référer aux pertes économiques dues aux croisades, visant à susciter l'indignation du lecteur et une connivence avec celui-ci par l'emploi de l'adjectif possessif *notre* :

La rançon de S. Louis coûta neuf millions de notre monnaie. On peut supposer, sans exagération, que les croisés emporterent à-peu-près chacun cent francs, ce qui forme une somme de deux cents neuf millions.⁴⁰

En guise de conclusion, il liste les dégâts de cet événement historique sur une plus large échelle, en utilisant un vocabulaire connoté négativement :

[...] vers le commencement du treizieme siecle il ne restoit pas en Asie un vestige de ces horribles guerres, dont les suites pour l'Europe furent la dépopulation de ses contrées, l'enrichissement des monasteres, l'apauvrissement de la noblesse, la ruine de la discipline ecclésiastique, le mépris de l'agriculture, la disette d'especes, & une infinité de vexations exercées sous prétexte de réparer ces malheurs.⁴¹

Comme on pourra l'imaginer, l'article de l'*Encyclopédie* sur les croisades fit l'objet d'une attention particulière de la part du Saint-Office, qui demanda du moins des corrections.⁴² Faute de place, nous nous limiterons aux considérations que nous

37 Denis Diderot, « croisade, » dans id., *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (Paris, 1751-1780), consulté le 9 février 2023, <https://encyclopedia.uchicago.edu>.

38 Michel Balard, « Voltaire et le Proche-Orient des croisades, » *Médiation, paix et guerre au Moyen Âge. Actes du 136e Congrès national des sociétés historiques et scientifiques, « Faire la guerre, faire la paix »*, Perpignan, 2011 (Paris: Éditions du CTHS, 2012): 87-94, aux pages 87-88.

39 Balard, « Voltaire, » 90.

40 Denis Diderot, « croisade, » dans id., *Encyclopédie*, consulté le 9 février 2023, <https://encyclopedia.uchicago.edu>.

41 *Ibidem*.

42 Catherine Maire, « L'entrée des "Lumières" à l'Index : le tournant de la double censure de l'*Encyclopédie* en 1759, » *Recherches sur Diderot et sur l'Encyclopédie*, 42 (avril 2007): 108-139, consulté le 9 février 2023, doi : [10.4000/rde.2363](https://doi.org/10.4000/rde.2363).

venons de faire sur cet article, qui mériterait à lui seul une analyse approfondie. Ce qui nous intéresse ici est de souligner comment il se constitue en qualité de premier contre-discours dans un ouvrage lexicographique, au point que l'abbé Féraud écrira dans son dictionnaire (1787-88) que « les croisades sont aujourd'hui le grand cheval de bataille des Philosophistes ».⁴³

Dans le sillage des Encyclopédistes, d'autres lexicographes se font les porte-parole d'un contre-discours polémique sur les croisades, comme Laveaux ou Lachâtre, cités plus haut. Les deux partagent une même posture énonciative, qui se concrétise dans l'emploi du pronom délocutif *on*. Ce dernier renvoie à un « tiers multiple dont l'identité n'est pas déterminée de façon précise »,⁴⁴ permettant ainsi à l'énonciateur de ne pas se manifester et de véhiculer un point de vue fluctuant. Voici leurs définitions:

Croisade, s.f. On donne ce nom à des ligues formées par les rois et les peuples catholiques dans des temps de fanatisme et d'ignorance, et dont le but était la conquête des lieux saints, ou d'exterminer les infidèles, les hérétiques, et tous ceux qui s'élevaient contre la doctrine de l'Église de Rome.

(Laveaux 1820)

Croisade, s.f. On appelle ainsi, dans l'histoire, ces grands pèlerinages militaires, ces excursions qui portèrent vers l'Orient les peuples occidentaux, dans le but de chasser les musulmans du sol de la Palestine.

(Lachâtre 1865-70)

Comme on peut le constater, la définition de Laveaux se base sur la polémique au sens de « discours disqualifiant ».⁴⁵ Les mots « fanatisme » et « ignorance » constituent le penchant contre-discursif du mot « dévotion », que nous avons souvent rencontré dans les dictionnaires de la première catégorie.

Il nous semble important de rattacher à ces définitions aussi la définition des croisades que Lachâtre fournit dans son *Dictionnaire des écoles* (1858), où la perspective anticléricale est renforcée par l'emploi de l'adjectif « imaginaire », qui constitue un indice du positionnement du locuteur:

Croisade, s.f. Expédition militaire des peuples occidentaux dans le but de chasser les musulmans du sol de la Palestine et de conquérir un sépulcre imaginaire.

Informations supplémentaires

Si les dictionnaires sont les témoins de l'évolution lexicale, ils ne sont pas moins les dépositaires de faits historiques et culturels associés aux mots qu'ils décrivent. Ainsi les articles de dictionnaire peuvent-ils fournir au lecteur des informations qui dépassent la dimension strictement linguistique. Cela est d'autant plus vrai pour les

43 Abbé Féraud, *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française*, consulté le 9 février 2023, <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaire-critique-de-l%C3%A9raud>.

44 Charaudeau, *Grammaire*, 129.

45 Charaudeau and Maingueneau, *Dictionnaire*, 438.

dictionnaires encyclopédiques. Néanmoins, il est tout aussi possible de trouver des informations de différente nature aussi dans les dictionnaires de langue.

Une information fournie par plusieurs dictionnaires du corpus (XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles) concerne la couleur des croix cousues sur les habits de ceux qui s'engageaient dans les croisades selon leur pays d'origine. Ainsi découvre-t-on que « ceux qui avoient dessein d'y aller se distinguoient des autres en mettant des croix de différentes couleurs sur leurs habits, suivant leur nation. Les François la portoient rouge, les Anglois blanche, les Flamands verte, les Allemands noire, & les Italiens jaune ».⁴⁶ La source de cette information n'est précisée dans aucun de ces dictionnaires. Il semblerait cependant que cette résolution fut prise au Concile de Clermont de 1095, comme le souligne Bescherelle dans le *Précis historique des croisades* situé à la fin du volume consacré aux grands guerriers des croisades, où on peut lire que « pour distinguer ceux qui s'engageaient dans cette sainte entreprise, il fut ordonné qu'ils porteraient une croix rouge sur l'épaule droite: par la suite on en porta de différentes couleurs ».⁴⁷

Les dictionnaires du XIX^e siècle, en revanche, se limitent à faire le lien entre le mot *croisade* et la croix cousue sur les habits des pèlerins, sans donner davantage d'explications.

Il nous semble utile de signaler l'information donnée par Bescherelle concernant une « croisade des enfants », à savoir une « expédition qui eut lieu en l'an 1212, et qui se composait d'environ 50000 enfants, ramassés tant en France qu'en Allemagne, de tout âge, de toute condition, et même de tout sexe; la plupart périrent en route de faim et de misère »,⁴⁸ qui n'a été repérée dans aucun autre dictionnaire du corpus. Cela est sans doute dû à la connaissance que Bescherelle pouvait avoir du sujet des croisades, faisant l'objet du volume cité plus haut. Cependant, la consultation de cet ouvrage ne nous renseigne pas davantage sur la croisade des enfants, qui est citée dans le titre du chapitre consacré à la quatrième et à la cinquième croisade mais finalement n'est pas décrite en tant que telle.

Pour sa part, Lachâtre décide d'insérer dans son *Nouveau Dictionnaire Universel* une citation sur l'apport des croisades à l'histoire de la France, qu'il attribue à Lavallée. Ce dernier est sans doute l'historien Théophile Sébastien Lavallée (1804-1867), auteur d'une *Histoire des Français* publiée en 1838. On y apprend que

La France avait eu la principale part et presque toute la gloire de la guerre sainte ; sa renommée s'en accrut; sa langue, déjà parlée en Angleterre et en Sicile, le fut encore en Syrie ; le nom de *France* devint et est resté synonyme de celui de *chrétiens*. Un nombre prodigieux d'histoires latines et françaises racontent les *Gestes de Dieu par les Francs*. Tous les rois de Jérusalem furent français. Pendant les deux siècles que dura « ce long accès de dévotion et de gloire », la destinée de la Terre sainte fut immédiatement liée à celle de la France, et l'histoire des croisades n'est, en réalité, qu'un épisode de l'histoire des Français.⁴⁹

46 *Dictionnaire de Trévoux*, 1771, à l'instar de Richelet (1680) et Furetière (1690).

47 Bescherelle, *Les grands guerriers*, 117.

48 Bescherelle, *Dictionnaire national*, 839.

49 Lachâtre, *Nouveau dictionnaire*, 1170.

La croisade idéologique

Comme nous l'avons anticipé plus haut, cet emploi néologique du mot 'croisade', attribué à Voltaire, n'est enregistré dans les dictionnaires que dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle. Les exemples fournis par les lexicographes témoignent de l'évolution des faits de société. Ainsi, si Bescherelle parle de « une croisade pour un prétendant, pour la propagation, pour le triomphe d'une idée », Littré fait référence à une « croisade contre les préjugés » Reprenant sans doute Lachâtre. De son côté, Larousse définit cette acception de la croisade comme une « entreprise concertée pour la défense d'un intérêt ou d'une idée ».

Évolution de la combinatoire

Les articles de dictionnaires listent d'habitude les collocations les plus fréquentes d'un mot. Celles-ci sont le plus souvent à base verbale ou à base nominale. Une collocation à base verbale relevée dans tous les dictionnaires du corpus est « prêcher une/la croisade », traduction de la forme latine *cruciatam predicare*. D'autres exemples de collocations à base verbale sont « *publier la croisade* » et « *partir en/pour la croisade* ». Le corpus *Les Voisins de Le Monde*, quant à lui, répertorie les verbes suivants pour des constructions dans lesquelles le mot 'croisade' se trouve en position de complément d'objet direct: « prêcher, mener, continuer, entreprendre, lancer, poursuivre, entamer, conduire, relancer, soutenir, reprendre ».

L'observation de la combinatoire des collocations à base nominale – et notamment de la nature sémantique des arguments – nous permet de distinguer les deux acceptions du mot 'croisade' discutées dans cet article, la croisade en tant qu'évènement historique et la croisade en tant que lutte idéologique. Dans le premier cas, nous avons, d'un côté, les collocations formées d'un numéral suivi du mot 'croisade', et de l'autre, le syntagme « croisade contre » suivi toujours d'un nom propre au pluriel désignant les membres appartenant à un même groupe social/religieux (les Albigeois, les Hussites, les Mahométans, les Musulmans). Dans le second cas, l'argument du syntagme croisade contre est en revanche un nom abstrait (l'alcoolisme, le tabagisme, l'avortement) tout comme l'argument de la construction croisade pour (l'emploi des jeunes, la défense), tandis que la construction croisade en faveur de peut être suivie aussi d'un nom humain (les orphelins).

Outre les collocations, les dictionnaires citent de façon générale les syntagmes les plus employés. Dans le cas qui nous intéresse ici, le syntagme « au temps des croisades » a été relevé dans la plupart des dictionnaires du corpus, suivi du syntagme « histoire des croisades ».

Conclusion

L'analyse en diachronie du traitement lexicographique du mot 'croisade' dans un corpus de dictionnaires français nous a permis d'en retracer non seulement l'évolution sémantique, mais aussi de toucher du doigt à la fois l'engouement et la répulsion suscités par cet évènement historique.

Cela est tout d'abord visible dans les définisseurs employés par les lexicographes. Nous avons ainsi relevé la présence de noms provenant de différents champs sémantiques, pouvant indiquer soit la dimension sociale des croisades (assemblée, ligue), soit l'idée de mouvement (voyage, expédition, pèlerinage, etc.), soit le caractère militaire de l'entreprise (guerre, entreprise de guerre), et la combinaison de plusieurs définisseurs dans les définitions proposées par certains dictionnaires.

Si jusqu'au milieu du XVIII^e siècle les dictionnaires véhiculent un discours unitaire à propos des croisades, en justifiant la nécessité de l'entreprise – une « guerre sainte », faite par « dévotion » et pour « délivrer les lieux saints des Infidèles » –, avec l'Encyclopédie de Diderot et d'Alembert voit le jour un contre-discours polémique sur cet événement historique, qui devient un cheval de bataille pour attaquer et disqualifier la chrétienté. C'est à partir de ce moment qu'une polarisation autour du sujet des croisades se manifeste de façon évidente dans la posture énonciative des lexicographes, comme en témoignent les ouvrages publiés au XIX^e siècle.

De plus, nous avons relevé que, parallèlement à l'émergence de ce contre-discours polémique, le mot 'croisade' subit un processus de néologisation sémantique et combinatoire. Il commence ainsi à être employé pour désigner des combats idéologiques pour ou contre une cause ou un phénomène qui prévoient le déploiement de moyens conséquents. Tel est le cas par exemple de la « croisade contre l'alcoolisme », citée par plusieurs dictionnaires entre le XIX^e et le XX^e siècle.

Nous espérons avoir montré que, loin d'être des simples répertoires de mots, les dictionnaires sont des répertoires discursifs qui méritent d'être appréhendés dans toute leur complexité, ainsi que des témoignages inépuisables des sociétés dans lesquelles ils voient le jour.

Corpus

Dictionnaires de langue

Nicot Jean (1606): *Le Thresor de la langue françoise tant ancienne que moderne* (consulté sur <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaires-dautrefois>).

Richelet Pierre (1680): *Dictionnaire françois contenant les mots et les choses*, Paris (consulté sur gallica.bnf.fr).

Abbé Féraud (1787-88): *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française*, Paris (consulté sur <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaires-dautrefois>).

Laveaux Jean-Charles (1820): *Nouveau dictionnaire de la langue française*, Paris, Deterville (consulté sur gallica.bnf.fr).

Boiste Pierre-Claude-Victor (1843): *Dictionnaire universel de la langue française avec le latin*, Paris: Firmin Didot frères (consulté sur: numelyo.bm-lyon.fr).

Bescherelle Louis-Nicolas (1856): *Dictionnaire national ou Dictionnaire universel de la langue française*, Paris, Garnier frères éditeurs, 4^{ème} édition (consulté sur gallica.bnf.fr).

Gattel Claude-Marie (1857): *Dictionnaire universel de la langue française: avec la prononciation figurée*, 9^{ème} édition, Paris, J. B. Clarey, vol. 1 (consulté sur: books.google.fr).

- Lachâtre Maurice (1858): *Dictionnaire des écoles*, Paris, Imprimerie Serriere et compagnie (consulté sur gallica.bnf.fr).
- Dochez Louis (1860): *Nouveau dictionnaire de la langue française*, Paris, Fouraut (consulté sur gallica.bnf.fr).
- Littré Émile (1863-73): *Dictionnaire de la langue française*, Paris, Hachette (consulté sur <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaires-dautrefois>).
- Guilbert Louis, Lagane René & Niobé Georges (1986): *Grand Larousse de la langue française en sept volumes*, Paris, Larousse, vol. 2 « CIR-ERY ».
- Robert Paul & Rey Alain éd. (1989): *Le Grand Robert de la langue française*, Paris, Éditions Le Robert, vol. 3, « Couv-Ento ».
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- Pierre Larousse, *Grand dictionnaire universel*, tome 5, Paris : Éditions Larousse (1866-1877), 565

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8 Crucifixion, cross and crusade

Crusading terminology in Old French crusading chansons de geste

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“La guerre...si séduisante pour de jeunes cerveaux pleins des illusions entretenues par les lectures et les récits toujours poétisés pour enflammer les cœurs et leur faire trouver glorieux les sacrifices les plus pénibles, n’est au fond...qu’une chose abominable”¹

Introduction: *chansons de geste* and the portrayal of the crusade

The *chanson de geste* was one of the main literary genres of Old French throughout the Middle Ages. These texts provide an arena in which the dilemmas faced by the aristocratic warrior class could be explored in fictionalised form, “la première rencontre durable et massive de l’épopée et de la politique”: the use and abuse of royal power, the conflict of Christianity and Islam and issues around inheritance and lineage.² The stories are set in a universe deliberately remote from contemporary France, whether historically in the Merovingian and Carolingian eras or geographically through a setting in Outremer as a fantasy land where anything becomes possible.³

An entire cycle of *chansons de geste* is dedicated to recounting the history of the crusades. The texts collectively known as the Old French Crusade Cycle take the story from the ancestry of Godfrey of Bouillon, first ruler of Jerusalem, to events just before the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, the actual events serving as a chronological thread but largely submerged by a hefty dose of fantasy both about Godfrey’s ancestry and the Saracens opposing the Crusaders.⁴ These texts were then heavily reworked into a further fictionalised version of the Crusades known somewhat misleadingly as

- 1 “War, seductive as it may be for young minds filled with illusions maintained by what they read and by tales invariably recounted in poetic terms designed to inflame hearts and convince them that even the most painful sacrifices are glorious ones, is fundamentally nothing more than an abomination”: Léonce Patry, *La Guerre telle qu’elle est (1870–71). Metz, armée du Nord, Commune (éd. 1897)*, (Paris: Montgrédien, 1897), 6. All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.
- 2 “The first encounter, long-lasting and significant, between the epic and the political”: Dominique Boutet and Armand Strubel, *Littérature, politique et société dans la France du Moyen Âge* (Paris: PUF, 1979), 39.
- 3 Luke Sunderland, “Genre, ideology and utopia in *Huon de Bordeaux*,” *Medium Aevum* 81.2 (2012): 289–302.
- 4 Jan A. Nelson and Emanuel J. Mickel, eds., *The Old French Crusade Cycle*, 10 vol. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 1977–2003).

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the Second Cycle during the 14th century.⁵ An Occitan version was also produced, of which only one fragment remains, known as the *Canso d'Antioca*.⁶ All these texts were translated into Spanish prose at the end of the 13th century in a compilation at the behest of Alphonse X, the *Gran Conquista de Ultramar*.⁷ An Anglo-Norman verse account of the crusade preserved in two manuscripts shows extensive knowledge of the Cycle.⁸ The Occitan verse account of the Albigensian crusade, the *Canso de la Crozada*, invokes the *Canso d'Antioca* as its model.⁹ Together, these texts create an entire fictional universe centred around the crusades of the 12th century.

Many *chansons de geste* recount the conflict between Saracens and Christians: the concept of crusade shapes events but is not explicitly depicted or described as such.¹⁰ The Crusade Cycle is unusual in recounting (relatively) contemporary events in a way which has at least a passing acquaintance with historical truth. We might therefore expect to find extensive use of crusade terminology. This article examines the vernacular terminology of 'crusade' from the end of the 12th century, looks at the extent to which such terminology is in fact found in crusade *chansons de geste* and offers some observations on its use.

Old French crusading terminology

The fall of Jerusalem to Saladin in 1187 and the loss of the relic of the True Cross at Hattin formed the catalyst for an enormous outpouring of shock and grief and a determination to regain the Holy City. The taking of the Cross had long symbolised the start of a journey to Jerusalem, whether as pilgrimage or crusade.¹¹ One of the earliest sources for the First Crusade, the *Gesta Francorum*, famously describes Bohemond tearing up a precious cloak to make into crosses as a piece of theatre in 1096.¹² So there was a well-established link between the symbolism of the Cross and the practice of the crusade.

5 Frédéric de Reiffenberg and Adolphe Borgnet, eds., *Le Chevalier au Cygne et Godefroid de Bouillon: poème historique*, 3 vol. (Brussels: Hayez, 1846–59); Larry S. Crist, ed., *Baudouin de Sebourg*, 2 vol. (Paris: SATF, 2002); Robert F. Cook, ed., *Le Bâtard de Bouillon* (Geneva: Droz, 1972).

6 Linda M. Paterson and Carol Sweetenham, ed. and trans., *The Canso d'Antioca: an Occitan epic of the First Crusade* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).

7 Louis Cooper, ed., *La Gran Conquista de Ultramar*, 4 vol. (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, 1979).

8 The first part of the text has been edited and translated by Jennifer Gabel Aguirre, ed., *La Chanson de la Première Croisade en ancien français d'après Baudri de Bourgueil*, (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2015). Linda Paterson, Simon Parsons, Lauren Mulholland and I are producing a full edition and translation of the text. There is no commonly accepted name and we refer to the text as the *Siège d'Antioche*.

9 Eugène Martin-Chabot, ed., *La Chanson de la croisade albigeoise*, 3 vol. (Paris: Champion, 1931–60) at laisse 2 lines 1–3 for reference to a *Canso d'Antioca*.

10 Pierre Jonin, "Le climat de croisade des chansons de geste," *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* 7 (1964): 279–288 for an old but helpful overview.

11 William Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia c.1095–1187* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2008).

12 Roger A. B. Mynors, ed., and Rosalind Hill, trans., *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, (London: Nelson, 1962), 7.

However, it is not until the end of the 12th century and the Third Crusade that we find widespread use of Old French crusading vocabulary linked to the Cross.¹³ In part, this reflects the evolution of crusading theology and concepts through the 12th century, with the loss of the relic of the True Cross at Hattin as a catalyst for the creation of recognised terminology.¹⁴ It also reflects the fact that until the end of the 12th century, there were, with the exception of some crusade lyrics, few vernacular texts focusing on crusade, reflecting a society where much continued to be written in Latin rather than the vernacular.

From the end of the 12th century, after the defeat of 1187, we find the verb *croisier* routinely used for the concept of taking the cross and the past participle *croisié* for one who has taken the Cross in other words, a crusader. Ambroise, for example, writing at the end of the 12th century, uses the form *se croisier* a number of times at the start of his account of the Third Crusade to describe crusaders taking the cross.¹⁵ In the early 13th century, Robert de Clari refers throughout to *croisié* to describe the crusaders, on occasion distinguishing them from the Venetians.¹⁶ Villehardouin's initial chapters describe the large number of nobles who take the cross using the terminology of *prist la croiz*, *se croiseroient* and *croisié*.¹⁷ The Occitan poet Bertran de Born, in a poem from 1188, uses the terms *croisar* and *croisatz*.¹⁸ This coincides with the emergence of the term *crucesignatus* in Latin.¹⁹

The terms *crois*, *croisement*, *croiserie* and *croisiee* are likewise all found as terms for the taking of the cross from the Third Crusade onwards.²⁰ In Old French, they remained in use until well into the 15th century: the *Passages d'Outremer* by Sebastien Mamerot, writing in 1472, refers to the First Crusade as *croisiee*.²¹

- 13 See the discussion by David Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades* (Geneva: Droz, 1988) chapter 1. For Old French references see Frédéric Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IX^e au XV^e siècle*, 10 vol. (Paris: Vieweg, 1880–1902), vol 2, 377–379; Adolf Tobler and Erhard Lommatzsch, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch*, 11 vol. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1925–2002), vol 2, col. 1076–1079, 1087.
- 14 Christopher J. Tyerman, “Were there any crusades in the twelfth century?,” *English Historical Review* 110 (1995): 553–577, at pages 574–575; Alan Murray, “‘Mighty against the enemies of Christ’: the Relic of the True Cross in the Kingdom of Jerusalem,” in *The Crusades and their Sources: essays presented to Bernard Hamilton*, ed. John France and William G. Zajac (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998): 217–238.
- 15 Marianne Ailes and Malcolm Barber, ed. and trans., *The History of the Holy War: Ambroise's Estoire de la guerre sainte*, 2 vol. (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), lines 55, 57, 62, 122, 137, 145.
- 16 Peter Noble, ed., *Robert de Clari: La Conquête de Constantinople*, (Edinburgh: British Rencensvals Publications, 2005): see for example chapter 2, pages 6–7 or chapter 16, pages 18–19.
- 17 Geoffroi de Villehardouin, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. and transl. Edmond Faral, 2 vol. (Paris: CHFMA, 1938), chapters 1–11.
- 18 “Ara sai eu de prez”, poem 34, lines 21 and 24 in: Gérard Gouiran, ed., *L'amour et la guerre: l'œuvre de Bertran de Born*, 2 vol. (Université de Provence: Aix-en-Provence, 1985), vol. 2, 671–691.
- 19 Michael Markowski, “‘Crucesignatus’: its origins and early usage,” *Journal of Medieval History* 10 (1984): 157–165.
- 20 *Ambroise's Estoire de la guerre sainte*, 156; Jean de Joinville, *Vie de St Louis*, ed. and transl. Jacques Monfrin (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 1995), chapter 69, pages 34–35 for “croisement” and chapter 734, pages 364–365 for “croiserie”.
- 21 Thierry Delcourt and Danielle Quéruel, eds. and trans., *Les Passages d'Outremer* (Cologne: Taschen, 2009), chapter 7.

What we do not find in Old French until the end of the Middle Ages is the word ‘crusade’. It appears earlier in other Romance languages.²² The earliest attestation in Spanish is in a charter in Navarre in 1212.²³ The word is found shortly afterwards in a poem by the mystic Gonzalo de Berceo (c.1197–1264), who refers to *essa falsa cruzada* in the context of Judas’ betrayal of Jesus.²⁴ It is first found in Occitan at a similar time in the *Crozada* and shortly afterwards in the troubadour lyric, although its meaning seems to be closer to a crusading army than the act of crusading.²⁵ A poem of 1226 by Tomier and Palaizi criticises the *falsa croisada* of Louis VIII laying siege to Avignon, and in 1240–41 Uc de San Circ asks the Pope and the church to send *la croisada* to Faenza to help defend it against Frederick II; the *vida* of the troubadour Perdigon likewise refers to a deputation of Occitan nobles and clerics travelling to Rome “*per mal del coms de Tolosa e per adordenar crozada*”.²⁶

Crusade terminology in the Old French crusade cycle

We might have expected to see extensive use of crusading terminology in the *chansons de geste* dedicated to the crusades which appeared from the end of the 12th century. In fact, such terminology is conspicuous by its scarcity.

The *Chanson d’Antioche* is by some distance the (relatively) most historically accurate of the texts in the First Cycle.²⁷ It is also a text which starts with an explicit

- 22 For etymology of words derived from the Latin suffix -ADA/ATA and movement from Occitan and Spanish to French see Carl Sven Reinhold Collin *Étude sur le développement de sens du suffixe -ATA (IT. -ATA, PROV, ESP, PORT. -ADA, FR. -EE, -ADE dans les langues romanes, spécialement au point de vue du Français*, (Lund: A-B PH.Lindstedt’s Universitetsbokhandel, 1918); Emanuel S. Georges revised Jerry R. Craddock and Yakov Malkiel, *Studies in romance nouns extracted from past participles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), pages 22–27 for Occitan, page 17 for Spanish, page 22: “if we were to pinpoint one area acting as a centre for the diffusion of past participle nouns, we should unhesitatingly choose the region encompassed by Provençal and Catalan”; John Kidman, *Les emprunts lexicologiques du français à l’espagnol des origines jusqu’à la fin du XVe siècle* (PhD diss., University of Paris 4, 1969), 84–86.
- 23 Santos A. Garcia Sarragueta, ed., *El gran priorado de Navarra de la orden de San Juan de Jerusalén: siglos XII–XIII*, 2 vol. (Pamplona: Diputación foral de Navarra, 1957), vol 2, 148–149, n°145: “*facta carta sub era Ma Cea La, mense octobris, in anno quo rex Sancius fuit super Sarracenos cum illa crozada*”.
- 24 Germán Orduna, ed., “El duelo de la Virgen,” in Gonzalo de Berceo, *Obra Completa*, ed. Isabel Uria (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1992), 797–857, at page 809, stanza 16, line 4. For examples of crusading terminology see Martín Alonso Pedraz, *Diccionario Medieval Español*, 2 vol. (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia, 1986), vol. 1, 819–820; Joan Corominas and José Antonio Pascual, *Diccionario Crítico Etimológico Castellano e Hispánico*, 6 vol. (Madrid: Gredos, 1983–91), vol. 2, 253–254.
- 25 Francois-Just-Marie Raynouard, *Lexique roman*, 6 vol. (Paris: Silvestre, 1836–44), vol. 2, 522–523; Emil Lévy, *Provenzalisches Supplement-Wörterbuch*, 8 vol. (Leipzig, 1894–1924), vol. 1, 420.
- 26 “De chanter farai/una esdemessa”: Raymond T. Hill and Thomas G. Bergin, eds., *Anthology of the Provençal Troubadours*, 2 vol. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973), vol. 1, 194–96, line 18; Alfred Pillet and Henry Carstens, *Bibliographie des Troubadours* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1933), 416 line 38; Jean Boutière and A. H. Schutz, *Biographies des troubadours. Textes provençaux des XIIIe et XIve siècles* (Paris: Nizet, 1973), 413.
- 27 Most recently: Bernard Guidot, ed. and trans., *La Chanson d’Antioche, chanson de geste du dernier quart du XIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 2011).

exhortation to its listeners to take the Cross like their forebears.²⁸ Yet there is little, if any, use of crusading terminology. The taking of the Cross is compressed into a few lines where the main interest of the author seems to lie in the reaction of the women left behind: there is one reference to them sewing crosses on clothes, but no apparent use of the verb *croiser* or its related substantives.²⁹ This stands in sharp contrast to other crusade narratives, which start with the ceremony of taking the Cross.³⁰ We find a similar approach in the *Chanson des Chétifs* and the *Chanson de Jérusalem*, the two texts which complete the central trilogy.³¹ There is a wide range of terms to describe the crusaders: *François, no franc Crestien, franc chevalier, rices barnage, no gent, l'ost Deu, no Crestien baron* and *no chevalier baron*. They are also described as *pelerin*. There is however little, if any, use of the term *croisié*.

The Occitan *Canço d'Antiocha* similarly has no use of crusading terminology. Since it is a fragment, we cannot say that it did not have such terminology elsewhere, notably at the start of the crusade. However, the *Gran Conquista de Ultramar*, which translates this source material, is similarly light on crusading terminology, using terms like *romería, pelegrinaje, cristianos, los de la hueste* and *cavalleros*. There are a few exceptions. In the chapter effectively serving as a naratorial prologue to the preaching of the First Crusade (and therefore not translating earlier material), we find the terms *crusada* and *se cruzar*. At the end of the text, we find *cruzar* used in the context of the Third Crusade and *cruzados* for the crusade of 1270 to Tunis, drawing on material bearing no relationship to the Crusade Cycle texts.³²

In the 14th-century texts known as the Second Crusade Cycle, we find a little more use of the terminology. The *Chevalier au Cygne et Godefroid de Bouillon* refers to the *croiserie*, and there is a cluster of uses of *croisier* and *prendre la crois* at the point when the leaders take the Cross.³³ The crusaders are however routinely described in terms such as *l'ost des crestyens, no gent, ly boin pelerin de France* and *no chevalier*; their Saracen opponents describe them as *celles gent d'oultre mer*. We find similarly sparse usage in the *Baudouin de Sebourg* and the *Bâtard de Bouillon*.

The very limited use of crusade terminology stands in sharp contrast in these texts to a heavy emphasis on the Cross and on the Crucifixion. The loss of the relic of the True Cross at Hattin led to a stronger emphasis on the theme of the Cross as Christendom grappled with the reality of its loss.³⁴ This was linked to a focus on the bodily suffering of Christ on the Cross. The *Sermo de Cruce Domini* of Alan

28 *La Chanson d'Antioche*, lines 128–137. The first fourteen laisses of the text set out the theme of the vengeance of Christ and hold up the First Crusade as an example to be followed.

29 *La Chanson d'Antioche*, lines 825–850; line 844 for sewing on crosses.

30 See for example Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, chapters 3–11.

31 Geoffroy M Myers, *Les Chétifs*, in version in *The Old French Crusade Cycle*, vol. 5 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 1981); Nigel R Thorp, ed., *La Chanson de Jérusalem version in The Old French Crusade Cycle*, vol. 6 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 1992).

32 *La Gran Conquista*, I.185, vol. 1, 346; IV.377, vol. 4, 250.

33 *Le Chevalier au Cygne*, lines 3575, 5752.

34 Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 26–29.

of Lille was preached shortly after Hattin, explicitly linking Christ's death on the Cross with the relic found by St. Helena and ultimately lost at Hattin.³⁵ The crusaders are urged to take this sign of the Cross, and Alan is clear that crusading is about avenging the sufferings of Christ: "let the soldiers of Christ make the sign of the Cross in their bodies and in their hearts, displaying it outwardly in their appearance and inwardly as a mark of penitence ... may they avenge the insults meted out to Christ and grieve over the slights; may they liberate the land which is our inheritance, the inheritance of Christ and the dowry of the Virgin".³⁶ Vengeance thus became a driving theme: "Crusading was an act of vengeance because crusading resembled the mytho-historical destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and Vespasian, reminded people of the Crucifixion of Christ, emphasised the bonds of Christian love and duty that bound society, and evoked contemporary ideas of justice, authority, and punishment".³⁷ The *Antioche* places the Crucifixion at the heart of the theology of the crusade, linked to the theme of the Vengeance of Christ. Jerusalem is the city where God allowed Himself to be tortured and killed for the salvation of mankind. The crusaders have a duty to take the Cross for His sake and seek revenge on the pagans, the descendants of the Antichrist – those who respond will receive the crown of martyrdom. As He hangs on the Cross Jesus foretells the future arrival of the crusaders, who will avenge Him and receive salvation as their reward.³⁸ The goal of the Crusade is the Cross and the Holy Sepulchre.³⁹ The *Jérusalem* again emphasises the Crucifixion, with a description by Peter the Hermit as the crusaders arrive at Jerusalem; when they enter Jerusalem it is at midday, the hour when Jesus was raised on the Cross.⁴⁰ The texts refer repeatedly to the sufferings of Christ on the Cross.⁴¹ The theme is counterpointed in the *Antioche* by the martyrdom of Rainalt Porcet at the hands of the Turks when he is captured and refuses to apostasies: he is stripped and lashed like Christ, and in a piece of obvious symbolism spread-eagled on a table in the shape of a cross to be tortured, evoking the Crucifixion and imploring Christ for mercy.⁴² The theme of vengeance is prefigured by the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of Vespasian and Titus, who believe in God and want to avenge His sufferings at the hands of the Jews. This is subsequently evoked by Corbadas, king of Jerusalem, as the Franks prepare to attack the city.⁴³ The account at the start of the *Antioche* does not mention Longinus, the centurion who plunged

35 Alan of Lille, "Sermo de cruce domini" in *Alain de Lille, textes inédits*, ed. Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny (Paris: Vrin, 1965), 279–283. See Matthew Phillips, "The Thief's Cross: Crusade and Penance in Alain de Lille's 'Sermo de Cruce Domini'," *Crusades* 5 (2006): 143–156.

36 "Sermo de cruce domini", 281: "*milites Christi signent se signo crucis in corpore, signent in corde, signent exterius per figuram, signent interius per penitentiam...vindicent Christi iniurias, doleant contumelias; liberent terram nostre hereditatis, Christi hereditatem, Virginis dotem*".

37 Susanna A. Throop, *Crusading as an Act of Vengeance 1095–1216* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 182.

38 *La Chanson d'Antioche*, lines 159–248.

39 *La Chanson d'Antioche*, lines 1990–1991.

40 *La Chanson de Jérusalem*, lines 1019–1055, 4712–4716.

41 See e.g. *La Chanson d'Antioche*, lines 1300, 2133, 2584; *La Chanson de Jérusalem*, lines 1208, 2328, 3301–3302.

42 *La Chanson d'Antioche*, lines 4340–435, in particular lines 4344–45, 4372–4373.

43 *La Chanson d'Antioche*, lines 218–248; *Jérusalem* 1380–1396.

the Lance into the side of Christ on the Cross and whom He forgave; however, he is referred to later in the text, once in passing and once in considerable detail.⁴⁴ He is similarly evoked in the *Chétifs* before Richard of Chaumont's judicial battle and before Baldwin of Beauvais fights the Sathanas.⁴⁵ Longinus also appears in later texts, being evoked, for example, in the *Bâtard de Bouillon*.⁴⁶

The Cross is also present in a physical form in these texts, both as a relic and as an emblem. In the Turin version of the Cycle, at the end of the 13th century, relics of the Cross are offered to Godfrey, and Tancred swears on relics including a fragment of the Cross and the blood of Christ wounded by Longinus.⁴⁷ In the *Chétifs* Harpin has “*une crois... d'or del Pere esperital*” on his shield when he fights outside Jerusalem; in the *Jérusalem* the bishop of Forez has a golden cross on his pennant.⁴⁸

There is therefore no doubt about the centrality of the Crucifixion and the symbolism of the cross in these crusade epics. But there is a persistent reluctance to use the vernacular terminology of crusade, despite its familiarity in other contemporary vernacular texts such as Clari, Ambroise and later Joinville. These poems were texts designed for a predominantly secular audience. There is relatively little emphasis on the spiritual and clerical side of crusading: the *Antioche* completely omits all mention of Urban and Clermont, and Adhemar is depicted as a quasi-secular figure who carries the Lance into battle and fights alongside the other leaders.⁴⁹ There is no doubt about the exemplary function of the *Antioche*: its hearers are exhorted to emulate their forebears.⁵⁰ But they are encouraged to engage in a generalised battle against the Saracens in terms familiar from epics about Charlemagne, Roland and William of Orange rather than the specific battles of contemporary Outremer. The *chanson de geste* by definition deals with events remote in time and history, lending them a heroic gloss: the hard realities of crusade exist at one remove from this mythical world.

Crusade terminology in other crusade *chansons de geste*

There are two crusade *chansons de geste* which stand apart but are related to the Cycle. The first of these is the *Siège d'Antioche*. This is a text of some 16,000 lines found in two Anglo-Norman manuscripts.⁵¹ It is written in the alexandrine *laisse* format of the *chanson de geste*. Whilst the text has never been fully edited, it is clear that the author knew both the work of Baudry and some of the material reflected in

44 *La Chanson d'Antioche*, lines 1624, 6107–6113.

45 *Les Chétifs*, lines 698–713, 843–54, 2361–2371.

46 *Le Bâtard de Bouillon*, lines 2494–2502.

47 Peter R. Grillo, ed., *The Jerusalem Continuations: the London-Turin version in The Old French Crusade Cycle*, vol. 8 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 1994), lines 4224–4232, 11331–11343.

48 *Les Chétifs*, line 3983; *La Chanson de Jérusalem*, lines 534–535.

49 *La Chanson d'Antioche*, *laisse* 306–14, 354.

50 *La Chanson d'Antioche*, *laisse* 6.

51 Bodleian Library, Hatton 77; British Library, Additional 34114.

the Cycle.⁵² However, the text is distinct from the Cycle. The *Chétifs* and its cast of characters are absent (indeed, the scribe of Hatton felt the need to add parts of the text after the *Siège*). The themes of the Vengeance of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem, which mark the start of the *Antioche*, are likewise absent. Unlike the Cycle, which consists largely of fictional material and claims no historical antecedents, the text is careful to set out its sources; it claims, albeit in rather confused fashion, to be based on the work of Baudry of Bourgueil, archbishop of Dol.⁵³ Whilst the participants on the crusade might not quite have recognised this account of their experiences, the text is clear that it should be regarded as based on historical fact.⁵⁴

We find in this text a range of synonyms for ‘crusade’: in particular, *prendre la croix*, with other terms such as *porter la croiz* and *la croiz envaie*.⁵⁵ Similarly, the crusaders are described with a range of terms, such as *paumier*, *nostre crestientez*, *li nostre*, *Francs*, *Franceis* and *nostre chevalier*.⁵⁶ We also find the terms *croisier* for the act of taking the Cross and of the term *croisié* for crusaders.⁵⁷ These are used interchangeably as part of the lexicon; there is no sense that they have a different or special meaning. What we do not find in the text as far as it has been edited is a reference to the crusade as a concept: there is no occurrence of words such as *croisement*, *croiserie* or *croisiee*. The emphasis is on the taking of the Cross by individuals and contingents as a symbol of commitment to fight in Outremer rather than any concept of a specific enterprise.

The second of these texts is the Occitan text, whose modern title, not attested in the manuscripts, is the *Canço de la Crozada*. This contains the first use in Occitan of the word *cruzada*.⁵⁸ The text has two authors. The first 130 laisses are by a pro-French Navarrese cleric, Guilhem of Tudela. Tudela is in no doubt that he is describing a crusade: he refers repeatedly to the Occitans as *eretges* and states in the opening lines of his text that he is using the format and tune of the *canço d’Antioica*, clearly an Occitan text recounting the events of the First Crusade, though not necessarily

52 *Siège d’Antioche*, lines 36–40 for Baudry. The text uses the storyline found in the Cycle of Corbaran being commanded to look after the son of the Sultan of Persia (Brohadas in the Cycle, Moadas in the *Siège*).

53 *Siège d’Antioche*, lines 31–44.

54 *Siège d’Antioche*, lines 31–44. See the illuminating discussion by Peter Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999).

55 *Siège d’Antioche*, lines 77, 105, 131, 142, 155, 173.

56 *Siège d’Antioche*, lines 851, 1018, 1056, 1403, 1541, 1687.

57 *Siège d’Antioche*, lines 96, 164, 611, 869, 176, 203, 635, 742, 759, 775, 1288, 1379, 1438.

58 See Eliza Miruna Ghil, *L’Âge de Parage. Essai sur la poétique et le politique en Occitanie au XIIIe siècle* (New York: Lang, 1989); Marjolaine Raguin, *Lorsque la poésie fait le souverain: étude sur la Chanson de la Croisade albigeoise* (Paris: Champion, 2015); Benjamin Weber, “When and Where did the Word Crusade appear in the Middle Ages? And Why?,” in *The Crusades: History and Memory. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, vol. 2, ed Kurt V. Jensen and Torben K. Nielsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021): 199–220; Carol Sweetenham, “Papal Discussions in a chanson de geste: the Depiction of Crusade, the Lateran Council and the Split Personality of the *Canço de la Crozada*,” in *Literary Echoes of the Fourth Lateran Council in England and France, 1215–1405*, ed. Maureen B. M. Boulton (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2019): 124–144. On use of crusading terminology in these texts see Eliza Miruna Ghil, “Crozada: Avatars of a Religious Term in Thirteenth-Century Occitan Poetry,” *Tenso* 10.2 (1995): 99–109.

identical with the extant fragment.⁵⁹ Laisse 131 marks the start of the second part of the text, written by a pro-Occitan author ferociously opposed to the crusade.

The term *crozada* occurs five times in Tudela's section of the text.⁶⁰ Tudela also uses the French-influenced forms *crozeia* and *crozea*.⁶¹ The anonymous continuator uses the term *crozada* a further five times.⁶² Laisse 131 is a transitional laisse in which the continuator deliberately reflects Tudela's style to lead into his own very different approach, and it is striking that he deliberately uses the gallicised form *crozea*.⁶³ Both authors use the word to describe the crusading army, with in Guilhem of Tudela a couple of shadings towards a more conceptual approach. Tudela more often, however, refers to the army as *la ost* and on occasion *la ost de Crist*.⁶⁴ Whilst for the continuator the crusading army was by definition hostile and to be criticised, there is no sense that *crozada* has particularly derogatory overtones compared to other terminology or that the continuator deliberately uses it in an ironic sense (with the possible exception of laisse 198 line 27, where the word is found alongside reference to Simon of Montfort and his mercenaries, *mainaders*).

Both authors use the term *crozatz*. Tudela uses it as a collective noun to refer to the crusaders when not specifying which leader or force he is describing.⁶⁵ The continuator generally refers to the crusaders as *Frances*; they are also referred to as *crozatz*.⁶⁶

Both authors, albeit from opposing viewpoints, were therefore clear that the French army had taken the Cross. Tudela's description at the start of the text of the abbot of Cîteaux preaching the crusade with Papal authorisation is described in terms familiar from the preaching of the First Crusade by Urban II and the Second Crusade by Bernard of Clairvaux; the crusaders display the sign of the Cross and, symbolically, the preaching takes place on the feast of the Holy Cross; and the vocabulary for taking the cross is identical to that used for crusades to Outremer.⁶⁷ The continuator disagrees fundamentally with the actuality of the Northern French enterprise, but he deliberately retains and uses the terminology of the crusade in order to subvert it.⁶⁸

What is less clear is how far the enterprise was specifically recognised as a crusade. By the early 13th century, the concept of crusade was attested in Old French as

59 Laisse 2 lines 1–3, followed in line 4 by a reference to “eretgia”.

60 Laisse 12 line 19; laisse 17 line 19; laisse 42 line 5; laisse 72 line 4; laisse 130 line 5.

61 Laisse 66 line 9; laisse 115 line 31. See Simon Gaunt, “Desnaturat son li Frances’: Language and Identity in the Twelfth-Century Occitan Epic,” *Tenso* 17.1 (2002): 10–31 for discussion of deliberately gallicised Occitan as a marker of the Frenchness of the *chanson de geste* genre.

62 Laisse 196 line 41; laisse 198 line 27; laisse 200 line 104; laisse 208 line 56; laisse 212 line 17.

63 Laisse 131 line 10.

64 Laisse 66 line 15.

65 For example laisse 41 line 1; laisse 58 line 5; laisse 66 line 17; laisse 67 line 15; laisse 116 line 1; laisse 130 line 13.

66 For example: laisse 133 line 30; laisse 135 line 23; laisse 137 line 30, “*pendrem los Frances e tras-totz los crozatz*” (we will string up the French and every last one of the crusaders). Ghil, *L'Âge de Parage*, 153–155.

67 Laisse 8 line 18; laisse 8 line 6; laisse 6 line 11, “*qui no.s crozara ja no beva du vin*” (may anyone who refuses to take the Cross drink no wine...); laisse 8 lines 12–13, “*se crozan en Fransa e per tot lo regnat/Can sabo que seran dels peccatz perdonat*” (people took the Cross throughout the realm of France on the understanding that they would be forgiven for their sins).

68 Sweetenham, “Papal discussions”.

croisee or *croisement*. Tudela twice uses an Occitan version of this term, reflecting the crusading ideology of the French army and, indeed, how they may have referred to themselves. He also uses the Spanish form of the word: as Weber has pointed out, Tudela was Navarrese, and the word is attested in Spanish at precisely the time he was writing in the context of the Reconquista.⁶⁹ It was therefore an obvious term to use in describing a war against heretics of a different kind. This dual usage reflects Tudela's own background and experience: it also reflects a measure of uncertainty about a relatively new terminology for a relatively new concept.

Conclusion

For a genre often seen as imbued with the spirit of crusading, the *chanson de geste* offers little acknowledgement of its actuality. Even in the texts where we might have expected to find particular reference to crusades, the multiple ramifications and adaptations which comprise the Old French Crusade Cycle are surprisingly devoid of crusade terminology. This stands in sharp contrast to vernacular texts which portray the actuality of the crusade in prose (Clari and Villehardouin) and in octosyllabic narrative (Ambroise). It also contrasts with texts which use the format of the *chanson de geste* to describe the crusade but operate in a different space: an account of the crusade as poetic history (the *Siège*) and an account reflecting "l'épicité du contemporain" (the *Crozada*).⁷⁰

What we do see in the Cycle texts is a heavy emphasis on the symbolism of the Cross on the suffering of Christ on the Cross, and hence on the theme of vengeance for that suffering. The Cycle may not use crusading terminology, but it is entirely consistent with the theology of crusade, which emerged after Hattin centred around the Cross and the need to recover it.

So why the reticence about the terminology of crusade and crusading? An answer may lie in the nature of the Cycle itself. The *chanson de geste*, by definition, operates in a fantasy arena in which contemporary dilemmas can be refracted but not reflected. To take the Cross was a serious step: according to Joinville, Blanche of Castile "made a display of grief which could not have been greater than if she had seen him dead" on hearing that Louis IX had taken the Cross.⁷¹ The texts of the Cycle create a fantasy universe with only the most tangential connection to the reality of the crusade. They are aimed at a secular audience familiar with the conventions of the *chanson de geste* in which battles are fought eternally against mythical Saracens, not a clerical audience familiar with theology. The *Crozada*'s gritty realism of a crusade fought out on home territory is a world away from the dragons, magic swans, storybook Saracens and single combats of the Cycle, played out in a fictional universe where Hattin never happened. In this universe, the concept of the crusade as a heroic fantasy for men whose lives revolve around fighting is what matters: the hard realities of becoming a crusader can wait.

69 Weber, "When and where", 208-9.

70 Ghil, *L'Âge de Parage*, 150; "the epic nature of the contemporary": the form of the *chanson de geste* is used, atypically, to depict current events.

71 Joinville, *Vie de St Louis*, chapter 107, 54-55: "mena aussi grand deul comme si elle le veist mort".

9 Crusading against France, 1789–1815

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One important strand of the history of the use of the word crusade is the way in which, long after the loss of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, it continued to be applied to a variety of military campaigns. This subject is attracting increasing interest, but more work still needs to be done on the use of this language in the late 18th and 19th centuries and how it was received.¹ An editorial in the popular weekly British periodical, the *Saturday Review*, in September 1860, entitled “Modern Crusades”, certainly criticised what it considered to be a rather indiscriminate usage of the term:

The crusading spirit of the Middle Ages has flared up once more... A pale spectre of medieval chivalry stands once more in arms on the graves of Bohemond and Tancred. We have had three crusades lately: an Irish Crusade for the Pope, the Spanish crusade against the Moors, the French crusade against the Druses. But these enterprises severally contain very different proportions of the genuine crusading element.²

The “Irish crusade” referred to Pope Pius IX’s call to Catholics throughout Europe to defend the papal states against the ambitions of the leaders of the *Risorgimento*³ and was described by the author as the one “most entitled to respect” having a religious element; the Spanish attempt to conquer Morocco was, however, judged a “far less respectable affair” and the French intervention in Lebanon, launched by Napoleon III, was dismissed as “hypocritical ambition”, with a warning that Britain should not become involved.⁴ Both this and the use of the term crusade for a variety of social

1 Mike Horswell, *The Rise and Fall of British Crusader Medievalism, c. 1825–1945* (Abingdon-New York: Routledge, 2018), 36–43; Adam Knobler, “Paradigms for Understanding Modern Crusading,” in *The Crusades: History and Memory. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, vol.2*, ed Kurt V. Jensen and Torben K. Nielsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021): 169–181; Elizabeth Siberry, *The New Crusaders. Images of the Crusades in the 19th and early 20th centuries* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 73–87.

2 “Modern Crusades,” *Saturday Review*, 29 September 1860, 377–378.

3 Charles A. Coulombe, *The Pope’s legion: the multinational fighting force that defended the Vatican* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

4 For the Moroccan and Lebanese campaigns, see Adam Knobler, “Holy Wars, Empires and the Portability of the Past: the Modern Uses of Medieval Crusades,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 48 (2006): 296–301.

campaigns show, however, that the language, idea, and history of crusading remained part of what I have described elsewhere as Britain's national collective memory.⁵

My focus here will be to consider an earlier and, I believe, less familiar example, namely some of the crusade language associated in Britain with events in France following the French Revolution and the military campaigns in Europe, culminating in the Battle of Waterloo. This is but one strand of the numerous and varied British responses to these tumultuous events, but the source material is rich and offers a further perspective on the way in which later generations drew on the history and memory of the crusades to promote, criticise or explain current events. Britain was of course not alone in this, and I will make some brief references to the use of crusade language in French, Spanish, and German sources, but these merit separate detailed analysis and are cited here only to provide a wider context.

British political and ecclesiastical debate

The language of crusading was used by advocates and opponents of the war against France in both Houses of Parliament. The advocacy of Edmund Burke is reflected in the sub-title chosen for a modern study of his career, *The Commonwealth of Europe and the Crusade against the French Revolution*.⁶ Not all, however, shared his crusading zeal, and the essayist William Hazlitt later wrote of Burke:

His lamentations over the age of chivalry and his projected crusade to restore it are about as wise as if anyone, from reading the Beggar's Opera, should take to the picking of pockets.⁷

The young Scottish radical, James Mackintosh, author of *Vindiciae Galliciae: A Defence of the French Revolution and its English admirers*, published in 1791, was another critic of Burke's approach. In 1792, he wrote to the Prime Minister, William Pitt:

If [the Revolution] is successful, the spirit of extreme democracy is likely to spread over all Europe and to swallow up every remnant of Monarchy and of Nobility in the civil world. It was to prevent such consequences that Mr. Burke so benevolently counselled the Princes of Europe to undertake that crusade in which they are now so piously engaged.⁸

5 See Siberry, *Tales of the Crusaders – Remembering the Crusades in Britain* (Abingdon-New-York: Routledge, 2021). An article, in *The British Controversialist* (1870), 128, complained about the way in which the word crusade had been debased by usage to describe and promote a range of social campaigns.

6 Jennifer M. Welsh, *Edmund Burke and International Relations*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995).

7 William Hazlitt, *Political Essays-The Character of Mr. Burke* (London, 1819), 267. Hazlitt later wrote in his biography of Napoleon that with the declaration of war in 1793, all could "join heart and hand in the new crusade against the encroachments and ambition of France": William Hazlitt, *The Life of Napoleon*, vol 3 (London: The Grolier Society, 1830), 204.

8 Anna Plassart, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 94. For Mackintosh's interest in the crusades, see Siberry, *Tales*, 24–25.

In Parliament, the criticism was led by the radical M.P. Charles James Fox, who warned of the dangers of foreign intervention, recalling the outcome of the American War of Independence. In January 1793, Fox addressed his electors and contrasted the proposed conquest of France with the medieval crusades, “o calumniated crusaders, how rational and moderate were your objectives”.⁹ In February 1793, France declared war on Britain, but in a speech in May 1794, responding to the call to augment the armed forces, Fox argued that “every day afforded additional reasons for putting an end to our crusade against France”.¹⁰ Fox’s supporters included the M.P. and author Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who spoke of both a “mercenary crusade” and a “presumptuous crusade of vengeance”.¹¹ And in the House of Lords in April 1794, the Marquess of Lansdowne described Britain as a Don Quixote figure fighting a crusade against a French windmill.¹²

Supporters of the war against France also used the language of crusading, arguing that the revolutionaries were engaged in “a crusade against the governments of the world”, and in March 1795, the radical campaigner and journalist William Cobbett, writing as Peter Porcupine, wrote:

Our democrats are continually crying shame on the satellites of royalty, for carrying on a crusade against liberty; when the fact is the satellites of liberty are carrying on a crusade against royalty.¹³

In the summer of 1796, the Foreign Secretary, Lord Grenville, had asked Gouverneur Morris, the American Minister, to return to France and report on what he found, and he responded as an enthusiastic crusader:

This kind of crusade will not indeed be so wonderful as that which was produced by the preaching of Peter the Hermit, but it may answer better purposes.¹⁴

By June 1799, however, Grenville saw danger in the use of crusade language, which could confuse the real justification for the war:

In order to counteract the dangerous language of the address, which Lord Holland considered as pledging us to a crusade against the French people, he proposed another amendment, the substance of which was that we would

9 Charles J. Fox, *The Letter of the Hon. Charles James Fox to the Worthy and Independent Electors of the City and Liberty of Westminster* (London, 1793), 30.

10 *The Parliamentary Register or, History of the Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons (and House of Lords) containing the most interesting speeches* 17 (38) (1794), 352–354.

11 *Ibid.*, 363.

12 *Parliamentary Register* 17 (39) (1794), 262. References to a crusade were also made by the Dukes of Grafton and Bedford, *ibid.*, 354 and 367.

13 Peter Porcupine, “A Bone to Gnaw for the Democrats,” in *William Cobbett: Selected Writings*, ed. Leonora Natrass (Abingdon-New York: Routledge, 2021), 76.

14 Bradford Perkins, *The First Rapprochement: England and the United States 1795–1805* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1955), 104–105.

prosecute a vigorous war, till the republic of France shall be disposed to enter on the work of general pacification. . . . if the word crusade was used reproachfully, it was improperly used, for the present coalition was gloriously in arms to defend all just and legal rights of governments and of nations.¹⁵

The political debate was echoed in the Church of England, with sermons and pamphlets for and against the government's position and the justification for war. In April 1793 and February 1794, the vicar of Wellesbourne in Warwickshire, Revd. John Henry Williams recalled with disgust the bloodshed of the crusades and argued "think not your war holy merely because it is declared against infidels". Publication and circulation to Williams's network of contacts meant that these views reached a much wider audience, and he was not a lone voice.¹⁶ This clerical debate also attracted some criticism, with the poet William Blake commenting on the Bishop of Llandaff's advocacy of the war, "to what does the bishop attribute the English crusade against France".¹⁷

Letters and literary circles

This was also the great age of letter writing, with many intended for future publication. Such letters are another valuable source for the use of crusade language in this period. The Liverpool doctor and campaigner for reform, James Currie, who also found time to edit the works of the Scottish poet Robert Burns, published a letter in 1793 urging Pitt not to declare a crusade against France.¹⁸ And, writing from the cathedral close in Lichfield, Fox's criticism was shared by the author and prolific letter writer, Anna Seward, whose social and intellectual circle included Erasmus Darwin, and the young Walter Scott, who was later her literary executor.¹⁹ Seward had previously expressed her criticisms of the American War of Independence in her poetry, but whilst she remained forthright in her views about the government's war policy, she now did so more circumspectly

15 *The Annual Register or a View of the History, Politics and Literature for the year 1799*, 183.

16 Revd. John H. Williams, *Two Sermons Preached on the Public Fasts of April 1793 and February 1794* (London: G.G. and J. Robinson, 1794). See also Colin Haydon, *John Henry Williams: Political Clergymen, War, the French Revolution and the Church of England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007), 102. The Yorkshire cleric and landowner, Christopher Wyvill and dissenter Gilbert Wakefield also used the language of crusading to oppose the war. See *Correspondence of the Revd. C. Wyvill with Rt. Hon. William Pitt* (Newcastle, 1798), 74 and Gilbert Wakefield, *A reply to some parts of the Bishop of Llandaff's address to the People* (London, 1798), 21–22.

17 William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose*, ed. David V. Erdman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 613.

18 William W. Currie, *Memoir of the Life, Writings and Correspondence of James Currie M. D. F.R.S. of Liverpool* (London: Longman, 1831), vol. 1, 193.

19 Margaret Ashmun, *The Singing Swan: An Account of Anna Seward and her acquaintance with Dr. Johnson, Boswell and others of her time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931). Teresa Barnard, *Anna Seward: A Constructed Life* (Aldershot: Ashgate 2009).

in correspondence. Seward had initially supported the declaration of war in 1793 but saw little chance of victory and wrote in July 1794 to her friend Revd. Thomas Whalley, in Somerset:

From the moment Mr. Pitt declared in the senate, that the war must be pursued at every hazard, even of national ruin here, he fell in my confidence [...] The villainy of nations, as well as individuals, has been too often suffered to triumph for us to rely [...] upon the interference of Providence in a cause which is become desperate. Such dependence induced the crusades, which spilt rivers of Christian blood in vain, warring against infidelity.²⁰

Unlike Seward, Whalley supported the war against France, and during the 1790s and until Seward's death in 1809, they maintained a lively and lengthy correspondence on this subject, with both using crusade language to advocate their cause. In January 1800, Seward, who read widely about the progress of the war, denounced "the crusading jargon, upon whose fallacy reason and history have pronounced"²¹ and in March 1803, she lamented "the direful consequences of that wretched, presumptuous crusade of nine years, whose Ate spirit was nursed in the British cabinet".²² One of her concerns was the impact of the war upon the British people, and in December 1797, she wrote to the antiquary and fellow writer Thomas Park about the "dire and inevitable consequences of this crusading and subsidizing war", which were pressing heavily upon the nation.²³

The novelist Helen Maria Williams was another of Seward's correspondents and provides a cross-channel perspective and window into debate in France itself. A French resident throughout the wars and advocate of the French Revolution, even though she had been imprisoned in Paris during the Reign of Terror, Williams's salon in Paris was attended by some of the most important literary and political figures of the day, and she published several volumes of letters giving a first-hand account of events as they unfolded.²⁴ These also included parallels drawn with the medieval crusades. Writing in 1790, Williams criticised the use of the term 'crusade':

Heretofore a crusade against infidels would have been required in expiation, what was now expected was a crusade against the liberaux.²⁵

20 Anna Seward, *Letters written between 1784–1807* (Edinburgh: Constable, 1811) vol. 3, 377–379.

21 *Journals and Correspondence of Thomas Sedgwick Whalley* ed. Revd. Hill Wickham (London: Richard Bentley, 1863), vol. 2, 132.

22 *Ibid.*, 243.

23 Seward, *Letters*, vol. 5, 33.

24 Deborah Kennedy, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2002) and Gary Kelly, *Women, Writing and Revolution 1790–1827* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993).

25 Helen Mary Williams, *Letters written in France in the summer of 1790*, ed. Susan S. Lanser and Neil Fraistat (Ormskirk: Thomas Lyster, 2001), 163–165.

And, in another volume of letters published in 1819, she reflected on the Revolution, expressing the hope that French ideas would inspire Britain:

The crusaders that so long devastated Europe roused the human mind from its long lethargy and unfolded its intellectual powers. Who shall say that the armies of the north have not imbibed new ideas of freedom and independence while they sojourned in France.²⁶

Whilst Williams' views remained pro-Revolution, others changed their minds as events unfolded. The poets Robert Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who both wrote in different ways about the medieval crusades,²⁷ had initially been supportive of the dawn of liberty promised by the French Revolution, but as the violence escalated, they focused their hopes on the French people rather than their leaders.²⁸ And as will be discussed later, they also saw the war in Spain as a crusade.²⁹

Malta, Egypt and Acre

Some campaigns were, of course, fought on the same soil as the crusades. In 1798, Napoleon had conquered Malta, expelling the Knights of St. John, but this did not preclude parallels being drawn between his Egyptian campaign and the crusades of Philip Augustus and Saint Louis. Indeed, the novelist Alexandre Dumas called the Egyptian expedition the eighth crusade.³⁰ And in Britain, the defence of Acre in 1799 by Sidney Smith, albeit in alliance with the Turks, was widely celebrated, with inevitable parallels drawn with the siege of Acre on the Third Crusade. A panorama of the siege by the artist Robert Ker Porter was put on display at the Lyceum in London in 1801. Visitors could also purchase an explanatory book, which gave a brief history of "British valour on the Syrian coast in the wars of the 12th century" and included "events of the siege ably narrated by the pen of that Christian commander, to whose courage and activity the city has owed its preservation from the infidels of the 18th century".³¹ The infidels here were, of course, the French. Porter's panorama was also popularised through engravings, and his sister, Anna Maria, published a romantic novel, *The Knight of St John* in 1817.

Eyles Irwin, a former member of the East India Company who had travelled in Egypt and knew the topography, published several pamphlets about Napoleon's

26 Williams, *Letters on events which have passed in France since the Restoration in 1819* (London, 1819), 73.

27 Siberry, *Tales*, 21–23.

28 Joseph Crawford, "The Romantic Gothic Imagination," *History Today* (June 2015), 9.

29 See below, pp. 9–10.

30 J. Christopher Herold, *Bonaparte in Egypt* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1963), 69, 81. The poet Parseval-Grandmaison, who accompanied the army to Egypt, is also said to have begun work on an epic poem glorifying the capture of Acre by Richard I.

31 *The Siege of Acre or Descriptive Collections relative to the late scene of contest between the British and Turkish forces under the command of Sir Sidney Smith and the Republican French commanded by General Buonaparte* (London, 1801). See also Siberry, *New Crusaders*, 73–75.

Egyptian campaign, including one entitled *The Failure of the French Crusade*, and hoped that a future Tasso might celebrate Smith's heroic action.³²

Other contemporaries also recalled the days of the crusades. In 1801, the poet and playwright Hannah Cowley published a lengthy epic poem, *The Siege of Acre*, which drew parallels with Richard the Lionheart and Edward I and placed the siege of Acre in the pantheon of British military victories along with Agincourt and Blenheim. Her poem is also an example of a feminine perspective on war, which will be discussed further later, with one character disguising herself as a man so that she can follow her husband, describing the horrors that she witnesses, and ending in her own death when she is shot by a French sniper.³³

It was no coincidence that the same year also saw the publication of *Richard the First* by Sir James Bland Burges, a former M.P. and Minister at the Foreign Office. The poem (running to over 17,000 lines and in Spenserian verse) included a debate about the respective benefits of anarchic democracy and monarchic rule, set in late 12th-century England but with a clear modern message. In the twelfth book, False Philosophy foretells Britain's triumph over France, with a direct reference to Prime Minister Pitt:

These and worst ills await thy menac'd realm,
Unless, what fate will scarce to hope allow,
Some honest statesman then shall guide the helm;
Who, while his breast with youthful zeal shall glow,
Shall tear the mask from frenzied faction's brow
And call on Albion's sons the patriot sword to gird.³⁴

This explicit modern parallel drew criticism from John Aiken, the editor of the *Monthly Magazine* and a critic of Burke's crusading advocacy,³⁵ who hoped that a second edition would "expunge all party politics and allusions". It received however favourable comments from fellow authors, including William Wordsworth, and Lord Byron noted that he read it whilst in Malta in 1811.³⁶ Burges's epic was mentioned in the *Gentleman's Magazine*³⁷ and in a lengthy review, the *British Critic* noted that it stirred "the patriotic feelings of Britons by being limited to the

32 Eyles Irwin, *The Failure of the French Crusade or the advantages to be derived from the restoration of Egypt to the Turks* (London: W. Bulmer, 1799), 14. See D. L. Prior, "Eyles Irwin," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed 7 November 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/14477>

33 Simon Bainbridge, *Napoleon and English Romanticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 201. Bainbridge, *British Poetry and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Visions of Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3 notes that over 3,000 poems on the war were published in the newspapers and periodicals of the day.

34 James Burges, *Richard the First: a poem* (London, 1800) Book 12, 114, verse CXIX.

35 Lucy Aiken, *Memoir of John Aiken MD* (London: Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, 1823), 101.

36 *Monthly Magazine* 11 (Supplement) (1801), 604; James Bland Burges, *Selections from the Letters and Correspondence of Sir James Bland Burges* ed. James Hutton (London: John Murray, 1885), 308–309.

37 *Gentleman's Magazine* (1801), 145.

fortunes and achievements of their famous hero, Coeur de Lion”.³⁸ Fortuitously, Burges’s cousin reminded him that an ancestor had been a knight of Jerusalem and died in the Holy Land.³⁹

The anonymous author of *The Crusaders or The Minstrels of Acre*, a poem of six cantos published in 1808, described the reaction to the news of the defeat at the Battle of Hattin in 1187 and “my brethren dear, sons of our Northern Isles” who answered the call to arms. A minstrel at a banquet to celebrate the recapture of Acre then predicts the events of 1799:

And if, in some far distant year,
From Cairo’s gates with Paynim boast
A faithless chief shall urge his host,
On Turon’s mount his ensigns rear,
‘gainst Acre’s wall his fury spend,
Again, so heaven decree be found
A Christian knight from English ground
These red cross bulwarks to defend
And match the trophies thou hast won.⁴⁰

The poem was reviewed in a number of contemporary periodicals, although the *Monthly Review* protested against the “practice of introducing heroes of all ages and climes [...] which reminds us of a biography rather than of a poem”.⁴¹ There seems, however, to have been a keen appetite for such historical parallels and the use of the epic form, with the crusaders and kings of medieval Britain portrayed as heroic exemplars inspiring their successors in times of danger.⁴²

British forces were again at Acre in 1840. In his poem *Syria: Acre (Ptolemais)*, Walter Savage Landor, of whom more later, linked the siege of Acre under Richard the Lionheart with the siege of 1799 by Smith and then the recapture of Acre by his close friend Admiral Napier in 1840:

No city on the many peopled earth
Hath been the witness of such valiant deeds
As thou hast, Ptolemais! And by whom
Were they achieved? By Britons, one and all.
The first our lion-hearted king may claim;
And who the second? He who drove across
The torrid desert the (till then unchecked).
Invader, from those realms the Ptolemies
Ruled, and the Caesars followed in their train,

38 *British Critic*, 17 (1801), 224.

39 Burges, *Selections*, 293.

40 *The Crusaders or The Minstrels of Acre* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1808), canto 2, 48–49.

41 *Monthly Review* 62 (May 1810), 17–26.

42 This and other epics inspired by the crusades are discussed by Herbert F. Tucker, *Epic. Britain’s Heroic Muse 1790–1901* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Sidney, the last of chivalry. One more
 Rode o'er the sea to win the crown that hung
 Inviting on thy walls: he also bore
 A name illustrious even as Sidney's own,
 Napier was he.
 't is something to have held
 His hand in mine, 't is somewhat to record
 One of his actions in the crowded page.⁴³

And in 1840, Cambridge University chose as the subject for the Chancellor's Gold Medal a poem on the theme of Richard I in Palestine. The winner was John Charles Conybeare, later a barrister and judge, who recalled not only the medieval royal crusader but also "gallant Sidney".⁴⁴

Crusading in Spain

Crusade language can also be found in the reaction to Napoleon's military campaigns across Europe, particularly in Spain. As just two examples, after Napoleon's declaration of war in 1793, the Jesuit Francisco Gustà wrote *Saggio Critico sulle Crociate* ("A Critical Essay on the Crusades") which argued for a modern crusade, and some regions in 1808–1809 declared *cruzadas*, with those participating displaying a black flag with a red cross, as used in the Reconquista.⁴⁵

In Britain, the Spanish cause inspired writers such as Scott and Byron, and in August 1808, Landor wrote to his friend Southey:

I am going to Spain. In three days I shall have sailed. At Brighton one evening, I preached a crusade to two auditors. Inclination was not wanting and in a few minutes everything was fixed.⁴⁶

Landor's recruits were Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. O'Hara from Ireland, although there is no evidence that they actually fought in Spain. As for Landor himself, he arrived in Coruña in August and was back in Britain by late October. But whilst he did not take part in any battles, he led a force on a 300 km march to the headquarters of the Spanish General Blake in Astorga and contributed 10,000 *reales* to the cause.⁴⁷

43 Walter S. Landor, "Ptolemais" in *Poems*, accessed 09 January 2023, <https://www.bartleby.com/270/11/21.html>.

44 *A Complete Collection of the English Poems which have won the Chancellor's Gold Medal* (Cambridge: T. and J. Allman, 1859), 217–225. A similar parallel was drawn by Reginald Heber, winner of the Oxford Newdigate prize in 1803 on the subject Palestine.

45 Glauco Schettini, "Eighteenth Century Crusaders: The War against France and the Catholic Counterrevolution, 1789–99" in *Cosmopolitan Conservatism: Countering Revolution in Transnational Networks, Ideas and Movements, c 1700–1930*, ed. Matthijs Lok, Friedemann Pestel and Juliette Rebouls (Leiden: Brill, 2021): 152–171; Knobler, "Holy Wars", 297–298; Gracieia I. Rogers, *British Liberators in the Age of Napoleon* (London: Continuum, 2013).

46 Robert H. Super, *Walter Savage Landor* (New York: New York University Press, 1954), 83.

47 See Bainbridge, *Napoleon*, 95–134.

Southey wrote to his brother, who was serving in the navy:

Landor has gone to Spain [...] This is something like the days of old, as we poets and romancers represent them; something like the best part of chivalry, old honours, old generosity, old heroism are reviving.⁴⁸

And in a letter to Anna Seward dated in late August 1808, he referred to Landor's preaching of a crusade and wished his endeavours success "God be with them".⁴⁹

Southey followed the events of the war closely and wrote at the time of the siege of Zaragoza in January 1809:

My hope and faith in the Spaniards remain unshaken by their reverses [...] Were I a single man I would hasten to Spain as to a crusade and if possible get to Zaragossa in time for the siege.⁵⁰

He remained in Britain but continued to see the struggle against France as a crusade "on the part of us and the Spaniards".⁵¹ For Southey, the fate of Spain was a personal matter, having spent time living there and writing about its history and literature⁵² and in his *History of the Peninsula War*, published between 1823 and 1832, he noted "like the crusaders of old, the inhabitants took the cross".⁵³ Later historians of the War used similar crusade language. For example, in his seven-volume *History of the Peninsula War* published between 1902 and 1930, Charles Oman wrote of Sir John Moore's aide de camp, Colonel (later General) Thomas Graham, who had seen the brutality of the French Revolution firsthand and fought across Europe, "he was no mere professional soldier, but a crusader with a mission".⁵⁴

There remained, however, parliamentary critics such as the radical M.P. Francis Burdett, who, in his reply to the Prince Regent's speech on 7 January 1812, expressed concern that after the first 'crusade' against France was finished:

We now found ourselves engaged in another seemingly endless contest; and he did not believe that any one of the persons who defended it, could say what they were fighting for.

Burdett's speech was subsequently published, running through 15 editions by March 1812 with some 30,000 copies sold, so his challenge struck a popular chord

48 Malcolm Elwin, *Landor. A Replevin* (London: Macdonald, 1958), 116.

49 *The Collected Letters of Robert Southey, Part Three*, ed. Carol Bolton and Tim Fulford, accessed 09 January 2023, www.romantic-circles.org, letter 1499.

50 *Ibid.* letter 1567.

51 Letter 1532 to his Westminster school friend, Grosvenor Bedford, 11 November 1808.

52 Packer and Pratt, "Robert Southey and the Peninsular War," in *Spain in British Romanticism* ed. Ian Haywood and Diego Saglia (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017): 37–54.

53 Robert Southey, *History of the Peninsular War*, 3 vol (London, 1823–32), vol. 2, 523.

54 Charles Oman, *Peninsula War*, 7 vol (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902–30), vol. 4, 96–97.

of opinion, although his radicalism apparently prompted some to declare a ‘crusade’ against him.⁵⁵

The female perspective

Mention has already been made of some female authors who were inspired to write about or comment on the war, but others approached the subject from a different perspective. Felicia Browne (Mrs. Hemans), who has been described as the most widely read woman poet of the 19th-century English-speaking world,⁵⁶ had family members fighting in Spain and linked the war there to Britain’s chivalric past and imperial destiny. In her poem *England and Spain or, Valour and Patriotism*, published in 1808, she recalled the “prince of the lionheart, whose arm in fight on Syria’s plains repelled Saladin’s might” amongst past victories. And both Laetitia Landon and Amelia Opie, worried about the heavy loss of life, used the screen of the medieval crusades to convey their opposition to the war.⁵⁷ In Landon’s *The Crusader*, “in chasing the glory of the righteous crusade, the warrior pays with the destruction of the family, the lover and the life he left unprotected”. And in her poem *The Warrior’s Return*, Opie has a further variant on this theme. Sir Walter returns from the Holy Land after an absence of 15 years, expecting to see his adult son Alfred. He discovers, however, that he had followed him to the East and was the young knight whom he had killed in a dispute. The poem was published in 1808, which was, of course, 15 years after France’s declaration of war on Britain.⁵⁸

Some German parallels

As already noted, the use of the word crusade was not confined to Britain, and the following examples reflect some of the German usage in the later stages of the European war. The priest and poet Zacharias Werner recalled the sacrifice of those who had fought to reclaim the Holy Sepulchre and used the language of a holy war. And Theodore Korner, who was killed in battle in August 1813, wrote “this is not a war which crowns know of, it is a crusade, it is a holy war”. The artist Heinrich Olivier, who had himself fought against Napoleon, also depicted the three members of the Holy Alliance in 1815 – Czar Alexander, Emperor Francis II, and King Frederick William of Prussia – as crusaders in a painting entitled “The Holy Alliance” now in the gallery in Dessau.⁵⁹

55 Sir Francis Burdett, *Address to the Prince Regent* (London, 1812), 4. Melville W. Patterson, *Sir Francis Burdett and his Times 1770–1844* (London: Macmillan, 1931), 315–316.

56 Bainbridge, *British Poetry*, 150–159.

57 Clare B. Saunders, “Louisa Stuart Costello and Women’s War Poetry,” *The Wordsworth Circle* 43.3 (2012): 178–182.

58 Amelia Opie, *Collected Works*, ed. Shelley King and John B. Pierce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 149–153.

59 Manfred P. Fleischer, “Deus Presens in June: The Politics of Ludwig von Gerlech,” *Zeitschrift für Religions und Geistesgeschichte* 39.12 (1987): 1–23; Colin Walker, “Zacharias Werner and the Crusade against Napoleon,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 71.3 (1989): 141–157.

Waterloo

After Napoleon's return from exile in Elba in April 1815, the Prince Regent called the nation to arms, but even so, not all in Britain supported the resumption of war. In the House of Commons debate, several MPs challenged the government's position, using the language of crusading. The M.P. for Waterford in Ireland, Sir John Newport, declared that "it would certainly be the most unwise crusade that had ever been heard of", and Samuel Whitbread, M.P. for Bedford, contended:

Against it being in the interests of the country to begin a fresh crusade for the purpose of determining who should fill the throne of France, after the experience we had had of the last crusade of twenty years – terminated only by accident, and by the temporary madness of the man who then filled, and now fills, the throne of France.⁶⁰

In his *Weekly Political Register* of April 1815, William Cobbett also denounced the war "as a crusade against France and against liberty". Cobbett lamented what could have been if Napoleon had remained faithful to the original republican ideals and spelled this out in an open letter to Lord Castlereagh, reflecting on the Prince Regent's message:

The war of 1793 was called a crusade and very justly so called. By some it was decreed a crusade in the cause of religion and social order; by others a crusade against liberty. That it was a war of kings and nobles against the enemies of kingly and feudal and ecclesiastical government, all the world must allow.⁶¹

And for Sir Francis Burdett in May 1815, there was concern about the nature of the European alliance:

With this rotten state of Europe, we are about to enter on a crusade against an individual, because we could not rely on his word.⁶²

The battle of Waterloo was of course fought and won against Napoleon in June 1815, but, whilst some applauded this victory, others, such as the antiquary Francis Douce, lamented the human cost:

A great and sanguinary battle has been fought in Flanders [...] The deaths of 10,000 English soldiers who might have been better employed than in this cowardly crusade of kings with their hired murderers against the liberties of mankind.⁶³

60 *Address on the Prince Regent's Message relating to events in France, Hansard 7 April 1815*, accessed 09 January 2023, api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1815/apr/06/prince-regents-message.

61 *Weekly Political Register* (27) 1815, 449.

62 Accessed 09 January 2023, api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/sittings/1815/may/25.

63 Rosemary Hill, *Time's Witness. History in the Age of Romanticism* (London: Penguin, 2021), 109.

Concern was also expressed at the political aftermath and the “tyranny of the Holy Alliance” and statesmen who “had declared a crusade against the freedom of Europe”.⁶⁴ So the crusades remained a thread of debate throughout this period.

Conclusion

Whilst there have been some studies of the use of crusade language in the 19th century and up to the present day, the British sources for the war against revolutionary and Napoleonic France have not previously been subject to such analysis. The richness of the material for this period of British history, in political debate, clerical sermons, pamphlets, letters, diaries and literature, however, reveals widespread usage of crusade terminology. Given the peril which faced Britain, it is not surprising that events and heroes of the past should be recalled and used to inspire their successors. The crusades provided both a historical parallel and vocabulary, and, as the examples cited from France, Spain, and Germany show, Britain was not alone in drawing on its past history in this way. Not all, of course, agreed with the use of this terminology, but they often responded in similar terms, drawing on their knowledge of the events of the medieval crusades at a time when that history was becoming more widely available through publications in Britain and Europe.⁶⁵ This analysis of its use in Britain therefore fills a gap in the study of the usage and significance of the word crusade in a period of revolution and European war.

⁶⁴ *The Annual Register* (1821), 14–18.

⁶⁵ For the availability of 19th-century histories and periodical articles about the crusades, see Siberry, *Tales*, 12–33.

10 Lutter contre l'immoralité: une « croisade morale »?

L'exemple des ligues de vertu sous les début de la Troisième République

Philippe Fache

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O tempora! O mores! Si chaque époque a peu ou prou entonné le refrain de la décadence morale et de la perversion de ses mœurs, la fin du XIX^e siècle nous offre un spectacle particulier. Cela, tant par sa propension à se désigner à elle-même des périls qui la menacent que par sa manière d'y répondre. Les années qui entourent le basculement dans le nouveau siècle sont effectivement des « années électriques »,¹ dont l'historiographie cumule les désignations en termes de « crise » à la fois intellectuelle, politique et, bien entendu, morale. Des années marquées à la fois par les craintes, les peurs et les incertitudes quant au devenir de la société, voire même de la civilisation, et par l'ambition d'en édifier de nouvelles bases : pour cela, « moraliser » et « instruire à la vertu » apparaissent alors comme des orientations de premier ordre, qui guident autant la religion et les institutions sociales que les politiques de logement ou les divertissements populaires.² Le spectre est large, il recouvre un ensemble considérable de pratiques, tout en produisant une abondante littérature; mais il s'accompagne par la volonté concomitante de défendre les « bonnes mœurs » et de protéger la « morale publique » de la dégénérescence et de la dissolution, comme autant de valeurs sacrées et de piliers de l'ordre social.

Au début de la Troisième République, s'amorcent ainsi les bases d'une lutte organisée contre l'immoralité, la pornographie et le vice, agissant au nom de la sauvegarde des mœurs et du relèvement moral.³ Sous la forme de plusieurs ligues, fédération et sociétés diverses, cette lutte constitue un champ d'observation où se marque le seuil d'émotivité – par essence fluctuant et soumis à l'historicité – d'un groupe social face aux « agressions contre les mœurs ». Elle s'organise alors principalement autour de la Ligue Française pour le Relèvement de la Moralité Publique (LFRMP), fondée en 1883, la Société Centrale de Protestation contre la

1 Christophe Prochasson, *Les années électriques. 1880-1910* (Paris: Éditions de la Découverte, 1991).

2 Stéphane Michaud, « La grande affectation de morale ou le XIX^e siècle et ses peurs : la pédagogie de l'Église, » dans *L'édification, morales et cultures au XIX^e siècle*, ed. Christophe Prochasson (Paris: Créaphis, 1993): 23-32.

3 Sans pouvoir détailler ici la cible de ces mouvements « anti-pornographiques », précisons quand même qu'elle recouvre un large spectre « d'écrits et de représentations licencieuses » incluant les cafés concerts, les music-halls, les théâtres, les affiches publicitaires, les ouvrages et les publications licencieuses, les illustrés, les cartes postales illustrées, les journaux quotidiens s'étalant dans les kiosques, les gravures, les brochures envoyées à domicile, etc.

Licence des Rues fondée en 1891, la Ligue de l'Étoile Blanche, fondée en 1899, et la Fédération des Sociétés contre l'Immoralité Publique fondée en 1905. Comme beaucoup des « contre sociétés » militantes qui fourmillent à cette époque, elles produisent ce que l'on peut désigner comme des grands récits, où se manifestent l'indignation contre le cours scandaleux des choses, la désignation des dangers et des périls, pour montrer comment collectivement il est possible, nécessaire, d'opérer les changements et les réformes vers ce qui « sauve ». Mais cette lutte si particulière est-elle l'équivalent d'une croisade ? En quoi se définit-elle, ou est-elle définie ou non comme telle à l'époque ? En outre, la question des usages sociaux contextualisés du terme n'invite-t-elle pas à être mise en miroir avec celle de ses usages sociologiques pour désigner de tels mouvements ? C'est ce que nous nous efforcerons de montrer, à partir de la tradition américaine établissant une analogie entre les mobilisations collectives ayant pour but la réforme des mœurs et la défense de la moralité publique.

Nous aborderons donc en premier lieu tout à la fois les usages et les non usages du terme de 'croisade' par les contemporains de l'action des ligues de vertu; puis nous verrons dans un second temps comment le concept sociologique de « croisade morale » peut s'appliquer à cette lutte contre l'immoralité en fournissant un cadre d'analyse.

Des croisés qui ne sont pas en croisade: l'évitement du mot pour ne pas desservir la cause

L'Imaginaire de la croisade et le refus de l'étiquette religieuse

Hommes d'action fustigeant les postures moralistes limitées au verbe, les membres des Ligues de vertu définissent principalement leur action en termes de lutte et de combat.⁴ À ce titre, ils nourrissent une méfiance quasi-viscérale vis-à-vis des « honnêtes gens », toujours prompts à s'indigner, mais plus rarement à agir contre les forces de dégénérescence morale. Ces propos d'Émile Pourésy, figure centrale du combat des ligues, en témoignent : « Les honnêtes gens ? Je sais trop ce qu'ils valent et méritent pour me préoccuper de leurs béates protestations. Je les entends comme je les ai entendus pendant six années, et je suis arrivé à craindre moins les pornographes que la veulerie des honnêtes gens ».⁵ Les ligueurs se démarquent ainsi du moraliste. Ils refusent la posture lointaine d'une condamnation de principe :

4 Quelques précisions utiles sur la terminologie employée dans cet article : les termes de « ligueurs », « vertuiste », ou « moraliste » ne sont pas équivalents. Ils se situent sur une échelle graduée qui va de l'engagement dans l'action à la réflexion morale. « Ligueurs » fait naturellement référence aux membres des Ligues et des sociétés protectrices de la moralité publique. Le terme « vertuiste » est quant à lui emprunté au pamphlet de Vilfredo Pareto sur *Le mythe vertuiste et la littérature immorale*, publié en 1911. Expurgé de la connotation négative qu'il revêt dans le texte de Pareto, nous l'utiliserons pour désigner un cercle plus élargi que celui des ligueurs, incluant des auteurs, des juristes ou des hommes politiques qui, sans appartenir à aucune des structures qui nous intéressent, partagent néanmoins les mêmes préoccupations morales face à l'immoralité publique. Enfin, nous utiliserons le terme de « moraliste » pour qualifier ceux qui écrivent sur les mœurs, mais qui ne sont pas impliqués dans la réflexion sur le « péril pornographique ».

5 Émile Pourésy, *La gangrène pornographique, choses vues* (Roubaix: Foyer solidariste, 1908), 143.

ils veulent dénoncer, mais en connaissance de cause. Aussi, les métaphores abondent-elles pour signifier cette confrontation concrète avec leur champ d'action. Toutes appartiennent au double registre du combat et de la confrontation directe: la lutte implique ainsi de batailler « sur le front de l'immoralité »; et conséquemment de « plonger dans la fange ». Le pasteur protestant Tommy Fallot, fondateur de la LFRMP en 1883, met en avant cet aspect de la lutte, en rappelant que le rôle d'une ligue de vertu consiste avant toute chose à « aller dans la boue »;⁶ cette injonction tactique faisant logiquement écho au programme fixé dès 1892, dans lequel était stipulée la volonté de la ligue de diriger les regards sur « l'envers social, en pénétrant notamment dans le domaine du répugnant ».⁷

Brandissant leur goût pour l'action, les ligueurs se sentent donc engagés dans une lutte sans merci contre le mal. Mais sont-ils coutumiers du recours au terme de 'croisade' pour qualifier leur démarche et leur engagement ? Un examen attentif des archives et des publications des ligues (publications de la Ligue Française pour le Relèvement de la Moralité Publique et de la ligue de l'Étoile Blanche pour l'essentiel) révèle que le vocable de 'croisade' intègre parfois le lexique de leur rhétorique riche en images et en métaphores, dans le sens d'un mouvement résolu, déterminé à combattre l'immoralité publique. Fustigeant la veulerie des élus face aux spectacles méritant interdiction pour des motifs d'outrages aux bonnes mœurs, l'auteur d'un ouvrage consacré à l'immoralité, Henri Merlier, évoque ainsi « des croisés de la morale qui apprennent à leurs dépens que l'honnête homme cède devant les impératifs de la fonction d'homme public ».⁸ Cet usage du mot connotant le degré d'engagement dans la lutte contre l'immoralité se retrouve également quoiqu'occasionnellement sous la plume d'Émile Pourésy, évoquant « notre croisade contre la réglementation de la prostitution »;⁹ ou encore sous celle du sociologue et juriste Paul Bureau, membre actif de la section parisienne de la LFRMP et auteur d'un essai remarqué, *La crise morale des temps nouveaux* (1907), dans lequel il fait allusion à la « croisade contre le fléau de la dénatalité ».¹⁰

Un tel usage du mot n'est cependant pas l'apanage des ligueurs. Il fait écho à celui qui en est fait à l'époque dans l'espace public. Sous la Troisième République, il est en effet de plus en plus courant – dans un contexte fortement marqué par le réformisme social et l'hygiénisme – de qualifier l'action de la société sur elle-même dans les termes de la croisade: « croisade contre les maladies vénériennes », « croisade contre la tuberculose », « croisade contre l'alcoolisme », « croisade contre les taudis », « croisade contre la syphilis ».¹¹ Les exemples abondent, dans

6 Tommy Fallot, *Notre nouvelle campagne* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1891).

7 *Le Relèvement Social*, (Bulletin périodique de la Ligue Française pour le Relèvement de la Moralité Publique), 15 mai 1892.

8 Henri Merlier, *L'immoralité actuelle et ses complices. Quelques faits* (Avranches: imprimerie nouvelle, 1926), 7.

9 Émile Pourésy, *Sous le fléau de l'immoralité* (Cahors: édition du Relèvement Social, 1937), 352.

10 Paul Bureau, *L'indiscipline des mœurs* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1921), 244.

11 A titre d'exemple, Léon Bourgeois, le père du solidarisme, évoque dans le journal *Le Radical* du 15 mai 1913 la nécessité « d'organiser une croisade contre les trois maux sociaux : l'alcoolisme, la tuberculose, et la diminution de la natalité ».

les débats publics, politiques, dans les articles de presse, des usages sociaux du terme, évidés de toute connotation religieuse ou sacrée, signifiant pour la société un combat vital à sa préservation, un effort politique de lutte indispensable pour conjurer les désordres et éloigner les périls. Le trait d'union entre ces occurrences – touchant à différents domaines sociaux et médicaux – réside dans la notion de « fléau social », ainsi qu'à l'imaginaire et aux représentations qui lui sont associées. Apparue dans le dernier tiers du XIX^e siècle, celle-ci culminera dans la période de l'entre-deux-guerres, avec une « effervescence militante d'ampleur inédite à l'encontre des fléaux sociaux ». ¹² Par définition, est alors définie comme « fléau social » une menace d'ampleur pour la survie de la collectivité. Mais il va de soi que tout problème social n'accède pas à cette catégorisation, laquelle appelle logiquement à une réaction sociale et implique des réponses politiques à la mesure des risques encourus. Le « fléau social » se situe ainsi à la croisée d'une double dimension, symbolique (comme phénomène construit et interprété dans un univers symbolique de sens particulier) et concrète (une réalité biophysique ou sociale porteuse de dangers). La lutte contre l'immoralité s'inscrira elle aussi dans ce moule avec, à titre d'exemple, un *meeting* public sur le « fléau de l'immoralité » organisé à Lyon en mars 1922. ¹³

Le registre combatif d'une collectivité luttant pour sa survie donne donc l'occasion de voir le mot 'croisade' associé à celui de « fléau social » ; les évocations en termes de 'croisade' contre tel ou tel « fléau social » se multiplient de façon notable au cours de la période, pour devenir particulièrement foisonnants dans les années 1920-1930. ¹⁴ Mais dans le cadre des ligues de moralité, force est de constater, en comparaison, le recours modéré et finalement extrêmement rare à l'usage figuré du mot 'croisade' ; auquel on en préfère d'autres, pour la plupart tirés du champ lexical du combat et de la lutte. Comment peut-on l'expliquer ? Il faut pour cela bien prendre en considération que cette modération dans l'usage du terme relève avant tout de la prudence tactique : c'est qu'en réalité, utiliser le terme de 'croisade' revient bien négligemment et imprudemment à prêter le flanc à toutes les critiques et tous les discrédits. C'est donc courir un risque dont il vaut mieux se prémunir. La clé pour déplier le type de risques encourus ici tient fondamentalement dans le caractère non confessionnel affiché par les ligues de vertu. En effet, leur quête stratégique pour mobiliser contre l'immoralité publique résidait dans le développement de leur capacité à trouver les bons relais et obtenir des soutiens dans les milieux politiques, juridiques et éducatifs. Pour la poignée d'hommes à l'origine du mouvement, l'enjeu était donc de s'ouvrir sur l'extérieur. Pour le noyau des fondateurs protestants de la LFRMP, il était impératif d'ouvrir les comités à des hommes extérieurs au protestantisme, car à leurs propres yeux, les protestants représentaient *de facto* une population trop restreinte pour espérer

12 Fabrice Cahen, Adrien Minard. « Les mobilisations contre les 'fléaux sociaux' dans l'entre-deux-guerres. Essai de cartographie sociale », *Histoire & mesure*, 31-2 (2016): 141-170 à la page 141.

13 « Meeting public sur le fléau de l'immoralité, tenu à Lyon le 26 mars 1922 », extrait des *Actes du Troisième Congrès National contre la Pornographie de la Fédération des Sociétés Contre l'Immoralité Publique, tenu à Lyon les 24, 25, 26 mars 1922* (Paris : imprimerie Coueslant, 1922).

14 Cahen, Minard, « Les mobilisations contre les 'fléaux sociaux' ».

assumer une « œuvre de propagande »¹⁵ exigeant un cercle d'alliés aussi large que possible, ceci afin de déterminer un puissant courant de masse. De manière générale, ce diagnostic fut également celui du christianisme social, qui thématiza et systématisa l'alliance avec des non-croyants. On trouve chez le juriste Raoul Biville, membre de la Ligue de l'Étoile Blanche, des propos édifiants lorsqu'il affirme, par exemple, que « l'action individuelle du chrétien est nécessaire, mais insuffisante », en conséquence de quoi « le chrétien se joindra à ceux qui travaillent en commun, sans se préoccuper de leurs convictions religieuses ».¹⁶ On retrouve bien ici l'un des présupposés du christianisme social.

Mais au-delà du problème des effectifs militants, la question de l'audience dont peut bénéficier l'action contre l'immoralité est posée sensiblement dans les mêmes termes. Une évidence s'impose: celle des limites de l'action d'un groupe chrétien, le risque de son faible écho et d'un auditoire limité aux seuls croyants, communauté elle-même de plus en plus restreinte. De fait, prêcher les convaincus offre dans l'esprit des premiers ligueurs trop peu de perspectives. La trajectoire de la Ligue Démocratique d'Action Morale et Sociale, elle aussi composée en majeure partie de protestants lors de sa fondation en 1911, est à ce titre représentative des évolutions vécues par la plupart des Ligues de vertu. Née d'une Union Chrétienne de Jeunes Gens, elle lutte contre les fléaux sociaux et moraux, et traverse elle aussi une phase de mutation qui la fait passer par deux stades distincts. De la conception d'un groupe à caractère confessionnel, elle glisse en effet vers celle d'une ligue pluraliste ; et ce principalement en raison d'une prise de conscience quant aux limites précédemment énoncées. Évoquant les péripéties de ce passage, son secrétaire général, M. Terrier, souligne l'impasse où semblait se trouver une action menée sous la seule bannière chrétienne: « Le bien que nous pouvions faire ça et là par quelques interventions visant l'alcoolisme ou la pornographie ne paraissait pas en rapport avec les efforts que nous fournissions » écrit-il en 1921. De là « une volonté d'agrandir le cercle et de faire entrer les gens de bonne volonté ».¹⁷

Un combat sous bannière non confessionnelle

La composition des différents comités des Ligues obéit à des préoccupations stratégiques précises. Elle fait l'objet d'une vigilance spécifique, et disons d'un souci d'équilibre quant aux profils idéologiques, religieux et socioprofessionnels des personnalités en présence. Il convient en effet d'observer que cette composition des comités de vigilance, loin de se confondre avec le produit spontané des adhésions et des ralliements, procède tout autant du savant dosage, pensé et provoqué à priori, en fonction de ce que l'on croit bénéfique et désirable pour défendre la cause. La diversité qui marque invariablement la plupart des comités tient pour

15 Élie Gounelle, *La vie et l'œuvre de Louis Comte, pionnier de la moralité publique et fondateur de l'œuvre des enfants à la montagne* (Saint-Étienne: Éditions du "Christianisme Social", 1927), 42.

16 Raoul Biville, *Le chrétien et les ligues morales et sociales* (Vals les Bains: E. Aberlen, 1901), 28.

17 Ligue d'Action Morale et Sociale, *Compte-rendu de l'assemblée générale du 21 janvier 1921* (Cahors: imprimerie Coueslant, 1921).

l'essentiel d'un subtil panachage, dont l'enjeu n'est rien moins que la crédibilité des Ligues. Les grandes figures de la mobilisation, ceux qui en orchestrent l'action et en donnent les principales orientations, multiplient justement leurs efforts afin de maintenir coûte que coûte la diversité des profils au sein des comités. Et s'ils agissent de la sorte, c'est pour tenter d'écarter l'hypothèse dépréciative selon laquelle la lutte contre l'immoralité pourrait être instrumentalisée pour des motifs soit partisans, soit élitaires, et n'être réductible qu'à l'expression limitée et arbitraire de la sensibilité d'une minorité fondée sur des appartenances particulières. Il importe, en la circonstance, de ne pas donner à penser que la réprobation de l'obscénité est – comme on l'écrira en dépit des efforts des ligueurs pour en conjurer le reproche – « le fait d'individus affectés d'une idiosyncrasie morbide »...¹⁸

En cela, il faut aussi et surtout aborder le caractère non confessionnel de nombreuses Ligues comme un principe dicté par une réflexion sur la « faisabilité » du combat contre l'immoralité en fonction du contexte politique, juridique et social de l'époque. Prudence élémentaire : la LFRMP ne devait alors en aucun cas laisser penser qu'elle relevait d'un caractère confessionnel. Il était clair qu'un mouvement d'obédience religieuse n'avait aucune chance de défendre la morale publique avec une crédibilité suffisante eu égard au contexte de laïcisation de la Troisième République. En conséquence, une Ligue de vertu devait résolument adopter toutes les mesures susceptibles de la protéger de l'accusation de faire du prosélytisme religieux et d'avoir la prétention d'imposer ses valeurs au reste de la société. De la même façon, elle devait éviter d'employer un langage par trop compromettant et donnant en quelque sorte des verges pour se faire battre. A l'image des attaques du sociologue Vilfredo Pareto dénonçant la duplicité des Ligues de vertu françaises et anglo-saxonnes, présentées comme les chevaux de Troie de la morale religieuse et comme des officines par lesquelles la religion cherchait à faire entendre sa voix dans un contexte de laïcisation où elle devait réinventer ses modes d'expression.¹⁹

Fortement connoté, le terme de 'croisade' ne pouvait donc tenir lieu d'enveloppe sémantique légitime dans le contexte de l'action des ligues de vertu sous la Troisième République. Aux côtés des divers registres métaphoriques mobilisés pour « flétrir le vice » – celui des catastrophes naturelles (« les torrents de lave pornographiques », le « volcan d'impuretés ») ou encore des maladies (« l'horrible lèpre des publications obscènes », le « choléra licencieux ») – on lui préféra plutôt le champ lexical de la « guerre contre l'immoralité », en termes de « combat contre le vice », de « lutte », de « troupes » mobilisées contre « l'ennemi du mal », de la « construction de digues contre la propagation de la pornographie », ou encore de « front des mœurs »²⁰ pour éviter la décomposition

18 Jean Pierre Haesert, *Étiologie de la répression des outrages aux bonnes mœurs* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1938), 223.

19 Vilfredo Pareto, *Le mythe vertuiste et la littérature immorale* (Paris: M. Rivière, 1911).

20 Toutes ces expressions et ces images pour qualifier l'objet de la lutte en constituent en quelque sorte les éléments de langage, fréquemment utilisés par les vertuistes dans leurs publications. Deux exemples parmi tant d'autres: Aquilas Quiévreux, *Guerre à l'immoralité ! Un projet d'action morale* (Vals les Bains : E. Aberlen, 1899) ou le *Bulletin de l'Etoile Blanche* de mars 1910, dans lequel on titre sur « une nouvelle union sacrée des forces morales en face de l'ennemi commun ».

de la société et défendre la civilisation. Cet évitement de l'emploi du terme 'croisade' par les ligues de moralité se comprend par l'emploi délibérément négatif qu'en font leurs adversaires pour disqualifier la cause vertuiste. Les contempteurs des ligues – quant à eux – n'hésitèrent effectivement pas à utiliser le terme pour moquer le ridicule de ces « pères la pudeur ».²¹ Par exemple sous la plume du pamphlétaire Laurent Tailhade, dans un propos adressé au sénateur Bérenger, figure de proue des ligues sur le terrain politique et juridique, stigmatisé comme « paladin de la censure et croisé des bonnes mœurs ».²² De fait, ces usages s'inscrivaient dans une opération de démystification du combat des ligues, cherchant à en faire tomber le masque et à en révéler la duplicité, l'hypocrisie de leur caractère non confessionnel comme un vernis trompeur, derrière lequel se retrouvaient les vieilles fresques de la morale religieuse. Dans le journal satirique *Le Rire*, on moque ainsi, sur le mode de l'arroseur arrosé, l'inculpation pour attentats à la pudeur d'un ancien pasteur secrétaire d'un mouvement anti-pornographique en Allemagne, d'un cinglant « Ce Pierre l'Ermitte de la croisade morale vient d'être arrêté [...] Le saint était cochon ».²³ On voit s'exprimer ici la connotation religieuse associée au terme, qui procède par assimilation du combat vertuiste à quelque chose d'à la fois anachronique et disproportionné. Le compte rendu du Congrès Anti-Pornographique tenu à Lyon en 1922 dans les colonnes du quotidien *La Liberté* en est une bonne illustration: relatant l'évènement comme le fait d'une « assemblée d'honnêtes citoyens » s'étant avisée que « la corruption de notre époque justifiait une croisade de palabres », l'article qualifie le congrès d'« inutile » et par surcroît « nuisible ».²⁴

Dans cette perspective, l'usage figuré du vocable de la croisade s'effectuera essentiellement sur le mode ironique. Le recours à l'analogie avec la croisade au sens religieux et historique du terme est une marque de désapprobation; il est utilisé pour frapper d'illégitimité et donner le sentiment de la résurgence d'un combat d'un « autre temps ». Cela, avec bien souvent le fond de républicanisme et de vigilance laïque marqué sur cette période, prompt à agiter le spectre du retour des « ecclésiastiques » pour légiférer sur les questions morales. Dans le journal *Le Radical* (organe du parti radical), on titre ainsi ironiquement sur « La vertueuse croisade morale » : « à chaque jour suffit sa ligue », lit-on, dont celles associées au mouvement anti-pornographique, lui-même désigné comme « véritable croisade » pour mieux en souligner les excès, les outrances, l'hypocrisie.²⁵ La croisade symbolise alors les dérives du puritanisme.

21 L'expression « père la pudeur » a été initialement associée au sénateur Bérenger, puis est devenue par extension une expression pour disqualifier les membres des ligues de moralité. Voir Jacques Bourquin, « René Bérenger et la loi de 1898 », *Revue d'histoire et de l'enfance irrégulière*, 2 (1999): 59-68, à la page 59 et Henri Merlier, *L'immoralité actuelle et ses complices. Quelques faits* (Avranches: Imprimerie nouvelle, 1926), 7.

22 Cité par Lionel D'Autrec, *L'outrage aux bonnes mœurs* (Paris : Editions de Cupidon, 1924), 233.

23 *Le Rire*, 23 mars 1912.

24 *La Liberté*, 14 avril 1922.

25 *Le Radical*, 20 juillet 1911.

Dans les filets du concept: la lutte contre l'immoralité, une « croisade morale » ?

Les jalons d'un concept sociologique

S'il n'est pas dans les habitudes des vertuistes de convoquer les images et les mots associés à la croisade pour désigner leur combat, les choses en vont néanmoins tout autrement du côté des outils conceptuels forgés pour analyser ce type de phénomène. Il faut ici faire mention d'une tradition sociologique au sein de laquelle l'analogie avec la croisade va peu à peu s'imposer. Sans prétendre en tracer la genèse de manière exhaustive, on peut toutefois en proposer quelques jalons essentiels. Dans cette perspective, il faut sans doute attribuer à l'un des auteurs classiques de la discipline, le sociologue italien Vilfredo Pareto, d'y avoir eu originellement recours dans un ouvrage publié en 1911. Avec beaucoup d'érudition et d'amplitude historique, il y dénonce sous l'étiquette de « vertuistes » l'action de tous ceux qui œuvrent pour censurer la littérature immorale et en dénoncer les dangers. Pour déconstruire le mythe vertuiste, qu'il ravale au rang de simple symptôme, Pareto suggère de changer de focale intellectuelle en portant toute son attention sur les sentiments moraux et l'état psychique dont procèdent ses idéaux. Ce faisant, il conseille au lecteur de « lire attentivement les historiens chrétiens des croisades »²⁶ pour avoir la confirmation de son postulat analytique.

Outre ces prémices, l'analogie avec la croisade sera consacrée par une branche de la sociologie attachée à l'étude des mobilisations collectives et aux mouvements sociaux, forgeant le concept de « croisade morale ». Le terme figure notamment dans le titre d'un ouvrage publié en 1963 – devenu classique depuis lors – de Joseph Gusfield, intitulé *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement*.²⁷ Étudiant les mouvements de tempérance antialcooliques, le sociologue américain y propose un cadrage théorique qui fera ensuite florès dans plusieurs travaux reprenant et validant la pertinence analogique de la croisade. (« symboliques » parce qu'elles portent essentiellement sur des valeurs).²⁸ Son usage du mot 'croisade' s'enracine dans la tradition même des mouvements de tempérance américains à la fin du XIX^e siècle, n'hésitant pas à s'auto-désigner en tant que 'croisades', à partir d'un effort pour affirmer l'autorité des idées religieuses dans la sphère publique au moyen d'une théologie du salut par la suppression du vice.²⁹

Sur le plan analytique, les croisades ainsi caractérisées désignent des mouvements visant la réforme des mœurs ou la défense de la moralité publique contre diverses manifestations sociales du vice (pornographie, obscénité, jeux, alcool, etc.).

26 Pareto, *Le mythe vertuiste*, 189.

27 Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Urbana: Illini books, 1963).

28 Louis Zurcher et George Kirkpatrick, *Citizens for Decency: Antipornography Crusades as Status Defense* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976); Richard Wallis et Richard Bland, « Purity in Danger: A Survey of Participants in a Moral-Crusade Rally, » *British Journal of Sociology* 30 (June 1979): 188-205.

29 La Schmidt, « 'A battle not man's but God's': origins of the American temperance crusade in the struggle for religious authority, » *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 56.1 (1995): 110-21.

Plus tard, la consécration intellectuelle du concept sera indéniablement assurée par les travaux du sociologue américain Howard Becker, en particulier ceux consacrés à une sociologie de la déviance;³⁰ puisqu'il y dresse un parallèle entre les réformateurs de la morale et les croisés : le prototype du créateur de normes – ce qu'il désigne comme un « entrepreneur moral », étant justement l'individu qui entreprend une croisade pour la réforme des mœurs.

Il estime que le monde ne peut pas être en ordre tant que des normes n'auront pas été instaurées pour l'amender. Il s'inspire d'une éthique intransigeante: ce qu'il découvre lui paraît mauvais sans réserve ni nuances, et tous les moyens lui semblent justifiés pour l'éliminer. Un tel croisé est fervent et vertueux, souvent même imbu de sa vertu. La comparaison des réformateurs de la morale avec les croisés est pertinente, car le réformateur typique croit avoir une mission sacrée. Les prohibitionnistes en sont un excellent exemple, ainsi que tous ceux qui veulent supprimer le vice, la délinquance sexuelle ou les jeux d'argent.³¹

Essaimant dès lors dans les travaux de sociologie des mobilisations collectives, le concept de *croisade morale* permettra de désigner des mouvements dont les ressorts de l'engagement reposent sur quatre éléments majeurs : 1. Une ferveur de la croyance dans la grandeur de la cause défendue et sa dimension matricielle pour l'ordre social. 2. Une éthique intransigeante, avec un ethos de l'entrepreneur moral marqué par l'absence de compromis et par le goût de l'absolu. 3. Une composante humanitaire reposant sur une foi dans la validité universelle des normes et des valeurs promues. 4. Une forte composante émotionnelle de l'engagement, avec une rhétorique entretenant délibérément la forme du pathos. Ces quatre traits caractéristiques des croisades morales vont contribuer à stabiliser le concept pour l'approche sociologique, en précisant qu'elles « tendent dans une logique missionnaire agressive à une conversion généralisée à une vision de l'ordre naturel ou social dont la prétention à l'universalité est explicite – justifiant ainsi l'emploi du terme à la fois religieux et guerrier du terme 'croisade' pour les désigner ».³²

De ce point de vue, nul doute que les ressorts de l'engagement dans les ligues de vertu sous la Troisième République et la forme même du combat contre l'immoralité méritent qu'ils soient désignés comme relevant d'une « croisade morale ». À commencer par les ressorts psychologiques de l'engagement: ce que l'on peut désigner comme une sorte de dynamique subjective du ligueur sur le chemin du relèvement de la moralité publique conduit à un mécanisme de retournement de la pénibilité de sa mission (du reste parfaitement intériorisée). En effet, de façon assez contre-intuitive, les souffrances et les difficultés rencontrées dans le cadre de la lutte contre l'immoralité (« descendre dans la fange » de l'immoralité et du

30 Howard Becker, *Outsiders. Études de sociologie de la déviance* (Paris: Métailié, 1985).

31 Becker, *Outsiders*, 170-171.

32 Lilian Mathieu, « Croisades morales, » dans *Dictionnaire des mouvements sociaux*, ed. Olivier Filieule, Lilian Mathieu et Cécile Péchu (Paris: SciencesPo Les presses, 2009), 171.

vice, affronter l'apathie des honnêtes gens, les moqueries, etc.) ne sont en réalité pas à porter au débit de son action militante. Il s'agit là d'un mécanisme abordé par Albert Hirschman avec la métaphore du pèlerinage :

pour le pèlerin habité par une quête spirituelle, les difficultés rencontrées lors du voyage ne s'imputent pas en négatif sur le sens de son expérience, mais y ajoutent; si bien que le bénéfice individuel de l'action collective n'est pas la différence entre le résultat qu'espère le militant et l'effort fourni, mais la somme de ces deux grandeurs.³³

Soit une somme d'efforts et de sacrifices qui donnent le sens de l'action entreprise, sur le modèle de la souffrance chez le croyant. En ce sens, la croisade morale des ligues se nourrit de la difficulté et de l'adversité. Elle en fait son miel, et les vents contraires semblent gonfler les voiles des Ligues. Il en va de même pour « l'impopularité » de la cause vertuiste, qui s'intègre elle aussi dans ce schéma. Aquilas Quiévreux, proche de la Ligue de l'Étoile Blanche, lance ainsi un avertissement où il retourne comme un gant les facteurs de découragement pour les convertir en éléments de motivations supplémentaires et de mise à l'épreuve salutaire :

Les malhonnêtes gens se moqueront de vous, les sots et même quelques hommes d'esprit joindront leurs plaisanteries à ces moqueries intéressées; d'autres lèveront les bras au ciel en disant: à quoi bon ! C'est précisément pour cela que votre engagement est une action. Moqueries, dénigrements, découragement, ce sont des négations, l'engagement est une affirmation. Au milieu de la nuit morale dans laquelle nous nous débattons, il est un phare qui s'allume.³⁴

Le rejet conforte dans le sentiment de dire le vrai, selon ce que Marc Angenot désigne comme une « légitimation par la persécution et le mépris », dont l'axiome peut se formuler de la façon suivante: « un discours est vrai qui reste incompris de la majorité et dont on persécute ou on moque l'auteur et les partisans ».³⁵ Pour achever de nous en persuader, on peut mentionner cette réflexion de Louis Comte (figure tutélaire de la LFRMP), adressée en 1918 à M. Welschinger, un membre de l'Institut engagé dans une campagne contre les publications obscènes et victime des attaques des « pornographes » :

Votre cœur d'Alsacien doit être tout frémissant de joie en constatant que la meute des « mangeurs de choses immondes » comme disait Séailles, se dresse contre vous. C'est la preuve que vous êtes dans la vérité.³⁶

33 Albert Hirschman, *Bonheur privé, action publique* (Paris: Fayard, 1983).

34 Aquilas Quiévreux, cité dans le *Bulletin de l'Étoile Blanche*, septembre 1913.

35 Marc Angenot, *Les grands récits militants des XIXe et XXe siècles : religions de l'humanité et sciences de l'histoire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 25-28.

36 *Le Relèvement Social*, 15 avril 1918.

La croisade des ligueurs de vertu, entre sacralisation des mœurs et indignation morale

S'il ne nous est pas permis ici de développer la totalité des quatre critères théoriques précédemment énumérés pour définir le concept de « croisade morale », il est cependant intéressant de revenir sur deux traits particulièrement saillants du combat mené sous l'égide de la Ligue Française pour le Relèvement de la Moralité Publique : la croyance au caractère sacré des bonnes mœurs et la prédominance du registre émotionnel de l'indignation morale. La ferveur du ligueur pour la cause défendue, le sentiment que quelque chose d'essentiel s'y joue, la dramatisation de la question des mœurs, tout cela se comprend dans un contexte historique où – dans la filiation du XVIII^e siècle – les mœurs forment une catégorie à part entière pour penser le réel. Comme l'écrit le sénateur Bérenger, « ce que l'histoire établit sans conteste, c'est que, parmi les peuples déchus, il n'en est pas un dont la ruine n'ait commencé par le dérèglement des mœurs ». ³⁷ La croisade morale des ligueurs ne peut se comprendre sans tenir compte des cadres psychologiques et mentaux de l'époque, chers à Lucien Febvre, dans lesquels la morale publique est encore envisagée, pour beaucoup, dans le sens ancien politico-juridique d'un dépôt sacré. ³⁸ C'est selon cette conception des choses que les ligueurs se décident à devenir des hommes d'action, avec pour mission sacrée de protéger celle-ci de tous les « agents corrupteurs ». En vertu de quoi, ils s'exposent à des attaques comme celle adressée aux sympathisants de la LFRMP en 1894, les accusant de faire preuve « d'hystérie métaphysique », ³⁹ avec – nous l'avons vu – le cortège des disqualifications critiques associé au rejet d'une « nouvelle croisade » morale sous le jeune régime républicain. Mais ils s'empressent précisément de revendiquer cette « hystérie » d'un genre particulier, dès lors qu'il faut y entendre le fait de tenir des notions abstraites telles que la vertu pour de « saintes réalités ». ⁴⁰

L'autre trait marquant de la lutte contre l'immoralité conforme aux critères du concept sociologique de la « croisade morale » réside dans la prégnance du registre émotionnel. L'indignation morale est une émotion, relevant tout à la fois de la conscience morale, des sentiments moraux et du sentiment politique. En cela, l'action des ligues est vécue comme une véritable communion dans l'indignation, laquelle constitue une « onde émotive » dont part le jugement d'approbation ou de désapprobation. ⁴¹ C'est l'émotion ressentie face au scandale de l'immoralité qui préside

37 René Bérenger, « La traite des blanches. II. Le commerce de l'obsécénité », *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, juillet 1910, 94.

38 Vieil héritage, illustré par l'intervention de De Serre lors de la discussion générale au sujet de l'outrage à la morale publique du 17 avril 1819 : « La morale publique est celle que la conscience et la raison révèlent à tous les peuples comme à tous les hommes parce que tous l'on reçue de leur divin auteur en même temps que l'existence [...] Voilà à quels traits on reconnaît et l'on reconnaîtra toujours la morale publique, c'est pour les nations le premier des patrimoines, le plus précieux des trésors », cité par Jean Gaultier, *Simple chronique d'un délit d'opinion. L'outrage à la morale publique et religieuse (1819-1881)* (Paris: A. Rousseau, 1923), 34-35.

39 *Le Relèvement Social*, 1 janvier 1894.

40 *Le Relèvement Social*, 1 janvier 1894.

41 Rolf Lagerborg, *La morale publique. Essai d'analyse générale des faits* (Paris: V. Giard et E. Brière, 1903), 14.

à la création des comités de vigilance. C'est elle encore qui, telle une sève, doit les irriguer en permanence pour les maintenir en activité et les rendre énergiques. L'ambition des Ligues est, de surcroît, de s'adresser au plus grand nombre, *a fortiori* dans un contexte où la moralisation des classes populaires tient de l'obsession. Elles veulent donc faire œuvre de propagande active, en prenant soin d'exprimer l'indignation morale sous une forme susceptible de toucher le peuple dans son âme et dans son cœur. Pour cela, le discours vertuiste ne devait pas se départir d'une charge résolument émotive. Pour des hommes que rassemble, avant toute autre chose, cette émotion partagée face au « scandale pornographique », il importe d'en manifester la dangerosité sociale avec force et éloquence, car ils ont l'intime conviction que le peuple ne peut sentir, voir et éprouver le « Mal » qu'au prix d'une théâtralisation et d'une dramatisation de la menace immorale pesant sur la société. Le Mal est une puissance qui se donne comme violence.⁴² On comprend dès lors qu'à l'époque, les excès et l'intransigeance morale de la rhétorique des ligues aient pu susciter dans la presse les analogies disqualifiantes des croisades religieuses, fustigeant « les marchands de morale qui organisent une nouvelle croisade. »⁴³ Si les ligueurs peuvent être désignés comme de « terribles croisés »⁴⁴, c'est aussi parce qu'ils construisent pour fédérer autour de leur cause la figure d'un ennemi, tout à la fois absolu et réifié. Désignant l'organisation des forces du mal, ils appellent à l'organisation des forces du bien dans un jeu de miroir où ce qui est projeté ou fantasmé de l'ennemi détermine la mobilisation vertuiste. Il faut alors prendre les armes mêmes de l'adversaire : à la propagande du vice par les publications obscènes doit répondre une propagande de la vertu par l'action moralisatrice. Dans le *meeting* public sur le fléau de l'immoralité de 1922, le pasteur protestant Élie Gounelle retrouve ainsi les accents du prêche, appelant à la « communion des âmes » pour « faire front contre l'ennemi intérieur qui a su mobiliser les puissances malfaisantes et faire, lui, son union maudite pour perdre les âmes ».⁴⁵

Conclusion

Née d'une aspiration impérieuse au sursaut, l'histoire des ligues de moralité sous la Troisième République rencontre donc celle du mot 'croisade' sous le double signe de l'évitement et de la stigmatisation. Comme nous avons pu le suggérer, le noyau de protestants inspirés du christianisme social qui en fut à l'origine prit soin de ne pas employer un terme susceptible de disqualifier les ambitions non

42 Frédéric Laupies, *Leçon philosophique sur le mal* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2000), 86-87.

43 *Le Canard de Clermont*, 31 mars 1928.

44 *Paris-Midi*, 12 mars 1927.

45 Elie Gounelle, « Les devoirs du public et des pouvoirs publics contre le fléau de l'immoralité, » discours tenu au meeting public sur le fléau de l'immoralité, tenu à Lyon le 26 mars 1922, publié dans les *Actes du 3ème Congrès National contre la Pornographie*.

confessionnelles de la lutte en l'enfermant dans le carcan d'une mobilisation religieuse. Ces hommes avaient coutume, par ailleurs, d'utiliser sans états d'âme le vocable de la croisade pour évoquer différents combats politiques dans lesquels ils s'engagèrent. Il suffit de consulter les archives de la revue *Le Christianisme Social* pour s'en persuader: les mêmes qui qualifient par exemple le combat pour le désarmement des grandes puissances de « croisade dans laquelle il faut enrôler toutes les églises afin qu'elles prennent au sérieux leur tâche qui est de réaliser ici-bas le règne de la justice et de la paix »,⁴⁶ s'entourent de précautions et rechignent à désigner le combat contre l'immoralité dans les mêmes termes. À l'opposé, la fréquence de son utilisation par les écrivains, journalistes ou critiques pour le dénigrer et en désigner le caractère ridicule leur donne raison de cette prudence. L'étiquette de la 'croisade' valait alors condamnation, mi-amusée, mi-effarée, du caractère outré de l'indignation morale des belles âmes. Ironie du sort - avec le concept de « croisade morale » - l'étiquette sera adoptée par la sociologie des mobilisations collectives pour qualifier l'action des ligues de moralité dans une perspective neutre et descriptive; mais sans pourtant parvenir à se départir tout à fait d'un « usage qui relève parfois plus de la stigmatisation que de l'analyse »⁴⁷ visant à disqualifier symboliquement des mouvements jugés réactionnaires ou rétrogrades.

46 *Le Christianisme Social*, 1 novembre 1921, 450.

47 Mathieu, « Croisades morales », 168.

11 “The last crusade”? The Italian public opinion in front of the conquest of Jerusalem in 1917

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Introduction

On 11 December 1917, the British general Edmund Allenby, commander of the Allied Egyptian Expeditionary Force, entered Jerusalem accompanied by Colonel Jean Philpin de Piépape, the commander of the French contingent, and Lieutenant-Colonel Francesco d’Agostino, at the head of the Italians forces. The Muslim rule over the Holy City was ended after seven centuries. The storming of Jerusalem had limited strategic importance, but from December 1917 the British press and propaganda emphasised the military victory by evoking the vocabulary of the crusade and the popular imagination of the medieval expeditions.¹ Numerous articles, pictures, volumes and public speech, these last ones held during public commemorations, depicted the military episode like the realisation of the medieval crusades and the Allied soldiers like “new crusaders”, insisting on the historical parallels between the medieval expeditions and the Allenby’s campaign, and recalling historical figures, like Richard the Lionheart, to celebrate the victory.² The British Press Bureau had initially invited the press not to define the military operations against Turkey as a modern crusade, so as not to cause friction with the hundred million Mohammedans who lived in the British Empire.³ However, at the beginning of 1918, the Press Bureau adhered to this narrative, not least because pressed by the General Staff and the Foreign Office, and produced many propaganda materials, including a film entitled *The New Crusaders*.⁴ In the British war memories, the campaign of Palestine was often remembered as “the last crusade”.⁵

- 1 Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917. Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 247–294; Mike Horswell, *The Rise and Fall of British Crusader Medievalism, c. 1825-1945* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 113–136.
- 2 James E. Kitchen, “‘Khaki crusaders’: crusading rhetoric and the British Imperial soldier during the Egypt and Palestine campaigns, 1916-18”, *First World War Studies* 1 (2010): 141–160; Stefan Goebel, “Britain’s ‘Last Crusade’: From War Propaganda to War Commemoration, 1914-1930”, in *Justifying War: Propaganda, Politics and the Modern Age*, ed. David Welch and Jo Fox (London, 2012): 159–176 at page 161.
- 3 Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture*, 260–262.
- 4 Luke McKernan, “‘The Supreme Moment of the War’: General Allenby’s entry into Jerusalem”, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 2 (1993): 169–180.
- 5 Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture*, 288–289, 293–294.

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Until December 1917, the Italian press paid little attention to the Middle East Theatre. The Italian public opinion was primarily interested in the combat on the Austro-Italian Front, particularly after the Caporetto's disaster (24 October–12 November 1917).⁶ Moreover, the *Regio esercito* participated in the Sinai and Palestine Campaign with a small contingent (500 soldiers).⁷ Nevertheless, the great part of the Italian press and the authorities and the interventionists enthusiastically celebrated the capture of the Holy City and the contribution of the Italian forces, insisting on the moral and political importance of the conquest. Similarly to the United Kingdom, most of pro-war political forces, the so-called interventionists (nationalists, democrats, conservatives, etc.), tried to make sense of the victory by evoking the medieval crusades, commemorating the historical role of the Italians in crusade expeditions and exalting Jerusalem's occupation as a decisive stage of the "civilising crusade" of the Entente. However, both in Italy and the United Kingdom, the word 'crusade' was used in a secularised way and actualised according to the propagandistic representation of the war as a "righteous crusade" of the civilised nations against the "barbarous" German enemy.⁸ Since the 19th century, the word 'crusade' and the crusading language were widely utilised in the propaganda campaigns of secular politics, in order to obtain a large popular mobilisation and an absolute dedication to achieve the proposed objective. Nevertheless, the contemporary Catholic culture, in spite of the extent use of the crusading language to summon the faithful in various spiritual activities (for example, the "Rosary Crusade" of Pope Leo XIII), rejected this secularised usage: the crusade was a holy war called and blessed by the pope.⁹ For this reason, the great part of the Italian Catholic community while legitimising the conflict as a "just war", rarely qualified the warfare and the conquest of Jerusalem as a crusade.¹⁰

In view of this, this chapter aims at analysing the reactions of the Italian authorities and public opinion to the conquest of Jerusalem in 1917, in order to observe how and to what extent the word 'crusade' was used to define and interpret this event in the Italian political debate. To present a complete framework, the paper also discusses the refusals to use the term. The case study constitutes a passage of no secondary importance for the general history of the word 'crusade'. The takeover of the Holy City, in fact, easily inspired references to the historical crusades and

6 Holger H. Herwig, *The First World War. Germany and Austria-Hungary* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 332.

7 Antonello Battaglia, *Da Suez ad Aleppo: La campagna Alleata e il Distaccamento italiano in Siria e in Palestina (1917-1921)* (Roma: Edizioni Nuova Cultura, 2015), 118.

8 Stéphan Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *La violenza, la crociata e il lutto, La Grande Guerra e la storia del Novecento* (Torino: Einaudi, 2002), 103–105.

9 To clarify the meanings that Catholic culture of the time attributed to the word *crusade*, see "Crocesignati" and "Crociata", in Gaetano Moroni, *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica*, vol. 18 (Venezia: Tipografia Emiliana, 1843), 274–303. See also: Marco Giardini, "The reception of the crusades in the contemporary Catholic Church. 'Purification of the memory' or medieval nostalgia?" in *The Crusades in the Modern World*. ed. Mike Horswell and Akil N. Awan (New York: Routledge, 2020): 75–90.

10 Daniele Menozzi, "Crociata". *Storia di un'ideologia dalla Rivoluzione francese a Bergoglio* (Roma: Carocci, 2020), 49–74, 103–129.

analogies between the medieval expeditions and the world war. The circumstance brought out the ways of using and qualifying the word ‘crusade’ by the different constituents of the Italian scene. The subject will be investigated through the printed sources, such as newspapers, magazines and propaganda leaflets, which also inform us about public meetings. Due to the extensive nature of the subject, this chapter will firstly focus on the behaviour of Italian authorities, moreover on the heterogeneous currents of the secular interventionism, and finally on the clergy and Catholic public opinion, considering the position of the Holy See on the event.

The Italian authorities

The Italian civil authorities reacted enthusiastically to the taking of the Holy City and attributed symbolic meanings to the event. Speaking to the Chamber of Deputies (12 December 1917), the Prime Minister Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, a liberal exponent, defined the event as a crucial stage in the civilising war of the Entente and implicitly recalled the crusades. According to Orlando, the episode evoked “venerable traditions and glorious memories, which have been the reason, the essence and *raison d’être* of the history and civilisation of the great Christian nations”.¹¹ The government understood the propaganda value of the conquest of Jerusalem to encourage the public opinion, which was still demoralised due to the defeat of Caporetto. On 15 December, the Minister of Education, the socialist reformist Agostino Berenini,¹² decreed that teachers would have to explain the importance of the event to the pupils through historical and literary references.¹³ The ministerial circular also intended to stimulate public initiatives across the country. Many local authorities responded to the call and, with the support of the patriotic associations, organised public commemorations in evocative and historical places.¹⁴

The Italian authorities adopted a communication strategy to celebrate the event similar to the British one, albeit in a minor tone: the conquest of Jerusalem acquired sense and importance through the connection to the medieval crusades. The pretextual use of historical topic was frequent in the pro-war public speech, but the Italian propaganda and the secular political forces used only marginally medieval themes.

11 *Comunicazioni del governo* in Atti parlamentari, Legislatura XXIV, I Sessione, Discussioni, 12 December 1917, 15106.

12 Stefano Rodotà, “Berenini Agostino”, in *Dizionario Biografico degli italiani*, vol. 9 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1967).

13 “Notiziario italiano. Ministro P.I. Bernini propone approfondimento sulla presa di Gerusalemme”, *Stampa*, 16 December 1917; “La presa di Gerusalemme e le scuole”, *Idea Nazionale*, 13 December 1917.

14 “Le manifestazioni patriottiche al Gianicolo”, *Messaggero*, 17 December 1917; “Commemorazioni. La caduta di Gerusalemme”, *Lavoro*, December 16, 1917; Salvatore Romano, *La liberazione di Gerusalemme. Conferenza del prof. Salvatore Romano* (Palermo: Stab. D’arti grafiche G. Fiore & figli, 1918); Filiberto Bassani, *La liberazione di Gerusalemme: conferenza tenuta al R. Liceo Mario Pagano ed alla R. Scuola Normale femminile principessa Elena di Campobasso il 20 dicembre 1917* (Campobasso: Tip. De Gaglia e Nebbia, 1918); Francesco Bernetti Evangelista, *Discorso tenuto a Roma in Arcadia nella solenne tornata commemorativa per la liberazione di Gerusalemme* (Fermo: Stab. Coop. Tipografico, 1918).

The Middle Ages recalled a politically fragmented and militarily weak Italy, united only on a linguistic-literary level and squeezed between the Papal State and the Holy Roman Empire, which was considered the ancestor of the Habsburg monarchy.¹⁵ The secular interventionists occasionally used the word ‘crusade’, but with secular and modernised connotations which had nothing in common with the historical events and with the meanings attributed to the term by the Catholic culture. Only the Nationalist Catholicism regularly used the medieval topic, such as the battle of Legnano, a clash between the Imperial army of Frederick “Barbarossa” and the troops of the Lombard League, a military alliance of the municipalities of Northern Italy and symbolically led by Pope Alexander III.¹⁶ These historical events were evoked for purely propaganda purposes, without historicising them.

The government reversed the trend and placed an episode of the world war in relation to the medieval past. However, the Italian propaganda operation suffered from the lack of great national crusader heroes such as Richard the Lionheart for the United Kingdom, or Saint Louis (king Louis IX) for France.¹⁷ Various historical episodes and historical-literary personalities, considered representative of the Italian ‘crusader’ identity, were mobilised for this propaganda campaign: the poet Torquato Tasso, author of *La Gerusalemme liberata*,¹⁸ and the heroes of this poem, such as Tancred of Hauteville, the *Lombards on the First Crusade*, the operatic *dramma lirico* of Giuseppe Verdi, and, beyond the medieval crusades, the naval battle of Lepanto (1571).¹⁹ In Rome, the largest commemoration of the victory, organised by the municipality and the patriotic associations, took place at the poet Tasso’s oak on the Janiculum, where a large procession of students and pro-war politicians laid a laurel wreath.²⁰

The secular interventionism

Most of the secular interventionist politicians re-proposed this representation of the event, but with different nuances and intensity.²¹ The interventionism front, which controlled the public bodies, was composed of heterogeneous political forces, from the revolutionary left to the nationalistic right. Mostly the liberal-conservative and nationalist exponents, who had assumed a predominant role in the interventionist side after the Caporetto disaster, recalled the theme. Generally,

15 Tommaso di Carpegna Falconieri, “Il medievalismo e la Grande Guerra in Italia”, *Studi storici* 56.2 (2015): 251–276.

16 Pietro Borzomati, “I cattolici calabresi e la guerra 1915-1918”, in *Benedetto XV, i cattolici e la prima guerra mondiale*, ed. Giuseppe Rossini (Roma: Arti grafiche italiane, 1963): 447–482 at page 476.

17 Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 87–91.

18 J.G. Strutt, *La quercia di Torquato Tasso cantore della Gerusalemme liberata* (Roma: Metallografia E. Calzone, 1917).

19 Luigi Goretti, *Gerusalemme liberata e il pensiero di Gesù. Conferenza* (Roma: Tip. Forense, 1918), 12.

20 “Per la liberazione di Gerusalemme. Gli studenti romani alla quercia del Tasso”, *Guerra italiana*, 30 December 1917.

21 Adorni Daniela, “Orlando al governo”, in *Gli Italiani in guerra. Conflitti, identità, memorie dal Risorgimento ai nostri giorni*, vol. 3.1, *La Grande Guerra: dall’Intervento alla “vittoria mutilata”*, ed. Mario Isnenghi and Daniele Ceschin (Torino: Utet, 2008): 501–515 at page 502.

this political area qualified the conquest of Jerusalem as a crusade to show that Entente and particularly Italy had fulfilled a centuries-old aim of Christianity. On 16 December, during a commemoration in Rome at the statue of Marcantonio Colonna, one of the main admirals of the Holy League fleet in the battle of Lepanto (1571), the conservative senator Rodolfo Amedeo Lanciani gave a speech and brought “a greeting to the combatants of Lepanto and to the new crusaders of Allied arms, who at this solemn hour carried out the centuries-old vow of the Christian peoples”.²² According to conservative politician Arturo Reggio, the episode demonstrated that the war against the Central Powers was a Christian struggle, to such an extent that the Entente soldiers could be defined as martyrs of the national and Catholic cause: “Pope Urban II, risen, could hand over the Cross to them, repeating the words of the Council of Clermont: ‘Christ himself rises from his Sepulchre to hand over the Cross to you. [...] May it shine on your arms and on your banners: it will be for you the prize of victory or the palm of martyrdom’”. By conquest the Holy City, the Entente combatants had renewed the deeds of their medieval precursors: “If the culture, the means, the weapons of the new crusaders are very different from those of the companions of Pius Geoffrey, the attitude of the soldiers of England, France, Italy [...] cannot be changed: like the ancient crusaders, they fought the barbarism of the crescent increased by German discipline”.²³ In many circumstances, the use of the vocabulary of the crusade led to embellishing speeches with anti-Islamic aspects.

In some cases, the conquest of the Holy City and, by extension, the war were placed in direct continuity with the medieval crusades. A pamphlet, published by the *Comitato romano di organizzazione civile durante la guerra* (an association politically close to the conservatives and nationalists),²⁴ declared it right from the title: *La IX crociata: gli eserciti di Inghilterra, Francia e Italia sotto il comando del generale E. H. H. Allenby liberano Gerusalemme dal dominio dei Turchi* (The 9th Crusade: the armies of England, France, and Italy, under the command of General E. H. Allenby, liberate Jerusalem from Turkish rule). However, once again, the author of the pamphlet used the word ‘crusade’ in a secular way: in fact, the Allied soldiers were defined as the “new crusaders of law and freedom”, rather than the defenders of the Christian faith, and the conquest of Jerusalem was presented as an ancillary aim, basically useful to demonstrate that Italy had divine support: “‘God wills it’, we can repeat it for our national crusade”.²⁵ Furthermore, the booklet, taking up typical themes of anti-German propaganda,²⁶ demonised above all

22 “Al vincitore di Lepanto Marcantonio Colonna”, *Messaggero*, 17 December 1917.

23 Arturo Reggio, *La liberazione di Gerusalemme* (Brescia: F. Apollonio & C, 1918), 8–9.

24 Alessandra Staderini, *Combattenti senza divisa. Roma nella Grande Guerra* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1995), 41.

25 Comitato romano per l’organizzazione civile durante la guerra, *La IX crociata: gli eserciti di Inghilterra, Francia e Italia sotto il comando del generale E. H. H. Allenby liberano Gerusalemme dal dominio dei Turchi* (Roma: Tip. Impr. Gen. D’affissioni e pubblicità, 1918), 11–12.

26 Anne Morelli, “La Grande Guerra: alle origini della propaganda moderna”, in *Costruire un nemico. Studi di storia della propaganda di guerra*, ed. Nicola Labanca, Camillo Zadra (Milano: Unicopli, 2011): 8–15.

Austria-Hungary and Germany, underlining that their alliance with the Ottoman Empire had broken the unity of Christianity.

The nationalist right and, sometimes with more intensity, the interventionist revolutionary left²⁷ resorted to the vocabulary of the crusade to attack the pope, as well as to make sense of military victory. According to them, the Holy See should finally have openly supported the Entente, which had achieved a historical papal aim. The *Popolo d'Italia*,²⁸ Benito Mussolini's newspaper, criticised Benedict XV for his neutrality, while he should have "been the happiest for this liberation that was a centuries-old dream of all Christianity".²⁹ The newspaper took advantage of the conquest of the Holy City to condemn again the appeal for international peace, made by the pope in August 1917³⁰. Mussolini wrote, using an anti-Islamic tone: "therefore, the massacre was not 'useless' and without the massacre – without the war – Jerusalem would still be Turkish, and the cross would be overwhelmed by Mohammed's crescent".³¹ In the face of this, the *Popolo d'Italia* and other tabloids near to the interventionist revolutionary left increased the criticisms against the Italian Catholics, often accused of not supporting the war cause with conviction, inviting them not to obey to the Holy See, because the pope ran against the interests of Catholicity.

The liberal-democratic and social-reformist interventionism³² also referred to the crusade, but often – as *L'Illustrazione Italiana* made – to emphasise the differences between medieval expeditions, motivated by "the hatred for those with a different faith from our", and the "new crusade"³³ of Entente, inspired by universal objectives and carried out by multi-ethnic and multi-religious force.³⁴ The democratic intellectual Giulio Provenzal underlined that the Entente conquered Jerusalem to "free those lands from all intolerance" and not for "the religious fanaticism of the crusades".³⁵ However, some exponents and newspaper of this political area had different approach. In the concluding oration of the Janiculum commemoration, mentioned above, the Minister Berenini drew a parallel between "the crusade sung by Tasso", which arose from the "desire to free the tomb of Christ from the Ottoman barbarism", and "the present crusade that nations are fighting for the law and the justice

27 Giovanna Procacci, "Gli interventisti di sinistra, la rivoluzione di febbraio e la politica interna italiana nel 1917", *Italia contemporanea* 138 (1980): 49–83 at pages 78–82.

28 Mussolini's newspaper officially held extreme left-wing positions, but during the war it had gradually embraced nationalism and imperialism. Paul O'Brien, "L'Audacia della 'grande voltata'. Benito Mussolini", *Gli Italiani in guerra*. vol. 3.1, *La Grande Guerra*, ed. Isnenghi and Ceschin: 384–392.

29 Ottavio Dinale (Jean Jacques), "D'ogni erba un fascio", *Popolo d'Italia*, 16 December 1917.

30 Maria Antonia Paiano, *La preghiera e la Grande Guerra. Benedetto XV e la nazionalizzazione del culto in Italia* (Pisa: Pacini, 2017), 213.

31 Benito Mussolini, "Il Convegno di Udine", *Popolo d'Italia*, December 27, 1917

32 Renate Lunzer, "Dare un senso alla guerra: gli intellettuali", in *Dizionario storico della prima guerra mondiale*, ed. Nicola Labanca (Bari: Laterza, 2014): 343–355 at pages 348–350.

33 "La presa di Gerusalemme", *Illustrazione italiana* 50 (1917), 500.

34 See also: Luigi Albertini, *Venti anni di vita politica*, vol. 2, *L'Italia nella guerra mondiale*, vol. 3, *Da Caporetto a Vittorio Veneto: ottobre 1917-novembre 1918* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1953), 395; Luigi Einaudi, "La capitolazione di Gerusalemme", *Corriere della Sera*, 11 December 1917.

35 Giulio Provenzal, "La Palestina e il sionismo", *Idea democratica*, 15 December 1917.

against the current Ottomans, who have become servants of a more refined barbarism, adorned with false civilisation”.³⁶ The politician evoked the medieval expeditions but re-interpreted the word ‘crusade’ in a secular sense, to glorify the conflict as a clash of civilisations against barbarian nations. To strengthen the demonisation of the Wilhelminian Empire, Berenini built a parallel between the Muslim states, which controlled Jerusalem in the 10th century, and Germany. This was not an isolated case: various circles of reformist socialism even seemed fascinated by the crusader past. The newspaper *Il Lavoro* described the conquest of Jerusalem as “an event of world importance” that marked the return of “European Christianity” and of the “banner civilisation” in Jerusalem, “as at the time of the Crusades”.³⁷

The Holy See and the Catholic public opinion

The conflict upset the balance of the Italian Catholic community (the clergy and the faithful), divided between the obedience to the homeland and the loyalty to the pope, who called for peace.³⁸ The Italian Church and the organised laity contributed crucially to the war effort and to building consensus for the conflict, to regain a prominent role in the Italian scene. However, they had political difficulty in fully embracing the positions of the secular interventionism. Firstly, the “Roman Question” remained unresolved: in fact, the Holy See and the Italian government did not have official relations and Catholics were still significantly under-represented in Italian politics. Moreover, the Catholic intransigent circles,³⁹ while supporting the war effort, intensely criticised the excesses of interventionist speech, like the instrumental use of the Faith for propaganda purposes or the frequent attacks against the pope, the clergy, and the Catholic community. The great part of the Italian episcopate, to not increase the distance from the papal course, legitimised the war, but refused the explicit sacralisation of the conflict and encouraged both the prayers for the victory and those for the peace. However, during the conflict and particularly after the Caporetto defeat, the pro-war rhetoric entered into the religious speech and the Italian Catholic community gradually assumed national-Catholic positions, opening the path to reconciliation between the patriotism and faith.⁴⁰ The conquest of the

36 “Cerimonie religiose e civili a Roma per la liberazione della Terra Santa. Alla storica quercia”, *Avvenire d'Italia*, 17 December 1917.

37 “Un avvenimento mondiale”, *Il Lavoro*, 11 December 1917.

38 Guido Formigoni, *I cattolici italiani nella prima guerra mondiale* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2021).

39 The advocates of Catholic intransigentism taught that all social and political action ought to be based on the Catholic Faith. Daniele Menozzi, *La Chiesa cattolica e la secolarizzazione* (Torino: Einaudi, 1993), 15–71.

40 Daniele Menozzi (ed.), “Religione, nazione e guerra nel primo conflitto mondiale,” *Rivista di storia del cristianesimo* 3.2 (2006): 305–422; Id., *Chiesa, pace e guerra nel Novecento. Verso una delegittimazione religiosa dei conflitti* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2008): 15–46; Id., “Strumentalizzazione della religione, sacralizzazione della guerra e delegittimazione religiosa dei conflitti”, in “*Inutile strage*”. *I cattolici e la S. Sede nella Prima guerra mondiale: raccolta di studi in occasione del centenario dello scoppio della Prima guerra mondiale (1914-2014)*, ed. Lorenzo Botrugno (Città del Vaticano: Libreria editrice vaticana, 2014): 637–658.

Holy City could have facilitated this reconciliation, because the Entente had fulfilled a centuries-old goal of Christianity. After all, during the Italo-Turkish War (1911–1912), the clergy resorted to the ideology of the crusade and martyrdom in order to sacralise the conflict and the fallen, despite the clear opposition from Pope Pius X.⁴¹

Indeed, the Italian Catholic community welcomed the conquest of the Holy City but distanced itself from the celebrations and the tones of interventionism. This attitude was probably influenced by papal conduct. Consistently to the intransigent standpoint,⁴² Benedict XV refused to compare the conquest to the medieval crusades, as it is evident from some private conversations between the high Roman hierarchy and the Italian and French *chargés d'affaires*, for many reasons. First of all, the Entente also included peoples of Protestant confession and non-Christian religion (Hindus and Muslims), whereas the crusades were animated by Catholic States. Secondly, the liberation of Jerusalem was not the final aim of the conflict, but a consequence of the struggle against Turkey and Germany in the Middle East.⁴³ The Holy See, moreover, feared that the British would support Zionist projects in Palestine. Furthermore, as illustrated by *Civiltà Cattolica* (a periodical published by the Jesuits in Rome), the crusades represented a reference model for the Catholic culture of the time, in which the society was permeated by Christianity and the secular political power was subordinated to the ecclesiastical authority. On the other hand, the world conflict did not pursue religious objectives, but imperialist aims, Christendom was divided, and the society was torn apart by social conflicts and secularisation.⁴⁴ These articles in the Vatican press anticipated the contents of the pope's public speech. In his Christmas address to the Sacred College of Cardinals, Benedict XV, avoiding parallels with the crusades, stated that the conquest of Jerusalem should be interpreted as an invitation to pacify Christian society by laying down arms and recomposing the religious rifts.⁴⁵ After the disclosure of the Christmas address, the nationalists and the interventionist revolutionary left harshly criticised the pontiff's speech and compared it to the "Papal Note" of August 1917.⁴⁶ The main Catholic press reacted unitedly to the attacks against the pontiff,

41 Matteo Caponi, "Liturgie funebri e sacrificio patriottico I riti di suffragio per i caduti nella guerra di Libia (1911-1912)," *Rivista di storia del cristianesimo* 2 (2013): 437-459.

42 Giardini, "The reception of the crusades", 76.

43 Carlo Monti, *La conciliazione ufficiosa: diario del barone Carlo Monti incaricato d'affari del governo italiano presso la Santa Sede: 1914-1922*, ed. Antonio Scottà (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997), vol. 2, 223-224; Charles Loiseau, *Politique romaine et sentiment français* (Paris: Bernard Grasset Éditeur, 1923), 72.

44 "La festa di Gerusalemme in un antico sacramentario liturgico", *Civiltà Cattolica* 1 (1918), 50.

45 "Discorso del Santo Padre al Sacro Collegio Cardinalizio, 24 dicembre 1917", *Civiltà Cattolica* 1 (1918), 17-18.

46 Celeste Ausenda, *Importanza politica e morale dell'occupazione di Gerusalemme* (Soresina: Tip. Mariani, 1918), 7; "Dio e popolo", *Messaggero*, 26 December 1917. "L'allocuzione natalizia", *Idea Nazionale*, 27 December 1917; Francesco Scaduto, "La Santa sede e la presa di Gerusalemme", *Riforma italiana* 7 (1918), 8.

stating in his defence that Benedict XV had remained consistent with his role as the father of the whole of Christendom.⁴⁷

Benedict maintained a neutral position, to safeguard the international standing of the Holy See, but authorised the religious commemorations of the victory.⁴⁸ Thus, while the bells of all Rome rang out to celebrate the victory, the bells of St. Peter’s Basilica remained silent.⁴⁹ However, the Catholic clergy and laity generally accepted the papal interpretation and, for this reason, refused to employ the ideology of the crusade in connection with operations in Palestine. For the *Te Deum* in thanksgiving to God for the victory, Cardinal Basilio Pompilj, the papal vicar, recalled that “the new liberators of the Holy Sepulchre do not all carry in their hearts, like the strong crusaders of the pious Godfrey, the holy unity of the faith willed by Christ”, alluding to the presence of non-Catholic and non-Christian soldiers among the allied troops. The memory of the crusades was functional to condemn the degeneration of contemporary society. Pompilj was indirectly polemising secular interventionism and their interpretations, stating that only the Church could “give this event the true character, the true meaning that makes it great in the eyes of faithful”.⁵⁰

Among organised Catholicism, the exponents of intransigentism categorically rejected any use of the ideology of the crusade to characterise Middle Eastern operations and polemised with the interventionists. They highlighted the profound differences between the medieval crusaders, models of the perfect Christian warrior, and the nations of the Entente, religiously disunited and guilty about the European bloodbath.⁵¹ The editor of *Unità cattolica*, Ernesto Calligari, described General Allenby as an unwitting executor of divine designs and, therefore, his name could not be placed “next to those of pious Godfrey, Baldwin, St Louis King of France, the Knights of St John, the heroes of Rhodes”.⁵² Leading exponents of National-Catholicism, like the journalist Filippo Crispolti, refused to qualify the military victory as a crusade. Crispolti admitted that the operations in Palestine recalled the crusades, but the military episode had above all a palingenetic significance: the taking of the Holy City became a premonitory sign of the restoration of Christian society.⁵³ Most of the Catholic public opinion also had difficulty in resorting to the crusade ideology for doctrinal reasons. The Catholic culture of the time defined

47 Vindex, “Logicamente”, *Unità cattolica*, 22 December 1917; “La campagna disfattista contro i cattolici. L’allocuzione del papa e il giudizio dell’onorevole Barzilai”, *Corriere d’Italia*, 26 December 1917.

48 Paolo Pieraccini, “Il Patriarcato latino di Gerusalemme (1918-1940). Ritratto di un patriarca scomodo: mons. Luigi Barlassina”, *Il Politico* 63.2 (1998): 207–256 at pages 211–215.

49 Monti, *La conciliazione ufficiosa*, 223–224; Loiseau, *Politique romaine et sentiment français*, 72–73.

50 Basilio Pompilj (Vicar General of Rome), *Invito sacro a ringraziare per la liberazione di Gerusalemme* (Città del Vaticano: Tipografia poliglotta vaticana, 1917). See also: Arturo Marchi, *Lettera pastorale 1918: Mancanza di fede* (Lucca: Tip. Editr. Baroni, 1918), 3–4.

51 “Dimostrazione per la conquista di Gerusalemme”, *Unità cattolica*, 13 December 1917.

52 Mikros (Ernesto Calligari), “Gerusalemme Liberata”, *Unità cattolica*, 14 December 1917.

53 Filippo Crispolti, “La liberazione di Gerusalemme”, *Avvenire d’Italia*, 16 December 1917; Mikros (Ernesto Calligari), “Gerusalemme Liberata”, *Unità cattolica*, 14 December 1917.

'crusade' as a form of Christian legitimisation of the war, sanctioned by the papal proclamation. Therefore, the conquest of Jerusalem could be considered part of the Entente's "just war" but could not be defined as a stage or completion of a crusade.

Nevertheless, a minority part of the Italian Catholic community did not share the Holy See's approach and tried to make sense of the conquest of Jerusalem by making analogies with the medieval crusades. The archbishop of Ancona, Giambattista Ricci, summoned the people to celebrate the victory "on the hill where so many times the ships of Ancona sailed to the Holy Land and [...] to win at Lepanto".⁵⁴ Some prelates and parish priests, who gave homilies during celebratory masses or at the end of the *Te Deum*, celebrated the Middle Eastern operations by resorting to the vocabulary of the crusade. According to the archbishop of Capua, Gennaro Cosenza, "the glories of this second liberation" needed to be sung by an illustrious poet such as "Torquato Tasso", who celebrated "the first liberation"⁵⁵ with his poem. Some speeches mingled war propaganda and religious languages, combining themes of anti-Germanism with the anti-Islamic repertoire, characteristic of the ideology of the crusade. The provost of Barga cathedral, Alfredo della Pace, stated that "the Turkish crescent" was a "sign of regression and barbarism", while the "Latin cross" was a "sign of civilisation, victory, peace".⁵⁶ In his homily for the *Te Deum* in the church of the Gancia in Palermo, the Franciscan friar Francesco Giordano asserted that "Jesus [...] came back with our flags" to Jerusalem, even though "Mohammed and Martin Luther" were united "against the new crusade, [...] in defence of iniquitous usurpation and ignominious desecration". Hence, the soldiers of the Entente deserved to be called "the new crusaders".⁵⁷

For Giordano, like for other personalities close to national-Catholic positions, the conquest of Jerusalem offered arguments to further the path of nation's "re-catholicisation" and legitimise the secular religion of the homeland. By extolling the Italian contribution to the medieval crusades and by presenting Italy as the guide of the "new crusade" in Palestine, these speeches intended to remember and emphasise Italy's role as bulwark of the Church.⁵⁸ In this sense, the bishop of Sarsina, Ambrogio Riccardi, raised the Savoy cross as the banner of the new crusaders and affirmed that the "Christian world" festively celebrated the moment when "the tricolour with the white cross in the middle" took the place of the "hallowed Turkish flag".⁵⁹ These positions sometimes gained public visibility in the initiatives of Catholic youth

54 Quoted in Luigi Bruti Liberati, *Il clero italiano nella grande guerra* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1981), 109.

55 Gennaro Cosenza, *Discorso letto nella Metropolitana da S. E. Mons. Gennaro Cosenza nella commemorazione della Liberazione di Gerusalemme il 26 dicembre 1917* (Santa Maria Capua Vetere: Stab. Tip. Progresso, 1918), 38.

56 Lucia Ceci, "Religione di guerra e legittimazione della violenza", in *Benedetto XV. Papa Giacomo Della Chiesa nel mondo dell' "inutile strage"*, ed. Alberto Melloni, Giovanni Cavagnini and Giulia Grossi (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2017): 179–189 at page 181.

57 Francesco Giordano, *Jerusalem: Discorso recitato la sera del 16 Dicembre 1917 nella Chiesa della gancia in Palermo* (Palermo: R. Sandron, 1917).

58 Menozzi, *Crociata*, 124.

59 Ambrogio Riccardi, "La risurrezione di Cristo e la risurrezione dell'uomo. Lettera pastorale alla diocesi di Sarsina per la Pasqua 1918", *Bollettino Ufficiale per la diocesi di Sarsina* 3 (1918): 34–35.

associations, which organised commemorations to mobilise the faithful, with the permission and support of the clergy. The “Italian Catholic Youth Society” summoned the population to celebrate the victory of the “Christian armies”, whose united flags flew in Jerusalem “like the banners of the crusaders of Godfrey of Bouillon”.⁶⁰ The Roman Youth Federation had a reproduction of the First Crusade flag blessed and later placed it in the Sacred Treasure of St. Peter’s Basilica.⁶¹

Conclusion

The conquest of Jerusalem stimulated various reactions in heterogeneous Italian public opinion. Similar to the United Kingdom, the institutions and much of the interventionist tried to make sense of the event by defining the operations in Palestine as a crusade. It should be underlined that the pro-war political forces, except for some minority, were solid in the interpretation of the event, highlighting the progressive convergence of left and right interventionist radicalism. However, the secular interventionism, after its initial enthusiasm, soon lost interest in the military episode, due to various factors. First of all, the public opinion was focused on the Italian front’s operations, where the *Regio esercito* was resisting the Austro-Hungarian offensives. Secondly, various liberals and democrats rejected these interpretations, judging the medieval crusades negatively, and called for an objective assessment of Middle Eastern victory: other events of the European war, such as the capitulation of Romania, would have needed more attention.⁶² Finally, apart from a few isolated demonstrations, the conquest was received rather coldly by the Italian population.

The reasons for the popular indifference were mainly the weariness and demotivation of the population, worn out by war. Nevertheless, the interventionists blamed the Italian ecclesiastical community of having kept an overly composed attitude in the face of the victory in the Middle East, thus influencing the population. For nationalist interventionism, the conquest of Jerusalem was above all an opportunity to attack the Holy See for its neutralism, asking the pope to finally take a stand in favour of the Entente. As we have seen, this did not happen and, to a large extent, the papal policy was accepted by the Italian Catholic community. With different approaches, the Catholic clergy and organised laity solemnised the event but appeared generally reluctant to explicitly use the ideology of crusade with secularised and actualised meanings, foreign to contemporary Catholic culture, due to theological and doctrinal reasons. In conclusion, it is evident that most of Italian Catholicism assigned a precise connotation to the term, as we have explained, and positively valued the imagery of medieval expeditions. The word ‘crusade’ not only evoked the myth of “the lost golden age of Christendom” but represented a model to be inspired by in order to pursue the project of re-Catholicising the contemporary society.

60 “Dopo la liberazione di Gerusalemme. L’appello ai giovani cattolici italiani”, *Avvenire d’Italia*, 15 December 1917.

61 “La Gioventù Cattolica Romana depono sulla tomba di S. Pietro il vessillo della Prima crociata”, *Corriere d’Italia*, 24 December 1917.

62 “La capitolazione di Gerusalemme”, *La Stampa*, 11 December 1917.

12 Crusade(s) reloaded

On the ideological use of a polymetaphor in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

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Crusade rhetoric has undergone a remarkable renaissance in the 20th and 21st centuries. Against the backdrop, in particular, of the so-called communist, fascist, Islamic or – most recently – Russian “threats”, the ‘crusade’ term has been in use quite frequently as a belligerent topos, used to legitimise various campaigns in Eastern Europe, Spain, Africa, and the Near and Middle East, with Nazi Germany’s “crusade against godless Bolshevism” and the US president George W. Bush’s “crusade on terrorism” probably being the most well-known examples. The most recent re-occurrence might be the numerous crusade metaphors used to describe Russia’s war against Ukraine (whether from an anti- or a pro-Russian perspective). Interestingly, crusading terminology also serves as *loci communes* in numerous other situations, such as with regard to the fight for democracy, against climate change, corruption and poverty. As well as providing a short introductory overview on the profane use of crusade terminology in everyday life in different Western languages, this chapter will mainly focus on the terminological use within political language.

The profane, the moral and the political

Entire libraries of Alexandrian proportions would probably not be enough to house all the books listing all the crusade metaphors that have ever been written down on paper. Indeed, in European languages, the literal sense of ‘crusade’ has long since been overtaken in its popularity by the figurative sense: a crusade for or against something or a crusade to do something, for example, “a long and determined effort to achieve something that you believe to be right or to stop something that you believe to be wrong”,¹ has long become established as an integral part of figurative language in

1 To list just a few examples: “Crusade,” *Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries*, accessed 31 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/4ojew>; “Kreuzzug, der,” *Duden*, accessed 31 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/zmi53>; “kruisocht,” *van Dale*, accessed 31 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/b8pue>; “croisade,” *Le Robert*, accessed 31 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/fdrp6>; “crociata,” *Treccani*, accessed 31 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/pu66a>; “cruzada,” *Priberam Dicionário*, accessed 31 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/x18bs>; “krucjata,” *PWN Słownik Języka Polskiego*, accessed 31 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/4nf3b>; “křížová výprava,” *nechybujete.cz*, accessed 2 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/xcnai>; “korsog,” *Den Dansk Ordbog*, accessed 2 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/6cpst>. Interestingly, although the figurative sense of crusade – as shown in the examples below – has been in use in Spanish language

modern and postmodern societies. In particular, the word ‘crusade’ as a metaphor “for idealistic, zealous, and demanding struggles to advance the good (‘crusade for’) and to oppose perceived evil (‘crusade against’)”² has been used in various rhetorical situations in the 20th and 21st centuries. In recent decades, there has been an increasing distortion of the term ‘crusade’ in the tabloid press in particular, with seemingly never-ending disputes between two parties commonly described as legal or personal crusades – as was the case, for example, in a neighbourhood lawsuit over the noise of cowbells, in a litigation between the car company Volkswagen and the keyboardist of the industrial metal band Rammstein over the use of the name of the VW Bulli, or, most recently, in an exaggerated description of the family feud between Harry Mountbatten-Windsor (Prince Harry) and his relatives from the British royal family.³

Besides the wide range in the terminological use of crusade metaphors in tabloids, the figurative sense of ‘crusade’ is most often used to describe so-called moral crusades.⁴ This is frequently the case with right-wing political agendas, whether this be the fight for allegedly Christian or conservative values and norms such as, for instance, the “Family Rosary Crusade”, founded by the Irish-American priest Patrick Peyton, or various campaigns by right-wing and conservative politicians and parties against liberal-leftist “woke” policies, for a stronger police infrastructure or to gain control, or at least a greater degree of influence, over the education system.⁵ This rhetoric is not limited to the political right. On the contrary: the left’s ample use of crusade metaphors also has a long history and crusade metaphors have been used to advance various left-wing political agendas, such as the political fight for human rights, social justice, rights for the LGBTQ+ communities, and the fight against poverty and discrimination of all sorts. What is striking is that the crusade term has been and is still being used in both a positive and a negative sense: on the one hand to emphasise the supposedly praiseworthy sacredness of one’s own cause and, on the other, to defame the allegedly reprehensible fanaticism of the other side.⁶

for a long time, the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* as the most authoritative and prescriptive dictionary of the Spanish language does only list the term in its *sensus litteralis*: “Cruzada,” *Diccionario de la lengua española*, accessed 31 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/9djs4>.

- 2 Gary Dickson, “Crusade as Metaphor,” *Britannica*, 5 January 2023, accessed 13 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/75zm0>.
- 3 “Jahrelanger Nachbarschaftsstreit: Ehepaar klagt abermals gegen Kuhglocken-Lärm – und scheitert wieder,” *Stern*, 24 January 2019, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/ii75s>; “Namensstreit um den Bulli: VWs Kreuzzug gegen den Rammstein-Keyboarder,” *Stern*, 27 March 2011, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/bpysd>; Taba Pija, “After His Crusade Against British Monarchy Falls Apart, Prince Harry Reportedly Wants Royal Family to Forgive Him and Take Him Back,” *Animated Times*, 3 January 2023, accessed 6 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/3kmjr>.
- 4 On the origins and uses of this concept in social sciences, see the article by Philippe Fache in this volume.
- 5 See Kara Voght, “Ron DeSantis’ Crusade to Take Over Schools Scores a Big Win,” *Rolling Stone*, 24 August 2022, accessed 6 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/nfjgg>; Murjani Rawls, “Florida Gov. Ron Desantis’ ‘Anti-Woke’ Crusade Takes a Blow,” *The Root*, 19 August 2022, accessed 6 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/qyup>; Aidan Elwig Pollock, “The Conservative Crusade against the History Curriculum,” *Honi Soit*, 1 August 2022, accessed 6 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/lp4io>. On the *Family Rosary Crusade*, see, accessed 6 January 2023, <https://www.familyrosary.org/>.
- 6 To name some recent examples: “Like His Anti-Freedom Crusade, Ron DeSantis’ TV Ad Silences an Awful Lot of Voices,” *Charlotte County Democrats*, 6 August 2022, accessed 6 January 2023,

A broad area in which there has been talk of a crusade, or rather several crusades, in recent years, both in the United States and in Europe, is the so-called refugee crisis. Crusade references were repeatedly made either directly by or about right-wing populist and national conservative politicians such as Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro, Viktor Orbán, Jarosław Kaczyński, and Marine Le Pen, and their political followers. Overall, the neo-nationalist policies of the latter have been dubbed national crusades by media as well as by the respective political players and their parties.⁷ Viktor Orbán and his party Fidesz's anti-refugee policy in 2015 may serve as an example in this context, since it was repeatedly described as a "crusade for Europe".⁸ For years now, the Hungarian prime minister has been defending his policies as representing an "illiberal Christian democracy". Orbán and other conservative and right-wing politicians in Hungary see themselves as defenders of Christian Europe, and therefore as maintainers of the old *antemurale Christianitatis* ("forewall of Christianity") concept.⁹ Tightly interwoven with medieval crusade terminology, this bulwark rhetoric has in fact served the post-1989 right in East-Central Europe as a welcome rhetorical breeding ground, legitimising various far-right policies and various anti-migration, anti-LGBTQ, anti-Muslim, etc. views for at least two to three decades.¹⁰ Orbán, Kaczyński and co.'s 'crusade(s)' serve openly alienising policies that seek to preserve an allegedly eternally and exclusively Christian,

<https://t1p.de/hwfl4d>; "Graham on Impeachment: Democrats Are on a Crusade to Destroy Trump," *U.S. Senator South Carolina Lindsay Graham*, 22 January 2020, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/cj7e3>.

- 7 Quahadi, "Krucjata PIS-u, a zasady demokracji," *Salon24*, 3 November 2020, accessed 16 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/lmg15>; Steven Erlanger, "Macron's Win Is Also a Blow to Viktor Orbán's Nationalist Crusade," *The New York Times*, 25 April 2022, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/bnkrh>; Paulo Pachá, "Why the Brazilian Far Right Loves the European Middle Ages," *Pacific Standard*, 12 March 2019, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/53uex>; "Jair Bolsonaro's Reckless Crusade Puts Landmark Reforms in Peril," *Financial Times*, 16 March 2020, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/you4z>; "Donald Trump Jr Posts Crusader Symbol Image Amid Middle East Turmoil," *The Guardian*, 7 January 2020, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/5abtk>; "La croisade de Marine Le Pen," *Courrier International*, 25 April 2014, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/fgr15>; "La croisade de Marion Maréchal-Le Pen," *Le Parisien*, 3 December 2015, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/et4sl>.
- 8 "Orbán Viktor keresztes hadjáratot indít Európáért," *index*, 21 September 2015, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/bv33b>. See also Barbara Oertel, "Populismus in Ungarn: Orbáns Kreuzzug," *taz*, 17 February 2020, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/r3w42>; Franz Kössler, "Orbáns Kreuzzug gegen die liberale Gesellschaft," *Falter.at*, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/wfwk>.
- 9 For the *antemurale* rhetoric, see Paul Srodecki, *Antemurale Christianitatis: Zur Genealogie der Bollwerksrhetorik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit* (Husum: Matthiesen, 2015).
- 10 See Paul Srodecki, "Concluding Thoughts on Central and Eastern European Bulwark Rhetoric in the Twenty-First Century," in *Rampart Nations: Bulwark Myths of East European Multiconfessional Societies in the Age of Nationalism*, ed. Liliya Berezhnaya and Heidi Hein-Kircher (New York: Berghahn, 2019): 374–395; id., "Von Europabegeisterung zu Euroskeptizismus: Die polnische Rechte und die Grenzraumdiskurse des frühen 21. Jahrhunderts," in *Polen und Deutsche in Europa: Grenzräume. Beiträge zur internationalen Konferenz, 1. und 2. Dezember 2017*, Kiel, ed. Michael Düring et al. (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2020): 219–239.

white, and thus ethnically homogeneous Europe. As Orbán summarised it: “we [Hungarians] are not a mixed race and we do not want to become a mixed race”.¹¹

A further context in which crusade allegories constantly reappear are in the political and societal debates surrounding climate change.¹² Interestingly, the appeal of the crusade metaphor in relation to the fight against climate change is not a phenomenon that has only emerged over the past five years in the context of the recent climate movement around Greta Thunberg, who has been mockingly presented as a “climate crusader” by her opponents. Rather, it can be traced back to as early as the 1990s and the early 2000s.¹³ In 2006, for example, the German magazine *Stern* branded the attempts of the governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger, to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases in the Sunshine State as a crusade against climate change.¹⁴ In particular, however, Greta Thunberg and her “Fridays for Future” generation’s efforts to ward off, or at least raise awareness of, climate change have been both positively and negatively described as a noble ‘crusade’ for the environment, on the one hand, and also, on the other, as a new “children’s crusade”, motivated by good intentions but amounting to unfounded scaremongering.¹⁵ Edward R. Dougherty, the distinguished professor of engineering at Texas A&M University and author of the bestseller *The Evolution of Scientific Knowledge: From Certainty to Uncertainty*, even devoted an entire polemic to the comparison between the popular crusade of 1212 and “the recent climate strike by youngsters concerned about their future”. According to Dougherty, the 21st-century climate protests bear “ominous similarities to a thirteenth-century event” and, “now as then, children are misled by a lack of real knowledge”:

One could hardly miss the comparison between the recent children’s climate strike and the children’s crusade of 1212, when 30,000 children aimed to cross the Alps, take a ship from Genoa, and sail to Palestine to free the Holy Land. Naturally, many died of hunger, aided by thieves who saw the easy pickings. In Genoa, the survivors were denied shipping and told to return

- 11 “Viktor Orbán Adviser Resigns after Hungarian Premier’s ‘Mixed Race’ Speech,” *Financial Times*, 27 July 2022, accessed 23 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/jrde5>; Lili Bayer, “‘Nazi’ Talk: Orbán Adviser Trashes ‘Mixed Race’ Speech in Dramatic Exit,” *Politico*, 26 July 2022, accessed 23 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/lhs41>.
- 12 Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, “Crusaders of Climate Change? The Debate on Global Warming between the Medieval and the Present Age?,” *Medievalists.net*, 7 July 2021, accessed 11 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/lcqnh>.
- 13 “Germany’s Crusade against Climate Change,” *living on earth*, 20 July 2001, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/1hu20>.
- 14 “Arnold Schwarzenegger: Kreuzzug gegen den Klimawandel,” *Stern*, 31 August 2006, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/idgc6>.
- 15 Frank Dabbs, “Greta Thunberg’s Children’s Crusade,” *MountainViewToday*, 30 October 2019, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/zw2md>; “The Children’s Crusade to Save the Planet,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 22 March 2019, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/focq5>; Jon Magnuson, “Climate Change and the Children’s Crusade,” *The Mining Journal*, 28 September 2019, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/b5kyk>; Michael B. Gerrard, “The Children’s Climate Crusade,” *Science* 373.6557 (2021): 860, accessed 15 December 2022, doi: [10.1126/science.abj9799](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.abj9799).

home by Pope Innocent III. The adults of the 13th century opposed the crusade, thereby showing more sense than the adults of today. Beyond the ludicrous behaviour in both the climate strike and the 1212 crusade there is a serious question: do the climate children or the adults singing their praises care that there is no scientific knowledge backing their claims, nor can there be? Scientific knowledge requires more than a mathematical model (theory); it also requires validation of the model. A host of models predicting increasing global temperatures assisted by human behaviour does not provide scientific knowledge. What would provide knowledge is a single model whose predictions have been validated.¹⁶

Notably, the first rhetorical connections between the climate movement of the present-day youth and the children's crusade were made as early as the beginning of the 2010s, with

a lawsuit brought by a group of 21 individuals, all age 20 or younger, seeking to compel the US federal government to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The case, *Juliana v. United States*, is part of the so-called "children's crusade" – a campaign of state and federal lawsuits and rulemaking petitions related to climate change coordinated by an Oregon nonprofit, Our Children's Trust, on behalf of American youth.¹⁷

Even more remarkably, looking back to early May 1963, we can see that the famous march of 5,000 school students in Birmingham, Alabama – an event that played a pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s – has been baptised by posterity as the "Birmingham Children's Crusade".¹⁸ Both these examples of drawing a rhetorical parallel to the ill-fated children's crusade of the early 13th century are instances of special significance, illustrating the creativity and liberty with which the crusade metaphor has been used in modern political and journalistic language.

16 Edward R. Dougherty, "The Children's Crusade, 2019," *Asia Times*, 27 September 2019, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/hf761>. For a similar line of thought, see "Climate School Strike: A Warning from History for Pupils & Parents," *Net Zero Watch*, 14 February 2019, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/1c9rv>; Hayden Chakra, "The Story of the Famous and Foolish Children's Crusade," *About History*, 27 April 2021, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/i6k3i>. Cf. Gary Dickson, *The Children's Crusade: Medieval History, Modern Mythistory* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

17 "Climate Change Litigation Update: 'Children's Crusade' Case against the United States Goes Forward," *CRS Reports & Analysis*, 17 January 2017, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/4k39w>. See "The Children's Crusade: The 'Public Nuisance' Greens Escalate Their Legal Harassment," *The Wall Street Journal*, 19 May 2011, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/7vb1d>.

18 See Alexis Clark, "The Children's Crusade: When the Youth of Birmingham Marched for Justice," *History Studies*, 14 October 2020 (updated 28 January 2021), accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/o9zh9>; Charlayne Hunter-Gault, "Fifty Years after the Birmingham Children's Crusade," *The New Yorker*, 2 May 2013, accessed 7 January 2023 <https://t1p.de/20bxp>.

Holy and unholy crusades of the 20th century

However, by far the most prolific context to inspire the use of crusade metaphors are and have been military conflicts. As has been shown by the other chapters in this volume, both armed and solely political conflicts which had no connection whatsoever (*sensu stricto*) to the medieval crusades in particular, or (*sensu lato*) to religious warfare in general, were already described as crusades in the late 18th, 19th, or early 20th centuries. For instance, the bourgeoisie's fight against socialism¹⁹ and the labour movement was characterised as a crusade, as was – from the Entente's perspective – the First World War, to name just one of the most famous examples (“a crusade for democracy”).²⁰ Then, after Tsarist Russia had fallen to the Bolshevik revolutionaries and the Russian Empire had been replaced by the Soviet Union in 1922, the fear of a Communist world revolution emerged throughout the Western World. As early as 1918, the Dutch ambassador in Russia warned that

the immediate suppression of Bolshevism is the greatest problem of the present time. If Bolshevism is not immediately rooted out, it will spread, in one form or another, throughout Europe and the entire world. The only way to avoid the danger is collective action by all the Powers.²¹

As atheists who openly fought against religion in any form, the Bolsheviks were regarded as the new anti-Christ and bitter enemies of the Western regimes, built on old-established aristocracies and bourgeoisies as well as on capitalistic *homines novi*, exploiting the working class. It may come as no surprise that the crusade metaphor made a remarkable comeback in the following years, as a vividly anti-Bolshevik discourse arose among Berlin, London, Paris and Warsaw calling for a crusade (whether military, political or economic) against the Soviet Union and the Comintern, the Soviet-controlled international organisation founded in 1919 which advocated a global communist revolution.²² Indeed, the interwar period witnessed numerous essays, memoranda, pamphlets, and speeches openly calling for a crusade against the “communist threat” in order to save the allegedly endangered Occident, with the Swiss lawyer and writer Theodore Aubert's 1927 work *The Crusade against Bolshevism* probably being one of the most famous examples.²³

19 See, for instance, Louis-Paul-Pierre Dumont's caricature “Croisade contre le socialisme,” *Journal Pour Rire*, 2 June 1849, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/vv1rl>.

20 Quincy Howe, “Lost Leadership,” *Annual Debate Handbook* 12 (1938–39): 113–124 at page 119. See “The Great Crusade: World War I and the Legacy of the American Revolution,” *The American Revolution Institute*, 17 September 2017, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/pwf58>.

21 Théodore Aubert, “The Crusade against Bolshevism,” *The English Review* 44 (1927): 159–164.

22 For an overview, see Todd H. Weir, “A European Culture War in the Twentieth Century? Anti-Catholicism and Anti-Bolshevism between Moscow, Berlin, and the Vatican 1922 to 1933,” *Journal of Religious History* 39.2 (2015): 280–306.

23 As both the founder and president of the Geneva-based *Internationale Entente against the Third International*, Théodore Aubert was one of the most influential international anti-communists of the interwar period. See Michel Caillat, “Théodore Aubert and the *Entente Internationale Anticomuniste*: An Unofficial Anti-Marxist International,” *Twentieth Century Communism* 6 (2014): 82–104. See also Richard Faber, *Abendland: Ein “politischer Kampfbegriff”* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1979).

The interwar anti-communists gained religious support and absolution from Pope Pius XI, who called on all Catholics to join forces in a worldwide “crusade of prayer” against communism and the fight for a “re-Christianisation of society”²⁴

Indeed, crusade references were eagerly used by propagandists in nationalist, Catholic-oriented, fascist or right-wing European states in the interwar period: in Poland, a country founded – in a manner of speaking – as a “bulwark of anti-Bolshevism” in 1918²⁵; in Italy, where Benito Mussolini’s war in Ethiopia was sacralised by Catholic clergymen such as the Franciscan friar Agostino Gemelli “as a crusade in defence of Catholic and national civilisation”²⁶ and where the Catholic Republican Fascists even published a journal named *Crociata Italica*²⁷; in Ireland, where the far-right paramilitary organisation of the so-called Blueshirts under their leader Eoin O’Duffy called the “youth of Erin” to “rise and lead the crusade” for national Catholicism in their rallying song²⁸; in Romania, where – although being a country with a predominantly Orthodox population – the ultra-nationalist political activist Mihai Stelescu founded the “Crusade of Romanianism” (*Cruciada Românișmului*) as an eclectic far-right movement in 1934²⁹; in António de Oliveira Salazar’s Portugal³⁰; or in Spain, where General Francisco Franco portrayed the war of his nationalist faction against the republicans, supported among others by the Soviet Union, as a crusade against far-left communists and anarchists and where, following his victory, the heroic and epic propaganda films of the regime became referred to as *cine de cruzada* (“crusade cinema”).³¹

- 24 Koos-jan de Jager, “Food Packages as Anti-Communism Weapons: Oskar Schabert, the Baltic Action for Russia and the Mobilization of Christians in the Netherlands, 1924–1936,” *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 69.2 (2020): 183–207 at page 185. See William Montgomery Brown, *Heresy: The Pope’s Crusade against the Soviet Union* (Galion, Bradford-Brown Educational Co, 1930); Klaus Grosse Kracht, “Campaigning Against Bolshevism: Catholic Action in Late Weimar Germany,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 53.3 (2018): 550–573.
- 25 Paul Srodecki, “Bulwarks of Anti-Bolshevism: Russophobic Polemic of the Christian Right in Poland and Hungary in the Interwar Years and Their Roots in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Rampart Nations*: 293–318.
- 26 Lucia Ceci, *The Vatican and Mussolini’s Italy* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 182. See J. Casey Hammond, *Padre Agostino Gemelli and the Crusade to Rechristianize Italy, 1878–1959*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2010, accessed 5 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/5y049>.
- 27 Annarosa Dordoni, “*Crociata italiana*”: *Fascismo e religione nella Repubblica di Salò (gennaio 1944–aprile 1945)* (Milano: Sugar, 1976); Luisa Quartermaine, *Mussolini’s Last Republic: Propaganda and Politics in the Italian Social Republic (R.S.I.) 1943–45* (Exeter: Elm Bank, 2000), 26–27.
- 28 Richard Parfitt, *Musical Culture and the Spirit of Irish Nationalism, 1848–1972* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), 105. See Mike Cronin, “Catholicising Fascism, Fascistising Catholicism? The Blueshirts and the Jesuits in 1930s Ireland,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8.2 (2007): 401–411. On the Blueshirts’ commitment in the Spanish Civil War, see John Dorney, “‘God’s Battle’: O’Duffy’s Irish Brigade in the Spanish Civil War,” *The Irish Story*, 24 October 2018, accessed 5 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/j6i27>.
- 29 Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).
- 30 Maria José Oliveira, “A cruzada anticomunista de Salazar em África,” *Público*, 27 May 2012, accessed 8 January 2023 <https://t1p.de/bgr6w>; Alberto Pena-Rodríguez, “Contra la revolución ‘satanica’: Propaganda católica y legitimación del franquismo en Portugal durante la Guerra Civil española,” *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, 69 (2019): 41–52.
- 31 Mary T. Hartson, “Masculinity and ‘Cine de Cruzada’: The Crusade against Self-Indulgence in Early Francoist Spain,” *Hispanófila* 170 (2014): 97–112; Núria Triana Toribio, *Spanish National*

However, the undoubted leaders in adapting the crusade allegories for their own purposes were the German National Socialists. Nazi propaganda never got tired of cloaking the NSDAP's fight against communism in the legitimacy provided by the concept of a holy war, whether this was in the suppression of internal enemies from the left or in the portrayal of the German involvement in the Spanish Civil War as part of "Europe's crusade against Bolshevism".³² Consequently, in order to mobilise and gain support from fascist, nationalist, right-wing, and conservative circles all over Europe, and by playing on the anti-communist prejudices, the Nazis sought to sell their attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 to the public as "Europe's crusade against the Bolshevism" (Figures 12.1a–d).³³ Interestingly, at the very same time, interwar democratic forces were repeatedly calling for a "crusade against fascism"³⁴ – a rhetoric which was willingly adapted by official British, (pre-Vichy and later Gaullist) French or US-American propaganda in the Second World War.³⁵ Crusade rhetoric was also used to sharply criticise the brutal Nazi policies against Jews and other religious minorities as the Jehovah's Witnesses.³⁶

Cinema (London: Routledge, 2003), 39–69. See *Totalitarian Arts: The Visual Arts, Fascism(s) and Mass-Society*, ed. Mark Ellipse, et al. (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2017).

- 32 Jürgen Förster, "Freiwillige für den 'Kreuzzug Europas gegen den Bolschewismus': Der Aspekt des 'Kreuzzugs'," in *Das Deutsche Reich und der Zweite Weltkrieg*, vol. 4: *Der Angriff auf die Sowjetunion*, ed. Horst Boog et al. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlag-Ansalt, 1987), 908–15; Judith Keene, *Fighting for Franco: International Volunteers in Nationalist Spain during the Spanish Civil War, 1936–39* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2001). On the German-Spanish relations during the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War, see Rafael García Pérez, *Franquismo y Tercer Reich: Las Relaciones económicas hispano-alemanas durante la segunda Guerra mundial* (Madrid: Centro de estudios constitucionales, 1994); Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, *The Spanish Blue Division on the Eastern Front, 1941–1945: War, Occupation, Memory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022).
- 33 David Stahel, ed., *Joining Hitler's Crusade: European Nations and the Invasion of the Soviet Union, 1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Eckart Conze et al., *Das Amt und die Vergangenheit: Deutsche Diplomaten im Dritten Reich und in der Bundesrepublik* (München: Klaus Blessing, 2010), 201; David Schmiedel, "Du sollst nicht morden": *Selbstzeugnisse christlicher Wehrmachtssoldaten aus dem Vernichtungskrieg gegen die Sowjetunion* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2017), 135. See Wolfram Wette, "Kreuzzug gegen den Bolschewismus: NS-Propaganda zur Rechtfertigung des Überfalls," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 69.6 (2021): 534–540; Bernward Dörner, "Ideologie und Wahrnehmung des Kriegs gegen die Sowjetunion," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 69.6 (2021): 522–533; Rolf-Dieter Müller, *An der Seite der Wehrmacht: Hitlers ausländische Helfer beim "Kreuzzug gegen den Bolschewismus"* (Berlin: C. Links, 2007); Jürgen Förster, "Croisade de l'Europe contre le Bolchevisme": la participation d'unités de volontaires européens à l'opération 'Barberousse', en 1941," *Revue d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* 118 (1980): 1–26.
- 34 J. L. Douglas, *Spotlight on Fascism* (London: J. L. Douglas, n.d.), 23; Corrado Govoni, "Italy's Empire and World Political Problems", in *Europe into the Abyss: Behind the Scenes of Secret Politics*, ed. Alex Forbath (London: Pallas, 1938): 203–247 at page 235; Quincy Howe, "Have We Bonds with the British?," *North American Review* 245 (1938): 240–55; id., 'Lost Leadership', 119–20.
- 35 *Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 77th Congress, First Session. Appendix, vol. 87, pt 11: March 17, 1941, to May 20, 1941 (Pages A1185 to A2384)* (Washington: U. S. Government, 1941), A1325; Charles Antoine Micaud, *The French Right and Nazi Germany, 1933–1939* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1943), 80.
- 36 *B'nai B'rith National Jewish Monthly* 49 (1934), 332; *The Jewish Forum: A Monthly Magazine* 16 (1933), 45; Franz Zürcher, *Kreuzzug gegen das Christentum* (Zürich: Europa, 1938). Zürcher's book was translated into French and Polish: *Croisade contre le Christianisme* (Paris: Rieder, 1939), *Krucjata przeciwko chrześcijaństwu* (Bern: Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, 1939).



Figure 12.1 a–d Clockwise from top left: (a) Michel Jaquot, *Victoire: La grande croisade européenne* (Paris, 1941); (b) *la croisade contre le bolchevisme* (Paris, 1941); (c) *la grande croisade: Légion des volontaires français contre le bolchevisme* (s.l., 1942); (d) Antoncarlo Valentineti, *la crociata antibolscevica* (Roma, 1942).³⁷

37 On the French propaganda in support of the war against the Soviet Union, see Dominique Rosignol, *Histoire de la propagande en France de 1940 à 1944* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1991), 195–201.

With the end of the Second World War and the start of the Cold War, the virtual monopoly of anti-communist crusade polemic passed on to the United States and its NATO allies, in particular France, West Germany, and the United Kingdom. From Dwight D. Eisenhower to Ronald Reagan, from Joseph McCarthy to Franz Josef Strauß, from Antoine Pinay to Pope John Paul II, ‘crusade’ became an omnipresent polymetaphor of anti-communists from 1945 to 1989–91.³⁸

From Bush to Macron: the holy war against Islamic fundamentalism

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, and the end of the Cold War which accompanied it, did nothing to stop the use of crusade terminology as a popular metaphor in political language. On the contrary, ‘crusade’ experienced an inglorious renaissance right at the beginning of the new millennium. This renaissance is inextricably linked with the name George W. Bush. It was the forty-third president of the United States of America who – after the infamous events of 11 September 2001 – equated his proclaimed “war on terrorism” with a crusade. Five days after the USA had been attacked by al-Qaeda terrorists, Bush gave a speech in which he summed up everything that, for centuries, has been typical of crusade and – the latter’s polemical twin – bulwark rhetoric: surrounded by inhuman and barbaric enemies, the US-Americans, as the self-proclaimed leaders of the Western World, were called upon to lead a war to protect their own civilisational values against those who stood diametrically opposed to them. Playing on constructions of alterity and alienity, and naming the “war on terrorism” a crusade, Bush sought to lend the subsequent US-American armed ventures of the following years in the Near and Middle East a sacralised legitimation:

We’re facing a new kind of enemy, somebody so barbaric that they would fly airplanes into buildings full of innocent people. And, therefore, we have to be on alert in America. We’re a nation of law, a nation of civil rights. We’re also a nation under attack. [...] We haven’t seen this kind of barbarism in a long period of time. No one could have conceivably imagined suicide bombers burrowing into our society and then emerging all in the same day to fly their aircraft – fly US aircraft into buildings full of innocent people – and show no remorse. This is a new kind of, a new kind of evil. And we understand. And the American people are beginning to understand. This crusade, this war on

38 Jeff Broadwater, *Eisenhower and the Anti-Communist Crusade* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Paul Kengor, *The Crusader: Ronald Reagan and the Fall of Communism* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006); Scott Lucas, *Freedom’s War: The US Crusade against the Soviet Union 1945–56* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Sanford J. Ungar, “Ideology: The Christian Anti-Communism Crusade,” *The Atlantic*, June 1974, accessed 6 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/wcv0p>; Adrian Hänni, “A Global Crusade against Communism: The Cercle in the ‘Second Cold War,’” in *Transnational Anti-Communism and the Cold War*, ed. Luc van Dongen et al. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014): 161–174. On the Vatican’s role in anti-communist propaganda between 1945 and 1989/91, see Kenneth S. Zagacki, “Pope John Paul II and the Crusade against Communism: A Case Study in Secular and Sacred Time,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 4.4 (2001): 689–710.

terrorism is going to take a while. And the American people must be patient. I'm going to be patient.³⁹

Consciously or unconsciously, George W. Bush echoed Samuel Huntington's axiom of the approaching "clash of civilisations", thereby ironically lending fuel to the Islamist terrorists themselves, who for years had repeatedly been accusing the West in general, and the United States in particular, of leading a modern crusade against Islam and the Muslim world.⁴⁰ In May 2005, the high-ranking al-Qaeda member Saif al-Adel emphasised that the September 11 attacks were meant "to prompt the Americans to carry out the anticipated [military] response". George W. Bush's "war on terrorism" speech, however, exceeded all the terrorists' expectations: "what we had wished for actually happened. It was crowned by the announcement of Bush Jr of his crusade against Islam and Muslims everywhere".⁴¹ Warding off the American and European crusaders, Islamist terrorists in turn saw and still see themselves as on a holy mission, fighting a seemingly never-ending jihad against the "evil" West. Remarkably, the Western crusade is regarded as a joint venture of Christian and Jewish forces, the latter leading a "Zionist crusade", as perhaps best expressed in July 2007 by Ayman al-Zawahiri, who later became the second general emir of al-Qaeda following Osama bin Laden's death:

The near-term plan consists of targeting Crusader-Jewish interests, as everyone who attacks the Muslim Ummah must pay the price, in our country and theirs, in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, and Somalia, and everywhere we are able to strike their interests. [...] And the long-term plan is divided into two halves: the first half consists of earnest, diligent work, to change these corrupt and corruptive regimes. [...] As for the second half of the long-term plan, it consists of hurrying to the fields of jihad like Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia, for jihad preparation and training. Thus, it is a must to hurry to the fields of jihad for two reasons: the first is to defeat the enemies of the Ummah and repel the Zionist crusade, and the second is for jihadi preparation and training to prepare for the next stage of jihad.⁴²

39 George W. Bush, "Remarks by the President Upon Arrival", *The White House – President George W. Bush*, 16 September 2001, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/zzgs0>.

40 Christopher M. Blanchard, "Al Qaeda: Statements and Evolving Ideology," *CRS Report for Congress* RL32759, updated 9 July 2007, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/w44gg>, 3, 15; "Al Qa'ida's Al Zawahiri Predicts Failure of US 'Crusade' against Muslim States," *OSC Report* GMP20051207507001, 7 December 2005.

41 *OSC Report* GMP2005060637100, 21 May 2005; Blanchard, "Al Qaeda," 5–6, n. 19.

42 Quotation taken from Blanchard, "Al Qaeda," 13–14. Three years earlier, Osama Bin Laden had also already stated similar thoughts: "I now address my speech to the whole of the Islamic nation: listen and understand. The issue is big, and the misfortune is momentous. The most important and serious issue today for the whole world is this Third World War, which the Crusader-Zionist coalition began against the Islamic nation. It is raging in the land of the two rivers. The world's millstone and pillar are in Baghdad, the capital of the caliphate", Quotation taken from "In Their Own Words: What the Terrorists Believe, What They Hope to Accomplish, and How They Intend to Accomplish It," *The White House – President George W. Bush*, 5 September 2006, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/t47mp>.

The metaphors of a “Jewish crusader state” and its “Zionist fight against Islam”, however, have first of all been propagated for decades now by the Palestinian Sunni Islamist political and military organisation of Hamas and the Lebanese Shia Islamist political party and militant group of Hezbollah, both - at least their military wings - being considered as terrorist organisations by several countries, including Israel, the European Union and the USA.⁴³

Even though George W. Bush had to take a lot of criticism for his crusade comparison⁴⁴ and subsequently no longer used the crusade term for his “global war on terrorism”,⁴⁵ the othering and alienating basic ingredients of crusade rhetoric did not disappear from his later speeches. Less than five months later, in another now famous speech, the president spoke of the “axis of evil”, consisting of Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, “and their terrorist allies [...], arming to threaten the peace of the world”.⁴⁶ At the end of June 2002, Bush went even further and reduced world politics to a simple black-and-white dichotomy, underlining that “nations are either with us or against us in the war on terror”.⁴⁷ Although such rhetorical crusade *faux pas* were avoided by other Western leaders, in the media, the concept of a crusade did establish itself as a metaphor for the fight against radical Islamism and Islamic extremist groups. Most recently, the French president Emmanuel Macron’s political campaign against Islamist terrorism and “homemade terrorists” was described as a “secular crusade”, conducted under the guise of French republican laicist policies. According to the British journalist David Hearst, in “Macron’s feverishly active hands *laicite* has turned into a 21st century crusade, with all the

43 See for example: David Ohana, “Are Israelis the New Crusaders?,” *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 13.3 (2006): 36–42; Uri Avnery, “Crusaders and Zionists,” *The Ecologist*, 12 October 2014, accessed 8 November 2023, <https://t1p.de/ljlt>

44 See, with further references, Peter Ford, “Europe Cringes at Bush ‘crusade’ against Terrorists,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 19 September 2001, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/erz49>; “Don’t Mention the GWOT: A New Vocabulary Is Needed to Confront Terrorism,” *The Economist*, 5 July 2007, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/ta1bl>; Peter Waldman and Hugh Pope, “‘Crusade’ Reference Reinforces Fears War on Terrorism Is Against Muslims,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 21 September 2001, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/8gnb>. See also Richard Jackson, *Writing the War on Terrorism. Language, Politics and Counter-Terrorism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); Markus Kotzur, “‘Krieg gegen den Terrorismus’ – politische Rhetorik oder neue Konturen des ‘Kriegsbegriffs’ im Völkerrecht?,” *Archiv des Völkerrechts* 40 (2002): 454–479.

45 Only two days after Bush’s crusade speech, Lawrence Ari Fleischer, the then-White House press secretary, sought to relativise the president’s words in a press briefing: “Q: The other question was, the President used the word crusade last Sunday, which has caused some consternation in a lot of Muslim countries. Can you explain his usage of that word, given the connotation to Muslims? Mr Fleischer: I think what the President was saying was – had no intended consequences for anybody, Muslim or otherwise, other than to say that this is a broad cause that he is calling on America and the nations around the world to join. That was the point – purpose of what he said”: “Press Briefing by Ari Fleischer”, *The White House – President George W. Bush*, 18 September 2001, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/i3207>.

46 George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address to the 107th Congress. The United States Capitol, Washington, D. C., 29 January 2002”, in *Selected Speeches of President George W. Bush 2001–2008* (Washington: White House, 2011): 103–113, at page 106, accessed 7 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/xlm60>.

47 George W. Bush, “Middle East Peace Process. The Rose Garden of the White House, Washington, D.C., June 24, 2002,” in *Selected Speeches*: 133–138 at page 135.

nuance Simon de Montfort showed in the 13th. However, in Hearst's eyes the French president's "cynical crusade" was proclaimed "not to save Jerusalem, but to save France's imaginary republican soul".⁴⁸ As described above, crusade references are most widespread in right-wing and ultra-nationalist circles, where the image of the new crusaders as part of the self-proclaimed Counter-Jihad Movement serves as an ideological foundation for rightist symbolism and rhetoric.⁴⁹

In contrast, in the last quarter century, crusade comparisons have also become established and essential parts of Islamist and jihadist propaganda. Following the outbreak of the most recent Hamas-Israel War in October 2023, crusade terminology in relation to Israel as well as the West has reached a new level in the Muslim world, with - besides the typical crusade commentaries made by jihadist terrorist organizations as al-Qaeda and their affiliates - Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's accusations against the Western powers of "creating a crusade war atmosphere" against Muslims being probably the most-known and commented.⁵⁰

Battlefield Ukraine: Putin's holy war and the West's anti-Russian crusade

In the Western world, however the outbreak of a new war at the eastern flanks of Europe with the Russian invasion in Ukraine at the end of February 2022 triggered a re-emergence of crusading metaphors. On the one hand, the Ukrainians' fight to defend their country as well as the West's efforts to support them, have frequently been portrayed as a holy war for national self-determination and for the maintenance of international law and order. The allegorical portrayals here vary from the "anti-Putin democracy crusade" to "a fatiguing crusade against Russian evil".⁵¹ Here, again, in a manner typical for crusade rhetoric, an image of a bipolar world order is being conjured, as described, for example, by the Polish journalist Jerzy Haszczyński:

The fight against evil now can take even longer. It would not be a crusade in the medieval sense. Not the armed conquest of Moscow. But great economic pressure on Russia combined with demonstrating the power of Western values – democracy and freedom, demonstrated in action, not just words. Missionaries act in a similar way, showing that abundance and the standard of living are related to the values professed.⁵²

48 David Hearst, "Emmanuel Macron's Cynical Crusade," *Middle East Eye*, 21 December 2020, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/s5hkb>.

49 Ariel Koch, "The New Crusaders: Contemporary Extreme Right Symbolism and Rhetoric," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 11.5 (2017): 13–24.

50 For an overview on the most recent jihadist crusade metaphors used in the current Palestine-Israel conflict, see "Islamist Groups Unite around Israel Attack, Diverge on Hamas," *Institute for Strategic Dialogue*, 6 November 2023, accessed 8 November 2023, <https://t1p.de/60iep>

51 Michael Hirsh, "Why Biden's Anti-Putin Democracy Crusade Is Failing: Washington's Framing of Its Fight against Russian Aggression Has Failed to Win over Most of the World," *Foreign Policy*, 11 May 2022, accessed 17 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/gxce7>; Jerzy Haszczyński, "Męcząca krucjata przeciw rosyjskiemu złu," *Rzeczpospolita*, accessed 16 December 2022, 26 March 2022, <https://t1p.de/2drcc>.

52 Ibid.: *Walka ze złem teraz może trwać nawet dłużej. Nie miałyby to być kruczata w średniowiecznym rozumieniu. Nie zbrojne podbicie Moskwy. Lecz wielki nacisk gospodarczy na Rosję połączony z*

On the other hand, Western politicians and journalists have also used the crusade metaphor to denounce Russia's assault on Ukraine. This was probably best summarised by the German chancellor Olaf Scholz who, in September 2022, emphasised that "Europe and the transatlantic community [...] are experiencing a *Zeitenwende* – a drastic turning point at which the supporters of liberal democracy need to come together more than ever to join forces". Scholz also left no doubt as to what date he considers to be the ultimate turning point of recent years:

February the 24th – Russia's ruthless attack on Ukraine has rendered the task more difficult but also much more urgent. Of course, even before that date, we had known for quite a while that authoritarians and right-wing populists were gathering steam. Liberal democracy has been under attack for years, both from within and without. But that attack reached a whole new level when Putin's Russia invaded Ukraine. [...]. All along, Vladimir Putin and his enablers have made one thing very clear: this war is not only about Ukraine. They consider their war against Ukraine to be part of a larger crusade – a crusade against liberal democracy, a crusade against [the] rules-based international order, a crusade against freedom and progress, a crusade against our way of life and a crusade against what Putin calls the collective West. He means all of us. That is why Ukraine must prevail in order for liberal democracy and peace to prevail. That is why for all of us this is definitely not the time to indulge in what Sigmund Freud once called the narcissism of small differences.⁵³

Scholz's terminological shift, however, should not come as any surprise, since Russian politicians, the Russian Orthodox Church as well as Russian anti-Western ideologists and journalists have been described as "anti-Western crusaders" in the Western media for several years.⁵⁴ In diametric opposition to this sort of language, Russian officials such as Vladimir Putin or Dmitry Medvedev have not tired of condemning crusades and crusading as solely Western ideological constructs,

demonstrowaniem siły zachodnich wartości - demokracji i wolności, demonstrowaniem w działaniu, a nie tylko słowach. Podobnie działają misjonarze, pokazując, że dostatek, standard życia jest związany z wyznawanymi wartościami.

53 Olaf Scholz, "The Chancellor's Address on the State of Democracy", *Das Progressive Zentrum*, 13 October 2022, accessed 14 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/jiwv1>. See Benjamin Lamoureux, "PGS22: Scholz Calls War in Ukraine a 'Crusade'", *Das Progressive Zentrum*, 13 October 2022, accessed 14 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/fmcjz>.

54 See, with further references, Vladimir Gel'man, "Mediocrity Syndrome in Russia: Domestic and International Perspectives," *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* 258, 2 July 2013, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/v3p3u>; Pål Kolstø and Helge Blakkisrud, "Not So Traditional After All? The Russian Orthodox Church's Failure as a 'Moral Norm Entrepreneur'," *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* 710, 4 October 2021, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/cvjre>; Sergei Medvedev, "The State and the Human Body in Putin's Russia: The Biopolitics of Authoritarian Revanche," *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* 597, 30 May 2019, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/3qzqxq>.

which provide proof of Western “imperialism”. Medvedev condemned NATO’s armed engagement in the Libyan civil war in 2011:

Under no circumstances is it acceptable to use expressions that essentially lead to a clash of civilisations, such as ‘crusades’ and so on. It is unacceptable. Otherwise, everything may end up much worse than what is going on now. Everyone should remember that.⁵⁵

Vladimir Putin, at the time Russian prime minister, argued along similar lines in criticising the UN resolution to intervene in an internal conflict as reminiscent of papal crusade calls in the Middle Ages, “when someone called on others to go to a certain place and liberate it”.⁵⁶ These are words that today seem like sheer mockery in view of the later Russian intervention in the Syrian war.

Let us return, however, to the Russo-Ukrainian War: even if he was probably the best-known person to use it, Chancellor Scholz was not the first to figuratively describe Russia’s invasion in Ukraine as a ‘crusade’ against the Western world. As early as the end of August 2022, Armin Huttenlocher, a Berlin and Tbilisi-based journalist and policy adviser with a focus on Eastern Europe, stated that “Putin’s war is also [Patriarch] Kirill’s crusade”. Huttenlocher justified the terminological extension of the crusade concept to the Eastern Church with the conceptual parallels in the rhetoric of the orthodox patriarch:

For Putin, the Russian Orthodox Church is a close yet simultaneously demanding ally in this war. In order for Kirill and his priests to declare to the millions of believers that his “special operation” is a holy war against evil, or alternatively a crusade to preserve God’s will on earth, some return is expected. The restoration of the Russian Orthodox Church in the area that Kirill now calls “Little Russia” rather than Ukraine would be not simply a matter of the Church’s political interest. It would help to support robust action against the assumed western decadence which has turned independent Ukraine, in Putin’s and Kirill’s eyes, into a Sodom and Gomorrah.⁵⁷

Huttenlocher emphasised that both Putin and Kirill largely drew their ideological foundations from the works of Ivan Alexandrovich Ilyin – a Russian jurist, dogmatic religious and political philosopher and conservative monarchist, who, like no other, is said to have had an enormous influence on the worldview of numerous post-Soviet intellectuals and politicians.⁵⁸ Built upon alienity constructions, in which an inner group is surrounded by allegedly hostile and threatening outer groups, it is in

55 Dmitry Gorenburg, “Russia’s Conflicts in Libya,” *Atlantic Sentinel*, 31 March 2011, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/angv6>.

56 Ibid.

57 Armin Huttenlocher, “Putin’s War Is Also Kirill’s Crusade,” *Zentrum Liberale Moderne*, 31 August 2022, accessed 23 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/a92b8>.

58 On this, see Philip T. Grier, “The Complex Legacy of Ivan Il’in,” in *Russian Thought after Communism: The Recovery of a Philosophical Heritage*, ed. James P. Scanlan (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe,

Ilyin's extensively dichotomous worldview that Huttenlocher identifies the main key to understanding Putin's war and Kirill's 'crusade' in Ukraine:

His [Ivan Alexandrovich Ilyin's] work provides them both with particularly useful arguments when it comes to the restoration of the Great Russian Empire and at the same time proves to be an ideal spiritual bridge between secular and religious power. [...] It would have been almost impossible to undervalue sufficiently the contributions of this so-called thinker to human endeavour, had not both President Putin and Patriarch Kirill found in his work their arsenal of arguments and reasoning in favour of a mixture of historical misrepresentation, leadership cult, messages of salvation, national-chauvinistic phrases and metaphysically loaded analogies. Anyone who wants to fully understand the reasoning behind Putin's war and Kirill's crusade cannot avoid submitting to the martyrdom of reading Ilyin's works.⁵⁹

According to Huttenlocher, it is therefore vitally important that the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 should not be viewed solely through political or even economic lenses. Rather, the Russian war of aggression is the result of an ever-increasing interdependence between state and church since Putin came to power in 1999/2000. Consequently, the Russian assault bears the features of a holy war, that is, a crusade:

Whoever tries to bring peace after this terrible war must take into account the ideological background and, above all, the intertwining of church and state, of the political and religious myths that are fundamental to this world view. The West urgently needs to move away from its sole focus on Vladimir Putin. What is currently happening in Ukraine is a collective crime in which the Russian Orthodox Church is playing a fundamental role. The re-education announced by Putin of all surviving Ukrainians remaining in the territory is intended not simply as denazification. Its aim is re-Christianisation. Putin's war in Ukraine is, at one and the same time, Kirill's crusade.⁶⁰

This is not the place to discuss the allegedly leading role of Ivan Ilyin in Putin's ideology or Patriarch Kirill's religious worldview. On this question, Huttenlocher is largely in agreement with Timothy Snyder, the American historian and best-selling author specialising in the modern history of East-Central and Eastern Europe, who described Ilyin as "Putin's philosopher of Russian fascism".⁶¹ In contrast, other scholars have repeatedly sought to contradict this assumption by downplaying

1994): 165–86; S. I. Zakhartsev, "The Victory Day in the Great Patriotic War: What the Biography of the Philosopher I. A. Ilyin Hides," *Russian Journal of Legal Studies* 8.2 (2021): 95–102.

59 Huttenlocher, "Putin's War".

60 Ibid.

61 Timothy Snyder, "Ivan Ilyin, Putin's Philosopher of Russian Fascism," *The New York Review Daily*, 16 March 2018, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/v7qlf>; id., "God Is a Russian," *The New York Review*, 5 April 2018, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/sw5t7>.

Ilyin's impact on post-Soviet Russia.⁶² Be that as it may, more interesting for this chapter is the appropriation of 'crusade' as a term originating in Latin Christendom to Russia and the Eastern Church. Another example, coming directly from the Catholic Church, might be even more surprising: as one of the Vatican's most famous specialists on Eastern European and Russian issues, the Catholic priest Stefano Caprio only recently condemned Putin's war in Ukraine as "Russia's last crusade" in the manner of a reckless holy war. Caprio emphasised that "instead of engaging in a grotesque 'denazification' campaign of the disputed provinces", rather, the Russian invasion

should be called a 'crusade', given the spiritual and "metaphysical" character attributed to it by the Putin regime and the Russian Orthodox under Patriarch Kirill in order to impose their dominion over the sacred lands of Crimea, the Don region and the Black Sea coast, which the Byzantine missionaries crossed to reach in Russia at the end of the first millennium. On the day of the new call to arms, preaching from the female monastery of the Sacred Conception in Moscow, the patriarch made a new appeal to "restore the unity of the Russian Church, and not consider Ukrainians as enemies".⁶³

Despite or maybe precisely because he himself is a member of an institution linked, like no other, to the medieval crusades and crusading, Caprio even went several steps further in his far-fetched comparison:

Russia's contradictory war strategy and the emphasis on religious motivations are really a step back, to the 11th century and the crusades and the reconquest of the Holy Land, which have largely shaped the world order that still exists today, between Europe and the Mediterranean. Calls for holy war echo the fiery preaching of the First Crusade and Pope Urban II's homily at the Council of Clermont in 1095. The march of the multitudes of armed pilgrims of Western Christianity ended in 1099 with the fall of Jerusalem, which Putin dreams of doing with Kyiv. [...] If not this, Putin's war can be seen as a belated response to the greatest offence that the Latins inflicted upon the Orthodox world, in the Fourth Crusade, when they seized Byzantium and set up the Latin Empire of Constantinople, which lasted from 1204 to 1261. Like the Templars, the Teutonic Knights tried to convert Baltic pagans and the Orthodox of Rus' to Catholicism, but were stopped by a young leader, Saint Alexander Nevsky, who inspires today's post-Soviet Russians. And the millennial circle closes. What remains is

62 For an overview with further references, see Marlene Laruelle, "Is Russia Really 'Fascist'? A Comment on Timothy Snyder," *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* 539, 5 September 2018, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/10ubx>.

63 Stefano Caprio, "Russia's Last Crusade," *PIME Asia News*, 24 September 2022, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/pequ4>.

the apocalyptic fear of nuclear war, which Putin and his drunken henchmen mention every time their armies fail; last time, he almost comically admitted that “this is not a bluff”, evidently referring to previous claims that few had believed. The crusades rhetoric goes too, inaugurated by Patriarch Kirill during the first days of the war and almost unchanged to this day. Holy Rus’ justifies Putin’s *Russkiy Mir*, Russian world, a new, militant Christianity. [...] Kirill’s wars echo more the schisms of later centuries between various European Churches than the crusades against the infidels. It would be too much to expect the Moscow Patriarchate to take a pacifist turn, since it inseparably operates in a symbiotic relationship with the Kremlin, despite the appeals of Pope Francis and the World Council of Churches. New army recruits now not only have the patriarch’s blessing, but also the canonical duty to rise up in defence of the one faith. However, instead of the Antichrist to be fought in Ukraine and the West, what is needed is a new version of the medieval Antichrist excommunicated by the pope, Emperor Frederick II of Swabia, who eventually led the sixth Crusade, the only peaceful crusade, when Saint Francis died.

Following the unilateral annexation of the four Southern and Eastern Ukrainian oblasts (Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson) by Russia on 30 September 2022, the change in Russian propaganda became increasingly visible. While in the run-up to and at the beginning of the invasion, the fight against the supposed Ukrainian fascism was provided as the top priority, the parameters now clearly shifted towards religious explanations. In his speech officially celebrating the September annexations, Vladimir Putin willingly adopted the image of a holy war, in which Russia is the defender of the one and only true Orthodox faith against Western infidelity. Following their “sexual deviation”, allegedly teaching and forcing children to change their gender, the Western elites “are moving toward open Satanism”, whereas Putin and his followers “are fighting for historical Russia, to protect” the Russian “children and grandchildren from this experiment to change their souls”.⁶⁴ Other Russian propagandists were happy to take up this image of the civilisational clash between the West and the East. In the summer of 2022, Araik Stepanyan, delivering a very unique and strange explanation, emphasised that Russia was forced to invade Ukraine by the West, whose “Anglo-Protestant elites came up with a cunning, devilish scheme in order to draw the Slavic peoples into that cauldron of Ukraine and grind them all up there”.⁶⁵ By December of the same year, Stepanyan’s propagandistic rhetoric was becoming increasingly religious, as he called upon the Russian Orthodox Church to

64 Andrew Rettman, “Putin Declares Holy War on Western ‘Satanism’,” *euobserver*, 30 September 2022, accessed 28 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/sy0kx>; Massimo Introvigne, “Putin Officially Embraces Theories Accusing the West of ‘Satanism’,” *Bitter Winter*, 10 March 2022, accessed 28 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/fewah>.

65 Francis Scarr, “‘Political Expert’ Araik Stepanyan Offers His Unique Explanation for Russia’s War in Ukraine,” *Twitter*, 29 June 2022, accessed 28 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/bftkk>.

“declare [the Ukrainian president] Zelensky the official Antichrist – because from a religious point of view, he is the Antichrist” for “he made a deal with the devil and embodies what he concluded”. According to Stepanyan, Volodymyr Zelensky’s goal is to destroy the Orthodox Christian faith and thus – in order to defend the Orthodox Church – “he [Zelensky] needs to be finished off”.⁶⁶ In turn, at the end of December 2022, Ukrainian officials such as the Secretary of the National Security Council Oleksiy Danilov demanded of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which until May 2022 was still subordinate to the patriarchate of Moscow, that they condemn Vladimir Putin as “Satan” and the Russian Orthodox patriarch Kirill as the “devil”.⁶⁷

Interestingly, searching for a non-Christian perspective also offers an astonishing insight into the Russo-Ukrainian war: only a few days after the Russian invasion began, the Islamic State (IS) released a statement on 3 March 2022 celebrating the armed conflict as a “direct bloody war between the Orthodox crusaders of Russia and Ukraine”. As the beginning of the long-desired “crusader-crusader wars”, the IS declared their hope that, with the divine help of Allah, such wars would multiply among Christian countries, thus dividing the “unbelievers”:

To the brothers, supporters of the Islamic State in Russia and Ukraine: seize the opportunity, brothers, and collect weapons, which have been widely distributed to civilians, then attack the crusaders. This war among the infidels is a good opportunity to incinerate the effeminate [people] of Europe who burned our brothers in al-Baghuz [the Islamic State’s final enclave in Syria] with white phosphorus.⁶⁸

Some concluding thoughts

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, entire libraries of Alexandrian proportions would probably not be enough to house all the books listing all the crusade metaphors ever written down on paper. A quick internet search should suffice to prove this point: on 8 November 2023, a Google search on ‘crusade’ yields 181 million entries; for the Spanish *cruzada* there are still 157 million hits, for the French *croisade* 7.53 million, for the Italian *crociata* 4.54 million, for the German

66 “Russian Television Suggests ‘Declaring Zelensky the Antichrist’,” *RISU*, 4 December 2022, accessed 28 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/x7hyc>.

67 “Kyiv Official Asks Church to Call Putin and Kirill ‘Devil’,” *CNE.news*, 28 December 2022, accessed 28 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/ytpc3>; “Kyiv: Orthodox Church Should Declare Vladimir Putin Is Satan,” *South China Morning Post*, 28 December 2022, accessed 28 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/4r5o6>.

68 Romany Shaker, “ISIS and Al-Qaeda Condemn Muslims Fighting in Russo-Ukrainian War,” *The National Interest*, 18 April 2022, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/qbb0g>. See also Jean-François Ratelle, “The North Caucasus and the Russian War in Ukraine,” *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* 802, 13 October 2022, accessed 24 December 2022, <https://t1p.de/flb8e>.

Kreuzzug 1.7 million. The results list both: websites which address the actual historical crusades of the high and later Middle Ages, and also the vast field of crusade metaphors used in numerous situations. The latter not only mirrors the presence and popularity of crusade terms in modern language and their widespread use. The sheer number of findings also confronts every scholar with the almost insurmountable task of summarising the phenomenon of modern crusade metaphors in their entirety – a task which certainly could not be achieved in a single short article. Rather, this overview leaves open the question as to whether, in the future, more precisely focussed studies – adopted through the lens of postcolonial linguistics, for example – might also reveal the extent to which crusade metaphors have been adapted in former European colonies and, if so, to which degree. An interesting example here might be the Sri Lankan Tamil political party “Crusaders for Democracy” (CFD).⁶⁹

The polyvalent nature of ‘crusade’ – especially if used as a metaphor – may not come as a surprise since, even in the pre-modern era, there was sometimes disagreement about what actually constituted a crusade, albeit admittedly from a more factual perspective: in the imagination of medieval *christianitas*, as well as far into the early modern period, the concept of the crusade was tantamount to the modern pluralist and/or generalist understanding, even if armed pilgrimage to the Holy Land, with Jerusalem as the *umbilicus mundi* (“navel of the world”), was without doubt the highest goal of every crusader, and this therefore also continued to have a lasting influence on “the language of crusading”, as Christopher Tyerman aptly pointed out over thirty years ago.⁷⁰ Even if opposing interpretations of the crusades (sometimes paired with harsh criticism of the crusading movement) already emerged in the Middle Ages and

69 Sulochana Ramiah Mohan, “CFD Fields ‘Untouchables’ for Election,” *Ceylon Today*, 12 July 2015, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/9hto8>; P. K. Balachandran, “Former LTTE Militants to Contest Polls as ‘Crusaders For Democracy’,” *The Indian Express*, 3 July 2015, accessed 8 January 2023, <https://t1p.de/7ng07>.

70 Christopher Tyerman, “The Holy Land and the Crusades of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries,” in *Crusade and Settlement: Papers Read at the First Conference of the Society of the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East and Presented to R. C. Smail*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Cardiff: University College Cardiff Press, 1985): 105–12, at page 108. Paul Srodecki, “Crusading on the Periphery in the High Middle Ages: Main Debates, New Approaches,” in *The Expansion of the Faith: Crusading on the Frontiers of Latin Christendom in the High Middle Ages*, ed. id. and Norbert Kersken (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022): 29–52. For an overview on Jerusalem as the *umbilicus mundi* in the medieval Christian worldview, see Hans-Joachim Schmidt, “Symbolische Aneignung des Unverfügbaren: Jerusalem und das Heilige Grab in Pilgerberichten und Bildern des Mittelalters,” in *Die Stadt im Raum: Vorstellungen, Entwürfe und Gestaltungen im vormodernen Europa*, ed. Karsten Igel and Thomas Lau (Köln: Böhlau, 2016): 67–87; Beat Wolf, *Jerusalem und Rom: Mitte, Nabel – Zentrum, Haupt: Die Metaphern ‘Umbilicus mundi’ und ‘Caput mundi’ in den Weltbildern der Antike und des Abendlands bis in die Zeit der Ebstorfer Weltkarte* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010); Friederike Jary-Janecka, “‘Jerusalem umbilicus est terrarium’: Das Himmlische Jerusalem, vielfach verwendeter Vorwand höchst irdischer Auseinandersetzungen,” in *Mahagonny: Die Stadt als Sujet und Herausforderung des (Musik-)Theaters*, ed. Peter Csóbad (Salzburg: Müller-Speiser, 2000): 55–72; Robert Bonfil, “Gerusalemme ‘umbilicus mundi’,” in *La città e il sacro*, ed. Franco Cardini (Milano: Garzanti; Scheiwiller, 1994): 45–82.

consequently led to numerous disputes among the intellectual elites of Western Christianity,⁷¹ the various, sometimes even diametrical interpretations of a crusade tended to develop in the course of modern debates in both historical and cultural studies. Against the background of this conceptual change and its reinterpretation into an allegory used for propagandistic purposes, the term ‘crusade’ grew into a fuzzy and somewhat inconclusive *topos*; a “polymyth” which “only attained a prominent position among historical myths in combination with its continuing, ever-changing significance beyond religious boundaries”, as stated by Nikolas Jaspert in a summarising essay on the phenomenon of the medieval crusades and their socio-cultural interpretation a few years ago.⁷² One could extend this interesting statement and pass a similar judgement for the (largely political) use of the crusade term in the 20th and 21st centuries: as the examples above have shown, ‘crusade’ as a term has not only survived into present times as a vividly used polymetaphor. It is actually enjoying great popularity as a polyvalent rhetorical device to describe a long and determined (political) effort for or against a state, institution, movement, group or a single person, for or against a cause or ideology; for or against a policy. Mostly, however, it has been used to describe military conflicts. An interesting shift in rhetorical usage can be observed over the past few years: while, in the 20th century, the concept of a crusade was mainly used to lend an almost sacred legitimacy to one’s own cause, in recent years the metaphor has increasingly been deployed (especially by left-liberal circles in the West and Islamist and jihadist propaganda in the Near and Middle East) to defame the other side.

71 Martin Aurell, “Is Political Theology an Oxymoron? Radical Criticism of the Crusades in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,” in *Political Theology in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Discourses, Rites, and Representations*, ed. Montserrat Herrero López et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017): 111–28; Daniel Soukup, “Apostatrix gens: The First Crusade and Criticism of the Reversions of Jews in Cosma’s *Chronica Boëmorum* (Chronicle of the Bohemians),” in *Juden in der mittelalterlichen Stadt: Der städtische Raum im Mittelalter – Ort des Zusammenlebens und des Konflikts*, ed. Eva Doležalová (Praha: Filosofia, 2015): 9–26; Peter Edbury, “The Crusades and their Critics,” in *Archeology and the Crusades: Proceedings of the Round Table, Nicosia, 1 February 2005*, ed. Peter Edbury and Sophia Kalopissi-Verti (Athens: Pierides Foundation, 2007): 179–194; Elizabeth Sibery, *Criticism of Crusading 1095–1274* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985); Palmer A. Throop, *Criticism of the Crusade: A Study of Public Opinion and Crusade Propaganda* (Amsterdam: N.V. Swets&Zeitlinger, 1940).

72 Nikolas Jaspert, “Ein Polymythos: Die Kreuzzüge,” in *Mythen in der Geschichte*, ed. Helmut Altrichter et al. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 2004): 203–235 at page 235.

13 Conclusion

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During the first years of the 21st century, the word ‘crusade’ has been intensively used to define military expeditions in public discourse. The third millennium opened with the statements of US President George W. Bush, who, after the attack on the Twin Towers on 19 September 2001, presented as a crusade the intended war of the United States against Islamic terrorism. The term was repeatedly used by both the President and his aides, despite the fact that several voices had warned the American administration against such language, which was considered inappropriate and politically counterproductive. From then on, sectors of Muslim radicalism and circles of Christian fundamentalism mobilised all the media resources at their disposal to characterise the relationship between the West and Islam in this way. The propaganda intent was obvious, and the failure to distinguish between the different orientations and multiple political and religious components of that complex relationship allowed an interpretation of it as a continuous armed clash to spread in the global infosphere. Whilst there had been different interpretations of the historical crusades, the collective view was that the term ‘crusade’ defined a medieval conflict, belonging to a past without parallels with modern geo-political situations. Critical historical analysis has, however, proved incapable of effectively influencing contemporary linguistic.

Not even the demise of an essential feature of what historians commonly understand as a crusade, namely a papal proclamation, has prevented the application of this term to current war events. A distanced attitude towards military expeditions to the Holy Land has a long political and cultural background within Catholic culture. At the beginning of the 20th century, for example, supporters of early Catholic socialism promoted such a position. They believed it could give historical ground to their desire to have the ecclesiastical authority to legitimise the class struggle. If the Church had once banned wars of aggression such as the crusades, it could easily justify recourse to violence for another purpose, based on an evangelical motivation such as social justice. The ecclesiastical magisterium itself had, however, never officially taken a critical stance towards these medieval crusades. Up to the middle of the last century, the pontiffs had claimed to be the sole repositories of the power to promote a war that could bear the title of ‘crusade’, and this was explicitly reaffirmed by Pius XII on the occasion of the

uprising in Hungary in 1956. Whilst his predecessors had avoided any explicit reference to this privilege since Vatican II, Pope Francis has gone much further. The removal from the powers of the papacy of the prerogative to proclaim a crusade is in fact the consequence of the pope's radical revision of the judgement on the medieval crusades. Unlike John Paul II's request for forgiveness during the jubilee celebration in 2000, he does not propose to contextualise them in order to find excuses or exculpation for Christians' past anti-Gospel behaviour.¹ With Francis, the historical reconsideration of the crusades was linked to the affirmation that they did not represent an inescapable necessity, recalling some 800 years before the meeting of St. Francis of Assisi with Sultan al-Malik during the Fifth Crusade. Although Francis did not use the term 'crusade', he stated explicitly, at a time when military expeditions against Islam were being banned, that there was no lack of witness within the Church of an alternative to establishing a war-like relationship with that religion, based on adherence to a Christian practice of the Gospel *sine glossa*.² The reference to the crusade by the Argentine pope was thus not a posthumous justification of medieval Christians' behaviour. It was not aimed at sketching an alleged "spirit of the times" that would have inevitably conditioned the social practices of ecclesiastics as well as laymen. Instead, it emphasised that, at the very moment when some were appealing to arms to establish a relationship with the Muslim world, there still existed a possibility of choosing a different path, and the saint of Assisi had taken it.

Pope Francis draws from this assessment a solicitation to approach relations with others, in particular those with religious differences, on the basis of dialogue and listening. In his opinion, the Gospel requires that encounters between people, even those of different faiths and cultures, should never lead to armed conflict. He repudiates a conception of the Church's presence in history that legitimises the use of any warlike violence. This has an obvious consequence. It removes one of the inherent powers of papal function that his predecessors had claimed for centuries and whose exercise had historically characterised the configuration of crusades: the legitimacy to sacralise a recourse to arms. This new orientation of the Catholic Church towards medieval crusades is made all the more powerful by his exhortation to the universal Church to expunge the very word 'crusade' from ecclesial discourse. Francis urged the church to avoid any use of this term, even symbolical, when used to characterise pastoral initiatives because it contradicts the essential core he identifies in the Gospel: mercy. Since the institution represented by the papacy has for centuries nurtured diffusion in public opinion, not only of a positive opinion of the medieval crusades but also of the use of the word 'crusade' to ecclesial initiatives, this represents a significant reorientation. Even when popes reserved to themselves the right to proclaim a crusade without actually calling for

1 *Discorso in occasione del convegno "La teologia dopo Veritatis gaudium"*, Napoli, 21 June 2019, last accessed 25 May 2023, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/speeches/2019/june/documents/papa-francesco_20190621_teologia-napoli.html.

2 *Omelia del santo padre Francesco*, Abu Dhabi, 5 February 2019, last accessed 25 May 2023, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/homilies/2019/documents/papa-francesco_20190205_omelia-emiratiarabi.html.

a military intervention, they had never refrained from using the term to promote religious or social mobilisations (“prayer crusade”, “missionary crusade”, “social crusade”, “crusade of goodness”, etc.). They had encouraged this linguistic practice, convinced that it could foster a broad and enthusiastic consensus among the faithful. This use, however, ended up fuelling the presence of the crusade lexicon in public discourse. Its persistence recalled – indirectly, but inevitably – the practice of war, which always remained as a potential opportunity, although never concretely activated. There was no shortage of those who made use of it, and not just in the Catholic sphere. The call for a cancellation of the use of the word therefore has its root in the awareness that the promotion of peace necessitates the expulsion from the vocabulary of terms referring to an armed clash.

But these changes in the contemporary ecclesiastical magisterium – the shift in the historical evaluation of the medieval crusades, the abandonment of the papal privilege of the crusade ban and the call to expunge the word from the ecclesial lexicon – have not had any significant impact on contemporary public discourse. There has been no massive renunciation of the use of the term, even within the Catholic world. The interpretation given to the war launched by the Russian Federation against Ukraine in February 2023 is a striking testimony to this still persistent use of the word ‘crusade’.

It should be noted immediately that Rome distanced itself from the guidelines issued by the Russian Orthodox Church. According to the account of the conversation held by video call between Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and Pope Francis, reported by the official Vatican website on 16 March 2022, the latter recalled that the Christian Churches cannot today, as they once did, speak either of holy wars or of just wars because wars are always unjust.³ This reference to the sanctification of the conflict evidently alluded to the attitude of the head of Russian Orthodoxy. While not explicitly resorting to the term ‘crusade’, the Moscow Patriarch elaborated a religious legitimisation of the conflict which echoes the characteristic traits of medieval crusades. He did not only project the aggression against Ukraine onto a metaphysical plane, presenting it as an act of defence against the absolute Evil embodied by the West. He also claimed that the soldiers falling in this epochal battle would be martyrs and gain eternal life. By so doing, he took up the central core of the crusade. The papal proclamation of military expeditions defined as such always contained the promulgation of an indulgence based on the sacred character attributed to the conflict. It provided that any death in battle for the holy cause entailed the automatic cancellation of all the sins of the fallen man, so that he was assured immediate access to the kingdom of heaven. In short, Kirill reactivated one of the founding reasons for the characterisation of a war as a crusade: to give a certainty of immortality to the believer who could possibly find death in the forthcoming fight.

The centrality of this recourse to the crusade lexicon is made evident by its presence also in those secular aspects of politics that, from the 19th to the 20th centuries,

3 Alessandro de Carolis, “Videochiamata del papa con Kirill: la Chiesa usi la lingua di Gesù non quella della politica”, *Vatican News*, 16 March 2022, last accessed 25 May 2023, <https://www.vaticannews.va/it/papa/news/2022-03/papa-videochiamata-patriarca-kirill-guerra-ucraina-pace.html>.

substituted an immanent social entity – the nation, the class and the race – for the transcendent principle that Christianity was the absolute criterion of reference for a correct organisation of collective life and relations between men. In the various wars, to which the advocates of these new political religions attributed the title of crusade – most famously, Operation Barbarossa launched by the Nazi Third Reich – the Christian promise of the kingdom of heaven was surrogated by the inscription of the fallen in the imperishable memory of the perfect community that had arisen from the triumph of the holy cause for which they were called to sacrifice their lives. While changing the destination of the martyr – from transcendence to immanence – secular religions did not change the crucial element for characterising a conflict as a ‘crusade’: the eternalisation of the dead in battle. The supreme authority of the Russian Orthodox Church thus justified the military attack on Ukraine by reaffirming one of the deepest religious structures associated with the crusades: death in war as martyrdom worthy of eternal reward. It thus sacralised the conflict. Without explicitly resorting to the word, it paved the way for a religious justification of the military attack on Ukraine in the terms of a ‘crusade’. Indeed, both Russian and pro-Russian propaganda defined it this way.

The ongoing war in Eastern Europe testifies that the use of the word ‘crusade’ to characterise the Russian Federation’s attack on Ukraine is not just a prerogative of Moscow’s supporters. In fact, the same noun has been used to characterise Russian aggression by pro-Ukrainian public opinion and promoters of Western assistance to Kiev’s resistance. Paul Srodecki’s contribution to this volume has highlighted this very well. His essay shows how even Catholic circles do not shy away from this use of language. Undoubtedly, these are sectors that, characterised by conservative positions, show little agreement with the orientations of the various aspects of Pope Francis’ government. Such dissent is most evident in the use of the word ‘crusade’ to define the ongoing war. Not only because the pontiff refused to attribute a religious legitimacy to the conflict, particularly in the form of holy war, but also because, the pope having called for the word to be deleted, its use constitutes an ostentatious rejection of his direction.

The spread of the term in relation to the current conflict between Russia and Ukraine is particularly evident when used to qualify the armed struggle of Ukrainians to defend themselves against Russian aggression. Again, there is no ecclesiastical justification for such a linguistic practice. The leaders of the Christian churches present in Ukraine – the Latin, the Greek Catholic, the autocephalous Orthodox in communion with the patriarchate of Constantinople and even the Orthodox in communion with Moscow – have in fact developed a different rhetoric with regard to the conflict. When they have expressed a legitimisation of war violence, they have referred to the traditional “just war” scheme, with particular emphasis on the moral permissibility of self-defence. Nevertheless, the qualification of the war of defence against Russian attack as a ‘crusade’ has had some success with public opinion, including Christian public opinion. Srodecki’s essay rightly notes that the competition between the two fronts to define their own war or that of the enemy with the same lemma has also awakened Islamic fundamentalism’s interest in the topic. Some of its leaders have urged their followers scattered in the places involved in

the conflict to take advantage of the clash between pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian crusaders. They have invited them to insert themselves into this contradiction, to develop armed jihad, which is also based on the promise of eternal salvation for those who sacrifice their lives in the fight against the infidels.

The war in Ukraine thus provides a particularly striking example of the wide circulation of the term ‘crusade’ in the modern world. It is used by multiple social actors with different and even conflicting purposes in order to spread their interpretation of the ongoing military conflict among public. The persistence of this linguistic practice is made even more significant by an element that has emerged in recent years. The Roman papacy, which for centuries had claimed exclusive management of the ban on military crusade and made ample use of the word on a symbolic level for mobilising purposes, has now come to abandon all reference to the crusade, even inviting the faithful to expunge it from public discourse. The refusal of Catholic circles to accede to this solicitation is a striking testimony to the ongoing success of the word.

This wide presence of the crusading lexicon in modern public discourse gives particular interest to the present volume dedicated to the history of the word. It is not merely a matter of erudite curiosity regarding the antecedents of current linguistic usage. By placing itself on the solid ground of the humanities, the book in fact promotes an interdisciplinary approach to a critical, grounded knowledge of the development in time and space of the use of the word. It applies a historical, long-term view to socio-linguistic studies, considering words as cultural artefacts traceable to the communities in which they are produced. The word thus becomes a sensitive indicator of the conditions of a community. The semantic variations of the word at the time of its translation in the Arab world are an obvious example of this phenomenon. But the book proposes several other cases in this regard. Although it is only one of the results compared to the overall cognitive acquisitions proposed in this volume, it is worth retracing – obviously in very summary terms – what can be gleaned from the various essays about the historical itinerary of the word in the European context. This aspect shows the book’s relevance for our time as well.

‘Crusade’ makes its first appearance at different times, depending on the historical context. In some cases, for example, in Poland, it emerges very late, appearing only at the beginning of the 18th century as a loan word from French. In Germany, *Kreuzzug* imposes itself over *Kreuzfahrt* for the same reasons in the same period. In Western Europe, however, it was found as early as the 13th century, well after the first wars for the liberation of the Holy Land. Benjamin Weber offers a convincing explanation for this: the experience of a number of warlike events (military expeditions to the Iberian Peninsula, Occitania and the Baltic) with similarities to the armed pilgrimage to Palestine called for a new unitary conceptualisation, which manifested itself in the production of this new word. After becoming common in the 15th century for the governing needs of the Roman curia, the lemma seems to define a historical event confined to the past in modern times. Its fiscal meaning – the *bula de la cruzada* – seems to be reserved for the narrow political circles of the negotiations between State and Church. From Machiavelli in his *Istorie fiorentine* to Maimbourg in the *Histoire des croisades* or Fleury in his *Histoire ecclésiastique*,

historians employed it in their works to describe medieval expeditions to the Holy Land. But it is above all the dictionaries that reveal how much common usage recalls past events. The definitions of the word are in fact accompanied by an unequivocal temporal adverb; they are always connoted as events *d'autrefois*.

The matter is complicated, however, by the intervention of the culture of the Enlightenment. The first hints of critical revision, already exposed in tendencies traceable to the Catholic *Aufklärung*, are radicalised by Voltaire and the *Encyclopédie* in a strongly polemical judgement on the medieval crusades. The term thus begins to become the subject of a clash – which reproduces the great ideological fractures of modernity – regarding its semantic content. It implies a different evaluation depending on the interlocutor. The historical events it defines are in fact characterised by a positive or negative sign, depending on the political and cultural positions of those who use them.

What makes the picture even more intricate is the passage of the word from the historical to the symbolic level. As the contribution about the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* notes, from the 1878 edition onwards, the headword is given a figurative meaning in addition to its historical one. It is used in order to connote an organised struggle against ideas or institutions judged to be erroneous or evil. The example given by the *Dictionnaire* refers to the crusade against the principles of the French revolution, the ideological struggle waged by counter-revolutionary agents against political modernity. The reference has an actual correspondence with historical reality, as testified in the English-speaking world, where the term 'crusade', although not appearing in Edmund Burke's famous *Reflections* (1790), quickly becomes commonplace in the interpretation of his work. This is particularly evident in the extraordinary operation of re-actualising the medieval crusades in defence of the Old Regime conducted in 1794, with lucid awareness, by Francisco Gustà, a Spanish ex-Jesuit living in exile in the Roman State, on the edge of the French invasion. His pamphlet on the necessity, with appropriate updates, of a papal proclamation of a counter-revolutionary crusade – which Rome would consider but never formally proclaim – is not the first reuse of the word in a symbolic key. An obvious precedent can be found in the revolutionary sphere: as early as 1791, the advocates of the war to export the revolutionary principles labelled it as a "croisade pour la liberté", a formula which later became common in the Romantic era.

What is important to note is the linguistic fact certified by the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie*: in the late 18th century, the metaphorisation of the word became common practice. Polysemy is now inextricably linked to the term, casting the shadow of medieval expeditions to the Holy Land over the most diverse historical events of other times, military or not. The word has thus taken on a polysemic and polymetaphoric character over time. Its use is connected to the fact that it contains the memorial deposit of a distant historical event whose meaning is continually moulded and reshaped through a reinterpretation in a symbolic, and sometimes even mythical, view of that past. By demonstrating this extraordinary historical path of the term, this volume also points out that the use of appropriate critical tools makes it possible to decipher the term's multiple meanings. Socio-linguistics

indeed recognises that words, by establishing a relationship between the intentions of the speaker and the mental representations of the listener, have the capacity to produce behaviour. The use of words is thus linked to their performative role. The deciphering of this process through the clarification of the intentions prompting social actors to make use of the term, as well as its reception by their addressees, allows to establish the conditions and reasons for the production and diffusion of a term. The book provides some interesting examples of this phenomenon, studied in relation to its socio-cultural spheres.

But this cognitive operation also appears very relevant for our present, in which, as mentioned, the word has a wide circulation. In fact, it allows us to look at current uses with all the critical warnings deriving from knowledge of the implications underlying its past usages. For this reason, a volume dedicated to reconstructing the history of the word *crusade* becomes a testimony to the civil value of historiography. Although it deals with a narrow specialist field, such as the study of a single term, it treats it over the long term and with the refined caveats of a methodology interweaving history with linguistics and sociology. It thus offers a relevant example of the contribution of such investigations to the formation of a free and egalitarian citizenship. As has already been mentioned, historical knowledge certainly cannot change the linguistic usages that are promoted in our time with obvious political and propagandistic purposes. It does, however, allow us to relate to them with greater awareness, thanks to the ability to compare the past with the present. In this way, it introduces us to a critical perceptive reading of the words circulating in modern public discourse, making it far less easy to quietly accept terms that aim to obtain from the listener a passive behaviour desired by the speaker.

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