

NEWS IN THE MIDDLE AGES: NEWS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND THE LAUNCH OF THE THIRD CRUSADE IN 1187–1188

Helen Birkett*

Abstract: Few studies have explored news in the medieval world. This lack of research, combined with differences in the available source material, has led scholars of early modern and modern news to assume that news in the Middle Ages was a significantly different phenomenon. This essay challenges this idea by offering a new methodology for investigating medieval news. It proposes a framework for the identification of medieval news texts and shows how these texts should be understood alongside other sources and in the context of contemporary communications. The potential of this approach is demonstrated through a case study of the dissemination of three related international news stories from 1187: the defeat of Christian forces at Hattin on 4 July, the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin on 2 October, and the launch of the Third Crusade on 29 October. It concludes by offering some general observations on news in this period and emphasizing the potential for further research in this area.

Keywords: news, communications, crusades, Third Crusade, Hattin, Jerusalem.

News before the age of print is poorly understood. In contrast to the wealth of scholarship devoted to early modern and modern news, far fewer studies have explored news in the medieval world. This lack of research has led scholars of later periods to construct their own version of medieval news, often to illustrate arguments of development and difference. However, the distinction between early modern news and its predecessor is more nuanced than these arguments suggest. News, the transmission of new, time-sensitive information, is found in all human societies. Although the media by which it is conveyed and the speed at which it travels have changed over time, news itself remains a constant. This essay briefly assesses the difficulties involved in the study of medieval news, before proposing new ways of tackling this topic. The possibilities and potential of these approaches are demonstrated through a case study from late twelfth-century Europe: the transmission of news of the battle of Hattin, the fall of Jerusalem, and the launch of a new crusade in 1187 and 1188. First, it provides a framework for the identification of news texts relating to these events. It then examines these texts alongside other contemporary sources to explore the speed and dissemination of this news across Europe. Finally, the case study also allows us to draw some general conclusions about the nature of medieval news—and highlights the need for further research in this area.

NEWS AND THE MIDDLE AGES

News is often viewed as a distinctively modern phenomenon. This is, partly, because traditional approaches to news focused on newspapers and the development of professional journalism, which tied the topic to the period after the advent of print. It also reflects the ways in which news has both benefitted from and helped to drive

*History, University of Exeter, Amory Building, Rennes Drive, Exeter, EX4 4RJ, UK, H.Birkett@exeter.ac.uk. I am grateful to all those who offered feedback on earlier versions of this work. I would like to express my particular thanks to: David Gary Shaw, Jesse Torgerson, and Adam Franklin-Lyons of the Traveler's Lab; the Center for the Humanities at Wesleyan University; Thomas Smith; Stephen Spencer; Keagan Brewer; Damian Fleming; and Levi Roach and my colleagues at Exeter.

advances in modern communications technologies. The introduction of telegraphy, radio, telecommunications, and, now, digital technology have revolutionized the speed and breadth of its transmission. Yet news itself is a much broader phenomenon. At its most basic, news is the communication of new, time-sensitive information, which alerts others to significant changes in their immediate or wider environment. It combines both the content of the information conveyed with the act of conveying it.¹ News also plays an important role in human society. Bernard Roshco identified it as a basic commodity of social exchange, which is necessary for the functioning of all social organizations.² In the short-term, the exchange of news allows individuals and groups to respond to changing circumstances. In the long-term, the transmission of news and its focus on the exceptional, good and bad, underlines and expresses the shared social norms of its audiences. It helps to reinforce group identity.³ As such, the exchange of news should be recognized as a fundamental component of human interaction and, therefore, as a phenomenon which is transhistorical: it is something that can be found in all human societies, both past and present.⁴

In spite of this, scholarship has tended to emphasize difference over continuity in the study of news in the past. The advent of print in mid-fifteenth-century western Europe is often seen as the key turning point in the history of news. The printing press enabled the large-scale publication of news texts at a much quicker and cheaper rate than copying by hand. This both stimulated and fed a demand for printed news, which led to the creation of a mass market served by news pamphlets, newsbooks, and, eventually, newspapers. The news environment created by these changes has been viewed by early modern scholars as crucial in the development of modern concepts of communication, political culture, and time.⁵ Medieval news has either had little role to play in these narratives or has been characterized as different and “other.” However, similarities in the transmission and speed of news in the medieval and early modern worlds suggest that emphasis could also be placed on continuity. It is acknowledged that news continued to be transmitted orally and via manuscript after the arrival of print. Indeed, early modern scholars working on “scribal news” have shown that manuscript newsletters retained their importance into the eighteenth century, undermining the assumed dominance of print in this period.⁶ Likewise, news still

¹ See Sian Lewis, *News and Society in the Greek Polis* (London 1996) 4.

² Bernard Roshco, *Newsmaking* (Chicago 1975) 10.

³ See Mitchell Stephens, *A History of News*, 3rd edn (New York 2007) 28–29, 51–52.

⁴ See: Yves Renouard, “Information et transmission des nouvelles,” *L'Histoire et ses methodes*, ed. Charles Samaran (Paris 1961) 95–98; Robert E. Park, “News as Form of Knowledge: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge,” *American Journal of Sociology* 45 (1940) 682–685; Stephens, *History of News* (n. 3 above) 7–31.

⁵ For example, see: Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe, Volumes I and II* (Cambridge 1980) 129–136; Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (New Haven 2014); David Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early-Modern England* (Princeton 2000); Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500–1700* (Oxford 2000) 335–405; Daniel Woolf, “News, History and the Construction of the Present in Early Modern England,” *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron (London 2001) 80–118.

⁶ For example, see: Ian Atherton, “The Itch Grown a Disease: Manuscript Transmission of the News in the Seventeenth Century,” *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain*, ed. Joad Raymond

moved by traditional modes of transport in the premodern world. Although the creation of postal networks from the late fifteenth century increased the intensity, volume, and regularity of news, maximum speeds remained limited by the technologies available: couriers still travelled on horseback, under sail, or by foot. In addition, the flow of news from overseas continued to be affected by the seasonal weather patterns that governed maritime travel.⁷

The emphasis on change over continuity also reflects another issue in the historiography of news: the lack of medieval research on this topic. The paucity of studies on medieval news is the result of three interrelated factors. Firstly, it reflects the dominant interests of historians working on news. Scholars tend to investigate the modern concept of “the news” rather than news itself.⁸ They focus on the history of printed news and journalism, and remain largely uninterested in the transmission of news before the arrival of print. Secondly, this emphasis on traditional news media has skewed our understanding of what news is. Research into information networks and news transmission has started to open up this discussion, but, generally, what constitutes news is ill-defined in the scholarship.⁹ Instead, historical news texts tend to be identified by their context rather than their content: news texts are recognized as news texts because they appear in accepted news genres. This poses a significant problem when trying to identify news before the emergence of manuscript newsletters in the late fifteenth century and printed news in the sixteenth. Thirdly, modern approaches to news presuppose knowledge of detailed chronologies and relatively precise dates. This has enabled scholars to offer close studies of the transmission, intensity, and spread of news. However, the exact date, authorship, and origin of many medieval sources remain uncertain. This has pushed medieval scholars to ask different questions of their material. Their studies tend to focus on the related topics of communication, social networks, and the dissemination of texts rather than news. This is shown by a glance at Marco Mostert’s *Bibliography of Works on Medieval Communication*, published in 2012, which does not recognize news as a valid research

(London 1999) 39–65; Sabrina A. Baron, “The Guises of Dissemination in Early Seventeenth-Century England: News in Manuscript and Print,” *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron (London 2001) 41–56; André Belo, “News Exchange and Social Distinction,” *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (Leiden 2016) 375–393; Rachael Scarborough King, “All the News that’s Fit to Write: the Eighteenth-Century Manuscript Newsletter,” *Travelling Chronicles: News and Newspapers from the Early Modern Period to the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Siv Gøril Brandtæg, Paul Goring, and Christine Watson (Leiden 2018) 95–118.

⁷ Woolf, “News, History and the Construction of the Present” (n. 5 above) 83–88; Nikolaus Schobesberger et al., “European Postal Networks,” *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (Leiden 2016) 19–63; John H. Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean, 649–1571* (Cambridge 1988) 12–57.

⁸ See Paul Goring, “A Network of Networks: Spreading the News in an Expanding World of Information,” *Travelling Chronicles: News and Newspapers from the Early Modern Period to the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Siv Gøril Brandtæg, Paul Goring, and Christine Watson (Leiden 2018) 3–4.

⁹ For example, see: David Randall, *Credibility in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Military News* (London 2008); Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham, “News Networks in Early Modern Europe,” *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (Leiden 2016) 1–16; Paul Arblaster et al., “The Lexicons of Early Modern News,” *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (Leiden 2016) 64–101.

category.¹⁰ Medieval scholars simply do not share the same preoccupation with news that is common among their modern and early modern counterparts.

Although news remains an underexplored aspect of medieval studies, it has not been entirely ignored. It has received the sporadic attention of French scholars, in particular. Pierre Sardella's 1948 study of the relationship between news, communications, and commerce in Venice at the beginning of the sixteenth century remains an important contribution, while Yves Renouard's 1961 essay on news is notable for its *longue durée* approach and its emphasis on the Middle Ages.¹¹ In 1993, the circulation of news attracted the attention of the *Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public*, which published a volume of conference proceedings on the topic. This is significant as a volume dedicated to medieval news, but the theme was broadly defined and papers tended to discuss medieval communications more generally.¹² Partly prompted by essays in this volume, aspects of the relationship between news and rumor in the Middle Ages were explored further in symposia held in Poitiers and Lyons, the results of which were published in 2011.¹³ German scholars have also touched on news. Josef Benzinger's article in 1970 applied modern terminology to medieval practices in an attempt to analyse broader structures of communication. However, his work highlighted the need for more detailed, source-based analysis—and this was the approach taken by Hanna Vollrath in her insightful essays on the circulation of news and information during the Becket Conflict and the Investiture Contest, published in 2008 and 2012 respectively.¹⁴ Vollrath's essay on the Investiture Contest was written in English and joins a growing corpus of Anglophone works on medieval news. Due, partly, to the prominence of "news" in its title, the 1948 essay by C.A.J. Armstrong on the transmission of news during the War of the Roses remains the work most cited by early modern and modern scholars.¹⁵ In the 1990s, Sophia Menache explored aspects of news in the context of the crusades in two articles. The earlier of the two includes a significant, but dismissive, discussion of medieval news as part of an early stage in the development of modern communications.¹⁶ Other notable contributions include Sylvia Schein's 1979 article on

¹⁰ Marco Mostert, *A Bibliography of Works on Medieval Communication* (Turnhout 2012).

¹¹ Pierre Sardella, *Nouvelles et Spéculations à Venise au Début du XVI^e Siècle* (Paris 1948); Renouard, "Information et transmission des nouvelles" (n. 4 above) 95–142.

¹² Michel Balard (ed.), *La circulation des nouvelles au Moyen Âge: Actes des congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public, 24^e congrès, Avignon, 1993* (Rome 1994).

¹³ Maïté Billoré and Myriam Soria (eds), *La rumeur au Moyen Âge: Du mépris à la manipulation (V^e–XV^e siècle)* (Rennes 2011).

¹⁴ Josef Benzinger, "Zum Wesen und zu den Formen von Kommunikation und Publizistik im Mittelalter: Eine bibliographische und methodologische Studie," *Publizistik* 15 (1970) 295–318; Hanna Vollrath, "Kommunikation über große Entfernungen: Die Verbreitung von Nachrichten im Becket-Streit," *Der Weg in eine weitere Welt: Kommunikation und "Außenpolitik" im 12. Jahrhundert*, ed. Hanna Vollrath (Berlin 2008) 85–114; Hanna Vollrath, "Sutri 1046—Canossa 1077—Rome 1111: Problems of Communication and the Perception of Neighbors," *European Transformations: The Long Twelfth Century*, ed. Thomas F.X. Noble and John van Engen (Notre Dame 2012) 132–170.

¹⁵ C.A.J. Armstrong, "Some Examples of the Distribution and Speed of News in England at the Time of the Wars of the Roses," *Studies in Medieval History Presented to Frederick Maurice Powicke*, ed. R.W. Hunt, W.A. Pantin, and R.W. Southern (Oxford 1948) 429–454.

¹⁶ Sophia Menache, "The Crusades and their Impact on the Development of Medieval Communication," *Kommunikation zwischen Orient und Okzident: Alltag und Sachkultur, Internationaler Kongress Krems an der Donau 6. bis 9. Oktober 1992*, ed. Harry Kühnel (Vienna 1994) 69–90; Sophia Menache, "The

a medieval fake news story involving the Mongols and Georg Christ's discussion of an early fifteenth-century "newsletter" in 2005.¹⁷ Recent studies of mass communication and public opinion in the Middle Ages have also made increasing references to news—and the topic is given particular emphasis in Christopher Fletcher's 2017 essay.¹⁸ However, despite various medieval contributions to the topic, Sian Lewis's book, *News and Society in the Greek Polis*, published in 1996, remains the most important study to date of news in the era before print.¹⁹ Her examination of the transmission of news and the role it played in a largely oral society offers valuable insights for scholars of later periods—and has not received the attention it deserves.

There is no doubt that news circulated in the medieval world—almost all studies of news admit this. What is less clear is the form that news took and the methods by which it was disseminated. To explore these questions, this essay examines the transmission of a series of related international news events from 1187: the defeat of the Christian army by Muslim forces under Saladin at the battle of Hattin on 4 July, the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin on 2 October, and the launch of the Third Crusade on 29 October.²⁰ This case study pushes the discussion of news deep into the Middle Ages and takes advantage of the relatively large amounts of source material produced and preserved from the late twelfth century onwards. It also allows us to explore the mass dissemination of news, both across Europe and down through society. The Christian community had a sense of collective investment in the Holy Land: the unexpected success of the First Crusade had been driven by popular support and fuelled a perception that Christian dominance in the east was preordained. This meant that news of the disasters in the east and the main responses to it, the calls for mass penitence and crusade, were of general interest. Not only would audiences have wanted to hear this news, but it was also thrust upon them. The need for individual

Communication Challenge of the Early Crusades, 1099–1187," *Autour de la Première croisade: Actes du Colloque de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East (Clermont-Ferrand, 22–25 juin 1995)*, ed. Michel Balard (Paris 1996) 293–314. Both articles expand on approaches to news and communications found in her monograph: Sophia Menache, *The Vox Dei: Communication in the Middle Ages* (Oxford 1990).

¹⁷ Sylvia Schein, "Gesta Dei per Mongolos 1300: The Genesis of a Non-Event," *English Historical Review*, 94 (1979) 805–819; Georg Christ, "A Newsletter in 1419? Antonio Morisini's Chronicle in Light of Commercial Correspondence between Venice and Alexandria," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 20.1 (2005) 35–66.

¹⁸ Christopher Fletcher, "News, Noise, and the Nature of Politics in Late Medieval English Provincial Towns," *Journal of British Studies* 56 (2017) 250–272. See also: James Masschaele, "The Public Space of the Marketplace in Medieval England," *Speculum* 75 (2002) 383–421; Carol Symes, "Out in the Open, in Arras: Sightlines, Soundscapes, and the Shaping of a Medieval Public Sphere," *Cities, Texts and Social Networks, 400–1500*, ed. Caroline Goodson, Anne E. Lester, and Carol Symes (Farnham 2010) 279–302; Leidulf Melve, "'Even the Very Laymen are Chattering about It': The Politicization of Public Opinion, 800–1200," *Viator* 44.1 (2013) 25–48; Leidulf Melve, "Public Debate, Propaganda, and Public Opinion in the Becket Controversy," *Viator* 49.3 (2017) 79–102.

¹⁹ Lewis, *News and Society in the Greek Polis* (n. 1 above). For other studies of news in the classical world, see: Wolfgang Riepl, *Das Nachrichtenwesen des Altertums, mit besondere Rücksicht auf die Römer* (Leipzig 1913); Richard Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy* (Cambridge 1990) 7–29; A.D. Lee, *Information and Frontiers: Roman Foreign Relations in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge 1993); and Mark W. Graham, *News and Frontier Consciousness in the Late Roman Empire* (Ann Arbor 2006).

²⁰ For succinct overviews of the events of 1187 and preparations for the Third Crusade, see: Penny J. Cole, "Christian Perceptions of the Battle of Hattin (583/1187)," *Al-Masāq* 6 (1993) 9–39; Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (Cambridge MA 2006) 366–399.

contrition as well as manpower and resources for the crusade meant that it was disseminated widely across Europe via ecclesiastical and secular networks. As a result, although the sources for this case study focus on the elite dissemination of this news, they also shed light on the circulation of news at other social levels.

DEFINING MEDIEVAL NEWS

The study of news in the Middle Ages poses various methodological problems, the most important of which concern source material. What, exactly, are our sources for medieval news? References in letters, statutes, chronicles, and histories tell us that news of the disasters in the east and the launch of the crusade spread across Europe in late 1187 and early 1188. All of these sources provide important witnesses to the ways in which this news circulated and the speed at which it travelled. However, a distinction needs to be made between the sources that tell us about news and those that actually conveyed news at the time—and in order to do this, we need to think more carefully about what “news” is.

The identification of most historical and contemporary news texts tends to rely on context and the appearance of these texts in accepted news media. However, scholars from the fields of media studies and sociology have also paid close attention to content as part of their investigations into biases in news reporting and news coverage. This has led them to identify the main features of news as a range of “news values.”²¹ Different scholars have identified different values, but their lists tend to emphasize aspects relating to subject matter, audience expectations and interest, time, and editorial decisions. Generally, these values are used to dissect contemporary news articles rather than to identify news texts—and, as a result, they are overly complicated for this purpose. They also often include features, such as factors relating to the longevity of a potential news story or editorial decisions over content, which relate to a modern news market and are anachronistic for the study of medieval news. However, these lists provide important insights into the constitutive elements of news, from which we can derive a simpler yet comprehensive framework for identifying news texts.

The most influential list of news values was that proposed by Johan Galtung and Mari Holboe Ruge in 1965. It consists of twelve criteria: frequency (the time-span required for an event to unfold and acquire meaning); threshold (the level of impact needed for an event to be recorded); unambiguity; meaningfulness (the perceived relevance of an event); consonance (the way in which an event accords with expectation); unexpectedness; continuity (the aspects of an event which remain newsworthy after its initial reporting, i.e. a running story); composition (editorial decisions relating to the balance of content within a news medium); reference to elite nations; reference to elite people; reference to persons (human interest stories); and reference to something negative.²² This list was based on an analysis of the reporting

²¹ For a succinct overview, see Deirdre O'Neill and Tony Harcup, “News Values and Selectivity,” *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, ed. Karin Wahl-Jorgensen and Thomas Hanitzsch (New York-Abingdon 2009) 161–174.

²² Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge, “The Structure of Foreign News,” *Journal of Peace Research* 2 (1965) 65–71.

of international news in newspapers and focused, largely, on aspects of content and meaning. It was revised by Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill in 2001 to include the interests of domestic printed news and to emphasize qualities more intrinsic to news itself, such as its potential for entertainment and positive content. They then revised the list again in 2017 to include categories relevant to digital media.²³ Paul Brighton and Dennis Foy offered a broader set of criteria in 2007. They proposed seven values: relevance (the significance of an event to its audience); topicality (new or current information); composition (as defined by Haltung and Ruge); expectation (the expectation of the audience to be informed about this event); unusualness; worth (reference to elite people or organisations); and external influences (pressure from outside the news organisation to report particular events).²⁴ These competing lists of news values offer insights into the characteristics of news, but tend to highlight variations within its contemporary form rather than emphasize its core components. The values put forward by Teun van Dijk, which are based on cognitive understandings of news consumption, are slightly more transferable. Van Dijk identifies seven key values: novelty (new information); recency (the recent disclosure of information); presupposition (the correspondence of new information to pre-existing knowledge); consonance (the correspondence of information to pre-existing opinions and attitudes); relevance; deviance and negativity; and proximity (both geographical and ideological).²⁵ However, like the preceding lists, these criteria are overly complicated for the task of simply identifying news texts. The values suggested by Bernard Roshco, which focus on the temporal qualities of news, are much more succinct. His list consists of recency; immediacy (a minimal delay between the occurrence of the event and its transmission); and currency (the relevance of the information to the current interests of the audience).²⁶ Yet while the simplicity of this list is appealing, it underplays distinctive aspects of news content that are highlighted by the other schema. The insights offered by these lists are important. The next step is to distil them into a simpler, more usable framework that defines rather than dissects news.

Stripped back to its essential components, news combines distinct elements of content with a temporal dimension: it is comprised of new information concerning a change in circumstances, which is transmitted to its audience as quickly as possible. These features can be translated into three news values: novelty, significance, and immediacy. "Novelty" underlines the fact that news is the transmission of previously unknown information. The value of "significance" indicates that this information represents a meaningful deviation from the norm. This might be a report of an unexpected, one-off incident or an important development in an ongoing series of events, i.e. part of a running story. The caveat "meaningful" also makes significance a relative measure: significance may be assigned to greater or lesser changes in the

²³ Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill, "What is News? Galtung and Ruge Revisited," *Journalism Studies* 2 (2001) 261–280; Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill, "What is News? News Values Revisited (Again)," *Journalism Studies* 18 (2017) 1470–1488.

²⁴ Paul Brighton and Dennis Foy, *News Values* (London 2007) 25–29.

²⁵ Teun A. van Dijk, *News as Discourse* (Hillsdale 1988) 119–124.

²⁶ Roshco, *News-making* (n. 2 above) 11–13.

environment, depending on the perspective of the author and his or her audience. In this sense, the value of significance also implies relevance. This reflects our limited ability to assess audience response in this period, which means we must rely largely on authors' assumptions of their interests.²⁷ Finally, immediacy highlights the temporal aspect of news as fresh, time-sensitive information, which is intended for immediate consumption. It combines an assessment of recency, which is the acceptable delay between the initial disclosure of this information and its communication, with urgency, through the analysis of tone, phrasing, and, occasionally, structure. Although the structure of most sources for medieval and early modern news is chronological, some texts foreshadow modern news practices by leading with the most recent or important aspect of the story. Both then and now, the use of a discontinuous narrative structure allows authors to convey news more quickly and with a greater sense of urgency.²⁸

This framework, consisting of the three core values of novelty, significance, and immediacy, enables us to identify historical news texts both in the Middle Ages and beyond. The combined presence of these three values in a source or a section of a source indicates that it is a news text. This allows us to distinguish between texts which convey news to new audiences from those which discuss the transmission of news or assume that recent events are already common knowledge. It also allows us to separate the original form of news texts, intended for immediate consumption, from the contexts, such as historiographical texts or letter collections, in which they have been preserved. The creation of a framework to identify news texts is an important step not just for the study of news in the Middle Ages, but for the comparative analysis of news across time. It enables scholars of all periods to identify and compare their material.

The application of this framework to the case study demonstrates how it works. Of the extant sources for the transmission of news in 1187 and 1188, twenty letters satisfy all three criteria: these are listed in the table below. In terms of novelty, almost all the letters assume that the information conveyed is unknown to the reader and provide discursive accounts of recent events. Indeed, only the letter sent by Conrad of Montferrat in January 1188 (no. 18) suggests that its intended recipient, King Béla of

²⁷ News producers do not always get this right, see John Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis* (Basingstoke 2007) 94–95.

²⁸ The “inverted pyramid” structure, which is characteristic of modern news media, only became the norm from the late nineteenth century. However, a comment in Hugh of Saint Victor’s *Didascalicon* makes it clear that non-chronological narratives were an accepted way of presenting material in the twelfth century. This application of modern news discourse analysis to historic material follows the lead of the CHINED research group (www.chinednews.com). *Hugonis de Sancto Victore didascalicon de studio legendi: A Critical Text*, ed. Charles Henry Buttmer (Washington 1939) III.8, 58; Nicholas Brownlees, “Narrating Contemporaneity: Text and Structure in English News,” *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Brendan Dooley (Farnham 2010) 225–250; Horst Pöttker, “The News Pyramid and its Origin from the American Journalism in the 19th Century: A Professional Approach and an Empirical Inquiry,” *Diffusion of the News Paradigm, 1850–2000*, ed. Svernik Høyer and Horst Pöttker (Göteborg 2005) 51–64; Friedrich Ungerer, “When News Stories are No Longer Stories: The Emergence of the Top-Down Structure in News Reports in English Newspapers,” *Text Types and Corpora: Studies in Honour of Udo Fries*, ed. Andreas Fischer, Gunnel Tottie, and Hans Martin Lehmann (Tübingen 2002) 91–104.

Hungary, had prior knowledge of the events mentioned in his opening summary.²⁹ The presence of terms such as *sciatis* (may you know) and *notum faciamus* or *notificamus* (we make it known) in three of the letters also suggests the transfer of new information.³⁰ The second value, significance, is indicated here by content, phrasing, and interpretation. The events in the east, which represented major losses of people and territory, and the launch of a crusade were significant in themselves. This was highlighted further by references to the numbers of people taken prisoner or killed, the elite status of these people, and by listing the cities that had either been captured by Muslim forces or remained in Christian hands. The writers' interpretation of the events in the east also emphasized their perceived significance: they were viewed as punishments from God and as heralding the collapse of the crusader states. The third value, immediacy, is reflected in the phrasing, tone, and—in one case—structure of these letters. The use of the present tense and terms including *adhuc* (as yet, until now), *iam* (now), *nuper* (recently), and *in presentiarum* (at present) situate audiences in the moment of writing. Similarly, the use of *ferebatur* (it is reported) and *dicantur* (they are said) in two of the letters also place their recipients in the position of the sender: they signal unverified information and the limits of current knowledge.³¹ Together, this creates a sense of shared temporality and adds immediacy to the narrative. Some of the letters heighten this by conveying a sense of urgency through requests for action to avert an impending threat, usually in the form of a *nisi* (unless) construction and sometimes with reference to speed. Finally, while most of the letters recount events in chronological order, the letter sent by Terricus to Henry II (no. 19) uses a discontinuous narrative similar to modern news structures—and to similar effect.³²

According to the framework, each of these letters contains news. That these sources are all letters is unsurprising. Letters were the texts most likely to replace direct communication over long distances, and they remained the conventional means to

²⁹ Anton Chroust, *Tageno, Ansbert und die Historia Peregrinorum: Drei kritische Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Kreuzzüge Friedrichs I.* (Graz 1892) 200; RRH 670.

³⁰ "Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris," *Quellen zur Geschichte des Kreuzzuges Kaiser Friedrichs I.*, ed. A. Chroust, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores rerum Germanicarum Nova series 5 (Berlin 1928) 2; "Chronica collecta a Magno presbytero –1195," ed. W. Wattenbach, [*Annales aevi Suevici*], Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores 17 (Hanover 1861) sub anno 1187, 508 [henceforth Magnus of Reichersberg, *Chronicon*]; Admont, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 25, inside front cover; RRH 661; John H. Pryor, "Two Excitations for the Third Crusade: The Letters of Brother Thierry of the Temple," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 25 (2010) 151; RRH 669; "Continuationes Weingartenses chronicorum Hugonis et Honorii a. 1152–1208," ed. Ludwig Weiland, [*Historici Germaniae saec. XII. I.*], Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores 21 (Hanover 1869) 476.

³¹ *Gesta regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis. The Chronicle of the Reigns of Henry II. and Richard I. A.D. 1169–1192, Vol. II.*, ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Series 49 (London 1867) sub anno 1187, 12 [henceforth Roger of Howden, *Gesta*]; Karl Hampe, "Reise nach England vom Juli 1895 bis Februar 1896," *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für A'tere Deutsche Geschichtskunde* 22 (1897) 279; *Die lateinische Fortsetzung Wilhelms von Tyrus*, ed. Marianne Salloch (Leipzig 1934) II.2, 81 [henceforth *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrii*]; Gregory VIII, "Audita tremendi," *Petri Cellensis... Carnotensis episcopi opera omnia. Accedunt Urbani III, Gregorii VIII, romanorum pontificum, epistolae et privilegia*, ed. J.-P. Migne, Patrologia Latina 202 (Paris 1855) 1540; JL 16019.

³² Pryor, "Two Excitations" (n. 30 above) 150–152.

transmit news into the early modern period.³³ Since these sources are all letters, it is possible to classify them under the broad category of “newsletter,” i.e. correspondence which contains news. However, this also masks important differences in the content and purpose of these sources. In addition, because this term has also been used to designate particular types of newsletters in both the medieval and early modern period, its more general usage may be misleading.³⁴ Only four of the letters in the case study might be considered “pure” newsletters, i.e. letters that conveyed news and nothing more. The late twelfth-century *Halberstadt Ars dictandi* refers to such letters as *actiones* and notes that they may be sent with or without a formal salutation.³⁵ Here, these letters seem to have functioned as situation reports for particular individuals or organizations, although the context of their preservation in other texts, such as chronicles, suggests that they were also disseminated more widely. Most of the letters containing news in 1187 and 1188 were intended to serve multiple purposes. Some combined summaries of recent events with advance notice of visits or requests for assistance, the latter referred to as *Hilferufe* by German scholars.³⁶ Others conveyed news alongside orders to perform particular actions, such as papal encyclicals, i.e. circular letters sent out by the papacy. In order to acknowledge the range of material under discussion, it is better to refer to these sources as “news texts” rather than “newsletters.” To describe a source as a newsletter is to identify news as its most important component and the main reason for its creation—whether or not this reflects the intention of the sender. News text is a more neutral term that allows us to highlight relevant content and can be used alongside other genre distinctions, which recognize the additional or primary features of these sources.

EXTANT NEWS TEXTS RELATING TO HATTIN, JERUSALEM,
AND THE LAUNCH OF THE THIRD CRUSADE FROM 1187–1188

(The asterisk (*) indicates letters of questionable authenticity.)

NO.	SENDER	ADDRESSEE	DATE	SENT FROM	RELEVANT NEWS CONTENT	TYPE OF LETTER
1		Barbarossa and Urban III	Early/mid-July 1187		Hattin	<i>Hilferuf</i>
2	Terricus	Urban III	Late July/early	Tyre	Hattin	<i>Hilferuf</i>

³³ Pettegree, *Invention of News* (n. 5 above) 316–318; Goring, “Network of Networks” (n. 8 above) 7–8; Atherton, “Itch Grown a Disease” (n. 6 above).

³⁴ See: Atherton, “Itch Grown a Disease” (n. 6 above) 41; John Gillingham, “Royal Newsletters, Forgeries and English Historians: Some Links between Court and History in the Reign of Richard I,” *La cour Plantagenêt (1154–1204): Actes du Colloque tenu à Thouars du 30 avril au 2 mai 1999*, ed. Martin Aurell (Poitiers 2000) 172 n.4.

³⁵ “Die Halberstädter Ars dictandi aus den Jahren 1193/94 nach der Handschrift der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek,” ed. Walter Zöllner, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther Universität Halle-Wittenburg, Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe* 13 (1964) II.2–4, 547–548.

³⁶ For example, see: Benjamin Z. Kedar, “Ein Hilferuf aus Jerusalem vom September 1187,” *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 38 (1982) 112–122; Hans Eberhard Mayer, “Zwei unedierte Texte aus den Kreuzfahrerstaaten,” *Archiv für Diplomatik* 47–48 (2002) 91–104; Nikolas Jaspert, “Zwei unbekannte Hilfersuchen des Patriarchen Eraclius vor dem Fall Jerusalems (1187),” *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 60 (2004) 483–516.

			August 1187			
3	Terricus	Templars	Late July/early August 1187	Tyre	Hattin	<i>Hilferuf</i>
4	Terricus	Philip of Flanders	Late July/early August 1187	Tyre	Hattin	<i>Hilferuf</i>
5	Hospitallers?	Hospitallers of Italy	Early September 1187	Latakia?	Hattin	<i>Actio</i>
6	Eraclius	Urban III	Mid-September 1187	Jerusalem	Hattin, threat to Jerusalem	<i>Hilferuf</i>
7	Eraclius	Rulers in west	Mid-September 1187	Jerusalem	Hattin, threat to Jerusalem	<i>Hilferuf</i>
8	Bohemond III	William II	Late September 1187	Antioch	Hattin, Jerusalem under siege	<i>Hilferuf</i>
9	Genoese consuls	Urban III	Late September/early October 1187	Genoa	Hattin	<i>Hilferuf</i>
10	Aimeric	Henry II	Early/mid-October 1187	Antioch	Hattin, Jerusalem under siege	<i>Hilferuf</i>
11	Aimeric	General	Early/mid-October 1187	Antioch	Hattin, Jerusalem under siege	<i>Hilferuf</i>
12	Peter of Blois	Henry II	Mid-/late October 1187	Ferrara	Hattin, threat to Jerusalem, crusade	<i>Actio</i>
13	Gregory VIII	General	29 October, 30 October, 3 November 1187	Ferrara	Hattin, crusade	Encyclical
14	Bohemond III	General	Post-early October 1187	Antioch	Capture of Jerusalem	<i>Hilferuf</i>
15	*Gregory VIII	General	Late October/1 November 1187		Hattin, capture of Jerusalem, crusade	Encyclical
16	Henry of Albano	Barbarossa	Early/mid-November 1187	Ferrara?	Crusade	Advance notice of visit
17	*Gregory VIII	General	Late 1187		Capture of Jerusalem	Encyclical
18	Conrad of Montferrat <i>et al.</i>	Béla III	January 1188	Tyre	Hattin, capture of Jerusalem	<i>Hilferuf</i>
19	Terricus	Henry II	January 1188	Tyre	Capture of Jerusalem	<i>Actio</i>
20	Templars	General	Early 1188	England?	Hattin	<i>Actio</i>

For studies of medieval news, the identification of news texts must then be followed by a second stage of analysis. Historians need to assess whether medieval news texts are authentic and the extent to which they may have been modified during the process of transmission. The question of authenticity concerns the time of production rather than the circulation of “fake news,” which, if it is widely believed to

be true, can still be considered news. The main problem here is that most news texts from the Middle Ages have been preserved as copies rather than originals.³⁷ Some of these texts may be later forgeries, which purport to be real documents and are intended to deceive, while others may be literary fictions, which were created to fulfil specific functions in longer narratives. Scholars need to assess the content, format, context, and preservation of these sources to try to ascertain if these texts circulated at the time, that they were news texts, or if they were created subsequently for other purposes. Caution is certainly necessary. None of the news texts from the case study survive in their original form: they have been preserved by being incorporated into chronicles and histories or by being copied into manuscripts, either individually or as part of a group of texts. Analysis of this material indicates that at least two of these texts are suspect and it is possible that more may be outed by subsequent scholarship.

Yet even apparently genuine news texts require close scrutiny. In contrast to the fixed texts produced by print, manuscripts were, to use Peter Burke's words, an "interactive" medium.³⁸ Copies of news texts may have been edited or revised during the process of transmission, which means attention must be paid to manuscript variants when multiple copies survive. For example, one version of the letter concerning Hattin, which was sent to the Hospitallers of Italy in 1187 (no. 5), was amended to include details from the text with which it circulated, the letter sent by Terricus to the Templars (no. 3), presumably to present a more uniform narrative of the event.³⁹ Recognizing these changes allows us to separate the original text from later accretions and brings us closer to the form in which it initially circulated.

The difficulties in assessing the authenticity and transmission of these letters has led at least one scholar, John Pryor, to take an extreme position in relation to the sources. Pryor's study of the letters sent from the east by Terricus in 1187 and 1188 (nos. 2–4, 19) led him to argue that the extant copies of letters have been "copied, altered and... 'doctored'" to the extent that they are distinct from the original material upon which they were based. Instead, he categorizes the reworked letters as *excitationes*, texts written to incite action, and views them as products of western crusade propagandists.⁴⁰ Pryor's argument is based on problematic content in the letters, which he interprets as later additions. That changes were made to individual texts before further circulation is possible. However, Pryor's argument implies that there was a systematic campaign to revise and circulate documents. This is not supported by the evidence. For example, one of the proposed additions, the reference to an earlier siege of Tyre in Terricus' first letter, is present in all three extant versions (nos. 2–4), each of which was sent to different recipients and appear to have circulated

³⁷ See Giles Constable's comments on letters: Giles Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections* (Turnhout 1976) 51–52, 55–56.

³⁸ Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, *A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet* (Cambridge 2009) 37.

³⁹ These letters are found, one after the other, in the *Chronicle of Magnus of Reichersberg* and in a manuscript from Admont Abbey—these copies are not directly related. This version of the letter to the Hospitallers includes the following variants drawn from Terricus' letter: Terricus escaped Hattin; Beirut is still in Christian hands; and Muslim forces cover the Holy land up to Jerusalem and Gaza. Magnus of Reichersberg, *Chronicon* sub anno 1187 (n. 30 above) 508–509; Admont, Cod. 25 (n. 30 above) inside front cover; RRH 660, 661.

⁴⁰ Pryor, "Two *Excitationes*" (n. 30 above) 147–168 (153).

independently. The most plausible explanation is that the statement reflects the original intention of the author rather than the synchronized revision of these texts at a later date.⁴¹ Pryor was right to be wary, but a critical rather than cynical approach needs to be taken to this material—and to all news texts which do not survive in their original form.

NEWS AND COMMUNICATIONS IN 1187–1188

News texts allow us to see how events were reported and interpreted as they happened. They place us in the midst of the action and give us important insights into the information available to decision-makers at particular points in time. However, the evidence they provide for contemporary communications is limited. For example, the letters conveying news of Hattin, Jerusalem, and the crusade usually contain information that allows us to identify the sender of the text, its intended recipient, and the approximate date it was written. We can use these details to construct a rough chronology of when information was sent and where it was directed. However, as was noted by Alexander Cartellieri over a century ago, tracking the dispersal and reception of these letters is much more difficult.⁴² While the preservation of these letters in other texts or manuscripts indicates their eventual delivery, it provides little insight into their initial dissemination.

In order to understand how these news texts functioned in context, we are dependent on other sources, such as histories, chronicles, statutes, songs, and letters. These sources contain evidence concerning the speed at which news travelled, the ways in which it was transmitted, and how different audiences responded to it. This helps us to map the spread and impact of news texts. However, this evidence must also be treated carefully since the intention of some of these sources, particularly chronicles and histories, was to obscure rather than to reveal these details. Authors of historiographical works collected and collated information, and arranged it into ordered, chronological frameworks. They tend to take a more global perspective and list events according to the date at which they occurred, rather than when this information became known. As such, they smooth over the initial confusion and uncertainty that accompanies breaking news. For example, several accounts of late 1187 imply that news of the fall of Jerusalem (2 October) prompted the call for crusade (from 29 October).⁴³ While this makes chronological sense, it doesn't reflect

⁴¹ Pryor argues that the reference to a siege of Tyre must refer to the siege from mid-November 1187 to 1 January 1188 and concludes that the extant text is an amended version of Terricus' letter produced after January 1188. Pryor did not have access to the version of Terricus' letter sent to Count Philip of Flanders, which is extant in a manuscript in Mons—this might have changed his analysis. Christoph Maier argues that the kind of centralized control of crusade propaganda implied by Pryor developed only in the 1230s. See also Nicholas Paul's discussion of historical approaches to "propaganda" and the First Crusade. Pryor, "Two excitaciones" (n. 30 above) 149; Mons, Bibliothèque Publique, Ms 851, sect. i, fol. 1^r; Nicholas L. Paul, "A Warlord's Wisdom: Literacy and Propaganda at the Time of the First Crusade," *Speculum* 85 (2005) 534–566; Christoph T. Maier, *Preaching the Crusades: Medicant Friars and the Cross in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge 1994).

⁴² Alexander Cartellieri, *Philipp II. August, König von Frankreich, Band II: Der Kreuzzug (1187–91)* (Leipzig 1906) 39.

⁴³ See: *Historia de expeditione* (n. 30 above) 6; "Historia peregrinorum," *Quellen zur Geschichte des Kreuzzuges Kaiser Friedrichs I.*, ed. A. Chroust, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores rerum Germanicarum Nova series 5 (Berlin 1928) 122; *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene, Vol. II*, ed.

the reality of communications in late 1187. The extant news texts and other sources agree that the crusade was launched in response to news of the defeat at Hattin—news that Jerusalem had been captured arrived later. Yet even those accounts which record the arrival of particular pieces of news may offer only partial insights into the spread of information. As Armstrong noted, news could be communicated in piecemeal fashion, which meant contemporaries might only get a full picture of events after the arrival of multiple reports.⁴⁴ As such, the reception of news registered in the sources may represent the fullest, rather than the first, information received.

The complexity of this evidence simply reflects the complex nature of medieval communications on the ground. This is particularly the case with international news. The speed at which news travelled across long distances might vary according to the method of transportation, the weather, the political situation, and the itinerary of the messenger. The interaction of these variables creates what Sardella termed the “elasticity” of news. Whereas most journeys on the same route took a similar amount of time, some could be much faster and others much slower. The greatest degree of elasticity occurred on sea routes, which were much more dependent on good weather than land travel—and remained so into the early modern period. The Mediterranean crossing from east to west was particularly variable.⁴⁵ According to Ibn Jubayr, who made this journey in 1184, most voyages sailed from the Holy Land with the arrival of the east wind during brief windows between mid-April and May or in the second half of October.⁴⁶ Communications westward across the Mediterranean were, therefore, likely to be faster in the spring and autumn. However, even journeys at these times could be waylaid by bad weather—Jubayr’s own voyage, which began in October and was expected to take two weeks, took two months to reach Sicily.⁴⁷ Such variation in travel times across the Mediterranean can be seen in our case study.

Our evidence indicates that news of the battle of Hattin on 4 July 1187 and the subsequent Muslim advance reached western Europe about three months later. Initial reports of the Christian defeat at Hattin were sent in late July or August and reached the shores of the western Mediterranean by late September or October. By November, they had made their way to parts of Germany and northern France. A stream of letters sent from the east during September and early October reiterated this information and provided new updates, including news that the city of Jerusalem was under siege. This information seems to have reached northwestern Europe by January 1188. The

William Stubbs, *Rolls Series 51* (London 1869) sub anno 1187, 322–323; “Gisleberti chronicon Hanoniense a. 1080–1195,” ed. Wilhelm Arndt, [*Historici Germaniae saec. XII. I.*], *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores 21* (Hanover 1869) sub anno 1187, 553.

⁴⁴ Armstrong, “Examples of the Distribution and Speed of News” (n. 15 above) 430.

⁴⁵ Sardella, *Nouvelles et Spéculations* (n. 11 above) 56–60. See also: Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, Vol. I*, trans. Siân Reynolds (New York 1972) 264–265, 361, 363; Bernard Doumerc, “Par Dieu écrivez plus souvent! La lettre d’affaires à Venise à la fin du Moyen Âge,” *La circulation des nouvelles au Moyen Âge: Actes des congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l’Enseignement Supérieur Public, 24e congrès, Avignon, 1993*, ed. Michel Balard (Rome 1994) 102–103.

⁴⁶ Muhammad ibn Ahmad Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, trans. R.J.C. Broadhurst (London 1952) Rajab 580, 326.

⁴⁷ Ibn Jubayr, *Travels Jumada al-Akhirah-Ramadan 580* (n. 46 above) 321–338; Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War* (n. 7 above) 1–6.

repetition of news in these letters reflects the fact that these were independent reports and their authors had little way of knowing what news had been received in the west until their messengers returned or other travellers brought information. They were also aware of potential delays in communication. Both of the letters sent to the west concerning the victorious defence of Tyre in January 1188 were careful to open with reference to the fall of Jerusalem in October—one assumed that this news had not reached the west (no. 19), while the other assumed it had (no. 18).⁴⁸ Such concerns were not unfounded.

It seems that, from mid-October, communications across the Mediterranean stalled. This was probably due to a combination of factors including the deteriorating sailing conditions of winter, the reduced sea traffic as ships were laid up for the season, and the severe political disruption in the Holy Land.⁴⁹ As a result, news of the fall of Jerusalem on 2 October does not seem to have reached the west until spring of the following year. To an extent, the vagaries of travel, from the seasonal slowdown in the Mediterranean to the misfortunes that affected individual journeys, must have been an accepted part of international medieval—and early modern—communications. However, the problems caused by conflict and political crisis were less predictable and, I would argue, more disruptive to communications networks in these periods. Instability in the east, more than any other factor, seems to account for the delayed transmission of news concerning the loss of Jerusalem.

NEWS OF HATTIN

Letters and envoys dispatched in late summer and early autumn brought news of the defeat at Hattin to the west. Most of these messages and messengers were destined for the papacy. It seems clear that the papal curia acted as the main news hub for reports coming from the east. This reflected the ecclesiastical and spiritual dimensions of the news story and anticipated the papacy's probable reaction—the launch of a crusade. The earliest extant letter (no. 1) is an *actio* preserved in a chronicle from Weingarten, which is said to have been sent to Pope Urban III and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, the spiritual and secular leaders of Latin Christendom. The letter opens with a detailed account of the earlier defeat of Christian forces at Cresson on 1 May, before summarizing the battle of Hattin on 4 July. Inaccuracies in the list of casualties at the latter, the absence of any reference to later events, and the prominence given to Cresson—which would soon be entirely eclipsed by a focus on Hattin and its aftermath—indicate that the letter was written soon after Hattin in early to mid-July.⁵⁰ It is unclear when this letter first reached western Europe, but it had been received by

⁴⁸ Terricus: 'sciatis quod...'; Conrad of Montferrat *et al.*: "...iam dudum credimus propalatam". Pryor, "Two *Excitationes*" (n. 30 above) 151; Chroust, *Tageno, Ansbert und die Historia Peregrinorum* (n. 29 above) 200; RRH 669, 670.

⁴⁹ See: Braudel, *Mediterranean* (n. 45 above) 248–253; Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War* (n. 7 above) 87–89; Michael McCormick, *The Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300–900* (Cambridge 2001) 450–464.

⁵⁰ The letter incorrectly states that Bernard, bishop of Lydda, Gerard de Rideford, and Aimery de Lusignan were killed at Hattin. The *Chronica regia Coloniensis* also seems to refer to this letter. *Continuationes Weingartenses* (n. 30 above) 475–476; *Chronica regia Coloniensis*, ed. Georg Waitz, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* 18 (Hanover 1880) sub anno 1187, 138; RRH 658; RI IV, 2, 4 n. 3085.

Barbarossa around 23 November when, the chronicle tells us, it began to be recited publicly, presumably, in Germany.⁵¹ The most likely scenario is that messengers carrying this letter travelled first to the papal curia in northern Italy, arriving at some point in or after mid-October, then on to the German imperial court. This timeline suggests that the messengers took three months to move from east to west and just over a month to travel from northern Italy to Barbarossa's court, probably, in Germany. This is a slightly longer journey from the Holy Land than might be expected, but neither time is unfeasible.

As Saladin's army advanced through the Holy Land and the scale of the disaster became clear, more letters were dispatched. In late July or early August, Terricus, Preceptor or Grand Preceptor of the Templars, wrote three letters: one to Pope Urban (no. 2); a second to the Templar Order (no. 3), in which he explicitly stated his presence at the battle of Hattin; and the third to Count Philip of Flanders (no. 4), presumably due to his active service in the Holy Land a decade earlier.⁵² These letters contain what must be an eyewitness account of the defeat, as well as stating the extent of the Muslim advance. Acre had been taken and only Jerusalem, Ascalon, Beirut, and Tyre remained in Christian hands—although the latter was said to be under siege (a reference, apparently, to an abortive siege that occurred in late summer).⁵³ Terricus ends each letter with a desperate plea for assistance. His account of the Muslim advance indicates that the letters were composed after the loss of Acre on 9 July, but before the capture of Beirut on 6 August was widely known.⁵⁴ Terricus is among the

⁵¹ This letter had not reached the curia by 3 September, when Urban sent a letter concerning Cresson—and Cresson only—to Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury. *Continuationes Weingartenses* (n. 30 above) 475; *Papsturkunden für Kirchen in Heiligen Lande*, ed. Rudolf Hiestand (Göttingen 1985) no. 148, 322–324.

⁵² Pryor, "Two excitaciones" (n. 30 above) 147–150; Mons, Ms 851 (n. 41 above) sect. i, fol. 1^r; RRH 660. Ralph de Diceto preserves a fourth version of this letter (no. 20), which seems to have been revised and redistributed by the Templars in early 1188 (see below). Pryor queries the references to Terricus' status in this and his subsequent letter in January 1188, but Jochen Burgdorf offers a persuasive explanation for this phrasing. Pryor, "Two excitaciones" (n. 30 above) 153–155; Jochen Burgdorf, *The Central Convent of the Hospitallers and Templars: History, Organization, and Personnel (1099/1120–1310)* (Leiden 2008) 75–78, 442–443. For a summary of Count Philip's activities in the east, see Jonathan Philips, *Defenders of the Holy Land: Relations between the Latin East and the West, 1119–1187* (Oxford 1996) 231–237.

⁵³ Although Pryor dismisses the reference to this siege as a later addition, limited evidence for an earlier, abortive siege of Tyre can be found in Christian and Islamic sources (as Pryor himself notes). See: Pryor, "Two excitaciones" (n. 30 above) 156, 158, 161 n.119; *Historia de expeditione* (n. 30 above) 4; Magnus of Reichersberg, *Chronicon* sub anno 1187 (n. 30 above) 508; Admont, Cod. 25 (n. 30 above) inside front cover; Bahā' ad-Dīn Ibn Shaddād, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin or al-Nawādir al-Sultāniyya wal-Mahāsin al-Yūsufiyya*, trans. D. S. Richards, *Crusade Texts in Translation* 7 (Aldershot 2002) II.[80], 76; 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Ismā'il Abu Shama, *Le livre des deux jardins: Histoire des deux règnes, celui de Nour ed-Dīn et celui de Salah ed-Dīn*, ed. and trans. A.-C. Barbier de Meynard. *Recueil des historiens des croisades, Historiens orientaux* 4 (Paris 1898) sub anno 583 [1187–1188], 315; *La continuation de Guillaume de Tyr, 1184–1197*, ed. Margaret Ruth Morgan, *Documents relatifs à l'histoire des Croisades* 14 (Paris 1982) §45, 57 [henceforth *Lyon Eracles*]; Cartellieri, *Philipp II* (n. 42 above) 37.

⁵⁴ Ibn Shaddād, *Rare and Excellent History* II.[79–80] (n. 53 above) 75–76; *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l-tārīkh, Part 2. The Years 541–589/1146–1193: The Age of Nur al-Dīn and Saladin*, trans. D.S. Richards, *Crusade Texts in Translation* 15 (Aldershot 2007) sub anno 583 [1187–1188], 325, 327; Imād ad-Dīn al-Isfahānī, *Conquête de la Syrie et de la Palestine par Saladin*, ed. and trans. Henri Massé, *Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades* 10 (Paris 1972) sub anno 583/1187 [31, 38, 41], 33, 40, 43.

grantors of a charter issued to the Genoese in Tyre during July, and it is likely that his letters were both written and sent from this location.⁵⁵

It may well be that the letters written by Terricus were carried by the charter's main signatory, Archbishop Joscius of Tyre. Joscius travelled west as an envoy and seems to have left the Holy Land by early September. The Old French continuations of William of Tyre's chronicle provide details of his voyage. His ship is said to have crossed the Mediterranean under black sails to forewarn of the news it carried and then to have made landfall in Sicily, where Joscius informed King William II of events in the east. William was "most distressed" to hear this news and blamed himself for weakening the Holy Land—his conflict with the Byzantine Emperor had led him to suspend the passage of pilgrims through Sicily from 1185. The king then equipped Joscius with horses and money to help speed his journey to "Rome," i.e. the papal curia.⁵⁶

At around the same time that Joscius was sailing west, an *actio* directed to the Hospitallers of Italy and to Archumbald, their prior or grand preceptor (no. 5), was also being dispatched.⁵⁷ The letter seems to have been sent from Latakia, a port in the principality of Antioch, and is notable for its insights into the circulation of news in the east. The report opens with a detailed summary of the defeat at Hattin and the subsequent capture of various Christian strongholds including Ramla, Ibelin, Daron, and Gaza. These cities fell during August and early September, which provides a *terminus post quem* for the letter. Yet the author's information was patchy: he also stated that Ascalon remained in Christian hands when, in reality, it had fallen on 5 September, shortly before Gaza.⁵⁸ Latakia was some distance from the action, which may explain this incomplete picture. The piecemeal nature of reports is also evident elsewhere in the letter, where it is amplified by confusion among the copyists. The

⁵⁵ The charter refers to the defeat at Hattin and was witnessed by Balian, lord of Ibelin, who seems to have left the city before the fall of Sidon on 29 July. The *Chronicle of Magnus of Reichersberg* assumes that Terricus' letter was sent from Jerusalem, but there is no further evidence to support this. *I Libri Iurium della Repubblica di Genova*, Vol. 1/2, ed. Dino Puncuh, Pubblicazioni degli archivi di stato Fonti 23 (Rome 1996) no. 330, 135–137; RRH 659; *Lyon Eracles* 45 (n. 53 above) 57; *Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le trésorier*, ed. M.L. de Mas Latrie (Paris 1871) §§15–16, 174–178; Magnus of Reichersberg, *Chronicon* sub anno 1187 (n. 30 above) 507; Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle* sub anno 583 [1187–1188] (n. 54 above) 327; Imād, *Conquête de la Syrie* sub anno 583/1187 [37] (n. 54 above) 39.

⁵⁶ *Lyon Eracles* 72, 74 (n. 53 above) 82, 83; "The Old French Continuation of William of Tyre, 1184–97," *The Conquest of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade: Sources in Translation*, trans. Peter W. Edbury (Aldershot 1998) 73; *L'Estoire de Eracles empereur et la conquête de la terre d'Oltre mer*, ed. Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Recueil des historiens des croisades, Historiens occidentaux 2 (Paris 1859) XXIV.5, 8, 111–113, 115 [henceforth *Colbert-Fontainebleau Eracles*]; Ernoul-Bernard, *Chronique* 21 (n. 55 above) 244–245, 247; Ibn Jubayr, *Travels* Shawwal 580 (no. 46 above) 353–354.

⁵⁷ The letter refers to Archumbald as "Master of the Hospitallers of Italy" (*magistro Hospitalarium Italiae*), which might refer to his status as either "Prior of Italy" or "Preceptor of Italy" (*praeceptoris Italiae*), the title he held in 1188. *Historia de expeditione* (n. 30 above) 2–4; Magnus of Reichersberg, *Chronicon* sub anno 1187 (n. 30 above) 508–509; Admont, Cod. 25 (n. 30 above), inside front cover; RRH 661; *Cartulaire Général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem, 1100–1310*, Vol. 1 1100–1200, ed. J. Delaville le Roulx (Paris 1894) no. 860, 547.

⁵⁸ The letter is preserved in the *Historia de expeditione*, the *Chronicle of Magnus of Reichersberg*, and, less legibly, in Admont Cod. 25. The copies in the *Historia* and the *Chronicle* state that Ascalon remained in Christian hands, whereas the Admont copy substitutes "safera" for Ascalon—however, Ascalon seems to be the preferred reading. *Historia de expeditione* (n. 30 above) 4; Magnus of Reichersberg, *Chronicon* sub anno 1187 (n. 30 above) 508; Admont, Cod. 25 (n. 30 above) inside front cover; Ibn Shaddād, *Rare and Excellent History* II.[80] (n. 53 above) 77; Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle* sub anno 583 [1187–1188] (n. 54 above) 330.

author of the letter tells us that as he sailed from Tyre (here referred to by its vernacular name *Sur*) the citizens were planning to surrender the city, probably in mid- to late July. While on the galley to Latakia, he heard that either Tyre (here referred to by its Latin name *Tyrus*) was to be surrendered or that Tibnin (*Turonus*) had surrendered. Since Tibnin fell on 26 July, the latter seems to be more accurate and, indeed, *Turonus* or *Tyronus* is listed among the cities that have been taken in the letter. If there had been any misinformation regarding Tyre, this was corrected by the time the author wrote the letter in early September: all versions confirmed that Tyre (*Sur* or *Tyrus quae et Sur*) remained among the cities still in Christian hands.⁵⁹ Although the sender is unstated, its recipients and the use of the *actio* form suggest that it was an internal communication—it seems to be the letter sent within the order that is mentioned by the chronicler Roger of Howden.⁶⁰ Judith Bronstein notes that the Hospitaller houses in Italy were not among the most important in the order and suggests that the letter was sent to Archumbald as the senior official closest to the papal curia, with the intention that he would pass this information on. This is plausible, although the letter might also represent a prior social connection: as Bronstein comments, Archumbald had served in the east as grand preceptor of the Hospital, second-in-command of the order, just two years earlier.⁶¹

The final letter in this initial wave was sent to Pope Urban from Genoa (no. 9).⁶² Genoa had a strong commercial presence in the east and reports of recent events had reached the ears of the city's consuls. The news had then been confirmed by the "mournful account" of a Genoese citizen returning from overseas.⁶³ The letter provides a relatively full account of the battle of Hattin, including several details found in the letter sent to the Hospitallers—a result, it seems, of shared sources in Tyre, where both Genoese merchants and the author of the Hospitallers' letter had

⁵⁹ The Latin names for Tyre (*Tyrus*), Tibnin, and Latrun (both *Turonus*) cause confusion here. Latrun fell in early September, which suggests Tibnin or Tyre was the subject of the rumors heard by the author. His statement that the citizens of Tyre were preparing to negotiate the surrender of the city while Balian met with Saladin to arrange his safe-passage to Jerusalem indicates a date in late July: Balian seems to have left Tyre before 29 July (see n. 55 above). *Historia de expeditione* (n. 30 above) 3–4; Magnus of Reichersberg, *Chronicon* sub anno 1187 (n. 30 above) 508; Admont, Cod. 25 (n. 30 above) inside front cover; Ibn Shaddād, *Rare and Excellent History* II.[80] (n. 53 above) 76–77; Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle* sub anno 583 [1187–1188] (n. 54 above) 330; Imād, *Conquête de la Syrie* sub anno 583/1187 [37] (n. 54 above) 39; *Lyon Eracles* 45 (n. 53 above) 57; Ernoul-Bernard, *Chronique* 15 (n. 55 above) 174–175. See also Jaspert, "Zwei unbekannte Hilfersuchen" (n. 36 above) 506–507.

⁶⁰ Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1187 (n. 31 above) 14.

⁶¹ *Cartulaire Général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers* 754 (n. 57 above) 479–480; Judith Bronstein, *The Hospitallers and the Holy Land: Financing the Latin East, 1187–1274* (Woodbridge 2005) 15.

⁶² Copies of the letter survive in Roger of Howden's *Gesta* (abridged in his later *Chronicle*), as a late twelfth-century addition to an Oxford manuscript (Oxford, St John's College, MS 115), and the *Latin Continuation of William of Tyre*. Gervase of Canterbury includes an abridged version in his chronicle, which is most closely related to the copy in the *Latin Continuation*. Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1187 (n. 31 above) 11–13; Hampe, "Reise nach England" (n. 31 above) 277–280; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrii* II.2 (n. 31 above) 80–82; *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury, Vol. I: The Chronicle of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II., and Richard I., by Gervase, the monk of Canterbury Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Series 73 (London, 1879) sub anno 1187, 373–374 [henceforth Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica*].

⁶³ "lugubri... narratione." The copies of the letter in the Oxford manuscript and the *Latin Continuation* identify the senders as *consules*, but this is omitted by Howden, who refers to them as "citizens" (*cives*) in his introduction to the letter. Hampe, "Reise nach England" (n. 31 above) 279; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrii* II.2 (n. 31 above) 80; Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1187 (n. 31 above) 12.

intermingled with survivors of Hattin. The consuls note the Muslim advance across the Holy Land and mention a particularly worrying rumor: “it was said” (*ferebatur*), they reported, that the citizens of Jerusalem had sent messengers to Saladin to negotiate the surrender of the city.⁶⁴ However, Tyre, Ascalon, Margat, and the territories of Antioch and Tripoli remain safe. Their letter then urges the pope to “convene nations, unite peoples to recover both the Holy of Holies and that most holy land,” i.e. to launch a crusade.⁶⁵ The reference to the “Holy of Holies” here indicates either the relic of the cross or the Temple. If the latter was intended, it seems that the Genoese assumed Jerusalem had been lost—making it the earliest reference to the fall of the city in the west. Such a claim was, however, both unverified and a minority report. In the context of the information received, it was also premature. The letter summarizes the situation before the loss of Ascalon on 5 September. The rumor concerning negotiations for the surrender of Jerusalem seems to refer to discussions instigated by Saladin during the siege of Ascalon and represents the most recent—and most uncertain—information in the letter.⁶⁶

Reports of the tumult in the east reached the papal curia by mid-October, probably in Ferrara, where it had been based since the start of the month.⁶⁷ The news arrived during the final days of Pope Urban’s reign and, indeed, its impact was viewed by many commentators as instrumental in his death on 20 October.⁶⁸ Peter of Blois provides our main evidence for the initial reception of this news. Peter had been present at the curia since June, pursuing a legal case on behalf of Baldwin, archbishop

⁶⁴ Howden’s copy refers to the Syrians “in those parts” and an unnamed city. However, the Oxford manuscript and the *Latin Continuation* refer specifically to Syrians remaining in Jerusalem—and this reading makes sense alongside the absence of Jerusalem from the list of locations still in Christian hands and the possible allusion to the Temple. Hampe, “Reise nach England” (n. 31 above) 279; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrii* II.2 (n. 31 above) 81; Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1187 (n. 31 above) 10, 11.

⁶⁵ Oxford MS and *Continuatio*: “Convenite gentes, coadunate populos et ad recuperanda sancta sanctorum et ad [Oxford MS: recuperandam] terram illam sanctissimam.” Roger of Howden: “Convenite gentes, et adunate populos, et ad recuperanda sancta sanctorum, et ad recuperandum terram illam beatissimam.” Hampe, “Reise nach England” (n. 31 above) 280; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrii* II.2 (n. 31 above) 81; Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1187 (n. 31 above) 12.

⁶⁶ *Lyon Eracles* 49 (n. 53 above) 62–63; *Colbert-Fontainebleau Eracles* XXIII.52–53 (n. 56 above) 79–81; Ernoul-Bernard, *Chronique* 16 (n. 55 above) 185–186.

⁶⁷ Philip Jaffé, *Regesta pontificum Romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post Christum natum MCXCVIII, Vol. II* (Leipzig 1888) 527.

⁶⁸ Gregory VIII’s letter, “Inter divinae,” confirms that this news was received during Urban’s reign. William of Newburgh notes that messengers arrived with the news at the curia around 18 October, although he also states, incorrectly, that Urban had died shortly before this. Gregory VIII, “Inter divinae,” *Petri Cellensis... Carnotensis episcopi opera omnia. Accedunt Urbani III, Gregorii VIII, romanorum pontificum, epistolae et privilegia*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 202 (Paris 1855) 1537; JL 16014; *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I, Vol. I: Containing the first four books of the Historia rerum Anglicarum of William of Newburgh*, ed. Richard Howlett, *Rolls Series* 82 (London 1884) III.21, 266–267; Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1187 (n. 31 above) 14; Roger of Howden, *Chronica* sub anno 1187 (n. 43 above) 322; “Roberti Autissiodorensis chronicon,” ed. O. Holder-Egger, [*Ex rerum Francogallicarum scriptoribus. Ex historiis auctorum Flandrensium Francogallica lingua scriptis. Supplementum tomi XXIV*], *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 26 (Hanover 1882) sub anno 1187, 252; Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica* sub anno 1187 (n. 62 above) 388; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrii* II.2 (n. 31 above) 82; *Lyon Eracles* 42, 74 (n. 53 above) 54–55, 83–84; “Willelmi chronica Andrensis,” ed. J. Heller, [*Annales aevi Suevici (Supplementa tomorum XVI et XVII). Gesta saec. XII. XIII. (Supplementa tomorum XX–XXIII)*], *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 24 (Hanover 1879) sub anno 1187, 718; Cartellieri, *Philipp II* (n. 42 above) 266–268.

of Canterbury, against the Canterbury monks.⁶⁹ He sent a report, an *actio*, to Henry II (no. 12) soon after the news broke and before Urban's death, which summarized both the disaster in the east and the immediate responses to it.⁷⁰ Peter opens by stating that he has heard how Jerusalem has been destroyed, and that the cross and the king have been captured. His reference to Jerusalem seems to refer to the kingdom rather than the city since he subsequently notes that all the cities and strongholds have been taken, save Ascalon and Tripoli, and that the ability of Jerusalem to withstand attack is in doubt. He also reports the reactions of the first western audiences to hear the news: William II of Sicily put on a hair shirt and wept for four days in seclusion, while the cardinals cast aside luxuries and vowed both to preach and to join the crusade. The reference to William indicates that Archbishop Joscius was among the first to bring news of the disaster to the curia and confirms the emphasis placed on his mission in the Old French continuations of William of Tyre and the *Itinerary of the Pilgrims and the Deeds of King Richard*.⁷¹ However, Peter's reference to the safety of Ascalon and Tripoli, as well as his doubts about Jerusalem, suggests that the letter from the Genoese had also arrived.⁷²

It seems that news of Hattin and the subsequent Muslim advance took between one and three months to cross from east to west, with news travelling more quickly in autumn than in summer. The effect of this was that reports of the disaster in the east reached the curia *en masse* in and around October 1187. This surge of information from the Holy Land may well reflect normal seasonal patterns in communications across the Mediterranean—the difference here was, perhaps, the severity of this news and the number of reports received. They made it clear that the curia, and Christendom, was in the midst of an unfolding crisis.

THE CALL FOR CRUSADE

The official papal response to the news from the east was to launch a crusade. It is likely that the preparations for this began under Pope Urban and were interrupted only slightly by his death on 20 October. The election of Urban's successor, Gregory VIII, on the following day was intended to minimize disruption—as Gregory himself noted in a letter to the prelates of Germany announcing his appointment.⁷³ On 29 October, just over a week after his election, the new pope issued the encyclical *Audita tremendi*

⁶⁹ Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica* sub anno 1187 (n. 62 above) 356, 366; Richard Southern, "Peter of Blois and the Third Crusade," *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R.H.C. Davis*, ed. Henry Mayr-Harting and R.I. Moore (London 1985) 212.

⁷⁰ Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1187 (n. 31 above) 15. For Peter's relationship to Henry II see John D. Cotts, *The Clerical Dilemma: Peter of Blois and Literate Culture in the Twelfth Century* (Washington DC 2009) 31–38.

⁷¹ Lyon Eracles 42, 72, 74 (n. 53 above) 55, 82, 83–84; Colbert-Fontainebleau Eracles, XXIV.5, 8 (n. 56 above) 111–112, 115; Ernoul-Bernard, *Chronique* 21 (n. 55 above) 244–245, 247–248; *Das Itinerarium Peregrinorum: Eine zeitgenössische englische Chronik zum Dritten Kreuzzug in ursprünglicher Gestalt*, ed. Hans Eberhard Mayer, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Schriften 18 (Stuttgart 1962) §17, 276. This evidence argues against the suggestion of Möhring and Mayer that Joscius brought the news of Jerusalem's capture to the west. Hannes Möhring, *Saladin und der Dritte Kreuzzug: Aiyubidische Strategie und Diplomatie im Vergleich vornehmlich der arabischen mit den lateinischen Quellen* (Wiesbaden 1980) 66; Hans Eberhard Mayer, *Die Kanzlei der lateinischen Könige von Jerusalem, Vol I* (Hanover 1996) 282–283.

⁷² This information might also have been drawn from the letter to the Hospitallers.

⁷³ Gregory VIII, *Inter divinae* (n. 68 above) 1537.

(no. 13). It formally launched the crusade and represented a swifter and more urgent response by the papacy to any previous crisis in the east.⁷⁴

Audita tremendi is an emotionally raw document that was designed to express the shock and distress of its sender, and to shape the reactions of its audience.⁷⁵ It opens with a statement of catastrophe in the “land of Jerusalem,” followed by a quotation from the Psalms: “*O God, the heathens are come into thy inheritance, they have polluted thy holy temple: they have made Jerusalem as a place to keep fruit; [they have given] the flesh of thy saints for the beasts of the earth, and as meat for the fowls of the air (Ps 78:1–2).*”⁷⁶ The text then briefly summarizes the defeat at Hattin, the loss of the True Cross, and the Muslim seizure of all but a few Christian strongholds. Despite the quotation from the Psalms, it is notable that no mention is made of Jerusalem here, which must reflect the extent of the papacy’s knowledge at this point. The text then situates events in the context of the biblical and more recent past, in particular the loss of Edessa in 1144. Finally, it offers an explanation for these events—the iniquity of the people—and provides a possible remedy: atonement for sin across the whole Christian community and the launching of a new crusade. It was also accompanied by a separate encyclical issued on the same date, which provided details of the penitential fasts that were to be imposed on Christendom for five years.⁷⁷ The faithful were to be left in no doubt as to their expected response to this news.

The issuing of *Audita tremendi* transformed the nature of the news story that had come from the east. Prior to this, information concerning the battle of Hattin and the Muslim advance remained restricted to groups with specific interests in the Holy Land: ecclesiastical and secular rulers active in international politics; the military orders based in the east; and the merchants and traders of the Italian city states who were part of the wider Mediterranean economy. The issuing of *Audita tremendi* changed this. The call for crusade and the accompanying instructions for the fast added new features to the story, which required the mass dissemination of this news and ensured that it would penetrate deeply into society. As an encyclical, this was then distributed to prelates across Europe via the Church’s extensive, transnational communications network. Indeed, the need to disseminate this information as widely as possible led to its immediate reissue or, rather, continuing issue on 30 October and

⁷⁴ See: Thomas Smith, “*Audita tremendi* and the Call for the Third Crusade Reconsidered, 1187–1188,” *Viator* 49.3 (2018); Menache, “Communication Challenge” (n. 16 above) 300–301; Jonathan Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven 2007) 38–39.

⁷⁵ Gregory VIII, *Audita tremendi* (n. 31 above) 1539–1542.

⁷⁶ “*terram Jerusalem...Deus, venerunt gentes in haereditatem tuam, coinquinaverunt templum sanctum tuum: posuerunt Jerusalem in pomorum custodiam: carnes sanctorum, tuorum bestiis terrae, et escas volatilibus caeli etc.*” Ibid. 1539, 1539–1540.

⁷⁷ Gregory supplemented this with an undated decree on dress. Henry of Albano also provided further instructions for clerical dress, behavior, and diet in a letter addressed to the prelates of the Church. Gregory VIII, “*Numquam melius superni*,” *Petri Cellensis...Carnotensis episcopi opera omnia. Accedunt Urbani III, Gregorii VIII, romanorum pontificum, epistolae et privilegia*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 202 (Paris 1855) 1539; Gregory VIII, “*Statuimus, ut clerici*,” *Petri Cellensis...Carnotensis episcopi opera omnia. Accedunt Urbani III, Gregorii VIII, romanorum pontificum, epistolae et privilegia*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 202 (Paris 1855) 1561; JL 16018, 16079; Henry of Albano, “*Publicani et peccatores*,” *Clementis III pontificis Romani epistolae et privilegia...*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 204 (Paris 1855) 247–249.

3 November.⁷⁸ The Church's belief in the efficacy of this communications system is indicated by the letter concerning the fasts, which accompanied *Audita tremendi*. A Lenten fast on Fridays was to be instituted during Advent—which meant that Gregory expected news of the crisis to be disseminated by 29 November, the start of the season in 1187.⁷⁹

News of the ongoing catastrophe in the east and the launch of a new crusade spread throughout Europe during late 1187 and early 1188. Unlike the voyage across the Mediterranean, journey times overland were less affected by seasonal variation, which meant that information continued to flow despite the onset of winter.⁸⁰ The broadcasting of this news combined a perception of it as a public good, in the belief that the disaster was both caused by and impacted upon the spiritual wellbeing of Christendom, and the need to promote active participation in the crusade. While the papacy played a crucial role in both extending the audience of this news and using its ecclesiastical network to transmit this information across Europe, evidence for regional and local dissemination also highlights the part played by secular rulers and, potentially, other groups.

The close, if not always cordial, relationship between the papacy and the Holy Roman Empire meant that the Empire's secular and ecclesiastical elites were particularly well informed about events in the east. According to the *Annals of Marbach*, papal envoys were sent first to Barbarossa's son Henry, king of the Romans, who was in northwestern Italy in late 1187.⁸¹ Around the same time or soon afterwards, the new pope, Gregory, wrote to the prelates of Germany on 27 October. He informed them of Urban's death and his subsequent election, and called on them to promote intervention in the Holy Land following the "calamity in the eastern Church," an oblique reference which seems to assume prior knowledge of the situation.⁸² This was followed by an emotional letter sent to Barbarossa by Henry, cardinal bishop of Albano (no. 16), who had been appointed as papal legate to preach the crusade. His letter announced that the *sanctuarium Domini* had been captured and that the Holy Land lay open to attack. Given the apparent early date of this text and the lack of references to the fall of Jerusalem in a subsequent letter sent by Henry in late 1187 or early 1188, it seems that the *sanctuarium Domini* referred to here is the "reliquary of the Lord," the relic of the True Cross, rather than the Holy Sepulchre. Henry then informed Barbarossa of his appointment and urged the "most Christian emperor" to

⁷⁸ Smith, "Audita tremendi and the Call for the Third Crusade" (n. 74 above).

⁷⁹ Gregory VIII, *Numquam melius superni* (n. 77 above) 1539. See also Henry of Albano, *Publicani et peccatores* (n. 77 above) 248. A slightly more discursive version of *Numquam melius superni* seems to have been reissued at Bologna on 18 November, see Alençon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 15, fol. 144^v; JL 16058.

⁸⁰ See: McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy* (n. 49 above) 445–450; Braudel, *Mediterranean* (n. 45 above) 206–207.

⁸¹ *Annales Marbacenses qui dicuntur*, ed. Herman Bloch, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi 9 (Hanover-Leipzig 1907) sub anno 1187, 58; Karl Friedrich Stumpf-Brentano, *Die Reichskanzler vornehmlich des X., XI. und XII. Jahrhunderts: II. Verzeichniss der Kaiserurkunden* (Innsbruck 1865–1183) nos. 4624–4626, 420.

⁸² "calamitatis Orientalis Ecclesie." Gregory VIII, *Inter divinae* (n. 68 above) 1537–1538.

take action and lead by example.⁸³ This letter was probably delivered by the papal envoys who attended the imperial council at Strasbourg around 1 December. Apparently, the envoys had had to rush to reach the council in time, which suggests that they left Ferrara in early to mid-November—they, therefore, probably also carried a copy of *Audita tremendi* with them.⁸⁴

News of events had certainly reached the empire's heartlands by late November. The evidence from the chronicle at Weingarten suggests that there was a relatively sophisticated internal communications system, within Germany at least. The author of the chronicle notes that the letter sent from the east in July (no. 1), recounting the defeats at both Cresson and Hattin, was publicly proclaimed from around 23 November.⁸⁵ This is supported by the report of Eleazar ben Judah in Mainz, who states that news of Hattin, the fall of Acre, and Saladin's advance towards Jerusalem became known after Sukkot (20–26 September) and before Hanukkah (28 November).⁸⁶ It is possible that this news, and the call for crusade that probably accompanied it, prompted the attack on Jewish homes in Mainz on Friday 27 November—anti-Semitic violence had been associated with previous crusades in Germany.⁸⁷

The dissemination of this news in the kingdoms of France and England, and elsewhere in Europe, is more difficult to trace. The *Chronicle of Hainaut* states that news of the disaster reached France and the lands north of the Alps in the autumn.⁸⁸ According to Gerald of Wales, it was known in Tours around the start of November, when Henry II's heir, Richard, responded to the news by taking the cross from the

⁸³ "imperatorem christianissimum." Walther Holtzmann, "Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte Friedrich Barbarossas," *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für Ältere Deutsche Geschichtskunde* 48 (1930) 412–13; RI IV, 2, 4 n. 3113. Barbarossa may also have been contacted by one of the patriarchs in the east. A letter collection from Hildesheim includes a letter sent from an unidentified patriarch to Frederick Barbarossa between autumn 1187 and March 1188. It asks Frederick to avenge the injury done to Christ in the lands of Jerusalem, but is, otherwise, rather general, lacks a salutation, and carries no echoes of other letters sent by patriarchs at this point. It is either a model letter derived from an original or is inauthentic. *Die Jüngere Hildesheimer Briefsammlung*, ed. Rolf de Kegel, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit 7 (Munich 1995) no. 76, 129–130.

⁸⁴ *Annales Marbacenses* sub anno 1187 (n. 81 above) 58; *Historia peregrinorum* (n. 43 above) 122; Holtzmann, "Quellen und Forschungen" (n. 83 above) 411.

⁸⁵ *Continuationes Weingartenses* (n. 30 above) 475.

⁸⁶ Although the dates assigned by Eleazar to events in the east and his description of them are inaccurate, there seems no reason to query his statement about when this information reached him. "Bericht des Elasar bar Juda," *Hebräische Berichte über die Judenverfolgungen während der Kreuzzüge*, eds A. Neubauer and M. Stern, trans. S. Baer, Quellen zur Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland 2 (Berlin 1892) 215; Eleazar ben Judah, "Emperor Frederick I, 1188," *Church, State, and Jew in the Middle Ages*, trans. Robert Chazan (New York 1980) 119; Robert Chazan, "Emperor Frederick I, the Third Crusade, and the Jews," *Viator* 8 (1977) 86.

⁸⁷ The month is omitted in the manuscript, but the remaining details of Friday 24 in [4]948 indicate Kislev is intended: I am grateful to Dr Shamma Boyarin for confirming this reading. This converts to 27 November 1187, as stated by A. Neubauer *et al.*, but differs from the dates suggested by Robert Chazan. Eleazar ben Judah, "Bericht" (n. 86 above) 215; Eleazar ben Judah, "Emperor Frederick I" (n. 86 above) 119; Chazan, "Emperor Frederick I" (n. 86 above) 87; Robert Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade* (Berkeley 1987) 139. For an overview of anti-Semitic violence and the crusades see Jonathan Riley-Smith, "Christian Violence and the Crusades," *Religious Violence between Christians and Jews: Medieval Roots, Modern Perspectives*, ed. Anna Sapir Abulafia (Houndmills-New York 2002) 3–20.

⁸⁸ The *Chronicle* includes the capture of Jerusalem among this news. Gislebert, *Chronicon Hanoniense* sub anno 1187 (n. 43 above) 553.

city's archbishop.⁸⁹ This is about two to three weeks after Peter of Blois sent his report from the papal curia to Henry II, probably in Normandy, and may record the progress of Peter's messenger.⁹⁰ Word of Richard's crusading vow was also quickly sent to Henry's court and preceded Richard's own arrival there several days later. This was then followed by news of Urban's death soon afterwards.⁹¹

News of Hattin and the crusade had certainly reached King Philip of France by December, when he met with Barbarossa near Carignan on the border of their respective territories during Advent. This meeting may also have been attended by Henry of Albano, but even if he was not present, it seems highly likely that Barbarossa would have mentioned the recent events in the east.⁹² By the end of the month, formal delegations had also reached some of the lesser rulers of Europe: the Christmas court of Knud VI in Odense, Denmark, was interrupted by papal envoys bearing the news.⁹³

It is difficult to analyze the dissemination of this news at lower social levels. Outside Germany there is little evidence for the general communication of events in the east before early 1188. The history compiled by Ralph de Diceto offers a glimpse into the wider circulation of this news by the Templars. Diceto's history includes a revised copy of the letter from Terricus to the Templars (no. 20), which is said to have been sent from "the Templars to all the faithful of Christ." This version of the letter has been shortened and updated, apparently in response to information sent by

⁸⁹ Several commentators suggest that Richard took the cross in late 1187, but only Gerald of Wales assigns it a more specific date in his *De principis instructione*. Gerald of Wales, *Instruction for a Ruler (De Principis Instructione liber)*, ed. and trans. Robert Bartlett, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford 2018) III.5, 586; Giraldus Cambrensis, *Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland*, ed. and trans. A.B. Scott and F.X. Martin, A New History of Ireland Ancillary Publications 3 (Dublin 1978) II.28, 206; Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1187 (n. 31 above) 29; Roger of Howden, *Chronica* sub anno 1187 (n. 43 above) 325; Gislebert, *Chronicon Hanoniense* sub anno 1187 (n. 43 above) 553–554; William of Newburgh, *Historia* III.23 9 (n. 68 above) 271; Ralph de Diceto, "Ymagines historiarum," *Radulfi de Diceto decani Lundeniensi opera historica: The Historical Works of Master Ralph de Diceto, Dean of London, Vol. II*, ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Series 68 (London 1876) sub anno 1187, 50.

⁹⁰ Such a timescale is tight, but possible. Gervase of Canterbury records that letters sent from Verona in March 1187 and the Lateran in March 1188 took 24 and 25 days to reach Otford and Canterbury, respectively, while news of Pope Gregory's death on 17 December 1187 in Pisa reached Canterbury around 18 January 1188. This suggests an average speed of 34 miles per day—and corresponds to the speed of a mounted rider in the later Middle Ages. It would have taken 20 days for Peter's messenger to cover the distance between Ferrara and Tours at this speed. Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica* sub anni 1187, 1188 (n. 62 above) 356–359, 402, 423–424; Geert Berings, "Transport and Communication in the Middle Ages," *Kommunikation und Alltag in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit: Internationaler Kongress, Krems an der Donau, 9. bis 12. Oktober 1990*, ed. Helmut Hundsichler (Vienna 1992) 69–71. Henry was in Caen, Burle-Rois (near Bayeux), and Lyons-la-Forêt during November, and returned to Caen for Christmas. I am grateful to Nicholas Vincent for sharing the revised version of Henry II's itinerary prior to its publication in his forthcoming *Acta of King Henry II*.

⁹¹ William of Newburgh, *Historia* III.23 (n. 68 above) 271; Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica* sub anno 1187 (n. 62 above) 389–390.

⁹² The *Chronicle of Clairvaux* seems to indicate that Henry was present—this is how Alberic of Trois Fontaines interpreted the statement (although he also added Joscius of Tyre to the meeting). An error in the *Patrologia Latina* edition of the *Chronicle of Clairvaux* lists this event under "1187," but this should read "1188": I am grateful to Stefano Mula for sharing the draft of his new edition of the *Chronicle*. Gislebert, *Chronicon Hanoniense* sub anno 1187 (n. 43 above) 554; "Chronicon Clarae Vallense," *S. Bernardi, abbatis primi Clarae-Vallensis, opera omnia*, ed J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 185 (Paris 1879) sub anno 1187, 1251; "Albrici monachi Triumphontium Chronicon," [*Chronica aevi Suevici*], ed. P. Scheffer-Boichorst, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 23 (Hanover 1874) sub anno 1188, 861.

⁹³ "De profectio[n]e Danorum in Hierosolymam," *Scriptores minores historiae Danicae medii aevi, Vol. II*, ed. M.Cl. Gertz (Copenhagen 1918–1920) §§3–4, 463–465.

Aimeric, patriarch of Antioch, in late September or early October (nos. 10–11) and which had reached Henry II's court by early 1188.⁹⁴ The broad audience of this letter suggests that it was intended for general proclamation, presumably in England, given the context of its preservation.

Efforts to disseminate the news in England and France intensified following the decision of Kings Henry and Philip to join the crusade. The rulers agreed to lead a joint expedition, following the preaching of Archbishop Joscius at Gisors in late January 1188.⁹⁵ This agreement included the levying of a special "Saladin tithe" to fund the venture, which was intended, at least in England, to subsidize the participation of poorer pilgrims. With the exception of those going on crusade and some religious orders, all subjects of both kingdoms were expected to contribute. This required the mass communication of both the call for crusade and instructions for the tithe payment. First, the regional secular and ecclesiastical elites were informed. This was done immediately in the Anglo-Norman realm, but less rapidly in France: Henry issued statutes at councils in Le Mans, Maine, in late January and Geddington, England, in mid-February; while Philip summoned a major council at Paris in late March.⁹⁶ The statutes also suggest the ways in which this information was

⁹⁴ "Templares omnibus Christi fidelibus." A sixteenth-century copy of this letter, not Terricus' later letter to Henry (no. 19), as stated by Pryor, can be found in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 6238, fol. 15^v. My analysis builds on Jochen Burgdorf's observation that this letter must have been written later. The three significant variants are: the stated date of the main battle; the Master of the Templars is said to have been captured; and Beirut is omitted from the list of cities in Christian hands. All three details are first found in the letter sent by Aimeric to Christendom (no. 11) and the first two appear in Aimeric's letter to Henry II (no. 10), which was carried by the same messenger. It is possible, but less likely, that these variants come from elsewhere: the date could have been calculated from statements in the letters sent to the Hospitallers (no. 5) and sent by the Genoese (no. 9), while Eraclius' letter to Urban (no. 6) listed Beirut among the captured cities. Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum* sub anno 1187 (n. 89 above) 49, 49–50; RRH 660; Mayer, "Zwei unedierte Texte" (n. 36 above) 102–103; Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anni 1188, 1187 (n. 31 above) 11, 36–38; Roger of Howden, *Chronica* sub anno 1188 (n. 43 above) 340–342; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrri* II.2, 8 (n. 31 above) 80, 88–89; *Historia de expeditione* (n. 30 above) 2; Magnus of Reichersberg, *Chronicon* (n. 30 above) sub anno 1187, 508; Admont, Cod. 25 (n. 30 above) inside front cover; Hampe, "Reise nach England" (n. 31 above) 278; Kedar, "Ein Hilferuf" (n. 36 above) 121; Burgdorf, *Central Convent* (n. 52 above) 75–76.

⁹⁵ Joscius had, perhaps, travelled north to deliver Terricus' letter to Count Philip of Flanders. The *History of the Pilgrims* assumes that Henry of Albano presided, but his presence is not noted elsewhere. Rigord dates the meeting to 13 January, but most other sources date it to 21 or 22 January. Rigord also suggests that the kings took the cross in order to liberate the city of Jerusalem, but this may have been added in hindsight, see below. Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1188 (n. 31 above) 29–30, 58–59; Roger of Howden, *Chronica* sub anno 1187 (n. 43 above) 334–335; Gerald of Wales, *De principis instructione* III.5 (n. 89 above) 586; Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, II.28 (n. 89 above) 208; "De rebus a se gestis, libri III," *Giraldi Cambrensis opera*, Vol. I, ed. J.S. Brewer, Rolls Series 21 (London 1861) II.17, 73; William of Newburgh, *Historia* III.23 (n. 68 above) 272; Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum* sub anno 1187 (n. 89 above) 51; Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica* sub anno 1188 (n. 62 above) 406; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrri* II.11 (n. 31 above) 92; Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon* sub anno 1188 (n. 68 above) 253; *The History of the Holy War: Ambroise's Estoire de la guerre sainte*, Vol. I: Text, ed. Marianne Ailes and Malcolm Barber (Woodbridge 2003) II. 109–159, 2–3; Rigord, "Gesta Philippi Augusti," *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton, historiens de Philippe-Auguste*, Vol. I, ed. H. François Delaborde (Paris 1882) §56, 83; *Historia peregrinorum* (n. 43 above) 143.

⁹⁶ *Councils and Synods, with Other Documents relating to the English Church*, Vol. I Part ii, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke (Oxford 1981) no. 173, 1022–1029; Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1188 (n. 31 above) 30–33; Roger of Howden, *Chronica* sub anno 1188 (n. 43 above) 335–339; Gerald of Wales, *De rebus* II.17 (n. 95 above) 73; William of Newburgh, *Historia* III.23–24 (n. 68 above) 272–275; Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica* sub anno 1188 (n. 62 above) 409–410; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrri* II.12 (n. 31 above) 93; Rigord, *Gesta* 57–59 (n. 95 above) 85–90.

disseminated. In France, payments and, presumably, information flowed through secular networks of lordship.⁹⁷ In the Anglo-Norman realm, ecclesiastical structures were deemed a more effective means of communicating and collecting the tithe. Bishops were instructed to send letters to each parish in their diocese, advising their inhabitants that payments would be due on 3 February 1189. These letters were then to be proclaimed, nationwide, on the 25, 26, and 27 December 1188.⁹⁸ This is a rather generous timescale, and it is evident that news of events in the east, the crusade, and the tithe were widely disseminated in England and Wales before this. Sources indicate that the collection of the tithe in England started soon after its announcement at Geddington, while Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury was dispatched to preach the crusade to the Welsh during March and April 1188—where news of events preceded him.⁹⁹ This is certainly the case in Powys, where Baldwin found that Reiner, bishop of St Asaph, had already recruited volunteers. This slight ecclesiastical *faux pas* indicates that Reiner had received news of the crusade before he received word of the archbishop's visit.¹⁰⁰

Indeed, research into the communication of Hattin and the crusade reveals a clear distinction between the initial spread of news and formal preaching tours relating to the crusade.¹⁰¹ This is demonstrated by the activities of Henry of Albano, the papal legate appointed to preach the crusade in northwestern Europe. Henry remained in the papal court until 11 or 13 November, almost a month after news had first reached the curia and two weeks after the issuing of *Audita tremendi*.¹⁰² The *History of the Pilgrims* suggests that Henry reached Germany in December 1187, by which time the news had already been received at the imperial court and proclaimed throughout the kingdom.¹⁰³ It was probably also widely known in northern France and the Low Countries when he preached there in early 1188.¹⁰⁴ The evidence indicates that Henry was not expected to disseminate this news, but to make sure people acted upon it.

The account of Archbishop Baldwin's preaching tour, written by Gerald of Wales, also implies that news circulated in advance of the archbishop's arrival. Partly, this reflected the need to organize and promote these events. It is likely that Baldwin's

⁹⁷ Rigord, *Gesta* 59 (n. 95 above) 88–90.

⁹⁸ *Councils and Synods* 173 (n. 96 above) 1027.

⁹⁹ For the collection of the tithe, see: Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1188 (n. 31 above) 33; Roger of Howden, *Chronica* sub anno 1188 (n. 43 above) 338; Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica* sub anno 1188 (n. 62 above) 422; Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095–1588* (Chicago 1996) 76. For Baldwin's preaching tour, see Gerald of Wales, *De rebus*, II.17 (n. 95 above) 73; "Itinerarium Kambriae," *Giraldi Cambrensis opera*, Vol. VI, ed. James F. Dimock, Rolls Series 21 (London 1868) 1–152.

¹⁰⁰ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae* II.12 (n. 99 above) 142.

¹⁰¹ For crusade preaching, see: Tyerman, *God's War* (n. 20 above) 383–388; Christoph T. Maier, "Ritual, What Else? Papal Letters, Sermons and the Making of Crusaders," *Journal of Medieval History* 44 (2018) 333–346.

¹⁰² Two sixteenth-century copies of a papal letter issued on 13 November 1187 list the bishop of Albano, incorrectly named as Theobald, among the witnesses. Jaffé, *Regesta pontificum Romanorum* (n. 67 above) 528; *Papsturkunden in Frankreich, Vol. I: Franche-Comté*, ed. Wilhelm Wiederhold, Nachrichten Der Königliche Gesellschaft Der Wissenschaften Zu Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse 1 (Berlin 1906) no. 77, 132–134.

¹⁰³ *Historia peregrinorum* (n. 43 above) 125.

¹⁰⁴ Gislebert, *Chronicon Hanoniense* sub anno 1187 (n. 43 above) 555; "Lamberti Parvi Annales a. 988–1193," [Annales aevi Suevici], ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores 16 (Hanover 1859) sub anno 1188, 649.

meeting with Welsh princes and nobles in New Radnor at the beginning of his tour was intended to arrange or confirm his itinerary.¹⁰⁵ That crowds subsequently greeted the archbishop at the borders of Ceredigion, Môn (Anglesey), and Powys indicates they had advance notice of his arrival and, presumably, his purpose.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, it seems that Gerald of Wales preached to an informed audience at Haverfordwest. Gerald casts himself as a second St Bernard in his ability to persuade the Welsh to join the crusade despite speaking to them only in Latin and French—languages they did not understand.¹⁰⁷ However, the most plausible explanation for Gerald's success lies less with his rhetorical skills and more with the intentions of his audience. They had probably already made the decision to take the cross and were simply waiting for the signal to do so. As Christopher Tyerman has noted, the success of crusade preaching depended on the prior acceptance of its message—which itself required the prior dissemination of news.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the sources suggest that some distance between first learning of a crusade and attending a crusade sermon, i.e. a recruitment event, was expected. This allowed would-be crusaders to consult with their household or lord, to receive permission to join the crusade (if needed), and to discuss the re-allocation of duties in their absence.¹⁰⁹ That Richard the Lionheart omitted these steps was criticized by some commentators. Richard is said to have heard news of Hattin in the evening and then taken the cross the following morning.¹¹⁰ Although he was widely praised for being the first of the western princes to join the crusade, that he did so without consulting his father, Henry II, and, as Roger Wendover notes, “without waiting for the preaching of anyone,” was evidently considered impulsive and unusual.¹¹¹ For most people in late 1187 and early 1188, it seems that hearing news of the crusade and making formal crusade vows were quite separate activities.

NEWS OF THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

However, while news of Hattin and its aftermath continued to circulate in late 1187 and early 1188, it seems that western Europe had yet to hear of the most significant development in the story: the loss of Jerusalem on 2 October. Previously, Cartellieri's argument that this news reached the west by the end of November 1187 has been accepted without question.¹¹² However, there is little evidence to support this. Letters

¹⁰⁵ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae* I.1 (n. 99 above) 13–14; Gerald of Wales, *De rebus* II.17 (n. 95 above) 73–74.

¹⁰⁶ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae* II.2, 7, 12 (n. 99 above) 112–113, 126, 142; Gerald of Wales, *De rebus* II.19 (n. 95 above) 77; Tyerman, *God's War* (n. 20 above) 385.

¹⁰⁷ Gerald of Wales, *De rebus* II.18 (n. 95 above) 74–76; Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae* I.11 (n. 99 above) 82–83.

¹⁰⁸ Tyerman, *God's War* (n. 20 above) 383.

¹⁰⁹ See, for example, Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae* I.4 (n. 99 above) 48–49.

¹¹⁰ William of Newburgh, *Historia* III.23 (n. 68 above) 271.

¹¹¹ “non expectata alicujus praedicatione.” *Liber qui dicitur Flores historiarum ab anno Domini MCLIV annoque Henrici Anglorum regis secundi primo*, *The Flowers of History* by Roger de Wendover, Vol. I, ed. Henry G. Hewlett, Rolls Series 84 (London 1886) sub anno 1187, 143; Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum* sub anno 1187 (n. 89 above) 50. See also Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica* sub anno 1187 (n. 62 above) 389; William of Newburgh, *Historia* III.23 (n. 68 above) 271.

¹¹² Scholars also seem to have drawn on the problematic statement in the *Short History of the Kingdom Jerusalem* that Pope Urban died of sorrow after receiving news of the fall of Jerusalem on 11 November—Urban died on 20 October. Sylvia Schein cites Cartellieri and the letter of Hermenger, provisor of the

sent from or within western Europe in late 1187 or early 1188 either do not mention Jerusalem or make only ambiguous references to its situation. Likewise, accounts of preaching before late March 1188 place emphasis on the cross and make very few references to the city. There also remain four crusade songs which seem to have been composed in the wake of the Muslim advance in 1187 but before the fall of Jerusalem was known.¹¹³ All of this points towards a more extended gap in communications between the arrival of news of Hattin and news that Jerusalem had been taken. This absence in the sources was noted by Sylvia Schein but, because she believed news of the city's capture was already known, was not viewed as meaningful.¹¹⁴ Yet this silence is striking since the loss of the city was keenly felt by Christians. Peter of Blois' tract on the delayed start of the crusade, which was written after March 1188, stated that even the words of Jeremiah (i.e. *Lamentations*) were not sufficient to express his misery at the suffering of the captured city; while a chronicle at Zwettl likened the sorrow felt at the news of the city's fall to that caused by the death of Christ.¹¹⁵ Likewise, in 1197, the Welsh bard Elidir Sais compared his grief at the capture and exile of his patron, Davydd ab Owain, to Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem ten years earlier—the pain of this moment had become a yardstick for emotional trauma.¹¹⁶ Indeed, for some, the loss of Jerusalem became the dominant cultural memory of events in the east in 1187. Yet examining these events through the

Hospitallers, to Duke Leopold of Austria for her statement that news of the fall of Jerusalem arrived in the curia in November 1187. However, she subsequently dates this letter, correctly, to late 1188. Cartellieri, *Philipp II* (n. 42 above) 272–273; “Brevis regni Ierosolymitani historia a. 1099–1188,” [*Annales aevi Suevici*], ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 18 (Hanover 1863) 54; *Papsturkunden für Kirchen im Heiligen Lande* (n. 51 above) 325; Möhring, *Saladin und der Dritte Kreuzzug* (n. 71 above) 66; Mayer, “Zwei unedierte Texte” (n. 36 above) 101; Sylvia Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City: Crusader Jerusalem and the Catholic West (1099–1187)* (Aldershot 2005) 160 n. 5, 161 n. 7; RRH 678.

¹¹³ These songs are: Bertran de Born: *Nostre seingner somonis el mezeis*; Giraut de Borneil's *A l'honor Dieu torn en mon chan* and *Ben deu en bona cort dir*; and *Ierusalem, civitas inclita*. Giraut de Borneil's *A l'honor Dieu torn en mon chan* and *Ben deu en bona cort dir* refer to the vows made by Henry and Philip and the situation in the Holy Land, but, unlike his poems *Era, quan vei reverdezizt* (1191) and *Jois sia comensamens* (1188x1190), they do not mention the loss of the Holy Sepulchre, i.e. Jerusalem. *Jois sia comensamens* refers to the delay of the crusade caused by those who lack heart rather than silver, which suggests a date after the collection of the Saladin Tithe. *Rialto: Repertorio informatizzato dell'antica letteratura trobadorica e occitana* (<http://www.rialto.unina.it/BdT.htm>): Bertran de Born, “Nostre seingner somonis el mezeis”; Giraut de Borneil, “A l'honor Dieu torn en mon chan,” “Ben deu en bona cort dir,” “Era, quan vei reverdezizt,” “Jois sia comensamens” (*Trovatori*, 80.30, 242.6, 242.15, 242.18, 242.41); “Ierusalem, civitas inclita,” *Mittelaltinische Kreuzzuglieder: Texte und Melodien*, ed. Goswin Spreckelmeyer, *Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik* 216 (Göppingen 1987) KL 9, 14–16; Goswin Spreckelmeyer, *Kreuzzuglied des Lateinischen Mittelalters* (Munich 1974) 91–103.

¹¹⁴ Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City* (n. 112 above) 186.

¹¹⁵ Peter refers to the crusading vow made by Barbarossa: he took the cross on 27 March 1188 (see below). Peter of Blois, “Conquestio de dilatione vie Ierosolimitane,” *Tractatus duo: Passio Raginaldi principis Antiochie; Conquestio de dilatione vie Ierosolimitane*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* 194 (Turnhout 2002) 76, 94; “Continuatio Zwetlensis altera a. 1170–1189,” [*Chronica et annales aevi Salicij*], ed. Wilhelm Wattenbach, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 9 (Hanover 1851) sub anno 1187, 543.

¹¹⁶ I am grateful to Dr Bryn Jones for both providing and translating this evidence. Elidir Sais, “Mawl i Dduw a Dafydd ab Owain,” *Gwaith Meilyr Brydydd a'i Ddisgynyddion*, ed J.E. Caerwyn Williams, Peredur I. Lynch and R. Geraint Gruffydd, *Cyfres Beirdd y Tywysogion* 1 (Cardiff 1994) no. 16, ll. 19–28, 336–338. For the context of this see: R.R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales, 1063–1415* (Oxford 2000) 238–239.

perspective of news shows that this was a construct of contemporary historians. From our perspective, the fall of Jerusalem was the big news story of 1188, not 1187.¹¹⁷

The threat to Jerusalem had been known in the west since mid-October when fears for the city were expressed by the Genoese consuls, Peter of Blois, and, more implicitly, by Gregory VIII in *Audita tremendi*. These fears were confirmed by two letters sent in early or mid-September by Eraclius, patriarch of Jerusalem, to Pope Urban and the secular rulers of the west (nos. 6–7), warning them that the siege of the city was imminent.¹¹⁸ In his letter to Urban, Eraclius claimed that Jerusalem could only hold out for six months at most.¹¹⁹ The chances of organizing and sending the required military response within this timeframe were slim, but the suggestion of a prolonged siege offered some element of hope to the curia. It certainly did not imply the reality—that the city would surrender within a fortnight.

The siege began around 20 September and news that it was underway was reported in three letters from the principality of Antioch, each of which emphasized the threat now posed to this territory.¹²⁰ Two of the letters were sent by Aimeric, patriarch of Antioch: one to Henry II (no. 10); the other to a general audience of Christian rulers and the faithful (no. 11).¹²¹ The third letter is an extraordinary missive sent to William II of Sicily, by Bohemond III, Prince of Antioch (no. 14), in which Bohemond offers to resign his principedom in return for aid.¹²² Mayer suggests that it would have taken around ten days for the news to travel between Jerusalem and Antioch—quick, but possible—which suggests a date of composition between the very end of September and mid-October.¹²³ The letters sent by Aimeric and, apparently, Eraclius had reached Henry II and the Angevin court by early 1188. Aimeric's letters were carried by the bishops of Valania and Jabala, who probably also delivered Bohemond's letter to William in Sicily. At least one of these couriers, the bishop of Valania, continued

¹¹⁷ Since most of the chronicles and histories cited seem to have started their year at Christmas or in January, this is also true for most of our writers. Only Rigord and Gislebert of Mons consistently calculated the year differently, according to the Annunciation (25 March) and Easter respectively. *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton, historiens de Philippe-Auguste, Vol. I*, ed. H. François Delaborde (Paris 1882), xviii; W. Prevenier, "Du style de Noël au style de Pâques dans la chancellerie des comtes de Hainaut et dans le 'Chronicon Hanoniense' de Gislebert de Mons (1171–1205)," *Miscellanea Mediaevalia in Memoriam Jan Frederik Niermeyer* (Groningen 1967) 251–254.

¹¹⁸ *Papsturkunden für Kirchen im Heiligen Lande* 149 (n. 51 above) 324–327; Kedar, "Ein Hilferuf" (n. 36 above) 112–122; Jaspert, "Zwei unbekannte Hilfsersuchen" (n. 36 above) 504, 511–516. Full copies of the letter from Eraclius to Urban are also found in: Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg, MS 224, fols. 17^r–18^v; Innsbruck, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Tirol, Cod. 118, 94^r; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 18211, 95^v–96^r; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 28195, fols. 48^v–49^r. I am grateful to Thomas Smith and Georg Strack for drawing my attention to this material.

¹¹⁹ Eraclius' letters both included Ascalon among the list of captured cities, which means that his letter to Urban had not reached the curia by mid-October when Peter of Blois reported the city as safe. This makes Rudolf Hiestand's suggestion that Archbishop Joscius of Tyre carried Eraclius' letter unlikely. *Papsturkunden für Kirchen im Heiligen Lande* 149 (n. 51 above) 325, 326, 327; Kedar, "Ein Hilferuf" (n. 36 above) 121; Jaspert, "Zwei unbekannte Hilfsersuchen" (n. 36 above) 514.

¹²⁰ Ibn Shaddād, *Rare and Excellent History* II.[81] (n. 53 above) 77; Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle*, sub anno 583 [1187–1188] (n. 54 above) 331; Imâd, *Conquête de la Syrie* sub anno 583/1187 [109] (n. 54 above) 97.

¹²¹ Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1188 (n. 31 above) 36–38; Roger of Howden, *Chronica* sub anno 1188 (n. 43 above) 340–342; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrii* II.8 (n. 31 above) 88–89; RRR 664; Mayer, "Zwei unedierte Texte" (n. 36 above) 100–103.

¹²² Rudolf Hiestand, "Antiochia, Sizilien und das Reich am Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts," *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienische Bibliotheken und Archiven* 73 (1993) 115–117.

¹²³ Mayer, "Zwei unedierte Texte" (n. 36 above) 100.

north to the Anglo-Norman court, where he was acknowledged in Henry II's reply. It is possible that Aimeric's couriers also carried the letters sent by Eraclius since Henry's letter is a joint response to both patriarchs as well as Bohemond.¹²⁴ In his letter, Henry assures his correspondents that he will come to their assistance shortly, which indicates it was written after he had taken the cross at Gisors in late January 1188.

Henry's response and other texts issued by him in late January and February indicate that his knowledge of Jerusalem's plight extended no further than the information contained in Aimeric's letter. In his letter to the patriarchs and Bohemond, Henry talks about the Holy Land in general terms and mentions Jerusalem only in reference to the upcoming crusade: "Jerusalem *lift up thy eyes round about, and see: all these are gathered together, they are come to thee...*" (Isa. 60:4–5).¹²⁵ This allusion and its positive tone seem more appropriate for the relief of the city than contemplation of its loss. The ambiguity of this allusion is echoed in another letter sent by Henry, this time to Béla, king of Hungary. The letter is one of three addressed to Barbarossa, Emperor Isaac of Byzantium, and Béla, in which Henry announces his expedition to the east and requests safe passage across their territories. The letters were to be carried by the same courier and seem to have been written around the same time: after Henry made his vow in late January and before Barbarossa took the cross in late March, which goes unmentioned. In the letters to Barbarossa and Isaac, Henry discusses the Holy Land in general terms. However, in the letter to Béla, he refers directly to the "holy city" and asserts his desire to restore "the *mistress of all nations*, which today *sits in sadness*," to its former state. Henry's words echo the Antiphon *Aspice Domine*, which draws on the opening lines of *Lamentations*—a text used by other commentators to express their grief at the loss of the city.¹²⁶ However, that there are no references to Jerusalem in Henry's other two letters makes this more ambiguous. Instead, it seems to reflect Henry's previous allusion to a downcast Jerusalem. It should probably be understood as referring to a city under siege rather

¹²⁴ Kedar suggests that the letter from Eraclius to Urban was carried by Balian of Ibelin when he left Jerusalem with his children and went to Tripoli, and that the letter was then carried by the Bishop of Valania with Aimeric's letters. However, the *Annals of Magdeburg* state that the "bishop of Jerusalem" (*episcopus Ierosolimorum*) sent messengers and letters, which may indicate a separate expedition to the west. Kedar, "Ein Hilferuf" (n. 36 above) 115; "Annales Magdeburgenses a. 1–1188, 1453–1460," [*Annales aevi Suevici*], ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores 16 (Hanover 1859) sub anno 1187, 195.

¹²⁵ "Jerusalem leva in circuitu oculos tuos et vide omnes isti congregati sunt venerunt tibi..." Mayer argues that the tithe was levied after the fall of Jerusalem was known, but he assumes that Henry's reply to Bohemond and the patriarchs, assuring them of his assistance, was written before rather than after he took the cross. Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1188 (n. 31 above) 38–39; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, sub anno 1188 (n. 43 above) 342–343; *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrri* II.13 (n. 31 above) 93–94; Hans Eberhard Mayer, "Henry II of England and the Holy Land," *English Historical Review* 97 (1982) 735–737.

¹²⁶ "Terra Sancta"; "sancta Terra Jerusalem"; "civitas sancta, quae quondam *domina gentium* hodie *sedet in tristitia*...pristinum statum...revertatur" (with the allusions to *Aspice Domine* emphasised). Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum* sub anno 1188 (n. 89 above) 51–4. For example, this same verse (Lam. 1:1) is cited by Peter of Blois, Roger of Howden, and the author of *Libellus de expugnatione Terrae Sanctae* in relation to the loss of Jerusalem: Peter of Blois, *Conquestio* (n. 115 above) 75; Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1187 (n. 31 above) 20; *The Conquest of the Holy Land by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Anonymous Libellus de expugnatione Terrae Sanctae per Saladinum*, ed. and trans. Keagan Brewer and James H. Kane (Abingdon-New York 2019) §24, 208, 210.

than conquered. If so, this corresponds to the lack of any explicit reference to the fall of Jerusalem in the statutes relating to the Saladin Tithe first issued by Henry in late January and in his letter to Pope Clement in early February.¹²⁷ That news of the city's capture had not yet reached Britain by this point is also indicated by the account of Archbishop Baldwin's preaching tour of Wales. The text refers to the defeat at Hattin and the capture of the cross, and cites the indignities suffered by the cross as the reason why Baldwin joined the crusade at Geddington in mid-February and why Gerald, its author, followed suit in early March. No reference is made to the loss of Jerusalem.¹²⁸

The papal curia appears similarly unaware of any major developments in the east in early 1188. The reissue of *Audita tremendi* on 2 January seems more likely to have been prompted by the accession of a new pope, Clement III, on 19 December than the arrival of new information from the Holy Land—certainly, the content of the encyclical remains almost unchanged.¹²⁹ Likewise, Clement's letter on 10 February, exhorting the archbishop of Canterbury and his suffragans to promote the crusade, refers to a city under siege rather than captured: he hoped that God "would look upon and defend his sanctuary, his holy city Jerusalem, and would not suffer it to be defiled by the wicked hands of the infidels."¹³⁰

The main evidence suggesting that the curia knew otherwise consists of two letters, both of which are suspect. The first letter was issued, allegedly, by Gregory VIII on 1 November 1187 (no. 15) and announces the capture of the cross, the king of Jerusalem, and the Holy City, before providing details of the projected crusade. The letter paraphrases and abridges *Audita tremendi* and lacks a salutation. It is also a late witness: it first appears in Nicolaus Reusner's collection of letters concerning the "Turks," published in 1598, and in the *Annals of Alessandria* compiled by Guglielmo Schiavina (d. 1616). Cartellieri, correctly, identified it as a spurious derivative of

¹²⁷ *Councils and Synods* 173 (n. 96 above) 1025–1029; William of Newburgh, *Historia* III.23 (n. 68 above) 272–274; *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I., Vol. II: Epistolae Cantuarienses. The Letters of the Prior and Convent of Christ Church, Canterbury, from A.D. 1187 to A.D. 1190*, ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Series 38 (London 1865) no. 182, 160–162.

¹²⁸ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae* I.1, II.14 (n. 99 above) 13, 14, 151.

¹²⁹ Smith, "Audita tremendi and the Call for the Third Crusade" (n. 74 above). It is Clement's reissue of *Audita tremendi*, rather than *Gravis illa et*, that is referred to under no. 170 in the *Inventaire Raybaud: Papsturkunden für Kirchen im Heiligen Lande* 157 (n. 51 above) 335. Arnold of Lübeck seems to refer to this letter in his *Chronicle of the Slavs* and states that it was sent by Clement in response to news of "the conquest of the church of Jerusalem," i.e. the fall of Jerusalem. However, Arnold's narrative attributes all papal responses to the disaster in 1187 to Clement, which makes this evidence problematic. "Arnoldi abbatis Lubecensis chronica a. 1172–1209," ed. Johannes M. Lappenberg, [*Historici Germaniae saec. XII. IJ*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores 21 (Hanover 1869) IV.6, 169–170.

¹³⁰ "ex alto sanctam civitatem suam tueatur nec eam nefandis manibus impiorum contaminari permittat." An almost identical letter was sent to the archbishop, archdeacon, and provost of Genoa on 27 May, a date by which the capture of Jerusalem seems to have been known. This, and the minor changes made to the reissues of *Audita tremendi*, suggest that the curia was reluctant to make major revisions to stock letters. Clement III, "Quam gravis et horribilis," *Papsturkunden für Kirchen im Heiligen Lande*, ed. Hiestand, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen Philologisch-Historische Klasse 3. Folge, Nr. 136, Vorarbeiten zum Oriens Pontificius 3 (Göttingen 1985) nos. 153, 154, 330–333; Clement III, "Quam gravis et horribilis," *Acta Pontificum Romanorum Inedita III: Urkunden der Päpste vom Jahre c. 590 bis zum Jahre 1197*, ed. J. v. Pflugk-Hartung (Stuttgart, 1886) no. 417, 363–364; JL 16252; Smith, "Audita tremendi and the Call for the Third Crusade" (n. 74 above).

Audita tremendi.¹³¹ However, he accepted the second letter as authentic. This letter was received at the Christmas court of Knud VI (no. 17) and an extract from it is preserved in *De profectione Danorum in Hierosolymam*, an account of Scandinavian participation in the Third Crusade written c.1200. The letter announces the loss of Jerusalem and includes a formal—if rather unusual—salutation from Gregory. It is incomplete and, therefore, undated, but the author of *De profectione* states that it was issued after a council, which refers either to a meeting held in Parma in late November or to that which elected Gregory in October. For Cartellieri, it provided conclusive proof that news of the fall of Jerusalem had reached the curia by the end of November. In contrast, scholars who work on *De profectione* argue that the letter is a fake and a product of the text's author rather than the papacy. The cumulative weight of evidence pushes the balance in favor of the latter camp. The timing of the letter and its general tenor indicates that it is best interpreted as a literary re-imagining of *Audita tremendi*. The author seems to have recreated a document to which he no longer had access.¹³²

The apparent delay in the transmission of news that Jerusalem had fallen may be accounted for by the situation in the Holy Land in late 1187. In theory, the surrender of the city on 2 October occurred just in time for messengers to take advantage of optimal sailing conditions west across the Mediterranean. However, by October, the Muslim seizure of most of the major Christian strongholds in the region must have severely disrupted internal communications networks. This was compounded by the restrictions placed on the movement of Jerusalem's displaced citizens, which further hindered the dissemination of this news. The Old French continuations of William of Tyre state that the Christian survivors of the siege were escorted from Jerusalem under Muslim armed guard, possibly over several weeks. It seems that some of them were taken to Tripoli and Antioch, where they set up camps or continued onwards towards Armenia and Byzantium, while others ended up in Tyre, to endure yet another siege beginning in November. Yet others joined refugees from Ascalon and Gaza in Alexandria, where they were interned until the start of the main shipping season in

¹³¹ Schiavina dates the letter to four days after Gregory's election, incorrectly given as 29 October, which, counting inclusively, matches the date of 1 November on Reusner's version. Philipp Jaffé cites Schiavina but corrects the date of the election and lists this letter under 24 October. Nicolaus Reusner, *Epistolarum Turcicarum variorum et diversorum auctorum, libri V* (Frankfurt am Main 1598) 44–45; *Guillelmini Schiavinae Annales Alexandrini*, ed. V. Ferrerus-Ponzilionus, *Historiae Patriae Monumenta* 11, *Scriptores* 4 (Turin 1863) sub anno 1187, 66–67; JL 16013; Cartellieri, *Philipp II* (n. 42 above) 268–272.

¹³² The letter has also been accepted as authentic by Jaffé, Ursula Schwerin, and the editors of the *Diplomatarium Danicum*. Ane Bysted's recent analysis argues that the extant text may not be authentic but that it was probably based on another letter issued by Gregory VIII rather than *Audita tremendi*. *De profectione Danorum* 3 (n. 93 above) 463–464; JL 16073; RI IV, 4, 4, 3 n.†1538; *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Vol. 22: *Ab anno MCLXVI. usque ad ann. MCCXXV*, ed. Joannes Dominicus Mansi (Venice 1778) 537–538, 670; Cartellieri, *Philipp II* (n. 42 above) 273; *Krøniker fra Valdemarstiden*, trans. Jørgen Olrik (Copenhagen 1900–1901) 128 n.4; Ursula Schwerin, *Die Aufrufe der Päpste zur Befreiung des Heiligen Landes von den Anfängen bis zum Ausgang Innozenz IV: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der kurialen Kreuzzugspropaganda und der päpstlichen Epistolographie* (Berlin 1937) 85, Anh. 10; Hans Midbøe, *Historia de Profectione Danorum in Hierosolymam: En Studie om Verket og Forfatteren* (Oslo 1949) 18–19; Eirik Vandvik, *Om Skriftet De profectione Danorum* (Oslo 1954) 5–9; Karen Skovgaard-Petersen, *A Journey to the Promised Land: Crusading Theology in the Historia de profectione Danorum in Hierosolymam (c.1200)* (Copenhagen 2001) 14, 27–36; Ane L. Bysted, *The Crusade Indulgence: Spiritual Rewards and the Theology of the Crusades, c. 1095–1216* (Leiden 2015) 223–230; *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1. række Bd. 3.i *Diplomer 1170–1199*, ed. C.A. Christensen, Herluf Nielsen, Lauritz Weibull (Copenhagen 1976) no. 144, 225.

March.¹³³ The movement of people and information was also curtailed by the seasonal slowdown on the Mediterranean. After October, many ships were laid up for the winter, which further limited the possibilities for communication.

News of the fall of the city seems to have been brought to the west via an envoy from Antioch and in two letters sent from Tyre in January 1188. The envoy from Antioch, Albert, archbishop of Tarsus, is the named carrier of a general letter from Bohemond addressed to all Christian clergy and people (no. 14). This is a revised version of Bohemond's letter to William (no. 8), and comparison between the two makes the meaning of his inserted comment, "Ascalon and Jerusalem having been captured," clear: the Holy City has fallen. Bohemond then repeats his urgent call for aid.¹³⁴ News of the city's capture may have been brought to Antioch by refugees from Jerusalem in October or November 1187. If so, it seems likely that Bohemond's letter was sent earlier than those from Tyre. However, it is not clear when this message reached the west. The song *Plange, Sion et Iudaea* seems to commemorate Albert's mission and the arrival of this news in Sicily but gives little indication of a date. Albert's movements past this point are also unknown. The preservation of this letter and two copies of the song in Austrian manuscripts led Rudolf Hiestand to suggest that Albert went from Sicily to the German court, but there is little further evidence to support this.¹³⁵

The letters sent from Tyre were addressed to individual rulers and their main purpose was to announce the successful defence of the port city, which had been under siege since November. One of the letters was a news report, an *actio*, sent by Terricus to Henry II (no. 19). It provides a general update on the situation in the Holy Land, but opens with the earliest and most important of events: "You should know that Jerusalem, with the citadel of David, has been surrendered to Saladin." It also notes the arrangements for the custody of the Holy Sepulchre and the Islamic purification of the Temple, which must have been particularly upsetting for its audience.¹³⁶ The other

¹³³ *Lyon Eracles* 59–61 (n. 53 above) 73–5; *Colbert-Fontainebleau Eracles*, XXIII.64, XXIV.1 (n. 56 above) 99–103; Ernoul-Bernard, *Chronique* 19 (n. 55 above) 230–234; Ibn Shaddād, *Rare and Excellent History* II.[82] (n. 53 above) 78; Imād, *Conquête de la Syrie* sub anno 583/1187 [60] (n. 54 above) 49; Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle* sub anno 583 [1187–1188] (n. 54 above) 334; *Itinerarium peregrinorum* 9 (n. 71 above) 264; Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon* sub anno 1187 (n. 68 above) 252.

¹³⁴ "Jerusalem et Ascalone captis." Hiestand, "Antiochia, Sizilien und das Reich" (n. 122 above) 118–119; Chroust, *Tageno, Ansbart und die Historia Peregrinorum* (n. 29 above) 202–203; RRH 663.

¹³⁵ Hiestand takes a different view of this evidence. He argues that Albert carried Bohemond's letter to William and left the east before the fall of Jerusalem was known. When Albert heard this news, he amended Bohemond's second letter to reflect this. Hiestand supports this by arguing that the reference to Jerusalem in *Plange, Sion et Iudaea* refers to the kingdom rather than the city, and that both the poem and Albert's mission predate news of the city's capture. However, the difference between the implied dates of Bohemond's two letters (before and after the fall of Jerusalem) indicate separate journeys and make it more likely that the letter to William was carried by the messengers sent by the patriarch of Antioch, the bishops of Valania and Jabala. Likewise, the argument that Albert revised the second letter in response to news of Jerusalem's fall is problematic: as the bearer of the letter, Albert could have mentioned any change in circumstances orally, making a revision to the text unnecessary. "Plange, Sion et Iudaea," *Mittelaltliche Kreuzzugslieder: Texte und Melodien*, ed. Goswin Spreckelmeyer, Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik 216 (Göppingen 1987) KL KL 12, 20–22; Spreckelmeyer, *Kreuzzugslied* (n. 113 above) 219–227; Rudolf Hiestand, "'Plange, Syon et Iudea'—Historische Aussage und Verfasserfrage," *Mittelaltliches Jahrbuch* 23 (1988) 126–142; Hiestand, "Antiochia, Sizilien und das Reich" (n. 122 above) 70–115.

¹³⁶ "sciatis quod Ierusalem cum arce David reddita est Saladino." Pryor's statement that this letter is preserved in a Paris manuscript is incorrect, see n.94. Pryor, "Two excitaciones" (n. 30 above) 150–151;

letter was addressed to Béla III, king of Hungary, from Conrad of Montferrat and the other victorious defenders of Tyre, including Terricus (no. 18). It summarized the events of the past six months, including the fall of the Holy City, and appealed for the king to send aid by April.¹³⁷ Although neither letter was addressed to general audiences, the news they carried was probably widely disseminated. For example, the route taken by the letter to Henry almost certainly brought the news through France. It may be that the couriers of this letter were the messengers from Outremer, recorded by Rigord, who brought news of Hattin and the subsequent fall of Jerusalem to King Philip before late March 1188—although this could also refer to Archbishop Albert's mission.¹³⁸ Likewise, the letter sent to Béla found an extended audience: it survives in two near-contemporary copies made in Austria, within the borders of Barbarossa's empire.¹³⁹ Further evidence for the reception of this news in the region is provided by the topical song *Heu, voce flebili cogor enarrare*. This recounts events that had "recently" (*nuper*) happened in the Holy Land, including Conrad's successful defence of Tyre, and has been dated to the first half of 1188. Although it may have circulated more widely, it is preserved only in the *Carmina Burana*, a collection of songs copied c.1230 in southern Austria or South Tyrol.¹⁴⁰

The evidence suggests that news of Jerusalem's fall reached northwestern Europe before Easter 1188. Eleazar ben Judah reports that news of the city's capture arrived in Mainz during Lent (2 March–16 April 1188) and prompted calls to kill the Jews among the Christian community.¹⁴¹ This city was also the venue for Barbarossa's

RRH 669. For a suggestion of why Terricus wrote to Henry at this point, see Mayer, "Henry II of England" (n. 125 above) 735–737.

¹³⁷ Chroust, *Tageno, Ansbert und die Historia Peregrinorum* (n. 29 above) 199–201; RRH 676. The continuation of the *Genoese Annals* by Ottobono Scriba suggests that Conrad of Montferrat sent letters and envoys to Barbarossa, the kings of France, England, and Sicily, and the cities of Genoa and Pisa in late 1187, but this probably refers to letters and envoys sent in 1188 or 1189. Conrad's letter to Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury in September 1188 or 1189 is extant and the *Royal Chronicle of Cologne* suggests that a similar letter was received by Barbarossa in 1189. According to the *Life of Saladin*, Conrad of Montferrat also sent a picture of a Muslim horseman defiling the Sepulchre to the west, which reached the German court—this complements a statement made in his letter to Baldwin and probably dates to this time. "Otoboni scribae annales a. 1174–1196," [Annales aevi Suevici], ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 18 (Hanover 1863) sub anno 1187, 102; Ralph de Diceto, *Ymages historiarum* sub anno 1189 (n. 89 above) 60–62; RRR 1260; RI IV, 2, 4 n. 3193; *Chronica regia Coloniensis* sub anno 1189 (n. 50 above) 141; Ibn Shaddād, *Rare and Excellent History*, II.[136–137] (n. 53 above) 125.

¹³⁸ Rigord dates this to 1187, but he calculated the year according to the Annunciation (see n. 117 above), which means that this interaction could have taken place in early 1188. It is also possible that the original exchange concerned Hattin alone and the reference to Jerusalem was added in hindsight. Rigord, *Gesta* 53 (n. 95 above) 81.

¹³⁹ Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 984, fols 29^v–30^r; Admont, Cod. 25 (n. 30 above) inside front cover; Astrid Breith, "Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (ÖNB), Cod. 984," (2014), *Mittelalterliche Handschriften in Österreich* (<https://manuscripta.at>); Jakob Wichner, *Catalogus codicum manu scriptorum Admontensis* (Admont 1888) 29.

¹⁴⁰ "Heu, voce flebili cogor enarrare," *Mittelalterliche Kreuzzuglieder: Texte und Melodien*, ed. Goswin Spreckelmeyer, *Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik* 216 (Göppingen 1987) KL 11, 18–20; Spreckelmeyer, *Kreuzzuglied* (n. 113 above) 238–249; Günter Glauche, *Katalog der lateinischen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München: Die Pergamenthandschriften aus Benediktbeuern Clm 4501–4633* (Wiesbaden 1994) 300–302.

¹⁴¹ Although Eleazar incorrectly dates the fall of Jerusalem after Hanukkah, there is no reason to doubt his statement about when he heard the news. I am grateful to Shamma Boyarin for confirming this reading. The attacks on Jewish property and persons in March recorded by Eleazar may have been a response to the

Easter court, the “Court of Christ,” at which he finally took the cross. The timing of this act is suggestive, but may be only partly related to the arrival of news concerning Jerusalem. The court had been planned well in advance: it was announced by Henry of Albano in late 1187 or early 1188, whose letter displays no knowledge that the city was lost; and it was scheduled on 27 March, the anniversary of Barbarossa’s imperial coronation and a day of personal significance for the emperor.¹⁴² It is probable that he had long intended to take the cross at this event. Such intentions could only have been confirmed by the arrival of fresh news from the Holy Land. Several chronicles refer to the reciting of accounts or letters at the court, one of which seems to have been *Audita tremendi*, but it may have been accompanied by other, more recent messages.¹⁴³ It is notable that the crusade song *Indue cilicium, sedes in pulvere, mater* dwells on the loss of Jerusalem and celebrates Barbarossa’s vow which may suggest that news of the city’s capture arrived around the time of his Easter court or soon after.¹⁴⁴

Further evidence for the arrival of news relating to the fall Jerusalem is hard to find.¹⁴⁵ The lack of more specific evidence is puzzling, considering the significance of this event in cultural memory. It may be that, in hindsight, chroniclers interpreted the citation of Psalm 78 at the opening of *Audita tremendi* as an accurate rather than prophetic summary of events. This and the fact that the defeat at Hattin and the surrender of Jerusalem occurred within a few months of each other in 1187 led them to discuss these events as part of a single narrative and to suggest that news of both reached the west simultaneously. However, the analysis of news texts alongside other contemporary sources indicates that news of these events arrived separately and that

arrival of this news, but this violence might also have been caused by the presence of crusaders in the city and the rising Christian-Jewish tensions that accompanied Easter. Eleazar ben Judah, “Bericht” (n. 86 above) 215, 217–19; Eleazar ben Judah, “Emperor Frederick I” (n. 86 above) 119–122; Chazan, “Emperor Frederick I” (n. 86 above) 88–89.

¹⁴² Henry of Albano, “Ex quo vox illa tuturis,” *Clementis III pontificis Romani epistolae et privilegia...*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 204 (Paris 1855) 249–252 (249); *Historia de expeditione* (n. 30 above) 11–13, 14; RI IV, 2, 4 n. 3143; Johanna Dale, “Inauguration and Political Liturgy in the Hohenstaufen Empire, 1138–1215,” *German History* 34 (2016) 194–197.

¹⁴³ Magnus of Reichersberg, *Chronicon* (n. 30 above) sub anno 1188, 509; *Continuationes Weingartenses* (n. 30 above) 476; “Chronici ab Ottone Frisingensi episcopo conscripti continuatio autore, uti videtur, Ottone Sancti Blasii monacho,” ed. Roger Wilmans, [*Supplementa tomorum I, V, VI, XII. Chronica aevi Suevici*], *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 20 (Hanover 1868) sub anno 1188, 319 [henceforth Otto of St Blasien, *Chronicon*].

¹⁴⁴ “Indue cilicium, sedes in pulvere, mater,” *Mittelalterliche Kreuzzuglieder: Texte und Melodien*, ed. Goswin Spreckelmeyer, *Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik* 216 (Göppingen 1987) KL 15, 27–29; Spreckelmeyer, *Kreuzzuglied* (n. 113 above) 142–153.

¹⁴⁵ The liturgical evidence offers no further insights. The clamor for the Holy Land in London, which was described by Roger of Howden, appears to have been instituted in 1188, possibly as a result of a papal directive—but what exactly prompted its introduction is unclear. Amnon Linder also refers to a Cistercian statute instituting masses for crusaders, which he dates to 1188 or 1189—but both Canivez and Waddell include this under the statutes for 1190. Roger of Howden, *Gesta* sub anno 1188 (n. 31 above) sub anno 1188, 53–54; Roger of Howden, *Chronica* (n. 43 above) sub anno 1188, 359–360; Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City* (n. 112 above) 183–185; M. Cecilia Gaposchkin, *Invisible Weapons: Liturgy and the Making of Crusade Ideology* (Ithaca 2017) 192–199; Amnon Linder, *Raising Arms: Liturgy in the Struggle to Liberate Jerusalem in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout 2003) 8–12, 26, 98; *Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis ab anno 1116 ad annum 1786, Vol. I: Ab anno 1116 ad annum 1220*, ed. Joseph Canivez, *Bibliothèque de la Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique* 9 (Louvain 1933) 1190:16, 122; *Twelfth-Century Statutes from the Cistercian General Chapter: Latin Text with English Notes and Commentary*, ed. Chrysogonus Waddell, *Cîteaux: Commentarii cistercienses Studia et Documenta* 12 (Brecht, 2002) 1190 Prep. Comm. 15, 187.

there was some delay in the transmission of news concerning the fall of Jerusalem. It is also notable that although rumors concerning the threat posed to Jerusalem had circulated in western Europe since mid-October, it seems that ecclesiastical and secular elites waited for formal confirmation, written or oral, that the city had fallen. This suggests both a critical approach to news and a reluctance to accept the unthinkable—the loss of Jerusalem.

NEWS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

This study of the transmission of three related news stories in late 1187 and early 1188 has highlighted the potential and limitations of studying news in the Middle Ages. As always, the evidence is not as abundant and as clear as we might like. Even so, we have been able to identify a number of texts which conveyed news according to a framework of novelty, significance, and immediacy. We have also been able to track the dissemination of this news across Europe and to show how the complex reality of communications on the ground is both hidden and revealed by the sources. This study also allows us to make three general observations about the nature of news in the Middle Ages. These observations relate to the flow of international news, the way in which news was transmitted, and the depth to which news penetrated society.

Firstly, it seems that the flow of international news continued throughout the year. This flow varied, primarily, according to whether news travelled by land or by sea. Communications across land were more constant. Land travel was less adversely affected by seasonal change and the difficulties encountered by travellers relating to route or mode of transport could be overcome more easily. The steady flow of international news over land, regardless of season, is shown well by the case study: here, news of Hattin and the crusade was disseminated across western Europe during late autumn and winter. In contrast, communications by sea tended to follow the annual sailing patterns of maritime transport. During peak sailing periods, voyages were more frequent and journey times were usually shorter, which made the transmission of news easier and more time-efficient. However, the case study also suggests that news was sent by sea outside these periods. It seems that while contemporaries must have been accustomed to annual fluctuations in the volume of news arriving via sea, they didn't expect communications to stop altogether. The case study also indicates that the flow of international news was particularly vulnerable to changing circumstances. In situations where normal lines of communication were disrupted, it became more difficult to transmit news across large distances: individuals and groups had to find new ways to bridge gaps in the network. This, I would argue, is the main reason why news of the fall of Jerusalem took so long to reach the west. By October 1187, political instability and social dislocation in the Holy Land made the transmission of news a slower, more *ad hoc* affair.

Secondly, the evidence indicates that news was an aural phenomenon in the late twelfth century. Most news, particularly at lower social levels and in the countryside, was probably transmitted by word of mouth. Likewise, the practice of reciting letters and proclamations meant that written news reached a listening rather than reading

audience throughout society.¹⁴⁶ Both Latin and French sources refer to the news from the east being heard, and, even in elite circles, it was usually described as reaching the ears, not the eyes, of its audience.¹⁴⁷ The Latin terms used for news from the east in 1187 and 1188 also suggest its aural context. The most common terms are *fama* and *rumor*, followed by *nuntium*—all of which are rooted in oral culture. To an extent, these could be used interchangeably, as they were by William of Newburgh.¹⁴⁸ However, a subtle distinction in meaning is implied by some of the sources. *Nuntium*, derived from *nuntiare* (to announce or make known) and related to *nuntius* (messenger), sometimes has the sense of a reliable or first-hand account. *Fama* and *rumor* tend to refer to news that is widely reported, which draws on their alternative meanings of “rumor” and “common talk,” but in a neutral rather than pejorative sense.¹⁴⁹ The use of the latter two terms also suggests that news of the disaster in the east and the crusade was both widely dispersed and widely discussed.

This brings us to our third observation: the depth to which news penetrated medieval society. The dissemination of news relating to Hattin, Jerusalem, and the Third Crusade demonstrates that international news was not simply the preserve of the elite in this period. Partly this reflects the nature of the case study. In the eyes of the

¹⁴⁶ See: Menache, *Vox Dei* (n. 16 above) 18–21; M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 3rd edn (Oxford 2012) 268–274.

¹⁴⁷ Gregory VIII, *Inter divinae* (n. 68 above) 1537; Gregory VIII, *Audita tremendi* (n. 31 above) 1539; Roger of Howden, *Gesta sub anno 1187* (n. 31 above) 15; Gislebert, *Chronicon Hanoniense* sub anno 1187 (n. 43 above) 553; Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica* sub anno 1187 (n. 62 above) 388; William of Newburgh, *Historia* III.23 (n. 68 above) 273; *Cronica Jocelini de Brakelonda: de rebus gestis Samsonis, Abbatis Monasterii Sancti Edmundi*. The chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond: concerning the acts of Samson, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Edmund, ed. and trans. H. E. Butler (London 1949) 39–40; *Continuationes Weingartenses* [sub anno 1187] (n. 30 above) 475; *Itinerarium peregrinorum* 17 (n. 71 above) 276; Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica* II.28 (n. 89 above) 206; Gerald of Wales, *De principis instructione* III.5 (n. 89 above) 586; Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae* II.14 (n. 99 above) 151; *De profectione Danorum* 4 (n. 93 above) 465; *Lyon Eracles* 74 (n. 53 above) 84; *Colbert-Fontainebleau Eracles*, XXIV.8 (n. 56 above) 115, 116; Ernoul-Bernard, *Chronique* 21 (n. 55 above) 248.

¹⁴⁸ The letter from the Genoese and *De profectione* also use the terms *narratio* and *novitas* in the sense of news or report. *Continuatio Guilelmi Tyrri* II.2 (n. 31 above) 80; Hampe, “Reise nach England” (n. 31 above) 278; Roger of Howden, *Gesta sub anno 1187* (n. 31 above) 11; Clement III, *Quam gravis et horribilis*, ed. Hiestand, 153 (n. 130 above) 330; Gerald of Wales, *De principis instructione* III.5 (n. 89 above) 586; *Epistolae Cantuarienses* 182 (n. 127 above) 160; Gislebert, *Chronicon Hanoniense* sub anno 1187 (n. 43 above) 553; Jocelin of Brakelond, *Cronica* (n. 147 above) 39–40; William of Andres, *Chronica* sub anno 1187 (n. 68 above) 718, 719; *Historia peregrinorum* (n. 43 above) 122, 124; Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica*, sub anno 1187 (n. 62 above) 388, 389; *De profectione Danorum* 2–4 (n. 93 above) 462–465; Otto of St Blasien, *Chronicon* sub anno 1188 (n. 143 above) 319; William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum* III.21, 23 (n. 68 above) 266, 271, 273; *Itinerarium peregrinorum* 17 (n. 71 above) 276; Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica* II.28 (n. 89 above) 206. Old French uses variants of only one term, *noveles*: *Lyon Eracles* 72, 74 (n. 53 above) 82, 84; *Colbert-Fontainebleau Eracles*, XXIV.5, 8 (n. 56 above) 111, 115–116; Ernoul and Bernard, *Chronique* 21 (n. 55 above) 244, 248.

¹⁴⁹ Menache argued that commentators on earlier crusades distinguished clearly between news and rumor, but the difference is less marked here. The distinction highlighted above seems similar to that in Greek terminology, as noted by Lewis, which placed emphasis on the source of news rather than its veracity. Menache, “Communication Challenge” (n. 16 above) 303–304; Lewis, *News and Society* (n. 1 above) 4. For discussions of the terms *fama* and *rumor* see: Marie-Céline Isaïa, “Rumor as nos magnum pervenit: Information et circulation des nouvelles aux origines du royaume franc,” *La rumeur au Moyen Âge: Du mépris à la manipulation (V^e–XV^e siècle)*, ed. Maité Billoré and Myriam Soria (Rennes 2011) 103–117; Jean-Pierre Néraudau, “La fama dans la Rome antique,” *Médiévales* 24 (1993) 27–34; Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail, “Introduction,” *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe*, ed. Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail (Ithaca 2003) 1–11.

Church, every Christian was both affected by and implicated in the loss of the True Cross and the fall of Jerusalem. To avert further spiritual disaster, mass penitence in the form of individual prayers, fasting, and contributions to a new crusade was required. This was a message that needed to be disseminated from the highest to the lowest levels of society, from the papal curia to provinces, dioceses, and parishes. News of events was also broadcast by secular rulers as part of the mobilization of men and resources for the crusade. The many thousands who responded by either taking the cross or contributing, mostly in England, to the Saladin Tithe provides evidence of the mass communication of this news.¹⁵⁰ Most importantly, though, is the fact that this news was disruptive. The calls for penitence and the crusade meant that events in the east in late 1187 had a tangible impact on the lives of those in the west. Unfortunately, our extant evidence makes it difficult for us to assess the full extent of this impact. However, we can estimate its range and depth. It seems reasonable to assume that if international or elite events directly affected the life of an individual, then that individual probably knew about them.¹⁵¹

This case study shows that there is much to be gained from the study of news in the Middle Ages. By focusing on news texts and contemporary communications, we can investigate how groups and individuals responded to situations as they unfolded. This places us in the midst of the action and allows us to appreciate more fully the context of knowledge in which contemporary decisions were made. This approach also reveals the disparities between the reception of events at the time and their subsequent portrayal in historiographical texts—and offers further insights into the ways in which medieval chroniclers and commentators constructed the past. As with any case study, aspects of the transmission of news relating to Hattin, Jerusalem, and the crusade in 1187 and 1188 are both exceptional and unique. This case study concerns events which had unusually significant and widespread impact, and it took place within the particular historical context of late twelfth-century western Europe. However, it also offers more general insights into the news environment of the twelfth century and the centuries on either side. This was a period in which European society both became more closely integrated and expanded its geographical borders. This promoted more regular and effective systems of international communication, which allowed for the more extensive dissemination of news. We are also fortunate that the increasing production and preservation of written documents in the late twelfth century makes this news environment particularly visible. The news environments of both earlier and later centuries may well have been different—and both require further research. It is likely that the contraction of political, social, and cultural networks in the post-Roman world meant that the circulation of news became more regional. The slimmer source base will, no doubt, also make the investigation of news in this period more difficult. It may be that the analysis of news texts offers more insights into the extent of contemporary news horizons than the regularity and volume of communications. In contrast, the greater range and number of sources available for the study of news in the

¹⁵⁰ See: Tyerman, *God's War* (n. 20 above) 389–399; Tyerman, *England and the Crusades* (n. 99 above) 75–80.

¹⁵¹ As noted by Pettegree, *Invention of News* (n. 5 above) 13.

later Middle Ages should make investigations into the concept and transmission of news easier.

However, this is not simply a call to action for medievalists. The main issue currently facing the historical study of news is the lack of dialogue between medieval scholars and their modern and early modern counterparts. This reflects the different approaches taken to news and communications by these camps, which itself reflects key differences in the source materials available. This article and its proposed framework for the identification of medieval news texts is intended to open this dialogue. It offers a new, broader definition of news that will allow the more effective comparison of news texts across time. This study also highlights other avenues of comparative research, which will, hopefully, prompt further work in these areas—from both medieval scholars and those working on other periods. The study of news in the Middle Ages raises important questions about the concept and communication of news in societies before the dominance of print. It will also help us to identify what, exactly, changed thereafter. Simply put, the future of historical news studies lies in its medieval past.

