
FRAMING THE NARRATIVE OF THE FIRST CRUSADE: THE LETTER GIVEN AT LAODICEA IN SEPTEMBER 1099¹

Thomas W. Smith

The letter given at Laodicea (Latakia, modern Syria) in September 1099 by elements of the leadership of the First Crusade is apparently the first known written narrative of the capture of Jerusalem and, indeed, of the entire campaign, to have circulated in medieval Christendom.² It is, as Jay Rubenstein describes, ‘a tight narrative summary of the First Crusade . . . [that proved to be] an extremely useful document for medieval chroniclers’, and it enjoyed a widespread transmission in manuscript and rapid acceptance into universal histories.³ Despite its status and importance to the writing of the history of the First Crusade, the agenda of the named authors in composing and structuring the account of the expedition has been little explored. The present article seeks to rectify this situation. It suggests that one of the named authors, Daibert, archbishop of Pisa and legate of Pope Urban II on the crusade, had a profound effect on the framing of the narrative of the First Crusade and its reception in the medieval West through his authorial decisions in the letter, and that, in order better to understand the reception of the crusade narrative in the high medieval West, we should attribute more attention to the letters which arose from the enterprise.⁴

The letter is addressed to ‘the lord pope of the Roman Church, all the bishops and all followers of the Christian faith’ (*‘Domino papae Romanae ecclesiae et omnibus episcopis et universis Christianae fidei cultoribus’*).⁵ The named senders of the letter, in the order given in the text, are: ‘I, the archbishop of Pisa, and other bishops and Duke Godfrey, now by the Grace of God defender of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Raymond, Count of St Gilles, and the entire army of God in the land of Israel’ (*‘ego Pisanus archiepiscopus et alii episcopi et Godefridus dux, gratia Dei ecclesiae S. Sepulcri nunc aduocatus, et Raimundus comes S. Aegidii et uniuersus Dei exercitus, qui est in terra Israel’*).⁶ The letter

recounts the history of the expedition following the fall of Nicaea in June 1097, through the gruelling siege of Antioch in 1098 and the capture of Jerusalem on 15 July 1099, up to the aftermath of the Battle of Ascalon (12 August 1099) and the sojourn of the returning crusader armies at Laodicea in September 1099, where their leaders met with Daibert and Bohemond of Taranto (who were then laying siege to Laodicea) and drafted the letter.⁷

The accepted view of the composition of the letter, first argued by Heinrich Hagenmeyer in 1873 and made even more forcefully in his classic edition and study of the letters in 1901, is that despite Daibert being named first in the *salutatio*, and his use of the first-person *ego*, we should not take this to mean that he wrote the letter. Having only just arrived in the East, Hagenmeyer stated, he was not an eyewitness to the crusade and therefore could not possibly have composed such a detailed and accurate account.⁸ In Hagenmeyer's view, the author (*Verfasser*) of the text was in fact none other than Raymond of Aguilers, a chaplain in the service of Raymond of St Gilles, who later composed a longer account of the crusade.⁹ Hagenmeyer noticed textual similarities between the letter given at Laodicea and Raymond's *Liber* which linked the two texts and supplied a close textual comparison of relevant passages to support his argument. One clue on which he placed great emphasis was the peculiar usage of the term *Hispania* for Isfahan (rather than Spain) which appears in both texts and nowhere else in any of the Western accounts of the expedition.¹⁰ John France also emphasised that the use of the first-person plural 'we' tallies with the Provençal experience of the campaign, and Hagenmeyer's argument has held sway ever since, albeit expressed in more cautious terms.¹¹ Close study of the internal contents of the letter, however, suggests an alternative interpretation.

Since Godfrey was absent at the time the letter was given, it is logical to suggest that, as the only individually named authors, Daibert and Raymond of St Gilles collaborated closely on its composition and that, although the *salutatio* pays lip-service to the *alii episcopi* and the *uniuersus Dei exercitus, qui est in terra Israel*, they were the two driving forces behind the document's issue. This is the view taken most recently by Susan Edgington, who states that the author was Daibert, who 'wrote it as if from himself and Count Raymond, who was alongside him in Latakia, and Duke Godfrey, who was not there but in Jerusalem.'¹² Raymond of St Gilles and Daibert were, after all, connected through Urban II's preparations for the crusade, and the archbishop spent time

with the count after his arrival in the East, so their collaboration should perhaps come as little surprise.¹³ As noted by Hagenmeyer, the newly arrived archbishop did not take part in the crusade campaign proper and he would have been reliant upon veteran crusaders for his account of the crusade. It follows that the narrative core of the missive is received from Raymond and his contingent, something apparently confirmed by the espousal of the Provençal perspective on the campaign and the assertion of the authenticity of the Holy Lance in particular.¹⁴ The principal contributions of this article are that, while such Provençal influence on the letter can be felt via Raymond of St Gilles, the internal evidence of the text suggests that we should attribute a more significant and dynamic authorial role in framing the narrative to Daibert, who deliberately shaped its content in order to assert his authority in the East and propound an ecclesiastical narrative of the First Crusade, in what is the first written account of the whole campaign known to have circulated in the West. If Raymond of Aguilers did indeed draft the text, he appears to have done so at the direction of Daibert.

We begin with the most obvious point in favour of the notion that Daibert had the greatest influence over the composition of the letter, and, correspondingly, the clue most vociferously rejected by Hagenmeyer: the order of the *intitulatio* in the greeting clause. Daibert is accorded pride of place as the first named author. The other bishops (*alii episcopi*) are also named before the (absent) *aduocatus* of Jerusalem, Godfrey of Bouillon, who is relegated to third place, followed by Raymond of St Gilles, and then the rest of the army (*universus Dei exercitus*).¹⁵ As Nicholas Vincent so convincingly demonstrates, the order of episcopal witnesses in medieval charters could be a source of great contention.¹⁶ Similarly the contemporary rules of diplomatic were clear that the ordering of senders and recipients in the *salutatio* should be determined by status.¹⁷ According to the norms of contemporary diplomatic and documentary cultures, then, Daibert was positioning himself as the foremost figure among the senders specifically, especially with his use of the first-person form *ego* to emphasise his personal role, and also probably staking claims for the precedence of the episcopate generally, although apparently none of the *alii episcopi* were important enough or played a significant enough role in the issue of the letter to warrant mention by name. It follows that Daibert probably had the greatest influence over the issue of the letter, and, by extension, that he controlled the drafting process, even if the source of much of the account of the crusade came from Raymond and

the act of writing the text itself was performed by one of their chaplains, such as Raymond of Aguilers. Raymond of St Gilles was probably pushing for recognition throughout Christendom as one of the foremost leaders by being named in the *intitulatio* and also seeking to promote the Provençal perspective in retelling the course of the crusade. Although he had only just arrived in the East and missed almost the entire crusade, Daibert, for his part, appears to have been angling to be recognised as the ecclesiastical leader of the crusaders.

Why did Daibert seek to assert his precedence over the crusader host in the composition and despatch of the letter? *Cui bono* – who benefited? The purpose of the letter was multifaceted. Its basic function is obvious: to inform the faithful of the West what had happened in the East, but there were two complementary agendas at play. One purpose was to invite the pope and all Christians in the West to celebrate the success of the expedition and its participants, as the final section of the first recension of the letter states: ‘And so we call on you, [and] all the bishops, devout clerics, monks and all the laity, to glory in the marvellous bravery and devotion of our brothers’ (‘ad tam mirabilem fratrum nostrorum fortitudinis deuotionem . . . inuitamus uos exsultationem et omnes episcopos et bonae uitae clericos, monachosque et omnes laicos’).¹⁸ The association of the crusaders with this endeavour within the text, and especially those named in the *intitulatio* as the bearers of the news, immortalised them in the process. This is, indeed, exactly how the letter was received. Very soon after entering transmission in Europe (we know that Count Robert of Flanders was one of the returning veterans who carried and spread the letter, and presumably others did too),¹⁹ the document acquired two postscripts: one calling upon those in the West to pay the debts of returning survivors in return for a share of their spiritual reward, and the other supplying a short summary of the dates of landmark battles, almost certainly to facilitate liturgical celebration.²⁰ An important manuscript witness now preserved in Würzburg bears a unique rhymed Latin inscription at the head of its copy of the text calling upon readers (and listeners) to meditate upon the crusade, using the letter as a way of magnifying the glory of the event.²¹ Connected to this was the need to recruit new warrior-pilgrims for the defence of the city of Jerusalem, and this letter and others – such as Daibert’s letter to the people of Germany, given as patriarch of Jerusalem in April 1100 – clearly whipped up enthusiasm and its extended manuscript transmission in Germany can probably be connected to recruitment for the Crusade of 1100–1.²²

Reading between the lines there was also a more worldly and pragmatic agenda at play. By adopting a leading role in the control and transmission of information, and by sending this official report (*offizieller Bericht*) back to the pope, Daibert was also staking his claim to ecclesiastical authority in the East.²³ As Michael Matzke convincingly argues, Pope Urban II had sent Daibert on the crusade as his legate to play a leading role in the expedition and its ecclesiastical affairs.²⁴ Daibert's connection to Raymond may have been part of an attempt to position himself as the direct successor to the previous papal legate, Adhémar of Le Puy, whose memory quickly assumed importance in the crusade narrative, and to benefit from the prominent leadership role that his predecessor had played. It should not be seen as peculiar that Daibert did not give the title of legate along with that of archbishop of Pisa in the *intitulatio* of the letter, however. He was clearly aware of the death of Urban but not the election of Paschal II, which explains why the letter is addressed *Domino papae Romanae ecclesiae* without specifying a pontifical name. Apparently Daibert considered his legatine mandate to have lapsed along with the death of Urban, although in the twelfth century there was no consensus on whether the death of a pope revoked his legatine mandates.²⁵ The formulation of an official report was, as Matzke writes, in accordance with Daibert's responsibilities as papal representative, and should probably be read as an attempt to take control over, or at least been seen as a leader of, the crusader army.²⁶ Even if Daibert had technically lost his legatine power, he proceeded to throw his weight around in the East in a manner commensurate with his earlier authority, and the letter fits into a pattern of assertive behaviour.²⁷ When he arrived in Jerusalem at Christmas 1099, he succeeded in having his authority recognised by quashing the election of Arnulf of Choques as patriarch of Jerusalem and having himself elected in Arnulf's place only six days after his arrival.²⁸ The Laodicea letter, in which Daibert assumes and consciously displays precedence, should probably be interpreted as part of his machinations to have his authority recognised in the East. Finally, there is another, more subtle function of the issue of the letter which the second part of this article will explore: the framing of the narrative of the First Crusade.

Having only just arrived in the Holy Land, and with no personal experience of the crusade proper, Daibert had to decide where the narrative of the crusade should begin in framing the letter. After an extremely brief *arenga*, which provided only the most basic theological context for the

success of the crusade, stating that the letter's audience should 'Multiply prayers and invocations with joy and exultation in the sight of the Lord since God has magnified his mercy by fulfilling through us what he had promised in ancient times' ('Multiplicate preces et orationes cum iocunditate et exultatione in conspectu Domini, quoniam Deus magnificauit misericordiam suam complendo in nobis ea, quae antiquis temporibus promiserat'), Daibert chose the fall of Nicaea on 19 June 1097 to demarcate the beginning of his narrative: 'After the capture of Nicaea . . .' ('etenim cum capta Nicaea . . .').²⁹ Daibert's authorial choice here is perhaps significant, since it delineates his conception of the chronological framing of the crusade. Other letters from the leaders had already informed the papacy about the course of the expedition at least up until 11 September 1098, when the princes sent a missive to Urban II (and it is likely that others were despatched thereafter which no longer survive).³⁰ The selection of the aftermath of Nicaea for the beginning of the letter therefore was not a logical continuation of the crusader princes' previous correspondence with the papacy, but a deliberate decision in framing the narrative. This, according to Daibert, and perhaps Raymond of St Gilles (who must have been feeding the archbishop the information necessary to write the letter), was where the campaign of the crusade proper began. Of course, the epistolary form in which Daibert and Raymond chose to communicate dictated that the text be brief, but it is perhaps significant that they chose not to recount any of the events in Europe or Byzantium, and that the narrative concerns only Latin conquests in the East. Because Nicaea was surrendered to the Byzantines apparently it was of lesser priority.³¹ Interestingly, this framing aligns with modern historians' structuring of the phases of the expedition. For Jonathan Riley-Smith, the first phase 'stretched from western Europe to Nicaea'.³² The evidence from the letter demonstrates that some medieval observers also conceptualised the enterprise in a strikingly similar manner.

Study of the epistle's reception reveals that this chronological framing of the First Crusade resonated with its audience. If we turn to the second postscript (appended to the main text of the *epistula* in its third recension), which supplements Daibert's narrative in the main body of the letter with a compressed compilation of the dates of all the major battles of the crusade, we find that readers of the document broadly followed Daibert's lead in conceptualising the course of the main campaign. This list of dates also contains only events which occurred in the East, though it extends the narrative backwards slightly to 'the first battle, in which

many Turks were killed, [which] was at the bridge on the River Farfar on the ninth day before the kalends of March' ('primum eorum bellum fuit apud pontem Farfar fluminis, in quo multi Turcorum interfecti sunt IX Kalendis Martii').³³ The next significant engagement, however, the 'second battle, a Christian victory over the pagans was at Nicaea on the third day before the nones of March' ('Secundum bellum fuit apud Nicaeam III Nonis Martii, in quo pagani a Christianis uicti sunt'), brings the rest of the chronology into line with that of Daibert in the main body of the text.³⁴ Shifting our perspective on the chronological framing also explains why the postscript seems to misdate the capture of the Jerusalem to 'the third year of their expedition' ('anno III profectionis eorum'), a chronological quirk which appears to be a simple mistake and the result of deficient knowledge on the part of the scribe who first compiled the summary, which is littered with incorrect dates.³⁵ This apparent mistake is perhaps not a result of misdating, but the product of the reception of Daibert's framing of the history, which, for him and apparently for many of those who read his letter, properly began in the East, in the first half of 1097. If we adopt this altered chronological framework and count forwards from the 'first battle' in March 1097, or even the fall of Nicaea in June of that year, then the conquest of Jerusalem on 15 July 1099 did indeed fall in the third year of the expedition. This suggests that Daibert's framing of the narrative of the First Crusade did influence contemporary ideas about the chronology of the crusade, and that the significance of the document in the reception of the crusade narrative in the West has been underestimated.

Daibert also influenced the reception of the crusade narrative through his ecclesiastical framing, and, in some ways, the narrative in the letter aligns with the longer accounts composed in the following decade. As Gerd Althoff notes, it is similar to other accounts of the crusade which emphasise God's help in return for liturgical supplication by the pilgrims.³⁶ The theology of the letter is conventional in its exposition of God's role in the expedition. It relates that God deliberately placed challenges in the way of army, most notably the gruelling siege of Antioch, explaining that 'because [earlier] successes bred arrogance among some of us, God placed Antioch in our path . . . There he detained us for nine months and during the siege so humbled us that eventually all our pride and arrogance turned to humility' ('ob haec itaque feliciter acta, quia quidem intumuerant, opposuit nobis Deus Antiochiam . . . ibique per IX menses nos detinuit atque in obsidione extra ita humiliavit, donec

omnis superbiae nostrae tumor in humilitatem recurrit').³⁷ After adopting humility befitting their status as pilgrims and showing due devotion to the Lord, God rewarded the crusaders with the fall of the city. As Andrew D. Buck demonstrates, such ideas were incorporated into longer narratives as divine tests of the piety of the crusaders, and as a mode of theological interpretation it is ubiquitous in contemporary histories of the crusade, especially on the subject of the siege of Antioch.³⁸ It is most likely that this represents the prevailing view among the crusader host, rather than the influence of Daibert's letter alone, although this surely played a role given the large number of known manuscript witnesses (which currently stands at twenty-one copies) and its inclusion in universal histories and letter collections such as the *Codex Udalrici*.³⁹ We can point to one account of a miracle in the letter, an indication of God's favour before the Battle of Ascalon, which seems to have influenced later narratives. Immediately before the battle, thousands of captured animals formed themselves into columns and 'when the people advanced in battle order the camels, oxen and sheep advanced in similar formations with us, stopping when we stopped, going forward when we did and running when we ran' ('haec autem animalia nobiscum comitabantur, ut cum stantibus starent, cum procedentibus procederent, cum currentibus current').⁴⁰ On this point Raymond of Aguilers's *Liber* matches the letter exactly and must have used it as a source: 'ut starent cum stantibus cum currentibus current, cum procedentibus, procederent'.⁴¹ Fulcher of Chartres also recounts the miracle in similar terms and it may be that he received this information through Daibert's letter.⁴² In turn, Fulcher's text was received by William of Malmesbury, reinforcing the place of this miracle in the crusade narrative.⁴³

Perhaps most notable from the document's otherwise fairly standard theological mode of exposition is that there is no mention of the deeds of individual crusaders or contingents and almost no mention of any tactical or strategic decisions, aspects which are staples of the longer narratives. Instead, all the military successes, especially the capture of Antioch and Jerusalem, but also the Battle of Ascalon, are attributed to the penitential acts of a united army alone. The letter pastes over cracks in the unity of the host, passing over the desertions at Antioch and stating that the army was not many, but unanimous and united in its desire to reach Jerusalem: 'our army was not large and everyone was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem' ('exercitus noster non multus erat, et in Hierusalem unanimiter uenire festinabant').⁴⁴ The most detailed account

of a military engagement is that of the action at the Battle of Ascalon in August 1099, which includes more detailed strategic information and a record of the martial deeds of the army as a whole than in the preceding sections – though no individuals or contingents are picked out and the collective deeds are tempered by the providential interpretation. When the crusaders ‘caught sight of our enemy we went down on our knees to ask God for His help’ (*‘cumque exercitus noster et hostium se conspexissent, genibus flexis adiutorem Deum inuocauimus’*).⁴⁵ The size of the crusader host is given in precise terms, ‘five thousand knights and fifteen thousand foot-soldiers’ (*‘V milia militum et XV milia peditum’*), in comparison to their Egyptian foes, who commanded ‘a hundred thousand horsemen and four hundred thousand foot-soldiers’ (*‘C milia equitum et CCCC milia peditum’*).⁴⁶ As is well known, the portrayal of a small army against a superior foe was meant to align the crusaders with the biblical armies from the Old Testament, and is an interpretation standard for high medieval crusade texts.⁴⁷ This is also where the reader first receives information about the collective martial deeds of the army, such as how many enemies were killed and how, which diverges from the purely ecclesiastical framing of the rest of the campaign:

[God] caused our mere rush to rout this multitude and scatter all their weapons, so that even if they had wanted to fight back afterwards they would not have had the means to do so . . . More than one hundred thousand Moors fell beneath the sword, while the panic was so great that up to 2,000 were suffocated in the crush at the city gate. There are no figures however for those who drowned in the sea. Many were caught in the thickets.

*pro solo impetu nostro hanc in fugam multitudinem uertit et omnia arma eorum diripuit, ut, si deinceps nobis repugnare uellent, nec haberent arma, in quibus sperarent . . . ceciderunt ibi plus quam C milia Maurorum gladio. Timor autem eorum tantus erat, ut in porta ciuitatis ad II milia suffocati sint. De his uero, qui in mari interierunt, non est numerus. Spineta etiam ex ipsis multos obtinuerunt.*⁴⁸

In portraying the crusader host as a united and deeply religious army, the letter presages the later Benedictine rewritings of the history of the First Crusade in which Robert the Monk, Guibert of Nogent and Baldric of Bourgueil ‘put the miracle, as they saw it, of the success of the crusade into the context of providential history and they chose to treat the

crusaders as temporary religious, professed into what looked to them like a military monastery on the move.⁴⁹ What is noteworthy about the letter is that the text always presents a united host and does not pick out any particular warriors or contingents for special praise, as later accounts do.

That said, it must be remembered, of course, that the letter presents the Provençal perspective of the campaign, asserting, for example, the authenticity of the Holy Lance: at Antioch, God ‘showed us His lance, which had not been seen since the time of the Apostles’ (*‘lanceam suam . . . non uisum a tempore apostolorum . . . nobis obtulit’*).⁵⁰ But despite the supposedly key role in composition played by Raymond of St Gilles, none of his personal crusading deeds are recorded, nor are those of any other crusaders in the manner that Raymond of Aguilers does in his *Liber*.⁵¹ If the count of St Gilles’s scribe really did have such influence over the composition of the text down to the spelling *Hispania*, we would expect to find something of Raymond’s deeds. Rather, we find the bishops in the army playing a leading role. At the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem, which opened with a barefoot procession around its walls performed by the penitent crusaders, it is noteworthy that the bishops precede the princes in the leadership of army and that the key to the fall of Jerusalem was a display of religiosity rather than martial superiority:

at a meeting of a council the bishops and princes decided that we should go barefooted around the outside of the city . . . Eight days after our act of humility the Lord showed He was placated by delivering to us the city and His enemies.

habito consilio, episcopi et principes circinandam esse ciuitatem nudis pedibus praedicauerunt . . . placatus itaque hac humilitate Dominus, VIII^o die post humiliationem nostram ciuitatem cum suis hostibus nobis tribuit.⁵²

The promotion of episcopal authority within the leadership of the crusader host in this passage fits with Daibert’s agenda to assert ecclesiastical authority over the crusade, and, specifically, to extend his own power. That the success of the crusade is framed in such theological terms, with no mention made of the martial deeds of individual crusaders, is another indicator that Daibert took the lead in crafting the letter, and not Raymond of St Gilles or his chaplain and namesake.

Famously, the bloodshed during the capture of Jerusalem is described in the letter in a chillingly laconic fashion: ‘Should you wish to learn

what happened to the enemies we found inside [Jerusalem], know that our horsemen rode knee-deep in Saracen blood in Solomon's Porch and in his Temple' ('et si scire desideratis, quid de hostibus ibi repertis factum fuerit, scitote: quia in porticu Salomonis et in templo eius nostri equitabant in sanguine Saracenorum usque ad genua equorum').⁵³ Althoff uses the letter as a *Schlüsselzeugnis* (key testimony) for his interpretation of the Church's attitude towards violence in the Middle Ages because, he claims, it is not an attempt to fashion a later justification for the violence that occurred during the capture of Jerusalem, but an eyewitness account composed with the understanding that the recipient of the letter, the pope (whom Althoff names as Urban II, but who, as we have noted, was already dead, and whose death was known to Daibert), would be in accord with the account of that violence.⁵⁴ As noted above, having only just arrived in the East after the conquest of the Holy Land, Daibert was not an eyewitness, Godfrey was absent, and as the present article argues, the archbishop was consciously framing an ecclesiastical narrative of the crusade. Although this does not affect Althoff's argument that the expression of the violence would have been in accord with what the papal curia expected, we should be very wary of accepting the letter as the testimony of the crusaders themselves since it was written by a member of that very curia *in provincia*. Because Daibert refashioned the crusaders' accounts through an ecclesiastical filter, we cannot use the letter as evidence of how strongly their understanding of the expedition was 'under the influence of ecclesiastical arguments' ('wie sehr die Kreuzfahrer unter dem Eindruck christlich-kirchlicher Argumente standen'); instead, it should be treated like the other narratives of the crusade which were also composed according to authorial agendas.⁵⁵

Perhaps the most surprising (and interesting) thing about the epistle is the focus (or, better, foci) of its content and how little space is dedicated to the conquest of Jerusalem, which extends little further than the two quotations provided above. The account of the siege of Jerusalem and its capture is surprisingly brief for such a momentous event – at least according to what the general scholarly consensus has conditioned us to expect was the focal point of the crusade. As Georg Strack argues, the status of Jerusalem as the main goal of the expedition is not quite as clear-cut as many scholars suggest.⁵⁶ In fact, the letter text dwells much longer on the siege of Antioch and the Battle of Ascalon – the fall of Jerusalem is little more than an interlude between the two. This reflects the actual length of the siege at Antioch and the more harrowing

tribulations of the army there, and it is interesting to note that the heavy focus on Antioch in the letter is reflected in the later, longer narratives of the crusade. As explored above, there is also a noticeable shift in content, framing and level of detail in the letter's account of the action at Ascalon. Is it possible that Daibert's sources were able to offer more detail on this most recent engagement? Hagenmeyer, for instance, argued that the uneven length of the coverage of events in the letter, which strongly privileges the Battle of Ascalon, results from the fact that this event was the most recent and was therefore fresh in the memory.⁵⁷ The main point, though, is that Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre are not in any way the central, or even *a* central, focus in the body of the letter (indeed, the only mention of the Holy Sepulchre is Godfrey's title as *aduocatus* of the tomb in the *salutatio*), even though, as we have seen, its author fashions the crusade narrative into an ecclesiastical account. This apparent lack of interest in Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre renders the Laodicea letter out of step with the narratives composed in the following decade in the West and the modern scholarly consensus on Jerusalem as the single most important goal of the crusade.⁵⁸

This lack of focus on Jerusalem changes, however, when we turn from the composition of the text in the East to examine the letter's reception in the West. The second postscript, which compiles in the third recension a compressed list of key battle dates for liturgical celebration, mentions Jerusalem twice. It is foregrounded in the opening of the addendum: 'Jerusalem was captured by the Christians in the year of the Lord 1099, on the Ides of July, 6th feria in the seventh indiction, in the third year of their expedition' ('Capta est autem Hierusalem a Christianis anno Domini MXCIX, Idus Iulii, feriae VI, indictione VII, anno III profectionis eorum'), and noted again towards its conclusion: 'Their fifth battle was on the Ides of July when Jerusalem was captured after thirty-nine days of siege' ('quintum eorum bellum fuit Idibus Iulii, quando post tricesimum nonum obsidionis diem capta est Hierusalem').⁵⁹ The European reception of the letter, then, while accepting the basic narrative framing of the campaign in the East, placed much more emphasis on the capture of Jerusalem than Daibert himself did. This is consistent with the shaping of the history of the crusade in the West after 1099, when Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre became the focal points of the entire enterprise in the Benedictine rewritings of the *Gesta Francorum*. That Daibert's letter bucks this trend and offers a distinct narrative focus is significant.

In conclusion, the letter given at Laodicea in September 1099 can no longer be used as an unfiltered eyewitness account of the First Crusade. As this article has revealed, rather than attributing the authorship to Raymond of Aguilers on behalf of Raymond of St Gilles, as Hagenmeyer argued, the author dictating the content of the text must, in fact, have been Daibert, archbishop of Pisa. The letter hardly lacks an agenda. Raymond of St Gilles succeeded in cementing his position in the very top tier of the leadership of the crusade and ensured that it was the Provençal account of events that was recognised as the 'official' one in the report of the (former) papal legate. Daibert, for his part, styled himself as the foremost leader of the enterprise in his attempt to assert his ecclesiastical authority and seize power in the East – which he did, very successfully, when he had himself installed as patriarch of Jerusalem a few months later. In so doing, Daibert framed the first written Latin narrative of the whole campaign of the First Crusade known to have circulated in the West. While the theological interpretation of successes and setbacks being the work of God, who was testing the faith of the pilgrims, is entirely conventional, the framing of the letter is significant for three main reasons. First, in setting a distinct chronological framework for the campaign proper which began only with the Latin conquests after Nicaea. Second, in devoting much more attention to Antioch and the Battle of Ascalon than the capture of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre, which later became the ultimate focal points of the crusade narrative in the West in the following decade. And third, in using the document as a vehicle for an ecclesiastical narrative that did not mention the deeds of individual crusaders or contingents at all, but instead promoted the authority and role of the episcopate in the leadership of the crusade.

Notes

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² Kb, no. XVIII, pp. 167–74; the *Codex Udalrici* version of the letter has been recently edited in *Codex Udalrici*, ed. K. Nass, 2 vols, MGH Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit, 10 (Wiesbaden, 2017), vol. 2, no. 259, pp. 449–53; the letter is translated in M. Barber and K. Bate (trans.), *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims and Settlers in the 12th–13th Centuries*, Crusade Texts in Translation, 18 (Farnham, 2010) (henceforth *Letters*), pp. 33–7. See: T. W.

- Smith, 'The First Crusade Letter Written at Laodicea in 1099: Two Previously Unpublished Versions from Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm 23390 and 28195', *Crusades*, 15 (2016), 1–25; T. W. Smith, 'Scribal Crusading: Three New Manuscript Witnesses to the Regional Reception and Transmission of First Crusade Letters', *Traditio*, 72 (2017), 133–69; Hagenmeyer's extremely detailed commentary on the letter is in Kb, pp. 371–403, and his assessment of the manuscript traditions (now superseded by Smith, 'First Crusade Letter' and 'Scribal Crusading') is at pp. 103–14; H. Hagenmeyer, 'Der Brief der Kreuzfahrer an den Papst und die abenländische Kirche v. J. 1099 nach der Schlacht bei Askalon', *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*, 13 (1873), 400–12; P. Riant, 'Inventaire critique des lettres historiques des croisades', *Archives de l'Orient latin*, 1 (1880), 1–235 (here 201–4); and also T. J. H. McCarthy, *The Continuations of Frutolf of Michelsberg's Chronicle*, MGH Schriften, 74 (Wiesbaden, 2018), pp. 88 and n. 18, 146–9, 192–5, 202; J. France, 'The Anonymous *Gesta Francorum* and the *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem* of Raymond of Aguilers and the *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere* of Peter Tudebode: An Analysis of the Textual Relationship between Primary Sources for the First Crusade', in J. France and W. G. Zajac (eds), *The Crusades and their Sources: Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton* (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 39–69 (here pp. 42–3); J. Riley-Smith, 'The Title of Godfrey of Bouillon', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 52 (1979), 83–6 (here 84); A. V. Murray, *The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Dynastic History, 1099–1125* (Oxford, 2000), p. 71.
- ³ J. Rubenstein, 'Holy Fire and Sacral Kingship in Post-Conquest Jerusalem', *Journal of Medieval History*, 43/4 (2017), 470–84 (here 475). See also Kb, p. 107. On the manuscript transmission, see Smith, 'Scribal Crusading' and Smith, 'First Crusade Letter'. On the acceptance of the letter into the continuations of Frutolf, for example, see McCarthy, *The Continuations of Frutolf*, pp. 88, 146–9, 192–5, 202.
- ⁴ On the narrative of the First Crusade and its reception in the West, in addition to the introductions to AA, BB and RM, see most recently: S. T. Parsons, 'The Letters of Stephen of Blois Reconsidered', *Crusades*, 17 (2018), 1–29; C. Symes, 'Popular Literacies and the First Historians of the First Crusade', *Past and Present*, 235 (2017), 37–67; E. Lapina, *Warfare and the Miraculous in the Chronicles of the First Crusade* (University Park, PA, 2015); S. John, 'Historical Truth and the Miraculous Past: The Use of Oral Evidence in Twelfth-Century Latin Historical Writing on the First Crusade', *English Historical Review*, 130 (2015), 263–301; M. Bull and D. Kempf (eds), *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory* (Woodbridge, 2014); M. Bull, 'The Historiographical Construction of a Northern French First Crusade', *Haskins Society Journal*, 25 (2013), 35–56; M. Bull, 'The Western Narratives of the First Crusade', in D. Thomas and A. Mallett (eds), *Christian–Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, Volume 3: 1050–1200 (Leiden, 2011), pp. 15–25; N. L. Paul, 'A Warlord's Wisdom: Literacy and Propaganda at the Time of the First Crusade', *Speculum*, 85 (2010), 534–66; J. Flori, *Chroniqueurs et propagandistes: Introduction critique aux sources de la première croisade* (Geneva, 2010); J. Rubenstein, 'What is the *Gesta Francorum*, and Who was Peter Tudebode?', *Revue Mabillon*, n.s., 77/16 (2005), 179–204; J. Rubenstein, 'Putting History to Use: Three Crusade Chronicles in Context', *Viator*, 35 (2004), 131–68.
- ⁵ Kb, p. 168; trans. *Letters*, p. 34.
- ⁶ Kb, p. 168; trans. *Letters*, p. 34.
- ⁷ See M. Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa: Zwischen Pisa, Papst und erstem Kreuzzug* (Sigmaringen, 1998), pp. 150–1.
- ⁸ Kb, p. 108: 'Die Epistula beginnt zwar Abs[atz] 1 mit den Worten "Pisanus archiepiscopus et alii episcopi" etc, hieraus darf aber keineswegs gefolgert werden, weil Dagobert zuerst genannt ist und im Falle auch das "ego" vor "Pisanus archiep[iscopu]s" authentisch

sein sollte, weil er sich in dieser Weise einführt, dass er auch der Briefschreiber gewesen sei, denn er wäre wohl nicht im Stande gewesen, da er ja nicht Augenzeuge des darin Berichteten und erst gegen September 1099 nach Palästina gekommen war, einen so zutreffenden Bericht zu erstatten.'

- ⁹ Hagenmeyer, 'Der Brief der Kreuzfahrer', 405–10; Kb, pp. 108–10. Raymond's account is printed in RA. I am preparing a new monograph study *The Letters of the First Crusade* for the series *Crusading in Context*, forthcoming with The Boydell Press.
- ¹⁰ Hagenmeyer, 'Der Brief der Kreuzfahrer', 407.
- ¹¹ Kb, p. 106; France, 'The Anonymous *Gesta Francorum*', pp. 42–3; Smith, 'First Crusade Letter', 3–4; Rubenstein, 'Holy Fire and Sacral Kingship', 475; Riley-Smith, 'The Title of Godfrey of Bouillon', 84.
- ¹² S. B. Edgington, *Baldwin I of Jerusalem, 1100–1118* (Abingdon, 2019), p. 62.
- ¹³ Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, pp. 107, 151, 166; Murray, *Crusader Kingdom*, p. 81; S. John, *Godfrey of Bouillon: Duke of Lower Lotharingia, Ruler of Latin Jerusalem, c. 1060–1100* (Abingdon, 2018), p. 199.
- ¹⁴ On the Holy Lance, see J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London, 1986), pp. 95–8.
- ¹⁵ On Godfrey's absence and the title *aduocatus*, see: John, *Godfrey of Bouillon*, pp. 180–90; Edgington, *Baldwin I*, pp. 62–3; Hagenmeyer, 'Der Brief der Kreuzfahrer', 401; Riley-Smith, 'The Title of Godfrey of Bouillon'; Murray, *Crusader Kingdom*, p. 71; Smith, 'First Crusade Letter', 3.
- ¹⁶ N. Vincent, 'Shall the first be last? Order and disorder amongst Henry II's Bishops', in T. W. Smith (ed.), *Authority and Power in the Medieval Church, c. 1000–c. 1500* (Turnhout, forthcoming).
- ¹⁷ See, for example, P. Chaplais, *English Diplomatic Practice* (London, 2003), pp. 102–3.
- ¹⁸ Kb, p. 173; trans. *Letters*, p. 36.
- ¹⁹ McCarthy, *The Continuations of Frutolf*, p. 88 and n. 18; G. Waitz (ed.), *MGH Scriptores*, vol. 6 (Hanover, 1844), p. 216.
- ²⁰ Kb, pp. 173–4. On the different recensions, including the identification of a fourth recension unknown to Hagenmeyer, see Smith, 'First Crusade Letter'.
- ²¹ Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek Würzburg, M. p. th. q. 17, fol. 90r: 'Hec qui scire sitis lege de Iherosolimitis / Multiplicant laudes rem si gestam bene gaudes.' See Smith, 'Scribal Crusading', esp. 133.
- ²² Smith, 'Scribal Crusading', 134, 148–9. On Daibert's letter of April 1100 see Smith, 'Scribal Crusading', 134, 148–9, and for a new, critical edition 168–9.
- ²³ I am grateful to Georg Strack for advice on this point.
- ²⁴ Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, pp. 135–41; Murray, *Crusader Kingdom*, p. 82 and n. 88.
- ²⁵ Kb, pp. 106–7; Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, pp. 139–40, 141, 151; John, *Godfrey of Bouillon*, p. 199. See also P. Skinner, 'From Pisa to the Patriarchate: Chapters in the Life of (Arch)Bishop Daibert', in P. Skinner (ed.), *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter* (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 155–72 (here p. 164) on this point.
- ²⁶ Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, p. 141 gives it as one of Daibert's responsibilities after arriving in the East, which Matzke explains as 'die Übermittlung des päpstlichen Grüßes und Segens sowie die Abfassung eines offiziellen Berichtes der Kreuzfahrer an den noch unbekannten Papst [Urban II had died in the meantime] und die westliche Christenheit'.
- ²⁷ A. V. Murray, 'Review of Michael Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa: Zwischen Pisa, Papst und erstem Kreuzzug*', *Speculum*, 78/3 (2003), 954–6 (here 955); Skinner, 'From Pisa to the Patriarchate', p. 164.

- 28 Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, pp. 153–66 (esp. p. 166); Murray, *Crusader Kingdom*, pp. 182–3; Rubenstein, ‘Holy Fire and Sacral Kingship’, 475; John, *Godfrey of Bouillon*, pp. 199–200.
- 29 Kb, p. 168; trans. *Letters*, p. 34.
- 30 Kb, no. XVI, pp. 161–5.
- 31 Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, p. 58.
- 32 Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, p. 64.
- 33 Kb, p. 174; trans. *Letters*, p. 36.
- 34 Kb, p. 174; trans. *Letters*, p. 36.
- 35 Kb, p. 174; trans. *Letters*, p. 36. The errors in dating events in the postscript are discussed in Kb, p. 402.
- 36 G. Althoff, ‘*Selig sind, die Verfolgung ausüben*’: *Päpste und Gewalt im Hochmittelalter* (Stuttgart, 2013), pp. 138–9.
- 37 Kb, p. 169; trans. *Letters*, p. 34.
- 38 Andrew D. Buck in this volume.
- 39 Smith, ‘Scribal Crusading’, 141, 157–61; Kb, p. 107; McCarthy, *The Continuations of Frutolf*, pp. 88, 146–9, 192–5, 202; *Codex Udalrici*, ed. Nass, vol. 2, no. 259, pp. 449–53.
- 40 Kb, pp. 172–3; trans. *Letters*, p. 36. On miracles and the crusades, see Lapina, *Warfare and the Miraculous* and B. C. Spacey, *The Miraculous and the Writing of Crusade History* (Woodbridge, forthcoming).
- 41 RA, p. 158.
- 42 FC, pp. 313–14.
- 43 WM, vol. 1, p. 653; see Lapina, *Warfare and the Miraculous*, pp. 24–5.
- 44 Kb, p. 170; trans. *Letters*, p. 35.
- 45 Kb, p. 171; trans. *Letters*, p. 35.
- 46 Kb, p. 172; trans. *Letters*, p. 35.
- 47 See, for example, E. Lapina and N. Morton (eds), *The Uses of the Bible in Crusader Sources* (Leiden, 2017).
- 48 Kb, p. 172; trans. *Letters*, pp. 35–6.
- 49 Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, p. 2. See also W. J. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia, c. 1095–c. 1187* (Woodbridge, 2008).
- 50 Kb, p. 170; trans. *Letters*, p. 34.
- 51 RA, *passim*. On Raymond, see T. Lecaque, *Raymond of Saint-Gilles: Occitanian Culture and Piety in the Time of the First Crusade* (Abingdon, forthcoming).
- 52 Kb, pp. 170–1; trans. *Letters*, p. 35.
- 53 Kb, p. 171; trans. *Letters*, p. 35. On this, see L. Russo, ‘The Sack of Jerusalem in 1099 and Crusader Violence Viewed by Contemporary Chroniclers’, in Lapina and Morton (eds), *Uses of the Bible in Crusader Sources*, pp. 63–73 (here pp. 69–70); T. F. Madden, ‘Rivers of Blood: An Analysis of One Aspect of the Crusader Conquest of Jerusalem in 1099’, *Revista Chilena de Estudios Medievales*, 1 (2012), 25–37; B. Z. Kedar, ‘The Jerusalem Massacre of July 1099 in the Western Historiography of the Crusades’, *Crusades*, 3 (2004), 15–75 (esp. 18); J. Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven: The First Crusade and the Quest for Apocalypse* (New York, 2011), pp. 286–92.
- 54 Althoff, *Päpste und Gewalt im Hochmittelalter*, p. 137: ‘Da der Brief ein Schlüsselzeugnis für meine Interpretation darstellt . . . Er ist deshalb ein Schlüsselzeugnis, weil er nicht ein Versuch nachträglicher Rechtfertigung des Geschehens ist, sondern ganz augenscheinlich von den Ausstellern im Bewusstsein verfasst wurde, dass ihre Taten – und auch das Vorgehen in Jerusalem – mit den Vorgaben und Vorstellungen des Empfängers dieses Briefes – Urbans II. – vollständig in Einklang stehen würden.’

⁵⁵ Althoff, *Päpste und Gewalt im Hochmittelalter*, p. 138.

⁵⁶ G. Strack, 'Pope Urban II and Jerusalem: A Re-examination of his Letters on the First Crusade', *Journal of Religious History, Literature and Culture*, 2 (2016), 51–70.

⁵⁷ Kb, p. 105.

⁵⁸ See Strack, 'Urban II and Jerusalem.'

⁵⁹ Kb, p. 174; trans. *Letters*, pp. 36–7.

