
Attitudes Towards the Venetians in the Fourth Crusade: The Western Sources

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Attitudes towards the Venetians in the Fourth Crusade: The Western Sources

THE LAST CENTURY has provided numerous interpretations of the Fourth Crusade's failure to reach its destination. In the ensuing controversies, various culprits have been accused of diverting the holy fervour of Christendom.¹ The majority of those who advance theories of treason load Venice with the weight of responsibility. They have reduced Venetian participation in the crusade to a mercantile exploit and disparaged the Venetians' religious sincerity with slurs of 'un-Christian cupidity'.² Those of us who regard the Venetians with the same sympathetic eye that we turn to others are charged with whitewashing the republic.³

The only satisfactory method for assessing, if not resolving, the controversy is a return to the sources. Reiteration of preconceptions and prejudices will not do. Historians are blessed with a large number of accounts of the Fourth Crusade, each with its own bias, point of view, and subtle

We have not dealt with the Greek sources, which, as one would expect, are bitterly anti-Venetian. Nicetas Choniates is an important source for the attacks upon Constantinople in 1203-4, but he had no knowledge of what went on in the crusading army or in the minds of the Venetians.

- 1 For an analysis of the controversies and their interpretations, see Donald E. Queller and Susan J. Stratton, 'A Century of Controversy on the Fourth Crusade', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, vi (1969), 235-77.
- 2 C. H. C. Pirie-Gordon, *Innocent the Great, an Essay on His Life and Times* (London, 1905), p. 64. Other examples of anti-Venetian sentiments are found in Charles Diehl, 'The Fourth Crusade and the Latin Empire', *Cambridge Medieval History*, iv (Cambridge, 1923); A. A. Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire, 324-1453* (2nd Eng. rev. ed.: Oxford and Madison, 1952); Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1954); Donald M. Nicol, 'The Fourth Crusade and the Greek and Latin Empires, 1204-1261', *Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. iv, pt. 1 (Cambridge, 1966).
- 3 E.g., '... perhaps one can suggest that Queller has gone a bit too far in trying to correct treasonous charges leveled at the Venetians in the past.' Jaroslav Folda, *Speculum*, liv (1979), 621; '... one attempt to explain and defend the Venetian role which I find marred by overly ingenuous special pleading in some respects'. John W. Barker, *Catholic Historical Review*, lxxvi (1980), 629; 'Queller makes out the best possible case for the Venetians ...' C. H. Lawrence, *Heythorpe Journal*, xx (1979), 331. All of the above are fair and generous to the book reviewed, but we think the Venetians deserve more sympathetic treatment.

implications. There are often very specific reasons why sources reflect differing opinions of the Republic of St. Mark. Evaluations of their historical credibility illuminate which viewpoints should take precedence and which are less reliable.

PRO-VENETIAN SOURCES

Doge Enrico Dandolo's letter of 1205 to Pope Innocent III presents the original summary and justification of the Fourth Crusade from the Venetian perspective.⁴ Quite understandably, the document contains no criticism of the Venetians: it represents the quintessence of the pro-Venetian stance. After the customary polite formulae, Dandolo asserts that he took the Cross for the service of Jesus Christ and the Holy Roman Church, adding that all efforts of Venice were directed to this purpose.⁵ The Doge claims that as the crusaders approached Zara, bad weather prevented them from moving on, and they decided to winter there.⁶ He justifies the conquest of Zara by the city's long record of enmity and injustice towards the Venetian Republic.⁷ Dandolo admits that he had heard of Innocent's protection of Zara, but he could not believe that it was true.⁸ How could pirates who hide behind the pilgrims' Cross enjoy papal protection?⁹ In spite of these strong reasons, the Doge affirms, the excommunication and sustained censure of Venice were borne 'patiently and with humility'.¹⁰

Dandolo explains the decision to go to Constantinople in terms of the plight of the young Byzantine prince, Alexius, who promised the submission of the Byzantine Church to Rome.¹¹ Only when the Greeks proved treacherous, sought to burn the Venetian fleet, and attacked the crusaders by land, did the Venetians and their allies agree to conquer the city and divide the empire.¹² He recounts the strenuous battle for the city and declares that Constantinople was taken for the glory of God, the Roman

4 In Innocent III, *Epistolae*, VII. 202, ed. J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, CXXV. Also in *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, ed. G. L. Fr. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, (3 vols., Vienna, 1856-57), I. 521-3.

5 '... cum crucem assumpserim pro servitio Jesu Christi et sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae, et transmeandi gratia de Venetiis iter arripuerim ...', *Urkunden*, I. 522

6 '... necessitate temporis hiemalis ingruente oportuit me cum stolio meo et peregrinorum apud Jaderam hiemare ...', *ibid.* He conveniently neglects to mention that the onset of winter and the stop at Zara had been foreseen at Venice in late summer. See Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. Edmond Faral, (2 vols., Paris 1938-9), secs. 62-3, I. 64-6.

7 *Urkunden*, I. 522.

8 *Ibid.*

9 '... sed et aliena invenieant et injuste detineant ...', *ibid.*

10 '... quam patienter et humiliter sustinimus ...', *ibid.*

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Ibid.*

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Church, and all Christianity.¹³ He concludes with a reaffirmed commitment of the Venetian Republic to the papacy.¹⁴

Of course, this is special pleading. The Doge bases every act of the Venetians upon Christian piety but, under the circumstances, he could hardly be expected to mention the commercial interests of Venice. Venetian religious zeal, indeed, should not be underestimated nor Venetian avarice overestimated, relative to the motives of other crusaders. From the beginning, the crusades had offered material as well as spiritual rewards to all: northerners and Italians alike had shown themselves eager for both. The Doge's letter is the work of an advocate, one-sided, but, with the exception of the unplanned stop at Zara, probably honest enough from the Venetian point of view.

A brief narration by the monk of San Giorgio contains a few details on the Fourth Crusade. Although the cleric's name is unknown, we are certain that he was a scribe at the Benedictine abbey of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice.¹⁵ Like most of the sources in Riant's *Exuviae*, the *Translatio corporis beatissimi Pauli martyris de Constantinopoli Venetias* is not an eyewitness account. It was probably written between 1222 and 1223.

The *Translatio* portrays the Republic in generous terms. The author calls the Venetians a 'noble and God-loving people',¹⁶ and Dandolo a good Doge who worked for the glory of Venice.¹⁷ The purpose of the account is to relate the liberation of the body of St. Paul the Martyr from Constantinople; the crusade itself is summarized in a short paragraph at the beginning of the work, and the monk of San Giorgio makes no references to the Venetian excommunication. The *Translatio* examines the Venetian role in the Fourth Crusade in terms of the fame it brought to the abbey, and although this source does present the Venetians favourably, there is nothing unique or noteworthy in its observations.¹⁸

This is not the case with Martino da Canale. Written in Old French between 1267 and 1275, *Les Estoires de Venise* is an unusual work. We

13 '... civitatem Constantinopolitanam ad honorem Dei et sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae et Christianitatis subventionem decrevimus debellandam ...' *ibid.*, I. 523.

14 *Ibid.*

15 Paul Riant, 'Des dépouilles religieuses enlevées à Constantinople au XIII^e siècle', *Memoires de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France*, ser. 4, VI (1875), 123.

16 '... gens nobilissima et Deo devota Veneticorum', *Translatio beatissimi Pauli martyris de Constantinopoli Venetias*, in *Exuviae sacrae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. Paul Riant, (3 vols., Paris, 1877-1904), I. 144.

17 *Ibid.*, I. 141-2.

18 Two other sources concerned with the translation of relics do not discuss the Venetians: Anonymous of Langres (written 1209), *Historia translationem reliquiarum s. Mamantis*, in *Exuviae*, I. 22-34; *Lectiones Longipratenses*, (written 1437), in *Exuviae*, II. 10-22. Another source, written between 1211 and 1214, also fails to treat the Venetian issue: Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum libri VII*, ed. J. M. Lappenber, in *M[onumenta] G[ermaniae] H[istorica]*, *S[criptores]*, XXI. 115-250.

are not sure who da Canale was.¹⁹ His name might suggest that he was a Venetian; and most critics agree that he probably was.²⁰ As for his occupation, current theories are little more than speculation:²¹ Gina Fasoli suspects da Canale may have been an official historian working for the Doge, Ranieri Zeno.²² It is recognized that the chronicler lived outside Venice for a period of time, but the exact location sparks a debate between those who believe he was in the court of Lusignan (Cyprus) and those who do not.²³ Nor does anyone know precisely where da Canale obtained his material on the Fourth Crusade, though some contend that he used a Venetian version of Villehardouin.²⁴ One thing is certain: Martino da Canale relates a highly biased, inaccurate account of the Fourth Crusade, reflecting Venetian popular opinion about the expedition.²⁵

Da Canale insists that Venice entered the crusade 'in the service of Holy Church', a phrase he scatters throughout the chronicle.²⁶ Responding to the envoys' requests, Dandolo set about preparing a fleet which called all of Venice's resources to the effort. To pay the workers for the immediate preparation of a fleet, the Doge issued a new coin, the *quartarolo*.²⁷ The Papal Legate presented the Cross to Dandolo.²⁸ Winter arrived and the fleet, still on its way to the Holy Land, stopped at Zara,²⁹ where the Doge explained that he would attack the city because its inhabitants refused to submit to his domination and were full of pride.³⁰ The Venetians conquered Zara without the host's aid, even though it had been offered to

19 Alberto Limentani, ed., 'Introduction', in Martin da Canale, *Les Estoires de Venise: Cronaca veneziana in lingua francese dalle origini al 1275* (Florence, 1972), p. xxii.

20 *Ibid.*, pp. xxi-xxii, and pp. xxv-xxvi, Gina Fasoli, 'La "Cronique des Veniciens" di Martino da Canale', *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser., II (1961), 44-6; Agostino Pertusi, 'Maistre Martino da Canale, interprete cortese delle crociate e dell' ambiente veneziano del secolo XII', in *Venezia dalla prima crociata alla conquista di Constantinopoli di 1204* (Florence, 1966), pp. 107-9.

21 Limentani, p. xxii.

22 Fasoli, pp. 51-2.

23 *Ibid.*, pp. 44-6; those supporting the Lusignan thesis include Pertusi, pp. 107-9; and Antonio Carile, 'Aspetti della cronachistica veneziana nei secoli XIII et XIV', in Pertusi, *Storiografia veneziana*, p. 84, n.1; and Agostino Pertusi, *La cronachistica veneziana (secoli XII-XVI) di fronte alla spartizione della Romania nel 1204*, with an appendix by P. R.-J. Loenertz (Florence, 1969), pp. 177-8. The view is challenged by Limentani, pp. xxv-xxvi.

24 Limentani, pp. xxxix-xl, lxii; Fasoli, p. 58.

25 Pertusi, 'Martino da Canale', p. 113.

26 '... au service de Sainte Yglise.', da Canale, pt. I, sec. 36, pp. 44-6.

27 *Ibid.*, pt. I, sec. 27, p. 46. See Louise Buenger Robbert, 'Reorganization of the Venetian Coinage by Doge Enrico Dandolo', *Speculum*, XLIX (1974), 48-60; and Donald E. Queller, 'A Note on the Reorganization of the Venetian Coinage by Doge Enrico Dandolo', *Rivista Italiana di Numismatica e Scienze Affini*, LXVII (1975), 167-72.

28 da Canale, pt. I, sec. 37, p. 46.

29 *Ibid.*, pt. I, sec. 42, p. 50.

30 *Ibid.*, pt. I, sec. 39, p. 48.

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them:³¹ Innocent's excommunication is not mentioned. The Pope learned of the attack and sent Alexius to Zara, commanding the crusaders to go to Constantinople and restore the prince to his throne.³² Dandolo convinced the barons that they must obey the wishes of the pontiff,³³ and as they approached Constantinople, the Doge advised the Franks to remain before the land walls while the Venetians attacked the maritime ones. As a result, the Venetians were first to cross into Constantinople and set fire to the city. Seeing the flames from the assault, the Franks suspected that the Republic had allied with the Greeks and betrayed them, but Dandolo set these fears to rest.³⁴ Da Canale writes that, though the Franks were not as accustomed to fighting from flying bridges, they wanted to take part in all attacks so they might claim a share of the spoils.³⁵ The first conquest of the city was achieved by the Venetians.³⁶ After a combined assault which resulted in the second taking of the city, Dandolo humbly refused to be elected Emperor.³⁷

Three points recur in this account: the Venetians did everything possible for the 'Holy Church', following the Pope's command;³⁸ by ordering the restoration of Alexius to the Byzantine throne, Innocent III himself was responsible for diverting the crusade from the Holy Land;³⁹ and the Franks, lacking maritime prowess, were inferior to the Venetians.⁴⁰ What purpose do these views serve? They may indicate da Canale's romantic inclinations to present an epic tale of courtly adventure and heroic characters.⁴¹ *Les Estoires de Venise* might also be a Venetian recognition of the Venetians' guilt in the crusade: as charges against them accumulated, they tried to exculpate themselves.⁴² A third explanation seems to be the most satisfying. It is reasonable that Martino da Canale 'was not able to write a

31 *Ibid.*, pt. 1, sec. 40, p. 48. Roberto Cessi accepts this view that the Franks were not to participate in the attack upon Zara, which was strictly a Venetian undertaking. 'Venezia e la Quarta Crociata', *Archivio veneto*, ser. 5, XLVIII-XLIX (1951), 24, n. 1, and 27; 'L'eredità di Enrico Dandolo', *Archivio veneto*, ser. 5, LXVII (1960), 6, n. 1; 'Politica, economia, religione', in *Storia di Venezia, Vol. II, dalla origini del ducato alla IV crociata* (Venice, n.d.), p. 453.

32 da Canale, pt. 1, sec. 41, pp. 48-50, and sec. 42, p. 50.

33 *Ibid.*, pt. 1, sec. 43, p. 52.

34 *Ibid.*, pt. 1, sec. 46, p. 52, and sec. 47, pp. 52-4. See also Pertusi, 'Martino da Canale', p. 113.

35 da Canale, pt. 1, sec. 51, pp. 56-8.

36 *Ibid.*, pt. 1, sec. 53, pp. 58-60.

37 *Ibid.*, pt. 1, secs. 52-5, pp. 58-62.

38 '... au service de Sainte Ygilse.' *Ibid.*, pt. 1, sec. 36, pp. 44-46, sec. 38, p. 46, and sec. 55, pp. 60-2. See also Giorgio Cracco, *Società e Stato nel Medioevo Veneziano (Secoli XII-XIII)* (Florence, 1967), pp. 273-4.

39 Pertusi, 'Martino da Canale', pp. 116-7.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 117.

41 *Ibid.*, pp. 119-20; Limentani, p. xli; Fasoli, pp. 56-7; Freddy Thiriet, 'Les chroniques vénitienes de la Marcienne et leur importance pour l'histoire de la Romanie gréco-vénitienne', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire: Ecole Française de Rome*, LXVI (1954), 243.

42 Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)* (Philadelphia, 1976), I. 10.

work so full and deliberate . . . without any nexus with the vital problems of his own time'.⁴³ As Fasoli and Cracco suggest, the account might be propaganda for a new crusade against the Genoese, with whom Venice was fighting when da Canale wrote, and the Greeks, who had left Baldwin II without an empire.⁴⁴ The Fourth Crusade would then be a poignant reminder of a past coalition that had achieved great ends. This hypothesis explains not only why the account is so inaccurate, but also why certain themes dominate the work. The various explanations, of course, are not mutually exclusive.

The *Historia ducum Veneticorum*, written in 1229, may have provided da Canale with source material, yet the elaboration of history was strictly da Canale's; the *Historia* did not alter incidents the way *Les Estoires de Venise* later would.⁴⁵ The account narrates how the French barons contracted with Enrico Dandolo to prepare one hundred horse transports (*asirios*) and one hundred transports (*naves*) for five thousand horses and riders and eight thousand foot soldiers, while the Republic would also provide fifty galleys at their own cost. In addition, the Venetians were to provision the army for one year.⁴⁶ The Franks were very pleased with this arrangement. Once the host arrived in Venice, they were graciously received by the people.⁴⁷ The chronicler does not mention plans to attack Zara when he writes that three hundred vessels set sail in October 1202.⁴⁸ Part of the fleet went on to Trieste and to Muggia, where the Doge reasserted Venetian control of the Gulf.⁴⁹

All the ships then sailed to Zara, where the city was devastated due to the inhabitants' rebellions against the Venetians: nothing except churches remained standing.⁵⁰ Philip of Swabia wrote to the Doge and the barons, asking them to restore the Byzantine throne to Alexius.⁵¹ The Franks and Venetians worked together closely during the attacks on Constantinople.⁵² The city was taken with the help of God and divine intervention rightfully

43 Cracco, pp. 276-7.

44 Fasoli, p. 55; Cracco, pp. 280, 283-5.

45 Fasoli, p. 56, 58; Carile, p. 176, contends that the *Cronica Venetiarum* was the source for the *Historia ducum Veneticorum*.

46 *Historia ducum Veneticorum*, MGH, SS., XIV. 92. The treaty of 1201 says four thousand five hundred knights, nine thousand squires and twenty thousand foot soldiers. See *Urkunden*, I. 365; Jean Longnon, *Recherches sur la vie de Geoffrey de Villehardouin, suivies du catalogue des Villehardouin* (Paris, 1939), pp. 179-81; or Jules Tessier, *La quatrième croisade: la diversion sur Zara et Constantinople* (Paris, 1884), pp. 252-4. Thirteen thousand men is in the right range, not for the contract, but for the number actually arriving at Venice.

47 *Historia ducum Veneticorum*, MGH, SS., XIV. 92.

48 *Ibid.*

49 *Ibid.*

50 *Ibid.*

51 *Ibid.*, XIV. 93.

52 *Ibid.*, XIV. 93-4.

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punished the wicked Emperor Mourtzouphlus.⁵³ The *Historia ducum Veneticorum* highlights throughout the justification of Venetian deeds.⁵⁴

Andrea Dandolo wrote his chronicle between 1344 and 1351.⁵⁵ The *Historia ducum Veneticorum* and Martino da Canale certainly supplied Dandolo with information on the Fourth Crusade,⁵⁶ but, as Doge, he also had access to documents and a variety of other sources.⁵⁷ In fact, however, the greater portion of his account is derived from the *Historia* of Paolino (1301-44), who, in turn, drew from the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais.⁵⁸ Comparison of Dandolo's text with Vincent reveals that the chronicle follows the source quite closely,⁵⁹ yet Vincent of Beauvais's version is itself derived from Rigord⁶⁰ and Dandolo's narrative is further removed from this original source.⁶¹ Clearly, Andrea Dandolo wrote a chronicle in which the details had been filtered somewhat.

According to Dandolo, the barons signed a treaty for the transport of 4,500 horses and 8,000 foot soldiers, and the Venetians agreed to prepare fifty galleys of their own and supply the crusade with provisions for a year.⁶² These terms approximately match those outlined in the *Historia ducum Veneticorum*. Similarly, Dandolo tells us that a fleet of three hundred ships departed from Venice in the month of October,⁶³ but there is no reference to the stops at Trieste and Muggia. The rebellious behaviour of the Zarans is cited as reason for the attack on the Dalmatian city,⁶⁴ and once Enrico Dandolo had secured its submission, the vessels set sail again. Alexius promised 300,000 marks to the crusaders for helping him regain the crown, but the Franks and Venetians hesitated before agreeing. Enrico Dandolo played a key role in convincing the barons that the proposal was indeed sound and would aid the crusade.⁶⁵

When describing the first capture of Constantinople, Dandolo does not even distinguish between French and Venetian forces.⁶⁶ The second attack

53 *Ibid.*, xiv. 94.

54 Carile, p. 176.

55 The extended chronicle. E. Pastorello, ed., 'Introduzione', in Andrea Dandolo, *Chronica*, *RIS* 2, xii. xxxvi.

56 *Ibid.*, pp. lxii-lxiii; Auguste Molinier, *Les Sources de l'Histoire de la France des origines aux guerres d'Italie (1494)*, iii (Paris, 1903), 43.

57 Pastorello, p. lxii; Marco Foscarini, *Della Letteratura veneziana* (Venice, 1854), p. 134.

58 Pastorello, pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

59 *Ibid.*, p. lix; Foscarini, p. 134.

60 See Vincent of Beauvais, excerpt of *Speculum historiale*, *MCH*, ss, xxiv. 165.

61 For Rigord, see *infra*, pp. ??.

62 Dandolo, *Chronica*, p. 276. Again, 12,500 men is within the correct range for those arriving at Venice, although way off the contracted figure.

63 *Ibid.*, p. 276.

64 *Ibid.*, p. 277.

65 *Ibid.*

66 *Ibid.*, p. 278.

on the city is also discussed as a battle between Latins and Greeks, not Venetians and Franks against Greeks.⁶⁷ The Doge declined the title of Emperor, nominating Baldwin of Flanders instead,⁶⁸ and Andrea Dandolo notes that the taking of Constantinople punished the wrongdoing that Emperor Manuel Comnenus had brought upon Venice in 1171.⁶⁹ This justified the enterprise as a vehicle of revenge, in which the commercial and political rivalry between Venice and Byzantium was settled in the former's favour.⁷⁰ Dandolo's failure to separate the host and the Venetians as distinct members of the crusade eliminates the possibility that the Republic acted independently or planned something improper to divert the venture; in fact, Enrico Dandolo is portrayed as the one who kept the crusade intact.

The Venetian histories after Andrea Dandolo continued to emphasize the righteous nature of the Fourth Crusade.⁷¹ Lorenzo de Monacis, Chancellor in Crete from 1388 to 1429, wrote a Venetian history covering the years 1204 to 1354.⁷² Using both Andrea Dandolo and Nicetas Choniates as sources for his account, de Monacis justified the outcome of the crusade by explaining that the Greeks had been perjurious, faithless, and treacherous.⁷³ Galeotto Del Carretto, writing in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, also praised the Venetian role in the expedition. A persistent justification of the Fourth Crusade, then, stands out in the Venetian tradition.⁷⁴

Unlike the Venetian accounts, the Old French chronicle of Geoffrey of Villehardouin relates a detailed, first-hand narration of the entire crusade. Written between 1206 and 1207, *La Conquete de Constantinople* is the most reliable source for the Fourth Crusade. As Marshall of Champagne, Villehardouin did more than follow the events from beginning to end: he was a key participant in the debates, decisions, and councils of the high-ranking officials. For this reason, he was able to include exact reports of negotiations and treaties in his account.⁷⁵ The narrative's precision indicates that Villehardouin probably had kept a journal and also may have had copies of official documents.⁷⁶ Comparison with the extant documents

67 *Ibid.*, p. 279.

68 *Ibid.*

69 *Ibid.*

70 Carile, pp. 183-4.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 172.

72 *Ibid.*, pp. 181-2; Thiriet, p. 243.

73 Carile, pp. 181-2.

74 *Ibid.*, p. 184, and 'Famiglia C-Recensione I', pp. 338-9, 361, 325-6, and 'Recensione III', p. 408.

75 See Longnon, pp. 75-6; Natalis de Wailly, ed., 'Eclaircissements', in Villehardouin, *La Conquête de Constantinople* (Paris, 1874), pp. 440-1.

76 Faral, p. xiv; also his 'Geoffrey de Villehardouin: la question de sa sincérité', *Revue Historique*, CLXXVI (1936), p. 546; Paul Rousset, *Histoire des Croisades* (Paris, 1957), p. 206.

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reveals few discrepancies of any significance.⁷⁷ The chronicler's position gave him a knowledge of all that was fundamental to the crusade and, so far as we can tell, he recorded it scrupulously.

Some historians have criticized Villehardouin for his so-called 'official point of view',⁷⁸ believing his account to be no more than an apologia for the crusade and its leaders.⁷⁹ Geoffrey did, of course, see events from the point of view of the leaders but this does not mean that he did not write accurately.⁸⁰ Sir Frank T. Marzials explained that 'there is a ring about him of honesty and sincerity'.⁸¹ Villehardouin is to be praised for his clarity 'and if his work seems slightly deficient in variety and humor, his sobriety nevertheless guarantees in some degree the historical value of the subject matter which has been sifted and sorted'.⁸² Moreover, the Marshall gains credibility when his historical method is analyzed; in addition to the use of documents, Villehardouin frequently remarks that he was an eye-witness to an incident himself as well as stating that other individuals were present to verify his testimony.⁸³ The historical reliability of *La Conquête de Constantinople* is unmatched among contemporary accounts,⁸⁴ and even those who cite Villehardouin as a political apologist agree that his narration is by far the most valuable and coherent version of the crusade.⁸⁵

Villehardouin does not question the good faith of the Venetians in the crusading effort, as several authorities have already pointed out,⁸⁶ and expresses a favourable attitude towards the Venetian Republic in various ways. The maritime skills of Venice are recognized throughout his

77 *Chroniques Greco-Romanes*, ed. Charles Hopf, (Berlin, 1873), p. x; Faral, 'Geoffrey de Villehardouin', p. 546; Longnon, pp. 11-12.

78 E.g., Paul Alphandéry, *La Chrétienté et l'idée de croisade*, completed from the author's notes by Alphonse Dupront, (2 vols., Paris, 1954 and 1959), II, 77, n. 1; Charles M. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West* (Cambridge, MA, 1968), p. 296; Edwin Pears, *The Fall of Constantinople* (London, 1885, and New York, 1886), p. 248; Riant, 'Considérations préliminaires', in *Exuviae*, I, xxvi.

79 Edgar H. McNeal, trans., 'Introduction', in Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople* (New York, 1936), p. 21.

80 See Rousset, pp. 206; Longnon, pp. 79; B. Rava, *Venise dans la littérature française* (Paris, 1916), p. 32, 40-1; M.R.B. Shaw, trans., 'Introduction', in Joinville and Villehardouin: *Chronicles of the Crusades* (Middlesex, 1963), p. 11.

81 Sir Frank T. Marzials, trans., 'Introduction', in *Memoires of the Crusades by Villehardouin and de Joinville* (New York, 1958), p. xxiii.

82 Jeanette M. A. Beer, *Villehardouin: Epic Historian* (Geneva, 1968), p. 116. On the value of the marshal's sobriety and clarity as an historical tool see also Rava, p. 37; Rousset, p. 206; Shaw, p. 15.

83 See Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 174, I, 176, sec. 218, II, 16-18, and sec. 231, II, 32.

84 See Beer, pp. 52-3, n. 1, pp. 64-5; Wailly, p. 434; Rava, p. 30.

85 Louis Bréhier, *L'église et l'orient au Moyen Age: les croisades* (1st ed., Paris, 1906; 6th ed., Paris, 1928), p. 44, n. 1; McNeal, p. 3; Nicol, p. 276; Runciman, III, 483.

86 Faral, pp. xx-xxi; Gabriel Hanotaux, 'Les Vénitiens ont-ils trahi la Chrétienté en 1202?' *Revue Historique*, IV (1877), 77; Marzials, p. 4; Jean Dufournet, *Les écrivains de la Quatrième Croisade: Villehardouin et Clari* (2 vols., Paris, 1973), I, 197-8.

chronicle, as in most other sources: the envoys journeyed to Venice where 'they might expect to find a greater number of vessels than in any other port.'⁸⁷ Upon conclusion of the treaty of 1201, Geoffrey of Villehardouin addressed the Doge and the Venetians, explaining why they had been chosen to join the crusading host: 'And for this end they have elected to come to you, because they know full well that there is none other people having so great powers on the sea, as you and your people'.⁸⁸

He praises highly the Venetian fleet of 1202 saying that it was great enough to accommodate three times as many crusaders as had gathered in Venice.⁸⁹ When the Franks and the Venetians discussed plans to assault Constantinople after the capture of the Tower of Galata in July of 1203, it was decided that the Venetians would attack across the harbour while the French would attack the land wall.⁹⁰ Venetian forces were successful in the attack on the city on 17 July 1203, capturing twenty-five towers⁹¹ but they had to give them up to come to the aid of their allies.⁹² As hostilities progressed in January 1204, the Venetians were responsible for breaking the attack of the Greek fire-ships.⁹³ Villehardouin applauds the Venetians for their effort: 'Never did people help themselves better at sea than the Venetians did that night.'⁹⁴ In April of 1204 another council met to determine a strategy for the second assault on the city: this time the crusaders acknowledged the superior tactics of the Venetians by adopting Dandolo's plan of attack across the harbour.⁹⁵ Villehardouin's assessment of the Venetians' skill in naval affairs, as well as their courageous fighting, underlines his admiration for them, and, as he saw it, Dandolo's men played a crucial role in the endeavours.

The Marshall of Champagne has no doubt about the Venetians' sincere motives in the Fourth Crusade. He frequently stresses the piety of the Doge and the people of St. Mark. Villehardouin's impressions contradict the belief that the Venetians were 'entirely unmoved by the genuine crusading spirit'.⁹⁶ Prior to the closing of the 1201 treaty, Dandolo summoned the Venetians to a mass in which they were to pray for good counsel,⁹⁷ and, upon agreement to the terms, the people '... burst into tears

87 Marzials, p. 4.

88 Marzials, p. 7.

89 Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 56, I. 58.

90 *Ibid.*, sec. 162, I. 162.

91 *Ibid.*, secs. 173-5, I. 174-8.

92 *Ibid.*, sec. 179, I. 180-2.

93 *Ibid.*, secs. 217-18, II. 16-18.

94 *Ibid.*, sec. 218, II. 16-18; Marzials, p. 55

95 *Ibid.*, sec. 239, II. 40.

96 George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. from the 2nd Germ. ed. of 1952 by Joan Hussey with revisions by the author, (New Brunswick, 1956), p. 367.

97 Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 25, I. 26.

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of pity and compassion, and cried with one voice, and lifted up their hands, saying: "We consent, we consent!" Then was there so great a noise and tumult that it seemed as if the earth itself were falling to pieces'.⁹⁸

To seal and validate the pact, the Doge 'knelt greatly weeping and swore on holy relics faithfully to observe the conditions thereof'.⁹⁹ Likewise, Enrico Dandolo's assumption of the Cross, as recounted by Villehardouin, shows the Doge's great compassion and sincerity.¹⁰⁰ Such a display of religious fervor may appear strange to our worldly eyes but the student of the Middle Ages must try to appreciate it rather than denigrating it as ostentatious.¹⁰¹ Villehardouin writes that the crusading host was greatly moved by the spectacle.¹⁰² The Marshal's impressions of Venetian piety even lend some support to Dandolo's self-serving professions: Jean Dufournet notes that religious issues in Villehardouin's account may overshadow its political emphasis.¹⁰³

The Doge is invariably characterized as 'very wise and valiant'.¹⁰⁴ The repetitive use of such terms leads Jeanette Beer and Jean Dufournet to believe that Villehardouin framed Enrico Dandolo in a typical epic-hero mold, like that found in *La Chanson de Roland*.¹⁰⁵ If this is true, it stresses the Marshal's high regard for Dandolo's moral strength.¹⁰⁶ Villehardouin notes how the Doge tried to quell the fighting which broke out between the crusaders and the Venetians at Zara.¹⁰⁷ He describes in colourful terms the Venetian assault across the Golden Horn on 16 July 1203, with the aged and blind Dandolo standing in the prow of his galley grasping the staff of the banner of St. Mark and shouting to his men to put him on shore. He was the first to set foot beneath the walls of Constantinople, where the Venetians captured the twenty-five towers.¹⁰⁸ Just as when he took the Cross,¹⁰⁹ Dandolo proclaimed during this battle that he would live or die with the pilgrims.¹¹⁰ After being crowned Emperor, Baldwin of Flanders 'had no wish to lose the friendship of the Doge of Venice'.¹¹¹ The Doge was

98 *Ibid.*, sec. 28, l. 28.

99 *Ibid.*, sec. 31, l. 32.

100 *Ibid.*, sec. 68, l. 68-70.

101 '... the Doge, and his leading counsellors, ostentatiously took the Cross,' Runciman, p. 115.

102 Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 68, l. 68-70.

103 Dufournet, l. 188-9.

104 E.g., Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 15, l. 18; sec. 25, l. 26; sec. 29, l. 28-30; sec. 30, l. 30; sec. 364, ll. 172.

105 Beer, pp. 48-50; Dufournet, l. 178; Jean Dufournet, 'Villehardouin et les Vénitiens', *L'information littéraire*, xxi (1969), 8.

106 Beer, p. 103.

107 Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 90, l. 90.

108 *Ibid.*, sec. 173, l. 174-6.

109 *Ibid.*, sec. 65, l. 66-8.

110 *Ibid.*, sec. 179, l. 180-2.

111 *Ibid.*, sec. 295, ll. 102; Marzials, p. 77.

also responsible for planning the rescue of the army after Baldwin's capture.¹¹²

Villehardouin writes of Enrico Dandolo that 'he was a great heart. Ah! how little like him were those who went to other ports to escape danger'.¹¹³

Since many did not go directly to Venice, Villehardouin explains that the host was unable to pay the Venetians as promised.¹¹⁴ There was no other alternative but to travel to Zara. Those abandoning the crusade and proceeding directly to Syria were dishonoured and shamed for not keeping their word.¹¹⁵ In Villehardouin's view, 'Those who wished the host be broken up, cared not for reasons good or bad so long as the host fell to pieces. But those who wished to keep the host together, wrought so effectually, with the help of God, that in the end the Venetians made a new covenant to maintain the fleet for a year'.¹¹⁶ Thanks to the new agreement, the crusade remained intact.

The defections are crucial to Villehardouin because he was a knight, trained by feudal custom to regard a breach of faith as a violation of law,¹¹⁷ and keeping one's word was a sign of valour. *La Conquête de Constantinople* remarks that the Venetians fulfilled their part of the 1201 agreement to the letter, and unlike the defectors, Villehardouin suggests then, the Republic made a bargain and kept to it.¹¹⁸ Does he question the right of Venice to claim her share of the spoils? Before the venture, Dandolo had contracted that his people were to receive half of all conquests,¹¹⁹ and the booty was later divided according to this prearranged agreement.¹²⁰ In this respect, both parties were keeping their sworn word, the sealed covenant guaranteeing the Venetians their portion. Failure on the part of the host to respect the contract would entail loss of honour.

Villehardouin makes some references to the number of Venetian crusaders which prove that the Venetian claim to half the conquests was not out of line. Early in his chronicle, he writes that the envoys chartered the Venetians to prepare a fleet for 4500 knights, 9000 squires, and 20,000 foot soldiers.¹²¹ If he is correct that the fleet was three times the size needed for the assembled Franks, we can estimate that there were roughly eleven

112 *Ibid.*, secs. 364-7, II. 172-6.

113 *Ibid.*, sec. 67, I. 68; Marzials, p. 17.

114 *Ibid.*, secs., 50-1, I. 54.

115 *Ibid.*, sec. 103, I. 102-4.

116 *Ibid.*, sec. 199, I. 202; Marzials, p. 50.

117 Shaw, p. 15. See also Longnon, pp. 76, 112-13.

118 And "above measure". Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 57, I. 58-60.

119 *Ibid.*, sec. 23, I. 24.

120 *Ibid.*, sec. 254, II. 58.

121 *Ibid.*, sec. 21, I. 22-4. These figures agree with those outlined in the treaty itself. *Urkunden*, I. 365; Longnon, pp. 179-81; or Tessier, pp. 252-4.

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thousand crusaders waiting to embark from Venice.¹²² Defections along the way reduced this number. After the final siege of Constantinople in April 1204, Villehardouin remarks that a force of 20,000 men was able to overcome 400,000 Greeks.¹²³ In other words, the fighting army was almost equally divided between Franks and Venetians. The Venetians fully deserved their share of the fruits of victory.

Geoffrey of Villehardouin draws a rather complete portrait of the Venetian role in the Fourth Crusade. We are not convinced that he felt 'bound to conceal the conduct of Venice'.¹²⁴ As one of the leaders and as chief negotiator of the treaty with Venice, Villehardouin would have had every reason to fix the blame for the miscarried crusade upon the Republic, for this would have freed him and his group from responsibility. He could have charged Dandolo with violating the agreement in order to profit the Venetians, but he makes no such charge. Only defectors, who broke their word and forfeited the respect a knight commands, prevented the expedition from reaching its destination. In contrast, the Republic of St. Mark fulfilled its promise and Enrico Dandolo worked to keep the crusade going. If Villehardouin is indeed an apologist for the Fourth Crusade, he certainly does not try to exculpate himself by condemning Venice.

Robert of Clari's *Conquête de Constantinople*, another eyewitness account, offers a unique perspective. Unlike Villehardouin and almost all medieval sources, Robert presents a view of the crusade from the ranks of the common soldiers. The events he describes before his arrival in Venice in June or July of 1202 are based on hearsay and are not to be relied upon.¹²⁵ Once Robert arrives on the scene, however, his chronicle is noteworthy for its picturesque, colourful, and spirited narration. A curious and often naive observer, Robert of Clari was removed from the negotiations in which the Marshal of Champagne participated, and he reports what was known or rumoured among the rank and file. To verify his testimony, the poor crusader claims that 'he has made the truth to be put in writing, how it [Constantinople] was conquered'.¹²⁶

He seems, indeed, to have told the truth as he perceived it.¹²⁷ Between

122 For an alternative calculation of the numbers, see Benjamin Hendrickx, 'À propos du nombre des troupes de la quatrième croisade et de l'empereur Baudouin I', *Byzantina*, III (1971), 29-40. We do not find his larger alternative at all convincing. See Donald E. Queller, *The Fourth Crusade* (Pennsylvania, 1977), p. 177, n. 59, which also comments on other estimates.

123 Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 251, II. 54.

124 Pears, p. 268.

125 McNeal, pp. 12-13. See also C. P. Bagley, 'Robert of Clari's "La Conquête de Constantinople"', *Medium Aevum*, XL (1971), 110; C. Klimke, *Die Quellen zur Geschichte des 4. Kreuzzuges* (Breslau, 1875), p. 9.

126 Robert of Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. Philippe Lauer (Paris, 1924), sec. CXX, p. 109; McNeal, p. 128.

127 P. F. Dembowski, *La Chronique de Robert of Clari: Étude de la Langue et du Style* (Toronto, 1963), p. 122.

the summer of 1202 and his return to France early in 1205 Robert's account generally confirms that of Villehardouin, even in details.¹²⁸ Although the knight truly had no head for dates and figures, Robert is recognized as one of the major chroniclers of the crusade, second only to Villehardouin. His account satisfies those who view Geoffrey as an official apologist.¹²⁹ It can be used, however, to check and complement the Marshal's narration.¹³⁰ His role as an undistinguished member of the crusading host, reflecting common opinion, makes his assessment of the Venetians particularly significant.¹³¹

Robert of Clari, like Villehardouin, is amazed by the Venetian fleet, calling it 'the richest navy that ever was seen',¹³² and relates that 'when the pilgrims were all assembled at Venice and saw the rich navy that had been made, the rich ships, the great freighters, the transports to carry the horses, and the galleys, they marveled at it greatly and at the great riches which they found in the city'.¹³³

Similarly, Robert is enchanted by the technical contraptions which the Venetians constructed in the attack on Constantinople, particularly the flying bridges.¹³⁴ The account portrays the Venetians as equal crusading partners, balancing with their naval skill the abilities of the feudal host. During the first attack on Constantinople, 'while the French were drawn up for battle in this way, the Venetians, who were on the sea, did not neglect their part'.¹³⁵

Even more significant than his interest in the Venetians' naval inventiveness is Robert's estimate of the sacrifices which Venice made for the crusade. The Doge commanded that all were to aid in the preparation of the fleet, and 'had his ban cried through all Venice, that no Venetian should be so bold as to engage in any business, but that they should all help to build the navy, and they did so'.¹³⁶ Robert adds that the Venetians suspended all of their commercial activity for a year and a half while

128 See McNeal, pp. 15, 21-2; Faral, p. xxv; Rava, p. 35 for the ways in which the marshal and the Picard knight agree on details.

129 E.g., Anna Maria Nada Patrone, trans., 'Prefazione', Roberto di Clari, *La Conquista di Constantinopoli* (Genoa, 1972), pp. vii-ix; Pears, pp. 249-50.

130 J. LaMonte, review of *The Conquest of Constantinople by Robert of Clari*, by Edgar H. McNeal, *Speculum*, xi (1936), p. 419; Bréhier, p. 144, n. 1; Faral, p. xxv; Dufournet, *Villehardouin et Clari*, II. 206-7; Rava, p. 37.

131 Jean Dufournet noted that Clari's historical method is based on popular opinion, which the knight uses to pass judgment on individuals throughout the crusade. See Dufournet, 'Villehardouin et les Vénitiens', p. 7, and *Villehardouin et Clari*, I. 176.

132 Robert of Clari, *Conquête*, sec. vii, p. 8; McNeal, p. 39.

133 *Ibid.*, sec. x, p. 9; McNeal, p. 39.

134 *Ibid.*, sec. XLIV, pp. 44-5.

135 *Ibid.*, sec. XLVI, p. 47; McNeal, p. 73.

136 *Ibid.*, sec. vii, p. 8; McNeal, p. 38.

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arranging the fleet.¹³⁷ Dandolo also prescribed that one-half of Venice's own men were to join the pilgrims,¹³⁸ conditions which must have put a considerable dent in the Republic's economy. Anti-Venetians can argue, of course, that they may have accepted the sacrifices knowing full well that the benefits outweighed any risks.

Robert of Clari comments extensively upon Venetian treatment of the crusading host. Where anti-Venetian accounts suggest that the Franks were sequestered on the Lido while waiting to depart for the crusade, Robert asserts that when they learned that there were not enough quarters in the city, they themselves decided to camp there.¹³⁹ It is true that this occurred before Robert arrived in Venice, but if his report is indeed hearsay or rumour, we must conclude that Robert related the crusaders' consensus. Had the Venetians held the Franks captive or treated them unfairly, Robert certainly would have picked up the information around the camp. Even in the event that conditions might have improved tremendously by the time he joined the group (and that is unlikely), Robert of Clari would have learned of the change and reported it.¹⁴⁰

The crusaders' plight in fact worsened after Robert appeared. They exhausted their purses in an effort to pay the Venetians the agreed sum for the construction of a fleet much too large for the number which gathered in Venice. As a result, money with which to buy provisions grew scarce. The Doge became impatient and demanded that they pay, threatening to stop supplying them with food and water.¹⁴¹ Clearly, Robert of Clari was not hesitant to express the Doge's anger against his allies,¹⁴² but he goes on to say that Dandolo 'did not cease from having brought to them enough to eat and to drink'.¹⁴³

Robert does not make the Doge's wisdom a consistent theme as Villehardouin does but, of course, he did not know him as well. When discussing the fray between the knights and the Venetians at Zara, Robert of Clari does not mention Dandolo's efforts to end the fighting,¹⁴⁴ yet his

137 *Ibid.*, sec. xi, p. 10. In her manuscript for Kenneth M. Setton's fifth volume of *The Crusades*, which she kindly made available to us, Louise Buenger Robbert shows that suspension of trade was not uncommon among Venetians preparing for crusade. In 1148, Doge Pietro Polani did just that. See Robbert, 'The Venetian Colonies and the Crusades', p. 17; Donald E. Queller, *The Fourth Crusade*, p. 167.

138 Robert of Clari, *Conquête*, sec. xi, p. 9.

139 *Ibid.*, sec. x, p. 9; McNeal, p. 39.

140 Thanks to Steven Polley for his suggestions on this subject.

141 Robert of Clari, *Conquête*, sec. xi, p. 10.

142 Beer, p. 49, n. 1.

143 Robert of Clari, *Conquête*, sec. xi, p. 10; McNeal, p. 40. McNeal notes that there is a problem here translating the old French *laisa*. It can also mean that Dandolo gave them nothing to eat or drink. McNeal's interpretation is certainly correct; had the Doge ceased supplying them, he would, indeed, not be 'a right worthy man'.

144 *Ibid.*, sec. xv, p. 15.

overall respect for the Venetians is heightened when compared with his antipathy towards the leaders of the crusade. He believed that it was Boniface of Montferrat who was anxious to go to Constantinople.¹⁴⁵ Venetian ambition is not mentioned. When choosing electors who were to name an Emperor for the newly-captured city, the Franks conducted a most disorderly selection the chronicler records; and immediately adds a description of the businesslike manner in which the Venetians decided upon their ten electors.¹⁴⁶ He complains that the barons snatched a disproportionate share of the booty, leaving nothing for the poor, common people,¹⁴⁷ and nowhere mentions Venetian greed.

Whereas Villehardouin contrasts the Venetians with those crusaders who abandoned the mission, Robert contrasts them with the great leaders. Contrary to common belief, Robert does indeed have an axe to grind.¹⁴⁸ If, as C. P. Bagley proposes, the account concentrates on the distinctions between 'good' and 'bad' individuals,¹⁴⁹ Dandolo and the Venetians fall into the former category. Since Robert appears to relate the sentiments of the masses, his opinion of the Venetians is crucial. The account is an extraordinarily valuable complement to Villehardouin, since it represents a quite different point of view. It is all the more remarkable that both are highly favourable towards the Venetians.

Among the counts disliked by Robert was Hugh of St. Pol, who, in a letter written in 1203 to Henry, Duke of Louvain, narrates the first sack of Constantinople which occurred in July of that year.¹⁵⁰ Even more than Geoffrey of Villehardouin, Hugh of St. Pol was a leading figure in the Fourth Crusade, positioned among men such as Louis of Blois, Baldwin of Flanders, and Boniface of Montferrat. He was present when all of the major decisions shaping the crusade were made, and his letter, written well before the final capture of Constantinople, naturally does not draw conclusions or make explanations about the failure of the crusade. For this reason, Hugh of St. Pol's brief testimony cannot be reduced to a political apology.

Hugh's impression of the Venetians, therefore, is not loaded with guilt over the abortive nature of the crusade. The letter contains, however, little information about the Republic. He writes that the Doge took part in the council deciding upon the attack which would follow on 16 July.¹⁵¹ The

145 *Ibid.*, sec. xxxix, p. 39.

146 *Ibid.*, sec. xciv, p. 92; Bagley, p. 113. Actually, six electors, not ten. *Urkunden*, I, 446, 450.

147 Robert of Clari, *Conquête*, sec. lxxxI, p. 81.

148 McNeal, p. 21.

149 Bagley, p. 110.

150 In *Urkunden*, I, 304-11; Also in *Rec. Hist. Gaules*, xviii. 517-19; and *Annales Coloniensis maximi*, MGII, ss, xvii. 812-14.

151 *Urkunden*, I, 306.

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Doge is described as a 'most prudent and discrete man',¹⁵² which confirms the impressions of Villehardouin and Robert of Clari. Dandolo's skill in drawing the ships together for an assault on the walls of the city is shown, also in agreement with the Marshall of Champagne's testimony.¹⁵³ The Venetian flying bridges are mentioned as well.¹⁵⁴ Hugh of St. Pol judges the Republic of St. Mark to be an equal partner in the Fourth Crusade, sharing duties and displaying naval skill.

What the count does not say about Venice is as significant as what he discusses. He writes with surprise that none of Constantinople's inhabitants came out to greet Prince Alexius as he arrived with the crusading fleet;¹⁵⁵ as the crusaders thought they were restoring the rightful heir, they assumed that the city's people would welcome him. Thus, he assures us of the just motives of both Franks and Venetians. Also noteworthy is the absence of any reference to Venetian economic interest in Constantinople, and the commercial rivalry with Genoa and Pisa is not mentioned.¹⁵⁶ Hugh of St. Pol has no doubts about Venice's sincerity.

This interpretation is reinforced by a letter from Baldwin of Flanders, Louis of Blois, and Hugh of St. Pol dated April (?) of 1203.¹⁵⁷ The correspondence was a response to Innocent III's displeasure with the attack on Zara and the Venetian failure to repent of the assault on a Christian city. The barons ask Innocent to lift the censure of Venice; the Bishop of Acre, Jean of Noyon, pointed out that excommunicating the Venetians could lead to the dissolution of the entire expedition.¹⁵⁸ What is particularly striking in the letter is the lack of anger towards the Republic of St. Mark. Like Villehardouin, the counts could have blamed Venice in an attempt to establish their own defence, but it is clear that they regarded Venice as an essential collaborator in the crusade. Unless the Venetians were given absolution, the venture was destined to fail, and in the interest of the crusade, Baldwin, Louis, and Hugh were willing to risk their own standing with Innocent III.

In a letter of 1203,¹⁵⁹ Boniface of Montferrat explained to the Pope that he suppressed the bull excommunicating the Venetians in order to prevent the dissolution of the crusade, although he would deliver the document if Innocent insisted.¹⁶⁰ The leader of the crusade excused himself by recalling

152 '... Duce Venetie, viro prudentissimo et discreto', *ibid.*, I. 307.

153 *Ibid.*, I. 308.; Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 170, I. 170-2.

154 *Urkunden*, I. 310.

155 *Ibid.*, I. 304.

156 For a detailed explanation of the mercantile interests of the Italian cities, see Wilhelm von Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant au moyen âge*, (2 vols., Amsterdam, 1959), vol. I.

157 In Innocent III, *Epistolae*, VI. 99, in *PL*, CCXV. Also in *Urkunden*, I. 411-13.

158 *Urkunden*, I. 412-13.

159 Innocent III, *Epistolae*, VI. 100. Also in *Urkunden*, I. 413-14.

160 *Ibid.*

how the pontiff once spoke of circumstances which necessitate concealing many matters.¹⁶¹ Although the letter never praises Venice, it does express the view that Venetian participation was imperative for the crusade's unity.

In 1204, the new Emperor, Baldwin of Flanders, wrote to the Pope about his recent coronation.¹⁶² Here he discusses the battles following the restoration of Alexius to the throne, his own election as emperor, and he mentions that six venerable Venetians were electors.¹⁶³ The letter concludes by noting that the crusaders had found the Venetians faithful and diligent and worthy of being commended to the Pope.¹⁶⁴

Faral suggested that these letters were the source of Rigord's discussion of the Fourth Crusade in the *Gesta Philippi Augusti Francorum Regis*.¹⁶⁵ Actually, this chronicle discusses the Venetians more fully than the letters. The Fourth Crusade is, however, summarized only briefly: the chronicle is devoted principally to Philip Augustus.

Rigord began to write his history in 1186, while practising medicine in the Languedoc region of France.¹⁶⁶ A series of professional misfortunes led him to abandon this career and seek refuge in the abbey of Saint-Denis in 1189, where he resumed full-time work on the project.¹⁶⁷ Rigord's praise of Philip Augustus ended in 1196, when the King, desperate for funds, began extorting money from monasteries. Persuaded by his abbot, Rigord resumed his work in 1201, dedicating the new edition to Louis VII. A final version covered the years through 1207.

Among other things, Rigord relates the memorable deeds of the French barons, the Doge of Venice, his Venetians, and their navy.¹⁶⁸ The account does not mention Zara. Upon departing from Venice, the crusaders learned of Alexius' plight. Seeking to unite the Greek Church with the Roman for the glory of the Pope, they accepted the prince's proposal: in exchange for aid, he would pay the 33,000 marks still owed to Venice and accompany the crusade to the Holy Land.¹⁶⁹ The Franks began the initial attack on Constantinople but were losing miserably; seeing this, the Doge intervened, sending his men to the aid of the host. Dandolo stood in the

161 '... reminiscensque de consilio vestro multa dissimulanda fore loco at tempore...' *Ibid.*

162 Innocent III, *Epistolae*, VII. 152, Also in *Urkunden*, I. 501-11.

163 *Ibid.*, I. 507-8.

164 '... quos fideles ac industrios per cuncta reperimus, paternitati vestrae pro suae probitatis merito plurimum commendamus.' *Ibid.*, I. 511.

165 Faral, p. lxi.

166 François H. Delaborde, ed., 'Notice sur Rigord', in *Oeuvres de Rigord et Guillaume le Breton* (2 vols., Paris, 1885), I. ix-x, xxviii.

167 *Ibid.*, I. ix; M. Guizot, ed., 'Notice sur Rigord', in *Collection des mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France* (Paris, 1825), XI. vii.

168 Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti Francorum Regis*, ed. H. François Delaborde in *Oeuvres de Rigord et Guillaume le Breton*, I. 153.

169 *Ibid.*, I. 154-5.

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proW of the ship, which Rigord found remarkable for a man of the Doge's age and added that Dandolo was full of vigour and courage.¹⁷⁰ The Franks and Venetians worked together, realizing that God favoured the enterprise.¹⁷¹ The chronicle ends with the crowning of Baldwin by the Doge of Venice and 'the other princes'.¹⁷² Rigord then expresses hope for a new crusade that would indeed reach the Holy Land.

Rigord's historical reliability is summarized by the monk's own words: 'I have related those facts which I have seen with my own eyes, and others upon which I have informed myself with care. Those which I had no means of testing, I have omitted'.¹⁷³ Rigord, then, did not write about Zara because he could not verify any account of it. The monk's calculations of the debt owed to Venice closely approximates Villehardouin's figure, and the details of the assault on Constantinople agree with the narrations of the marshal and Robert of Clari, even if the motives are a bit confused. Though not an eyewitness account, this seems to be a credible source.

Rigord's chronicle was continued after his death by Guillaume le Bréton. Unfortunately, Guillaume only summarized the period Rigord had already covered,¹⁷⁴ with one major difference: Zara is discussed. After the pilgrims arrived in Venice and formed an alliance with Dandolo, they sailed to the Hungarian city, where the crusading host sacked and plundered, turning their profits over to the Doge and his people.¹⁷⁵ We can only speculate where Guillaume learned of this.

Kenneth M. Setton notes that just as in Venice, a reinterpretation of historical evidence became prevalent in Morea as well.¹⁷⁶ *The Chronicle of Morea* is related in four different versions: Greek, French, Aragonese, and Italian. The Italian chronicle is a translation of the Greek;¹⁷⁷ the Aragonese incorporates other sources besides an original Morea account; the French and Greek versions may be derived from a common prototype, possibly written in French. This exemplar would have been written between 1327 and 1331.¹⁷⁸ The Greek version, written in 1388, has much

170 *Ibid.*, i. 155-6. This corresponds closely with Geoffrey of Villehardouin's evaluation. See Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, sec. 61, i. 64.

171 *Ibid.*, i. 56-7.

172 *Ibid.*, i. 157.

173 Trans. by Achille Luchaire, *Social France at the Time of Philip Augustus* (New York, 1967), p. 194.

174 Guillaume le Bréton, *Gesta Philippi Augusti*, in Delaborde, *Oeuvres*, i. 211.

175 *Ibid.*

176 Setton, *Papacy and the Levant*, i. 10.

177 Harold E. Lurier, trans., 'Introduction', in *Crusades as Conquerors: the Chronicle of Morea* (New York, 1964), pp. 32, 38, 49, 52; Jean Longnon, ed., 'Introduction', in *Livre de la conquête de la principauté de l'Amorée: Chronique de Morée (1204-1305)* (Paris, 1911), p. lxxv.

178 It is imperative to clear up some confusion before proceeding. Longnon's version of the chronicle is simply a new edition of J. A. Buchon, trans., *Chronique de la conquête de Constantinople* (Paris, 1825). Both are editions of the same source. Lurier's work, however, is not a translation of this French version. It is an English translation of the Greek chronicle.

more detail than the French.¹⁷⁹ The latter was written between 1331 and 1346, probably at the request of Catherine of Valois while she was staying in Morea.¹⁸⁰ The original prototype was once the property of the Venetian Bartolomeo Ghisi,¹⁸¹ although there is little evidence to prove that it was written by an Italian in his native tongue.¹⁸² The chronicler may have been someone serving as an official historian, much as Fasoli thinks Martino da Canale was.¹⁸³

The authors of both versions were devout Catholics thoroughly imbued with feudal values.¹⁸⁴ The French account resembles a *chanson* insofar as it reminisces about the glory of the French and attempts to 'rekindle the warlike vigor'.¹⁸⁵ The Greek version, written by a Frenchman, has a similar purpose: a severe dislike of the Greeks characterizes the work.¹⁸⁶ If Martino da Canale wrote his account to press for a new crusade, the same reason might explain the background of *The Chronicle of Morea*.

How does the chronicle regard Venice? The Doge, 'a wise and very charming man', agreed to go on crusade because of the profit and honour it would bring him.¹⁸⁷ There were not enough men in the French camp to pay the Venetians, and a serious quarrel broke out between them and the Republic.¹⁸⁸ Dandolo became angry, quieted the disagreement and proposed a trip to Zara to solve the matter.¹⁸⁹ Greatly shamed for their failure to honour the Venetian contract, the Franks captured Zara for the Doge and thereby redeemed themselves.¹⁹⁰ The Pope absolved the Venetians and instructed the crusaders to proceed directly to Constantinople.¹⁹¹ The Venetians, grateful for the papal forgiveness and ready to comply with his wishes, decided to accompany the host to Byzantium.¹⁹² During the first siege, the Franks 'were in no way able to damage the city', and it was captured when Venetian ships came to the rescue.¹⁹³ Crusaders and Venetians participated equally during the second assault.¹⁹⁴ As the electors debated the choice of an Emperor, a disagreement erupted over whether

179 Lurier, pp. 35-6; Jean Longnon, *L'Empire Latin de Constantinople et la Principauté de Morée* (Paris, 1949), p. 325.

180 Lurier, pp. 35-6; Longnon, 'Introduction', p. lxxviii.

181 Lurier, p. 49.

182 Longnon, 'Introduction', p. lxvii.

183 Lurier, pp. 55-7.

184 *Ibid.*, p. 54.

185 *Ibid.*, pp. 60-1.

186 *Ibid.*

187 *Chronicle of Morea*, p. 77; *Chronique de Morée*, sec. 15, p. 6.

188 *Chronicle of Morea*, p. 79; *Chronique de Morée*, sec. 21-2, p. 8.

189 *Chronicle of Morea*, p. 79; *Chronique de Morée*, sec. 22, p. 8.

190 *Chronicle of Morea*, p. 79-80; *Chronique de Morée*, sec. 23-4, pp. 8-9.

191 *Chronicle of Morea*, pp. 82-3; *Chronique de Morée*, sec. 34-6, p. 12.

192 *Chronicle of Morea*, p. 83; *Chronique de Morée*, sec. 36, p. 12.

193 *Chronicle of Morea*, p. 83; *Chronique de Morée*, sec. 37-8, p. 12-13.

194 *Chronicle of Morea*, pp. 91-2; *Chronique de Morée*, sec. 56, p. 17.

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the Doge should be selected, but Dandolo intervened, declining offers of the crown.¹⁹⁵

The Greek and French versions agree in their accounts of the Fourth Crusade, possibly suggesting that in both cases a close adaptation of a prototype was made. If the original historian were serving as a government employee and, like the authors of the French and Greek versions, sought to reassert Frankish influence in Morea, he probably favoured Venice for a specific reason. The Republic's role in the crusade hints that its aid should be requested in a future confrontation with the Greeks: *The Chronicle of Morea* could be twisting history for propaganda purposes. Similarities between this account and *Les Estoires de Venise* indicate that they may be works of the same *genre*, and neither is a reliable historical source.

ANTI-VENETIAN SOURCES

An important account displaying a dislike of Venice is the *Gesta Innocentii*, an apologetic biography of the pope. Written about 1208 by a Roman cleric, it may be the product of an attempt to exalt Innocent's good intentions, particularly in the crusading effort. Besides his ecclesiastical career, we know nothing else about the writer, and because of its laudatory character, the *Gesta Innocentii* should be approached with caution. It has a tendency to introduce elements which colour the pope's actions in a becoming hue and attribute a particular foresight to all of his decisions.¹⁹⁶

The *Gesta Innocentii*, however, is not invariably negative towards the Venetians. It states that the Republic of St. Mark responded to papal appeals for support of the crusade and that many Venetians took the Cross.¹⁹⁷ The source praises Venice's maritime adeptness; the fleet prepared by the Republic is called a 'magnificent navy'.¹⁹⁸ But such references say nothing about the Venetians' motives for participating in the crusade.

The cleric first hints at Innocent's feelings about Venice when he writes that Venice was chosen since 'Genoese and Pisans . . . would not accept "the word of peace, because they were not sons of peace"'.¹⁹⁹ Yet this passage is not entirely complimentary, for the Pope did not really choose Venice: it was the only city able to provide for the needs of the mission at that time.

As a mercantile republic, Venice might have benefits (and, no doubt, losses) to draw from the crusade, and the *Gesta Innocentii* implies that

195 *Chronicle of Morea*, pp. 94-5; *Chronique de Morée*, sec. 64, p. 19-20.

196 Faral, 'Geoffrey de Villehardouin', p. 538; Achille Luchaire, *Innocent III: la question d'Orient* (Paris, 1907), pp. 89-94.

197 *Gesta Innocentii* PP. III, in *PL.*, CCXIV. ch. 46, col. 90.

198 *Ibid.*, ch. 85, col. 138.

199 *Ibid.*, ch. 46, col. 91.

Innocent was aware of these advantages. Its discussion of the treaty of 1201 is crucial.²⁰⁰ The account relates that the Pope gave his approval to the contract for transportation, although he was quite suspicious of the Venetians. Because Venice refused to accept the stipulation that no Christian territory could be attacked except for just or necessary cause, and then only with the consent of the Papal Legate, the biographer suggests that the Republic was conniving to assault Christians from the outset.²⁰¹ We believe that the Pope may have issued a verbal prohibition of one sort or another, but we do not believe, as the Roman cleric declares, that it was based on a particular papal distrust of Venice.²⁰² The account's reliability is vitiated by its apologetic character.

We also learn from the *Gesta Innocentii* that the Venetians refused to acknowledge the Papal Legate, although he was allowed to accompany the crusade as a mere preacher.²⁰³ This information agrees with Boniface of Montferrat's letter; the biographer is not fabricating facts. The Venetians' rejection of Peter Capuano is notable, and by defying the Pope, the author suggests, the Venetians showed that they wanted to take the crusade into their own hands.

The papal attitude towards the Venetians can be determined more precisely in Innocent's letters to the crusaders. The correspondence from 1203, like the baron's letter, discusses the attack on Zara. The first letter is a strong reprimand about their conquest and plundering of Zara and their spilling of Zaran blood: the crusaders had refused the Zarans' appeal for papal judgment in the Hungarian dispute with the Venetians; they had assaulted walls from which the inhabitants suspended the sign of the cross; they had attacked the lands of a crusader; and they ignored the Pope's strict prohibition, backed by the sanctions of excommunication and withdrawal of crusading indulgences.²⁰⁴

The second letter of 1203 contains the papal conditions for absolution.²⁰⁵ As in the first correspondence, the Pope emphasizes his disapproval by omitting a formal and polite salutation. Innocent, realizing that the Franks had been forced to conquer Zara by the Venetians, agreed to forgive the host, and in the meantime issued a bull of excommunication against the Venetians. Hugh of St. Pol, Louis of Blois, and Baldwin of

200 See Donald E. Queller, 'Innocent III and the Crusader-Venetian Treaty of 1201', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, xv (1963), 31-4.

201 *Gesta Innocentii PP. III*, ch. 83, col. 131.

202 On the controversy, see Queller, 'Innocent III and the Crusader-Venetian Treaty of 1201', p. 32, n. 8. Consult the entire article for the argument supporting our position.

203 *Gesta Innocentii PP. III*, ch. 85, col. 138.

204 *Urkunden*, I. 407-9. Also in Innocent III, *Epistolae*, v. 161.

205 Innocent III, *Epistolae*, v. 162. Also in *Urkunden*, I. 409-11. See Faral, 'Geoffrey de Villehardouin', p. 543.

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Flanders answered by arguing that this would destroy the crusade.²⁰⁶ Boniface of Montferrat withheld the bull, later telling the Pope why he had done so.²⁰⁷ Responding to the suppression, Innocent furiously demanded its publication.²⁰⁸ When he realized the risk to his crusade, however, he conceded that the Franks could proceed in the company of the Venetians but must maintain as much distance from them as possible.²⁰⁹

On 24 February 1204, Innocent III wrote to Dandolo about the Zaran attack.²¹⁰ The Pope scolds Dandolo for ordering the plunder of a crusader city;²¹¹ explains that the Venetians ignored his warnings about assault on Christian lands; and notes how they rejected his legate. Adding that the Republic had promised to join the enterprise in order to reach the Holy Land, Innocent tells the Doge to keep this in mind and to continue in that direction.²¹² Enrico Dandolo's letter of 1205 was a response to this message.²¹³

The Pope responded to Baldwin of Flanders' letter in November of 1204. Although he did not mention the Venetians, Innocent did congratulate the new Emperor and expressed the hope that all would be done to preserve the new Latin Empire for the sake of the Roman Church.²¹⁴ On 24 January 1205, he wrote to the ecclesiastics in Constantinople, rejoicing in the unification of the Churches.²¹⁵ He was angered, however, by the uncanonical choice by the Venetians of Thomas Morosini for Patriarch, but as Morosini was suitable, he was appointed.²¹⁶ Apparently, the immediate result of the attack on Constantinople pleased the Pope and he was willing to show his forgiveness. Five days after sending this letter, Innocent wrote to Enrico Dandolo absolving him and the Venetians for their past wrongdoings.²¹⁷

It seems farfetched to contend that Innocent's letters reflect the popular opinion of the European population,²¹⁸ but they do illustrate the views of the man who called the crusade together in the first place.

The *Devastatio Constantinopolitana*, written in 1215, is recognized for

206 Supra, p. 17.

207 Supra, pp. 17-18.

208 Innocent III, *Epistolae*, vi. 101, Also in *Urkunden*, i. 415-16.

209 '... ipsius excommunicatio non contiget et excusabiles eritis apud Deum, si, in excommunicatorum navibus existentes, cum dolore cordis sub spe poenitentiae excommunicatis ipsis communicaveritis...' *Urkunden*, i. 418. Also in Innocent III, *Epistolae*, vi. 102.

210 Innocent III, *Epistolae*, vii. 18, Also in *Urkunden*, i. 441-4.

211 *Urkunden*, i. 442-3.

212 *Ibid.*, i. 443-4.

213 Supra, pp. 2-3.

214 Innocent III, *Epistolae*, vii. 153, Also in *Urkunden*, i. 516-17. For Baldwin's letter, see supra, p. 18.

215 Innocent III, *Epistolae*, vii. 203, Also in *Urkunden*, i. 524-8.

216 *Ibid.*, i. 527.

217 Innocent III, *Epistolae*, vii. 208. Also in *Urkunden*, i. 532.

218 Pears, p. 266.

its precision in dating events and recounting the order of incidents.²¹⁹ Most historians agree that it is an eyewitness account by a German or Italian member of Boniface of Montferrat's entourage.²²⁰ M. Kandel concludes, however, that the similarity of the narrative to the information cited in Baldwin of Flanders' letters, and its ecclesiastical outlook, establish the author as a secretary of Baldwin.²²¹ Other evidence suggests that the writer was a notary in Baldwin's camp;²²² everyone finds, in any case, that the *Devastatio* closely resembles a personal diary or journal.²²³

The most frequently discussed passage involves the question of whether Innocent III ordered the choice of Venice,²²⁴ but the debate is based upon a misreading of the *Devastatio*. He did command the Franks to take passage from Venice but this was in 1202, long after the treaty for transportation had been concluded.²²⁵ The account also asserts that the crusaders were thrown out of Venetian homes and sequestered on the Lido,²²⁶ which seems to contradict Robert of Clari.²²⁷ The chronicle does not indicate whether or not the Venetians took the Cross. In the *Devastatio*, the Venetians charge the Franks exorbitant prices for supplies: fifty *soldi* for a *sestarius* of corn.²²⁸ The host's debt to Venice is not mentioned. The usual soldiers' gripes of the crusaders may have contributed to the writer's impression that they were treated like prisoners by the Venetians.²²⁹ On the other hand, eleven thousand men, tired and anxious to go on their crusade, could not be accommodated luxuriously on the island of St. Nicholas.

In Zara, it was the Venetians who 'destroyed its walls, towers, and palaces, and razed the city to the ground'.²³⁰ The *Devastatio* mentions the outbreak of disturbances between the Franks and Venetians in Zara.²³¹ Unlike Villehardouin, the author does not describe Dandolo's attempts to restore peace, although Venetian skill at war, particularly in scaling the walls of Constantinople, is noted.²³² After the coronation of Baldwin of

219 Brand, p. 288; Hopf, p. xiv.

220 E.g., Tessier, pp. 21-5; Bréhier, p. 144, no. 1; Klimke, pp. 62-3; McNeal, p. 3; Alphanhéry, II, 77, n. 1; Faral, 'Introduction', lix.

221 See M. Kandel, 'Quelques observations sur la *Devastatio Constantinopolitana*', *Byzantion*, IV (1927-9), 179-88.

222 This hypothesis was kindly provided by Gerald W. Day.

223 Kandel, p. 182. Also Bréhier, p. 144, n. 1; Tessier, p. 27.

224 *Devastatio Constantinopolitana*, *MGH*, SS, XVI, 10; Hopf, p. 87.

225 See Luchaire, *Innocent III*, pp. 88-9; Edgar H. McNeal and Robert Lee Wolff, 'The Fourth Crusade', in *A History of the Crusades*, ed. Setton, I, 159, n. 17; Queller, *The Fourth Crusade*, pp. 7-8.

226 *Devastatio*, p. 10; Hopf, p. 87.

227 *Supra*, p. 15.

228 *Devastatio*, p. 10; Hopf, p. 87.

229 *Ibid.*

230 *Ibid.* Trans. Pears, p. 397

231 *Devastatio*, p. 10; Hopf, p. 88

232 *Ibid.*, p. 11; Hopf, p. 89.

Flanders, the *Devastatio* contends that the Venetians occupied St. Sophia, claiming that since 'the Empire is yours [the Franks]', we will have the patriarchate'. This brought great dissension between the French and Venetian ecclesiastics, and the final settlement of the matter remained up to the Pope.²³³ If the author was indeed a follower of Boniface, his prejudices against the Venetians could be rooted in jealousy, for the great role of the Republic in the Fourth Crusade possibly overshadowed that of Boniface of Montferrat as the leader of the non-Venetian crusaders. If the writer was in Baldwin's camp, his assessment of the Venetians might have been coloured by their infringement, as he saw it, of Baldwin's full jurisdiction as Emperor. This could explain the rift over the patriarchate.

While the *Devastatio* might present the view of a compatriot of Boniface of Montferrat, it is certain that Raimbaut de Vaqueiras does. Boniface and Raimbaut had been friends since youth. The troubadour became Boniface's squire, and related their exploits in colourful songs.²³⁴ Raimbaut's testimony on the Fourth Crusade naturally emphasizes Boniface's role and narrates his deeds as acts of chivalric prowess, but the laudatory intent diminishes Raimbaut's value as an historical source. The poet can be characterized as Boniface of Montferrat's 'agent of propaganda'.²³⁵

His 'Crusade Song' applauds the departure of Boniface for the expedition, but does not mention where the host was headed.²³⁶ Venice is not named. Raimbaut was a somewhat reluctant member of the crusading host, staying behind at court, and joining the crusaders only in July 1203, early enough to fight in the first attack on Constantinople.²³⁷ An 'Epic Letter' about the battles also omits to mention the Venetians, even though Raimbaut recalls standing before the walls of the city and seeing 'the great smoke and embers'.²³⁸ The fire was started by the men of the Republic, but the poet does not tell us that. Raimbaut, like the Marshall of Champagne, denounces the defectors from the crusade.²³⁹

It is in the poem 'Council of the Emperor' that we find Raimbaut's one reference to Venice.²⁴⁰ The troubadour was angry because Boniface had not been elected Emperor, and worried that the crusade would never reach the Holy Land. Expressing a dislike for the Doge, Raimbaut implies that Venice no longer cared to continue the expedition, having secured their

233 *Ibid.*, p. 12; Hopf, p. 92.

234 Joseph Linskill, ed., 'Introduction', in Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, *The Poems of the Troubadour Raimbaut de Vaqueiras* (The Hague, 1964), p. 8.

235 Jean Longnon, *Les Compagnons de Villehardouin* (Geneva, 1978), p. 224.

236 Raimbaut, *Poems*, xix. 56-66, p. 218.

237 Linskill, pp. 30-1.

238 Raimbaut, *Poems*, ii. 38-45, p. 305.

239 *Ibid.*, xxii. 89-92, p. 245.

240 *Ibid.*, xx. 51-60, pp. 226-7.

commercial prize.²⁴¹ He urges Boniface to be wary of Dandolo.²⁴² This may be rooted in the Doge's activity as advisor to Baldwin of Flanders, particularly during negotiations with Boniface.

The account by Ogerius Panis, written shortly after the fall of Constantinople, represents the Genoese interpretation of affairs. Ogerius was the official compiler of the *Annali* for the Genoese Commune,²⁴³ who, as their envoy, took part in numerous diplomatic missions.²⁴⁴ Genoese commercial rivalry with Venice provides a motive for Ogerius Panis's vehement condemnation of the Venetians, yet he writes just as critically about the Franks. Together, these crusaders attacked Zara, destroyed churches, and slew men, women and children alike. Forgetting their crusading vows, they sailed to Constantinople, where they again sacked churches, and tossed relics and crosses about recklessly. The crusaders then divided the new Empire into three parts, crowning Baldwin of Flanders Emperor.²⁴⁵ Even though Boniface of Montferrat was an ally of Genoa, he is not set apart for particular attention in the account, except that he negotiated the treaty of 1201 along with Baldwin of Flanders and Hugh of St. Pol, and that he received the Kingdom of Thessalonica after the partition.²⁴⁶ Ogerius Panis's attitude can be traced to the severe loss Genoa suffered from Venetian domination of trade with Byzantium.²⁴⁷

Venetian commercial interests are also a central theme in *La Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Trésorier*. Written in Syria about 1232, this Old French account is a continuation of the chronicle of William of Tyre, and part of the composite history of the crusades known as the *Livre d'Eracles*. In a recent monograph, M. R. Morgan showed that the testimony of Ernoul actually ends in 1197: the history from that date to 1232 was compiled by Bernard, the treasurer of a Benedictine abbey.²⁴⁸ Yet because of its familiar citation as 'Ernoul', Morgan proposes that confusion be minimized by calling it 'Ernoul-Bernard'.²⁴⁹

241 Linskill, p. 234 n. to lines 59-60; Rava, p. 31.

242 Two other works of the same genre as Raimbaut's do not even mention Venice: 'Lai de la dame de Fayal', in *Recueil de chants historiques français*, ed. Antoine le Roux de Lincy, Ire série, (Paris, 1841); and Conon of Béthune, *Les Chansons de Conon de Béthune*, ed. Axel Wallensköld, (Paris, 1921). Considering Conon's leading role in the crusade, this is especially surprising. Wallensköld hypothesized that due to the romantic nature of the work, political affairs, in the poet's view, do not merit attention. See p. 2 in the Introduction.

243 Luigi Tommaso Belgrano and Cesare Imperiale, eds., 'Introduction', in Ogerius Panis, *Annales Ianuensis, Fonti per la storia d'Italia* (Rome, 1901), xii. xxxviii.

244 *Ibid.*, xii. xxxviii-xl.

245 Ogerius Panis, *Annales Ianuensis*, xii. 88-9.

246 *Ibid.*, xii. 89.

247 Belgrano and Imperiale, pp. xlix-l.

248 M. R. Morgan, *The Chronicle of Ernoul and the Continuations of William of Tyre*, (Oxford, 1973), pp. 50, 116.

249 *Ibid.*, p. 183.

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Like William of Tyre, Ernoul-Bernard is well informed on the history of the Latin kingdom. It expresses the views of the barons living there and provides a narration of events from *oultre mer*.²⁵⁰ Especially useful is Ernoul-Bernard's detail of Levantine politics and commercial affairs, which is rich in information that cannot be found in other medieval European accounts.

For the Fourth Crusade, however, the chronicle is not trustworthy.²⁵¹ Its credibility for this period was questioned in 1877 by Gabriel Hanotaux, who proved that the alleged treaty joining the Venetians and the Egyptian Sultan in an effort to divert the crusade from Alexandria was a fabrication.²⁵² The account makes free use of hearsay evidence: popular rumours are very likely the source for the Venetian treason it constructs.²⁵³ Although Ernoul-Bernard's historical accuracy with regard to the Fourth Crusade is dubious, the account became very influential: its editor, Mas Latrie formulated a Venetian 'treason theory' from its testimony.²⁵⁴

In addition to the conspiracy with Egypt, Ernoul-Bernard generally paints the Republic as a gang of mercantile swindlers. In the chronicle, 'they fight like crusaders, but behave like merchants.'²⁵⁵ The account refers to the Venetians as 'merchants' who prepared ships for the host.²⁵⁶ Once they had imprisoned the assembled Franks on the Lido, the Venetians became overjoyed with their dire predicament, for it gave them an excuse to go to Zara.²⁵⁷ The Frenchmen wrote to the Pope about the attack, explaining that they were forced to plunder the city under Venetian threats of being abandoned there.²⁵⁸ Ernoul-Bernard does praise the Republic's naval skills in the attack on the walls of Constantinople and he is impressed by the flying bridges,²⁵⁹ but he claims that the Venetians performed so brilliantly only because they coveted the entire spoils.²⁶⁰ Diverted by Venice's greed, the crusade never reached the Holy Land.

There are several possible reasons for Ernoul-Bernard's bitterness. Edgar H. McNeal and Robert J. Wolff note how men of the Levant commonly considered the Venetians to be profit-oriented, assuming that

250 McNeal and Wolff, p. 153.

251 See Morgan, p. 179; McNeal and Wolff, p. 153; Bréhier, p. 156.

252 Hanotaux, pp. 74-102. The substance of the alleged treaty's content is found in Ernoul and Bernard le Trésorier, *Chronique*, ed. Louis de Mas Latrie (Paris, 1871), pp. 345-6.

253 Morgan, p. 11; McNeal and Wolff, p. 161.

254 Louis de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre sous le règne de la maison de Lusignan*, (3 vols., Paris, 1852-61), i. 161-4.

255 'Ils les combattaient comme croisés mais traitaient avec eux comme marchands.' Luchaire, *Innocent III*, p. 90.

256 Ernoul and Bernard, pp. 338-9.

257 *Ibid.*, pp. 348-50.

258 *Ibid.*, p. 350.

259 *Ibid.*, pp. 365-6, 371.

260 *Ibid.*, pp. 374-6.

their commerce was more important to them than their duties as crusaders.²⁶¹ The account was also influenced by the negative views of the Venetians expressed by those who defected at Zara and went to Syria.²⁶² Finally, some Christians in the Holy Land were simply disappointed that the crusade did not arrive in the Levant. Ernoul-Bernard's account of the Fourth Crusade must be read with these explanations in mind.

The chronicle written for Baudouin d'Avesnes is particularly interesting because it picks up the supposed Venetian-Egyptian treaty found in Ernoul-Bernard. Written between 1278 and 1281 in Old French, this account also incorporates Villehardouin's testimony.²⁶³ Baudouin d'Avesnes was the son of Margaret, Countess of Flanders and Hainault, and therefore the grandson of Baldwin of Flanders.²⁶⁴ We do not know who wrote the chronicle at his request.²⁶⁵ Despite some confusion about the exact contents of the work,²⁶⁶ its use of both Ernoul-Bernard and Villehardouin explains the unique perspective it presents.

The French barons travelled to Venice according to this chronicle to contract a treaty of transportation to the Holy Land with the very wise and valiant Doge.²⁶⁷ We are told that Venice arranged with the Sultan of Egypt to divert the crusade from Alexandria.²⁶⁸ The counts decided among themselves that the arriving crusaders should lodge on the Lido, but the chronicle does not claim that they were imprisoned there.²⁶⁹ Without funds to pay the Venetians, the Franks agreed to Dandolo's proposal to sack Zara, realizing that they were at a disadvantage.²⁷⁰ Despite his gout, blindness, and old age, Enrico Dandolo took the Cross before a great crowd in St. Mark's.²⁷¹ The counts debated whether to aid Venice in the actual attack on Zara, for they feared disobeying the Pope's orders; they decided to join rather than disband the crusade,²⁷² and later asked forgiveness from Innocent III, telling him that they had disobeyed his command. The Vene-

261 McNeal and Wolff, p. 161.

262 Faral, 'Introduction', p. lix.

263 Wailly, pp. xvii-xviii; Faral, 'Introduction', pp. lvii-lviii; *Istore et Chroniques de Flandre*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, (2 vols, Brussels, 1979-80), I. xii; Joh. Heller, ed., in *Chronicon Hanoniense quod dicitur Balduini Avennensis*, *MGH, SS*, xxv. 414-15.

264 Emile Gachet, 'Baudouin d'Avesnes et sa Chronique', *Compte-rendu des séances de la Commission Royale d'Histoire*, ser. 2, vii (1853), 255; Kervyn de Lettenhove, pp. vii-viii.

265 Gustav Gröber, *Grundriss der Romanischen Philologie*, (2 vols., Strassbourg, 1902), II. 1014-15.

266 The chronicle is mislabeled in *Urkunden*, I. 328-58 ('*Chronicum Gallicum Ineditum*'), and I. 458-9 ('*Chronicum Franco-Gallicum*').

267 *Ibid.*, I. 330.

268 *Ibid.*, I. 332-33, I. 458.

269 *Ibid.*, I. 333; *Chronicon Hanoniense quod dicitur Balduini Avennensis*, *MGH, SS*, xxv. 448; 'Baudouin d'Avesnes', in *Istore et Chroniques*, II. 658.

270 *Urkunden*, I. 336.

271 *Ibid.*, I. 336-7.

272 *Ibid.*, I. 338.

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tian excommunication is not mentioned.²⁷³ Nearing Constantinople, the Venetians approached the city by sea and the Franks by land.²⁷⁴ The Venetians, using their flying bridges, were able to fight quite well,²⁷⁵ Dandolo being the first to sail in during the assault across the Golden Horn.²⁷⁶ Later, the Venetians captured twenty towers.²⁷⁷ When the Empire was divided, the Venetians received half.²⁷⁸ With the exception of the alleged treaty and the interpretation of the Zara debates, this account is not especially anti-Venetian.

Like Ernoul, *The Chronicle of Novgorod* relates the history of distant lands. It is a collection of numerous accounts gathered in Russia between 1061 and 1471.²⁷⁹ No one is sure where the author of the portion on the Fourth Crusade got his information, although it was formerly assumed that this was provided by a Russian visiting Constantinople during the assault.²⁸⁰ Jared Gordon recently suggested a German source, for the chronicler adapts German words and shows a familiarity with letters written by Philip of Swabia. Because his account reads like an apology for the German King and the Pope, the writer, according to Gordon, therefore must have been someone close to the Germans.²⁸¹

The chronicle relates that Philip and Innocent ordered the crusaders to restore Alexius to the throne but stipulated that no harm was to be brought on the city.²⁸² The 'Franks and all their *Voyevodas* [Generals],' however, 'conceived lust for gold and silver'.²⁸³ The Venetians are not distinguished from the Franks. Like Ogerius Panis, this is a point that sets *The Chronicle of Novgorod* apart from other sources. Dandolo is cited as one of the crusading generals: 'The blind *Duzh* from St. Mark's island Venedik. *Tsar* Manuel blinded this *Duzh*. . . . This *Duzh* had planned many attacks on the town and all used to obey him; his ships from off which they took the town were large'.²⁸⁴ The author praises the Republic's navy while at the same time suggesting that it was Dandolo's vengeful motives which

273 *Ibid.*, i, 340.

274 *Ibid.*, i, 345-6.

275 *Ibid.*, i, 346.

276 *Ibid.*, i, 346-7.

277 *Ibid.*, i, 347. Villehardouin says twenty-five. See *supra*, p. 11.

278 *Ibid.*, i, 356.

279 A. A. Shakhmatov, in Robert Michell and Nevill Forbes, trans., Royal Historical Society: *The Chronicle of Novgorod*, Camden 3rd series, xxv (1914), xxxvii.

280 Hopf, pp. xiv-xv; Faral, 'Introduction', p. lvii.

281 Jared Gordon, 'The Novgorod Account of the Fourth Crusade', *Byzantion*, XLII (1973), 304-5. See also D. Freydank, 'Die altrussische Erzählung über die Eroberung Konstantinopels, 1204', *Byzantinoslavica*, xxix (1968), 334-9. Freydank argues that the bishop of Halberstadt, Conrad of Krosigk, is the source.

282 *Chronicle of Novgorod*, p. 44-5.

283 *Ibid.*

284 *Ibid.*, pp. 47-8. It is from this passage that some historians concluded that Dandolo was indeed blinded by Manuel Comnenus and sought vengeance for his misfortune.

brought him to disobey the Pope and the German King.

Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay's chronicle, although well known for its testimony on the Albigensian Crusade, also contains a passage on the Fourth Crusade. This portion of the *Hystoria Albigensis* was written in 1213. Peter was the nephew of Abbot Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay, a close associate of Simon of Montfort and his companion on the Fourth Crusade, and, like his uncle, a member of the Cistercian order. The account highlights the role of Simon and Guy in the events leading up to the Albigensian Crusade. Peter was an eye-witness to these events, just as he was present in the company of his uncle in Zara.²⁸⁵

The *Hystoria Albigensis* tells how Simon of Montfort and Guy travelled to the noble and rich city of Venice, where they found magnificent ships to take them overseas.²⁸⁶ The wise and valiant Doge, seeing the crusaders' poverty and hardship, directed the fleet towards Christian Zara.²⁸⁷ Afraid to disobey the Pope's wishes, Simon and Guy camped far from the city.²⁸⁸ During the lengthy debate over the attack on the city, Guy produced a letter from Innocent prohibiting such a deed on pain of excommunication.²⁸⁹ The Venetians became infuriated and wanted to kill the abbot, but he was saved by Simon of Montfort.²⁹⁰ When he realized that the other barons would not follow the directions of the Pope, Simon defected from Zara and travelled to Apulia.²⁹¹ Like the chronicler of Novgorod, Peter presents an account of Venetian defiance of papal commands.²⁹²

Gunther of Pairis' *Historia Constantinopolitana* also questions the sincerity of Venetian motives in the crusade. Essentially completed by the end of 1205 with Chapter 25 added between August 1207 and June 1208, the chronicle is based on the experience of Martin, a Cistercian abbot of Pairis in Alsace who may have narrated his reminiscences of the Fourth Crusade to the monk Gunther.²⁹³ The account certainly cannot be trusted for incidents occurring between the conquest of Zara and 1 January 1204, because during this time, Martin left the army and went to the Holy Land.

285 Pascal Guébin and Ernest Lyon, eds., 'Notice', in Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, *Petri Vallium Sarnaii monachi hystoria Albigensis*, (3 vols., Paris, 1926-30), III. vi-vii.

286 *Ibid.*, *Hystoria Albigensis*, I. 106.

287 *Ibid.*, I. 107-8.

288 *Ibid.*

289 *Ibid.*, I. 108-9.

290 *Ibid.*

291 *Ibid.*, I. 109-10.

292 Another historian of the Albigensian Crusade, Jacques of Vitry, does not discuss Venice, although he pays careful attention to Fulk of Neuilly's preaching of the Fourth Crusade. See Jacques of Vitry, *The Historia Occidentalis of Jacques de Vitry: A Critical Edition*, ed. John F. Hinnebusch (Fribourg, 1972).

293 Riant, 'Considérations préliminaires', *Exuviae*, I, xxv. On the dating see Alfred J. Andrea, 'The *Historia Constantinopolitana*: An Early Thirteenth Century Historian Looks at Byzantium', *Analecta Cisterciensia*, xxxvi (1980), 276-7.

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He returned to Constantinople, where he learned of a rich supply of relics from Latins living there.²⁹⁴ Francis R. Swietek has recently demonstrated that Gunther's chronicle is unreliable for the entire crusade, not only the period when Martin was absent,²⁹⁵ for the highly perfected literary skills and purposive theme of the account diminishes its value for scholars as an historical record.²⁹⁶

The purpose of the *Historia Constantinopolitana* is to authenticate the relics which Martin secured, or liberated, in Constantinople. But it also highlights, if not exaggerates, the participation of Martin in the crusade.²⁹⁷ Swietek and Riant both note that Martin is cited in only one source other than Gunther: the *Devastatio*.²⁹⁸ The pious devotion of the abbot is central in this work.

Gunther writes that the Doge and his people took the Cross, and held the crusading host prisoner, awaiting payments.²⁹⁹ The Venetians directed the fleet to Zara, where they plundered the city.³⁰⁰ Finding this cruel and iniquitous, many in the host returned home.³⁰¹ When Innocent III learned of the assault, he absolved the crusaders, realizing that they had been forced by the greed of the Venetians,³⁰² who arranged the conquest of Constantinople when Alexius promised them great sums and naval predominance;³⁰³ For this, the clever Doge organized an impressive attack on the city.³⁰⁴ Gunther recognizes the Venetian naval power and acknowledges the prudence and acuity of Dandolo, who saved the army from falling into Mourtzouphlus' trap. The Venetians, however, did all this out of love of money:³⁰⁵ while the Venetians only seek profit, the Franks are characterized by true piety.³⁰⁶

The narrative of the Anonymous of Halberstadt, written in 1208, also focuses on the securing of relics. It seems to have been composed according to the dictation on Conrad of Krosigk, Bishop of Halberstadt. This Latin account is considered quite reliable for the period it covers, namely, the

294 Brand, p. 265.

295 Francis R. Swietek, 'Gunther of Pairis and the *Historia Constantinopolitana*', *Speculum*, LII (1978), pp. 48-56.

296 *Ibid.*

297 See Longnon, *Les Compagnons de Villehardouin*, p. 249; Alphandéry, II, 73, n.1; Faral, 'Introduction', p. lix.

298 Swietek, pp. 73-4; Riant, 'Examens des documents hagiographiques', *Exuviae*, I, lxxix.

299 Gunther of Pairis, *Historia Constantinopolitana*, in *Exuviae*, I, 70.

300 *Ibid.*, I, 71.

301 *Ibid.*, I, 72.

302 *Ibid.*, I, 74.

303 *Ibid.*, I, 85. Note that Martin was opposed to the German proposal.

304 *Ibid.*, I, 91.

305 *Ibid.*

306 Otto of St. Blaise, who continued Otto of Freising's account in 1146, wrote until 1209: His account is quite similar to Gunther's, and may be a derivative of it. See Otto of Saint Blaise, Continuation of Otto of Freising, *Chronicon*, ed. Roger Willmans, *MCH*, ss, xx. 302-37.

events from 12 August 1202 to the time of Baldwin of Flanders' death.³⁰⁷ Conrad was one of the leading bishops of the crusade, different in this respect from Gunther's more obscure Martin, and as can be expected, the *Peregrinatio* relates the story of Conrad's participation in the crusade as a means to validate the relics which he brought back from Constantinople.

Riant declared this account to be extremely favourable towards the Venetians.³⁰⁸ The anonymous scribe does explain how the people of the republic received the bishop graciously and provided the host with an excellent and expensive fleet.³⁰⁹ Other passages reveal a critical assessment of the Venetians: they held the host captive on the island of St. Nicholas;³¹⁰ they had no desire even to go with the Franks, and only after realizing that they would not receive their money did they join the crusade;³¹¹ the Franks were absolved for the sack of Zara, just as in other chronicles, but the Venetians were unmoved by their excommunication.³¹² We know this to be quite true. Yet Conrad was no great follower of the Pope: he had gone on crusade to avoid excommunication for his support of Philip of Swabia against Innocent III. As an associate of the German King, the bishop may easily have desired to turn attention away from charges of a German 'plot' to another candidate. Conrad's charge of Venetian responsibility may have been designed to free himself or King Philip of the blame.³¹³

The role of another major bishop in the crusade, Nivelon of Chérisy, is recalled in the account of the Anonymous of Soissons. The Bishop of Soissons was not only one of the first to call for support of the crusade, but he was also among the emissaries sent to Innocent requesting absolution for the conquest of Zara. The chronicle, based on Nivelon's own experiences in the crusade, was composed between August 1206 and September 1207. This chronicler, like Gunther and the Anonymous of Halberstadt, concentrates on the capture of relics, explaining how the Republic of St. Mark furnished a fine fleet but kept the host captive for three months while planning a diversion to Zara.³¹⁴

Rostang de Cluni wrote an account of the Fourth Crusade describing the retrieval of St. Clement's head from Constantinople. It was written in 1206, according to the dictation of Dalmase de Sercey, a knight in the

307 Longnon, *Les Compagnons de Villehardouin*, p. 243; Riant, 'Examens', *Exuviae*, I. lvi. Conrad joined the crusading host on the former date and returned to Halberstadt in 1208.

308 *Ibid.*, I. lvii. We have revised our position upon the advice of Prof. Andrea, who is working on the Halberstadt chronicle, although we retain the author within the anti-Venetian camp. Basically, however, he is not very judgmental.

309 *De peregrinatione in Greciam et adventu reliquiarum de Grecia libellus*, in *Exuviae*, I. 10-11.

310 *Ibid.*, I. 11-12.

311 *Ibid.*, I. 12-13.

312 *Ibid.*

313 Roberto Cessi, 'Venezia e la quarta crociata', p. 24, n.l.

314 *De terra Iherosolimitana et quomodo ab urbe Constantinopolitana ad hanc ecclesiam allate sunt reliquie*, in *Exuviae*, I. 5.

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crusading army. In this version, the Venetians treated the Franks deceitfully, keeping the crusaders in a labyrinth, prohibiting them from crossing the sea, and keeping them on the Lido. Alexius made a bargain with the Venetians for restoring his kingdom and the Franks were drawn into plans for attacking Constantinople.³¹⁵ This source does not mention Zara, but otherwise, it differs little from other chronicles chastizing the Venetians.

Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, who covered events to 1241, gathered information from a variety of sources. For the history of Philip Augustus, he used Rigord and Guillaume le Bréton, and he learned about the Albigensian Crusade from the work of Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay. He seems to have compiled these narrations carefully and exactly.³¹⁶ For the Fourth Crusade, he used the account by the Anonymous of Soissons and the 1204 letter of Baldwin of Flanders to Innocent III.³¹⁷ The latter seems particularly important here, for Alberic gives a detailed description of the gruesome sack of Constantinople.

Alberic writes that the Franks were kept on the island of St. Nicholas and remained there because the Venetians prohibited them from leaving.³¹⁸ Zara, a city of crusaders, was captured because of its hostilities with Venice,³¹⁹ and the news of the attack made the Pope furious.³²⁰ Innocent ordered the crusaders to help Alexius conquer Byzantium, and the Doge, a prudent man, agreed to follow the Pope's command.³²¹ The Venetians fought marvellously at Constantinople, although three of them met a horrifying death at the hands of Mourtzouphlus.³²² Six Venetians and six Franks participated in the election of Baldwin of Flanders as Emperor.³²³ With the exception of the encampment on the Lido and the diversion to Zara, the Venetians are handled rather kindly in this account. The notion that the Pope commanded the expedition to go to Constantinople is not one found in either the Anonymous of Soisson's or Baldwin's account. We can only speculate about where Alberic heard of it.

Robert of Auxerre's chronicle, which ends in 1220,³²⁴ also makes use of other accounts as sources of history.³²⁵ Robert, a monk at Saint-Marien,

315 Rostang de Cluni, *Exceptio capitis s. Clementis*, in *ibid.*, p. 133.

316 Auguste Molinier, *Les Sources*, III, 38-84; M. J. J. Brial, ed., *Rec. Hist. Gaules*, XVIII. xxix; P. Scheffer-Boeckhorst, ed., 'Introduction', in Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, *Chronica*, *MGH*, SS, XXIII. 660-1; Delaborde, 'Notice sur Guillaume le Bréton', in *Oeuvres*, pp. lix-lx; Guébin and Lyon, 'Notice', in Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, III. xxxix.

317 Brial, p. xxix. For Baldwin's letter, *supra*, p. 18.

318 Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, *Chronica*, *MGH*, SS, XXIII. 880.

319 *Ibid.*, XXIII. 880

320 *Ibid.*

321 *Ibid.*

322 *Ibid.*, XXIII. 881, 883.

323 *Ibid.*, XXIII. 884.

324 The original version ended in 1211. There is a continuation written for the years 1211-20.

325 Brial, p. xi.

wrote that the Franks were treated poorly by the Venetians,³²⁶ and agreed to help conquer Zara, for that city was an enemy of the Republic.³²⁷ Robert notes that the Venetians constructed wonderful machines for fighting the Greeks.³²⁸

Finally, the chronicle of Ralph of Coggeshall, a Latin account written in England, discusses the years 1066 to 1223. Ralph was a Cistercian in Essex. As an overnight stop for many foreign travellers, the Coggeshall Abbey may have received news of events from its guests,³²⁹ and perhaps Ralph heard about the Fourth Crusade from such individuals. Ralph suggests that Constantinople was won for the Doge of Venice and Baldwin of Flanders,³³⁰ and the chronicle continues with an explanation of the offer made by Alexius, but it does not pass further judgment on the Venetians.³³¹

CONCLUSION

There are some areas of agreement with regard to their attitudes towards the Venetians in all the sources for the Fourth Crusade. Without exception, they find that Venice kept to its part of the treaty for transportation and provided the Franks with an outstanding fleet. Venice is also highly respected for its naval valour; the skill displayed in maritime activities is denied nowhere. Often, Enrico Dandolo's wisdom and prudence is acknowledged, and even if he is considered shrewd and wily, he is also complimented for his leadership.

It is over the question of motivation that the sources divide into two camps. The anti-Venetian accounts are primarily ecclesiastical. One exception, Raimbaut's, however, is far more respected for its poetic, rather than its historical, value. The feeling expressed towards Dandolo arises from a possible resentment, since the Doge aided Boniface of Montferrat's rival, Baldwin. Even Ernoul-Bernard was written by a Benedictine, and his narration must be dismissed on the basis of Hanotaux's arguments. We cannot be certain that the writer of Baudouin d'Avesne's chronicle was a cleric; he did, however, incorporate the alleged treason treaty fabricated by Ernoul. Some of these anti-Venetian accounts are historically unreliable: it

326 Robert of Auxerre, *Chronicon*, *MGH, SS*, xxvi. 261.

327 *Ibid.*, xxvi. 265.

328 *Ibid.*, xxvi. 266.

329 Stevenson, 'Preface', in Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, *Rer. Brit. M.A. Script.*, lxxvi. xii-xiii.

330 Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, lxxvi. 201.

331 Another English chronicle, written by Roger of Hoveden, ends in 1201. Clearly, this was too early for writing about the Venetians in the Fourth Crusade from a particular perspective. See Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, ed. William Stubbs, 4 vols., *Rer. Brit. M.A. Script.*, LI (London, 1868-71).

is impossible to believe that Philip of Swabia would conspire with Innocent, as *The Chronicle of Novgorod* tells us. Similarly, Innocent would not order the crusaders to restore Constantinople to Alexius, as Alberic of Trois-Fontaines asserts. There is nothing particularly inaccurate about Gunther's *Historia Constantinopolitana*, but we must remember that it exaggerates the role of Abbot Martin. The Anonymous of Halberstadt, the Anonymous of Soissons, and Rostaing de Cluni, all of whom are primarily concerned with the liberation of relics, are based on eyewitness accounts, generally accurate on the facts but markedly anti-Venetian in their motives. Ogerius Panis, another secular source, is an official Genoese historian and for this reason his view is definitely anti-Venetian. This much could almost be assumed even without reading the account. The *Gesta Innocentii* provides important material on the Pope's deeds and attitudes but tends to praise him uncritically. Perhaps because we are uncertain of its authorship, little can be said concerning the reasons for the anti-Venetian bias of the *Devastatio*. It is factually very accurate and must be respected. Similarly, the letters of Innocent III are quite straightforward; they naturally present the Pope's (often justifiable) viewpoint.

These accounts typically charge the Republic for sequestering the Franks on the Lido. Most claim that the Venetians compelled the host to sack a Christian city against their wishes, which is true enough, but such observations are not always preceded by a consideration of the financial obligations of the host towards the Venetians. Many note that Venice ignored the papal excommunication, which is also clearly true: this is contained in pro-Venetian sources as well. They tend to suggest that the crusaders were hesitant about continuing with excommunicants, but the letters of the barons, who pleaded with Innocent III to absolve the Republic, prove that they knew they could not continue without them. The Venetians are said to have sought profits deviously in the Byzantine Empire, and all suggest that the Venetian motives were not as honourable as those of the Franks and the clergy. Since their world-view was quite different from that of the Venetians, the clerical authors condemn the Republic. The holy mission failed and they needed someone to blame. The most reasonable suspect, for them at any rate, was the city of greed and avarice.

With the exceptions of the monk of San Giorgio, who was, after all, Venetian, and Rigord, who actually did not become a cleric until after he had begun to write history, all of the pro-Venetian sources are secular. Here, too, we must sort out the unreliable historical sources. Enrico Dandolo's letter is certainly an attempt to justify the Venetian role in the crusade, but if we discount his explanation for the Zaran expedition, his version seems truthful enough. Martino da Canale, the *Historia ducum*,

Venetorum, and Andrea Dandolo, together with the entire body of Venetian chronicles, make a case for the Republic at the expense of accuracy. These are examples of highly special pleading, if not propaganda. Similarly, the *Chronicle of Morea* alters evidence in favour of epic narration.

Villehardouin, Hugh of St. Pol, and all the other high-ranking and well-informed figures could have considered the Doge above criticism because of his political stature. On the other hand, they, the responsible leaders, might well have blamed the Venetians in an effort to take responsibility off their own shoulders, but they do not. Robert of Clari appears to use the Venetians as a contrast to the evil barons and his view of the Venetians parallels Villehardouin's. Neither condemns mercantile values; on the contrary, they make a case for Venetian piety and generosity. Since these two men approach the Fourth Crusade from opposite perspectives, of the establishment and the anti-establishment, it is all the more interesting that they agree on crucial issues.

We must conclude that although there are more anti-Venetian than pro-Venetian sources and although some of them are reasonably reliable, others are outrageously bad. So are some pro-Venetian sources, but no one³³² expects us to follow Martino da Canale. It is significant that Villehardouin and Robert of Clari, the two best sources we have, are stongly pro-Venetian. Perhaps the secular sources in general saw the Venetians with favour because the authors were not as thoroughly saturated with clerical ethics. This division of the sources between ecclesiastical and anti-Venetian on the one hand, and secular and pro-Venetian on the other, is most striking, and is, perhaps, the root of the entire problem.

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332 Except Roberto Cessi. See *supra*, p. 5, n. 31.