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THE FOURTH CRUSADE: THE NEGLECTED MAJORITY

By DONALD E. QUELLER, THOMAS K. COMPTON AND DONALD A. CAMPBELL

INTRODUCTION

THROUGHOUT his famous history of the Fourth Crusade, Geoffrey of Villehardouin castigates the crusaders who either did not show up at Venice or later dissented or defected from the official leadership of the marquis of Montferrat and the counts of Flanders, Blois, and Saint-Pol. Again and again he accuses them of trying to destroy the army. On more than one occasion, however, he admits that those who followed the leadership loyally and contentedly were less than a majority of the total number. Many historians, especially those who believe that the crusade found its way to Constantinople as a result of a plot laid by one party or another for personal advantage, have not accepted the marshal's condemnation of those who failed to go to Constantinople, and some have even indicted him as a dishonest historian. From the point of view of these advocates of treason theories, the official leaders either were guilty of betraying the crusade or else were dupes of the Venetians, and this transformation of Villehardouin's heroes into villains presumably should convert those who did not follow their leadership into heroes. Yet, even the treason theorists concentrate upon the body of crusaders which gathered at Venice, conquered Zara, and sacked Constantinople. The crusaders who did not participate in the conquest of the Byzantine capital, or who did so unwillingly, have been treated as incidental to the main theme, as if they were a small number, rather than the majority.

The purpose of this study is to redress the balance, to examine in some detail, although not to praise or blame, the neglected majority. They were by no means cut from the same piece of cloth. Too often it has been assumed that all who did not follow the official leadership, or even those who quarreled with it, although reluctantly accepting it, were motivated by a profound disagreement with its objectives. This was not so, at least not in the earlier stages. The majority who went their various ways did so for various reasons, as did the minority who accepted the decisions of the leaders. The differences will be better understood if we consider our majority in groups, according to the point in the course of events when their separation from the leadership occurred. Naturally, only the principal men are named by the sources, but it should be understood that in most cases they led many lesser men with them. As a sort of postscript, we will examine those who defected but later returned.

WALTER OF BRIENNE

The first foreshadowing of the fragmentation of the Fourth Crusade occurred in the spring of 1201 when Geoffrey of Villehardouin and Alard Maquereau, returning to France after concluding in Venice a treaty for transportation, encountered Walter, Count of Brienne, accompanied by William of Montbéliard, Eustace of Conflans, Robert of Joinville, and a considerable number of other

crusaders from Champagne and elsewhere.¹ The count of Brienne had been enlisted by Innocent III as an instrument in the papal struggle with the party of the Hohenstaufen for control of Italy and Sicily, which was going badly for the pontiff. Walter had married the eldest daughter of Tancred, last of the Norman kings of Naples and Sicily, the foes of the imperial Hohenstaufen.² Innocent counseled and approved this marriage, and promised support for Walter's efforts to conquer, in the name of his wife, the county of Lecce and the principality of Taranto in Apulia.³ The pope regarded the war against the Germans in Italy as a quasi-crusade, ordained to prevent the papacy from being crushed by the hammer of Germany upon the anvil of the Regno. He once even threatened to divert the entire Fourth Crusade to Sicily, although he probably did not really mean it.⁴

In exchange for news of Walter's affairs, Villehardouin recounted the success of the envoys of the crusaders at Venice. They had negotiated transportation and supplies for 33,500 men and 4,500 horses at the rate of two marks per man and four marks per horse. As it turned out, this was a grossly optimistic estimate of the forces the crusaders could muster, and their inability to meet the terms of the contract later would compel the leaders to accept first the conquest of Zara and then the installation of young Alexius as emperor at Constantinople. All this was in the future, however, and Villehardouin reports that the count of Brienne and his companions rejoiced at the news of the treaty and congratulated the negotiators. Walter declared that he and his men were already en route, and that when the main body of crusaders arrived they would find him and his followers quite ready. Meanwhile they were going to use the interval before embarking for the Holy Land to win lands in Apulia.⁵ Villehardouin joyfully related this encounter, but it was fraught with evil portent.

Although Innocent did not, like some pontiffs, cynically sacrifice the cause of the Holy Land to other papal interests, he was making use of crusaders pledged to the pilgrimage overseas for papal warfare in Italy. No doubt he hoped, and

¹ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, par. 33 (Edmond Faral, ed. and trans., [Paris, 1938–1939], I, 34. Hereafter cited as Villehardouin with the paragraph number, followed in parentheses by the volume and page number from the Faral edition). *Gesta Innocentii Tertii*, PL, ccxiv, xlvii–xlix. *L'Art de vérifier les dates*, XI (Paris, 1818), 179, calls Walter of Montbéliard "Richard," stating that he embarked for Syria from a Calabrian port, arriving in the South with Walter of Brienne. See also E. F. Jacob, "Innocent III," in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, VI (Cambridge, Eng., 1936), 13–14.

² *Chronica Albrici Monachi Trium Fontium* (hereafter cited as Alberic of Trois-Fontaines), MGH SS, xxiii, 879, Villehardouin, 33 (I, 34). Edouard Jordan, *L'Allemagne et l'Italie au XII^e et XIII^e siècles* (Paris, 1939), pp. 173–174.

³ *Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Trésorier*, ed. Louis de Mas-Latrie, in *Société de l'histoire de France* (Paris, 1871), ch. XXX, p. 329 (hereafter cited as Ernoul, with page numbers from this edition). See also Ernst Kantorowicz, *Kaiser Friedrich der Zweite* (1st ed., Munich, 1931), p. 26. *Gesta Innocentii Tertii*, PL, ccxiv, xlvii–xlviii, lii.

⁴ J. R. Strayer, "The Political Crusades of the Thirteenth Century," in *A History of the Crusades*, Setton, Wolff and Hazard, edd., II (Philadelphia, 1962), 347.

⁵ Friedrich Hurter, *Storia di Papa Innocenzo III e de' suoi contemporanei*, 3rd ed. rev. by Giuseppe Gliemone (Milan, 1857), II, 62. (Hereafter cited as Hurter, *Storia*.)

Walter confidently expected, that their battles there would be swiftly won and that the crusaders under the count of Brienne would indeed be ready within a year to fulfill their vows. If so both were tragically wrong. Furthermore, Villehardouin does not record, nor is it logical to expect, in spite of Walter's assurances, that the count promised to lead his men to the rendezvous at Venice. If he could keep his vow at all, he would naturally embark his troops directly from an Apulian port, for the journey back up the peninsula was long and difficult, and good ports, such as Brindisi and Siponto, would be easily accessible. Thus, even if Walter could complete his campaign expeditiously, the future assemblage at Venice was destined to lose a number of crusaders described as "a great part of the crusaders from Champagne."⁶

As it turned out, the pope was able to lend Walter of Brienne but little support. Even so, he at first marched to victory after victory. Many enthusiastic Italians flocked to his banners, including the young Francis of Assisi, who fell out, however, before joining Walter's forces, overcome by the call to a new and greater cause. Provençal and Italian troubadours, who hated the Germans, sang the praises of the count of Brienne.⁷ However, Diepold of Schweinspeunt had been left in command by the late emperor Henry VI, and he put up such stiff resistance that Walter of Brienne's Apulian adventure dragged on for four more years. Finally, in 1205, long after the crusade had departed from Venice, Walter was surprised at night in his camp by the enemy, who cut the ropes of his tent, pulled it down upon him, and killed him.⁸

APULIA

A second group of crusaders, including Vilain of Nully, Henry of Arzillières, Renaud of Dampierre, Henry of Longchamp and Giles of Trasnignies, also avoided the rendezvous at Venice, turning south from Piacenza in the summer of 1202 to seek passage to the Holy Land from Apulian ports. They were not part of Count Walter's expedition, nor is it probable that they acted as a group, but each of them on his own initiative led his troops to the south. A great number of lesser knights and sergeants accompanied each of the prominent men, and their avoidance of Venice seriously weakened the hopes of those assembling there.⁹ Even Count Louis of Blois, one of the original leaders of the crusade and one of the signatories of the Treaty of Venice, hesitated. The army at Venice sent Hugh

⁶ Villehardouin, 33 (1, 34). We believe that Helmut Roscher, *Papst Innocenz III. und die Kreuzzüge* (Göttingen, 1969), p. 91, underestimates the significance of the Apulian expedition for the Fourth Crusade.

⁷ Omer Englebert, *Saint Francis of Assisi*, 2nd Eng. ed. rev. and augmented by I. Brady and R. Brown (Chicago, 1965), p. 64. Paul Sabatier, *Life of St. Francis of Assisi* (New York, 1920), pp. 17–20. T. S. R. Boase, *St. Francis of Assisi* (Bloomington, 1968), pp. 25–26.

⁸ Ernoul, XXX, pp. 329–330.

⁹ Villehardouin, 54 (1, 56). Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, p. 880, recorded that Renaud of Dampierre defected after the fall of Zara in company with Simon of Montfort and Adam la Trappe, which conflicts with Villehardouin's testimony. It is, of course, entirely possible that Renaud did take ship overseas with Simon from Brindisi, and that Alberic simply took it for granted that Renaud also defected from Zara: this seems to be the best conclusion.

of Saint-Pol and Geoffrey of Villehardouin out to meet the count of Blois and to plead with him and the others to keep the rendezvous. They found him vacillating at Pavia, just a few miles from Piacenza where the route branches, one way toward Venice, the other toward the south. Geoffrey and Hugh prevailed, but only with great difficulty, and Count Louis agreed to join his friends at Venice. The joy with which he was received underlines the gravity of the shortage of crusaders there. Villehardouin tells us how great an army was assembled at Venice, but he admits that it was only one-third as great as anticipated, approximately eleven or twelve thousand men.¹⁰

Various reasons have been suggested to explain the decision of some crusaders to sail from Apulia rather than join the army at Venice. Martin Hellweg has suggested that their reason for not going to Venice was, in part, that the Venetian treaty was complicated and incomprehensible to their feudal minds.¹¹ We think that the feudal knights of northern Europe were not as naive as Hellweg asserts. Apart from their overestimation of the size of the crusading army, the negotiators of the treaty of Venice had dealt skillfully.¹² Knights from such places as Flanders, Champagne, the Ile-de-France and other centers of commerce had some familiarity with contracts. Many had borrowed money to go on crusade. Some were veterans of an earlier expedition, others the sons or brothers of veterans, and they knew something of contracts for passage to the Holy Land. Hellweg's opinion rests upon an outmoded view of the economy of Europe at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

Other scholars have suggested that the French knights, who were a majority of all the crusaders, resented the leadership of the Lombard marquis of Montferrat.¹³ Without any support from the documents, these scholars, who wrote in an age of strident nationalism, gratuitously injected the prejudices of their own day into the minds of the crusaders. They also failed to take account of the medieval brotherhood of chivalry and the renown of the marquis of Montferrat in that international community of arms. Another possibility is that those who held a strict interpretation of their crusading vows might have turned aside from Venice because of rumors of a plot to install the Greek prince, Alexius, upon the Byzantine throne. It is true that the marquis of Montferrat had met young Alexius at Philip of Swabia's court at Hagenau during Christmas of 1201. Although the three of them undoubtedly did discuss the use of the crusading army to help Alexius gain the Byzantine throne, no realistic plans could have been made at that time.¹⁴ Moreover, Robert of Clari, who may be taken as

¹⁰ Villehardouin, 56 (1, 58).

¹¹ Martin Hellweg, "Die ritterliche Welt in der französischen Geschichtsschreibung des vierten Kreuzzuges," *Romanische Forschungen*, LII (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1938), 32-33.

¹² Donald E. Queller, "L'Évolution du rôle de l'Ambassadeur: les pleins pouvoirs et le traité de 1201 entre les Croisés et les Vénitiens," *Le Moyen Age*, LXVII (Brussels, 1961), 490 and nn. 29 and 30.

¹³ Natalis de Wailly, "Éclaircissements," in Geoffroi de Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, 3^d ed. (Paris, 1882), pp. 458-459. Paul Riant, "Innocent III, Philippe de Souabe et Boniface de Montferrat," *Revue des questions historiques*, XVIII (Paris, 1875), p. 39. C. Manfroni, *Storia della marina italiana dalle invasioni barbariche alla caduta di Costantinopoli*, I (Livorno, 1899), 314.

¹⁴ Space does not permit development of this point here. Mr Queller will argue it in a forthcoming book on the Fourth Crusade.

representing the level of knowledge of the lesser men, did not even know of the meeting at Hagenau until Boniface mentioned it at Zara some six months later.¹⁵ If a plot had existed, and if word of it had leaked out among the troops, surely such vehement foes of any attack upon Christians as Simon of Montfort, Enguerand of Boves, and the abbot of Vaux-de-Cernay would have known of it and would have abandoned the army at this time, as in fact they did later.¹⁶

There is an abundance of good reasons for the paucity of crusaders at Venice. First, we must not overestimate the cohesion of a crusading army, in which each of the leading men had his own goals and felt bound to the army only so long as it served them. Only the counts of Flanders, Champagne, and Blois had been bound directly by the terms of the Treaty of Venice, although there is some evidence of ratification by a larger group at Corbie.¹⁷ In general, since each man was expected to pay his own transportation, many probably decided to sail from other ports because they believed they could find more favorable terms. Furthermore, although we believe that there was no plot to divert the crusade to Constantinople, there was a secret codicil to the Treaty of Venice fixing Egypt rather than Acre as the point of debarkation.¹⁸ Information concerning this may have leaked, causing some of those who took their vows very literally to avoid Venice.

It is our opinion, however, that the shortage of crusaders was in itself the chief reason for vacillation and defection in the summer of 1202. The emissaries of the crusaders or their principals had erred tragically in contracting with the Venetians for the transportation of 33,500 crusaders.¹⁹ Knowledgeable leaders very likely had qualms about their ability to muster so large an army, and they feared what occurred in fact: the inability of the crusaders to meet their obliga-

¹⁵ Robert de Clari, *La conquête de Constantinople*, Philippe Lauer, ed. (Paris, 1924), ch. XVII, p. 16 (hereafter cited as Robert of Clari).

¹⁶ *Infra*, p. 453.

¹⁷ Robert of Clari, VIII, p. 8, mentions an assembly of the nobles at Corbie during which vocal ratification seems to have been given to the terms of the treaty of transportation with Venice. Ernoul, XXXI, p. 339, also relates the story of the meeting at Corbie, and, like Robert, records the presence of a Venetian delegation. Villehardouin, however, is mysteriously silent about this meeting.

¹⁸ Villehardouin, 30 (1, 30).

¹⁹ Villehardouin, 21 (1, 22). For a brief discussion of the treaty, see Queller, *op. cit.*, pp. 479-501. For copies of the Treaty of 1201, see Jean Longnon, *Recherches sur la vie de Geoffroy de Villehardouin, Catalogue des actes des Villehardouin* (Paris, 1939), pp. 179-181; *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, G. L. Fr. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, edd., 3 vols. (1st ed., 1856-1857; Amsterdam, 1967), 1, 362-368 [the document reproduced, 1, 369-373, is another version of the same document under an erroneous title]; and Jules Tessier, *Quatrième Croisade: La diversion sur Zara et Constantinople* (Paris, 1884), pp. 252-254.

We believe that the envoys who were sent to Venice in order to negotiate the treaty of transportation in April 1201 (there were two for Thibaut, Count of Champagne and of Brie: Geoffrey of Villehardouin and Miles the Brébantine; two for Louis, Count of Blois and of Chartrain: John of Friaise and Walter of Gaudonville; and two for Baldwin, Count of Flanders and of Hainaut: Conon of Béthune and Alard Maqueraus) made a rash overestimate in accepting the terms of the transportation agreement. Thus, they bear some of the responsibility for the subsequent financial difficulties, and many of Villehardouin's own remarks can be interpreted as attempts to cover up his overoptimism during the negotiations. In this we concur with H. Vriens, "De kwestie van den vierden Kruistocht," in *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, xxxvii (1922), 82. The envoys surely must have received an estimate of the expected number from their principals, however, so the ultimate responsibility was not theirs.

tions to the Venetians. Their fears, valid in themselves, were also self-fulfilling. Some changed plans to avoid the disarray of a reduced and indebted host. Others held back to see how many first appeared, and, as the result was not encouraging, they headed for Apulian ports or for home.

The bitterly disappointed Villehardouin passes a harsh judgment upon those who did not share his interpretation of the crusaders' duty.²⁰ In fact, those who sailed from Apulia did not accomplish much. Several hundred knights with accompanying infantry did find their way from southern Italy to the Holy Land, not at all the puissant force that had been anticipated there. The king of Jerusalem, Amaury II (king of Cyprus, 1194–1205; king of Jerusalem, 1198–1205), seeing that so little aid was at hand, refused to break the truce with the Muslims, despite the pleas of Renaud of Dampierre, one of the newcomers.²¹ Renaud was the knight to whom the dying count of Champagne had entrusted the fulfillment of his own crusading vow, and the count had provided a sufficient sum of money for expenses.²² Perhaps Renaud's regard for his dead lord led him to take especially seriously his obligation to go directly to the Holy Land to war against the Muslims. At any rate, Renaud and others departed for Antioch rather than waiting for the expiration of the truce. Against advice, they tried to force a passage and were ambushed by the Muslims. The entire force of eighty knights was wiped out, with only one escaping. Renaud was taken prisoner, and he remained in captivity for thirty years.²³

VENICE

The pilgrims who began to congregate at Venice in the early summer of 1202 came face-to-face with the monetary deficit which plagued the crusade throughout its course. Months after the scheduled date of departure, when as many crusaders had arrived in Venice as were likely to appear, the doge demanded that the barons pay what was owed under the terms of the treaty for transportation. The Venetians had performed what was required of them: a fleet capable of transporting 33,500 men and 4,500 horses stood ready. The barons turned to the host for payment of four marks per horse and two marks per man. Although some of the poorer men protested that they could not pay, Villehardouin reports that the barons collected as much as they could, which was less than half of the 85,000 marks owed.²⁴

²⁰ Villehardouin, 81 and 113 (I, 82 and 116). See B. Ebels-Hoving, *Byzantium in Westerse Ogen, 1096–1204* (Assen, 1971), p. 223, n. 540, for a criticism of E. Faral's defense of Villehardouin's indictment of those who did not follow the leaders.

²¹ Ernoul, XXXI, p. 341.

²² Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, p. 878.

²³ Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, p. 880. See, however, the evidence that a Renaud of Dampierre was in France in 1203: E. Faral, in Villehardouin, II, 31, n. 3.

²⁴ Villehardouin, 52–54, 58–59 (I, 54–56, 60–62). Robert of Clari, XI, pp. 9–10, states that 50,000 marks remained unpaid. Unreliable as he usually is on figures, this agrees with Villehardouin and seems a reasonable figure. If those present paid according to the contracted rate, this would mean that some 13,000 crusaders had arrived in Venice.

Since this article was written, there has appeared an attempt at quantitative analysis of the crusad-

The Venetians were enraged; they had undergone enormous expense and the interruption of their commerce for over a year. The doge, Enrico Dandolo, declared that the crusaders should not depart from their camp on the Lido until full payment had been made. "Nor," continued the doge, "shall you find anyone to bring you anything to eat or to drink." But Robert of Clari notes that he did not actually cut off their supplies.²⁵ Two other contemporary sources, the *Gesta Episcoporum Halberstadensium* and the *Devastatio Constantinopolitana* confirm that the crusaders were thereafter held as virtual prisoners on the island, and the *Devastatio* further complains of grain being sold by the Venetians at exorbitant prices.²⁶

Unable to pay their debt, the leading men conferred in desperation. The situation was clear: the Venetians had fulfilled the contract, but the crusaders could not since they were too far short of the required number of men. Some pleaded: "For the love of God, let us each give in addition as much as we can. It is better to spend all our wealth here than to default on our agreement and lose all we have spent. If this expedition does not take place, the opportunity for aiding the Holy Land will be lost." But not all were in agreement. Many argued that they

ing army: Antonio Carile, "Alle origini dell'impero d'Oriente: Analisi quantitativa dell'esercito crociato e repartizione dei feudi," *Nuova rivista storica*, LVI (1972), 288-314. We have tried to understand Carile's figures and calculations without always succeeding. Where we think we know what he is doing, we sometimes find ourselves in disagreement with his assumptions or his arithmetic. More basically, we question whether one can count the names of defectors mentioned in the sources and assume that one has a number that can be used for quantitative analysis. He also places more reliance than we do upon the figure 33,500 specified in the treaty for transportation. We do not see this as the size of an army, but as a very bad overestimate on the part of the counts of Flanders, Champagne, and Blois or their envoys.

The argument that most closely concerns our theme is the attempt on page 290 of Carile's article to estimate the percentage of defectors. He counts 46 regional princes and major vassals named as defectors by Villehardouin and then applies proportions based on the treaty for transportation to determine the number of defectors of all ranks and the percentage of defectors of the 33,500 crusaders anticipated in the treaty. His percentage is about 24.5%. As we apply his formula, however, we get the following: 46 (regional princes and major vassals) plus 46×31 (lesser knights) plus 46×62 (mounted sergeants) plus 46×136.4 (unmounted sergeants) = 10,589.4 crusaders, which is approximately 31.6% of 33,500, not Carile's 24.5%. Using another approach, he comes up with a percentage figure of 28.5%, which is closer.

In the same paragraph, Carile cites Villehardouin's statement, 56 (I, 58), that the fleet prepared by the Venetians could carry "bien a trois tanz que il n'aüst en l'ost de genz," concluding that this shows the army was reduced by a figure ranging from 67% to 75%. We fail to see how the passage quoted can be interpreted to sustain the latter figure. Further still in the same paragraph, there is an obvious arithmetical error: one-third of 33,500 is not 11,500, but rather 11,166.7.

For another example, we mistrust the argument on page 292 concerning the cost of maintaining the crusading army for an additional year. He takes the figure of 85,000 marks again from the treaty for transportation. However, this included the cost of building the fleet, as well as provisioning the army for a year. Carile assumes, moreover, an army of 33,500 men (not counting the Venetians) in Constantinople.

²⁵ Robert of Clari, XI, p. 10.

²⁶ *Gesta Episcoporum Halberstadensium*, MGH SS, XVIII, 18 (hereafter cited as Anonymous of Halberstadt). *Devastatio Constantinopolitana*, ed. Charles Hopf, in *Chroniques Greco-Romanes* (Berlin, 1873), p. 88 (hereafter cited as *Devastatio*).

had paid for the passage of those present; it was not their fault if others had failed to appear. If the Venetians would transport them, they were ready; if not, they would seek ships elsewhere. To counter this, the barons ordered a second collection to which they contributed not only money but also gold and silver vessels, which were borne off to the doge's palace. Yet, they still lacked 34,000 marks of the 85,000 originally owed.²⁷

Many of those who dissented from the judgment of the leaders chose to return home or to carry out the threat to seek other ports. Driven by lack of money, food, and generally unhealthy conditions, they made their separate ways.²⁸ Among the defectors was Villehardouin's nephew, also called Geoffrey, who crossed directly to Syria.²⁹ Villehardouin, without mentioning his nephew, charges the defectors with wanting to break up the army, but this is the harshness of a partisan.³⁰ The defectors were far from villainous men, and they held a simpler and more individualistic view of the crusade than did the marshal of Champagne and the leaders. Those who returned home excused themselves by reason of necessity. Those who sailed for Syria may have gotten wind of the planned Egyptian landing; in any case, considering the financial difficulties facing them in Venice, they believed that they chose the most direct way of fulfilling their vows.

The doge, recognizing that his demand for payment was creating hostilities which might preclude the crusaders' debt ever being paid, then proposed that payment of the remaining 34,000 marks would be deferred if the crusaders would help the Venetians conquer Zara. Villehardouin reports that the plan, which was kept secret among the chief men, was strongly contested by those leaders who wished to disperse the army.³¹ Robert of Clari and other common people knew only that the doge had agreed to postpone the debt until payment could be made out of the profits of conquest; they did not know of the proposed attack on Zara.³² Word of the agreement of the doge and the barons to attack Zara apparently did leak out among some of the host, however, for Gunther of Pairis reports disaffection, and adds that many of the poor now decided to return home. Some of the richer pilgrims, not willing to soil their consciences and risk excommunication by attacking the lands of a Christian king, Emeric of Hungary, who had himself taken the cross, also turned back. Not only was the army at Venice deprived of these crusaders, but on their homeward journey they encountered Germans and others who were either on their way to join the host in Venice or were hesitating in Lombardy to see how matters de-

²⁷ Villehardouin, 59–60 (I, 60–62).

²⁸ *Devastatio*, p. 87. Gunther of Pairis, *Historia Captae a Latinis Constantinopoleos*, in *Exuviae Sacrae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. Paul Riant, 3 vols. (Geneva, 1877–1904), I, 71 (hereafter cited as Gunther of Pairis).

²⁹ *Chronique de Morée, Livre de la conquête de la princée de l'Amorée*, Jean Longnon, ed. (Paris, 1911), p. vi.

³⁰ Villehardouin, 85 and 100 (I, 84–86 and 100).

³¹ Villehardouin, 63 (I, 64–66).

³² Robert of Clari, XII, p. 11.

veloped. Hearing the news of the expedition to Zara, they remained in a waiting position, sought Apulian ports, or joined the homeward trek, but did not proceed to Venice.³³

When Martin, the Cistercian abbot of Pairis, learned of the designs upon Zara, he became so troubled in conscience that he begged the papal legate Peter Capuano to absolve him from his vow and to permit him to return to the accustomed quiet of his cloister. The legate, a man more accustomed to moral compromise, absolutely refused the request. He even imposed upon Martin responsibility for all the Germans in the host. In no case should he or other monks abandon the army; they should remain with it and try as much as possible to prevent the shedding of Christian blood. Martin, having been denied his wish for moral security in the womb of his monastery, submitted, as he had to, with sighs and a grieving heart.³⁴ Another churchman opposed to the expedition to Zara, Conrad of Krosigk, Bishop of Halberstadt, also sought Cardinal Capuano's counsel. He was told that the pope preferred overlooking the proposed wrong in the interest of preserving the crusade, and that Conrad also should not withdraw from the crusading army.³⁵

When the fleet finally did set sail for Zara at the beginning of October, both Stephen of Perche and Matthew of Montmorency were left behind ill. Stephen's vessel, the *Violet*, sank at once. Stephen may have been injured in the mishap, or else he had already been incapacitated in Venice and was not aboard. As soon as Matthew was well, he rejoined the army before Zara; but Stephen joined those who defected from the leadership. In March of 1203 he proceeded to Apulia and thence took ship with many others directly for Palestine. After the fall of the Byzantine capital, he rejoined the leadership to serve in defense of the conquest and to claim a share in the division of fiefs.³⁶

Thus, as knowledge of the plan to attack Zara spread, the first manifestations of true discontent with the leadership of the crusade appeared. The large majority of those who had failed to join the army at Venice had done so for reasons of economy, convenience, or, in the case of Walter of Brienne's company, because they had become entangled in other affairs. These crusaders should not be regarded as dissenters or defectors. Only a few of those who had failed to appear in Venice may have done so because of belief and conscience. Now, however, because crusaders did not want to go where their leaders planned, true dissension and defection began to penetrate the host like a plague.

³³ Gunther of Pairis, p. 80.

³⁴ Gunther of Pairis, p. 73. Elizabeth A. R. Brown, "The Cistercians in the Latin Empire of Constantinople and Greece," *Traditio*, xiv (New York, 1958), 73, n. 44.

³⁵ Anonymous of Halberstadt, p. 117. For the bishop of Halberstadt's preaching after the failure of the second attack upon Constantinople on 9 April 1204, see Robert of Clari, LXXIII, pp. 71-72.

³⁶ Concerning Stephen's sickness and his defection to Apulia with Rotrou of Montfort and Yves of La Jaille, and his later taking ship for Syria in March of 1203, see Villehardouin, 79 (1, 80). Stephen's return to Constantinople after its fall with Renaud of Montmirail is also mentioned by Villehardouin: 315 (II, 124). See also, *Devastatio*, p. 88.

ZARA

The Venetians and the crusaders laid siege to Zara on 11 November 1202. Boniface of Montferrat and Peter Capuano, the secular and ecclesiastical leaders of the crusade, respectively, remained conspicuously absent to avoid lending the sanction of the church to the undertaking. On 12 November, emissaries from the Zarans, who had closed the city's gates and taken up arms when the fleet had been sighted, went to Dandolo and offered to surrender their city in exchange for their lives. The doge replied that he could not accept the surrender without consulting his allies.³⁷ Among the crusaders, however, qualms of conscience had become more widespread over attacking Catholic Zara.³⁸ Among those who set themselves against it were a number of clergy and white monks, led by Abbot Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay, and some laymen, of whom the most important were Count Simon of Montfort and Lord Enguerrand of Boves. They undercut the negotiations for the surrender of the city. Simon and others spoke to the representatives of Zara, reassuring them that the crusaders would not do harm to Christians. If the Zarans could resist only the Venetians, they would be safe enough, so they should not surrender their city.³⁹ The dissidents also sent Robert of Boves, Enguerrand's brother, under the walls of Zara to declare the same to those within. The relieved Zaran envoys departed without taking leave, uncereimoniously ending negotiations.⁴⁰

Angrily, Dandolo charged the barons that some of their number had deprived him of the city that lay within his grasp. He summoned them to honor their word with their arms. At this point the abbot of Vaux-de-Cernay stood up in the council and forbade the attack on Zara in the name of the pope and under threat of excommunication. Abbot Guy probably had in his hands Innocent's negative response to the news of the planned attack, concerning which Peter Capuano and Boniface of Montferrat had informed the pope.⁴¹ The abbot's declaration caused a violent scene, and the enraged Venetians were about to fall upon him when Count Simon interposed himself to protect him. The doge angrily retorted that he would not give up his revenge upon Zara, excommunicated or not.

³⁷ Villehardouin, 77–80 (I, 78–80). Robert of Clari, XIV, pp. 13–14.

³⁸ Because Zara belonged to the Christian king of Hungary, Emeric, who had also taken the cross, Abbot Martin and other crusaders found the attack "detestable": Gunther of Paris, p. 74. *Supra*, pp. 448–449.

³⁹ Petrus Vallis Cernaii, *Hystoria Albigensis*, P. Guébin and E. Lyon, ed., *Société de l'Histoire de France*, I (Paris, 1926), 109 (hereafter cited as Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay). Villehardouin, 81 (I, 82).

⁴⁰ Villehardouin, 80–83 (I, 80–84).

⁴¹ Robert of Clari, XIV, p. 14, states that Zara had secured a letter from Innocent III saying that anyone who should attack them would be excommunicated, and they sent this letter to the doge and the pilgrims. This may have been the source of Abbot Guy's denunciation; or, it may be a distortion by Robert of the facts as we have interpreted them; or, there may have been two letters: one to the Zarans and one sent via the abbot of Locedio to the host.

The legate earlier had stated to the bishop of Halberstadt that the pope preferred overlooking the proposed wrong in order to preserve the crusade: *Supra*, p. 449. Although we believe that Peter Capuano did accurately reflect papal policy, the pope could not publicly condone the attack. See Achille Luchaire, *Innocent III: la question d'Orient* (Paris, 1907), pp. 99–100, 106–109, 125–126. Mr Queller and George Stow are dealing with the policies of the legate and the pope in another article.

Again he demanded that the crusaders keep their word, and the "barons all answered that they would gladly help him, except for Count Simon of Montfort and Lord Enguerrand of Boves, who said that they would not go against the commandments of the Holy See, nor did they want to become excommunicated."⁴² They and their followers therefore encamped at a distance from the city apart from the host.⁴³

Although Martin of Pairis reported that the crusaders went about their work of conquest with heavy hearts,⁴⁴ the city fell on 24 November. Because their attack upon a Christian city appeared to be in violation of the prohibition of the pope, the crusaders feared that they had fallen under automatic excommunication; thus, they dispatched an embassy to Rome to seek absolution.⁴⁵ One of the envoys, the same Robert of Boves who had urged the Zarans not to yield, refused to rejoin the army at Zara, and went directly to Acre.⁴⁶ The choice of Robert, whose sentiments seem to have been known, is a puzzle. Abbot Martin of Pairis was another who accompanied the mission, although it is uncertain that he was an official member of it.⁴⁷ Perhaps Martin represented only the German contingent, whereas the four envoys named by Villehardouin either represented the whole army or the French-Flemish portion of it, since all of them were from the latter group. The abbot, at any rate, failed to return to the host. His conscience was troubled about the course of the expedition, and he had tried to gain relief from his vows from the papal legate.⁴⁸ At the Roman curia he again sought permission to return to the quiet of his monastery, but the pope insisted that he fulfill his vow. When he left Rome, he went to Benevento, where he joined the legate to await the outcome of the crusader-Hohenstaufen negotiations at Zara. When the scheme to aid young Alexius to the Byzantine throne was adopted, the legate and the abbot sailed together from Siponto for Acre.⁴⁹ Finally, on 1 January 1204, Martin rejoined the army before Constantinople to seek aid for the Holy Land, and later joined in the looting of sacred relics during the sack of the city, 13–15 April 1204.⁵⁰

Late in December of 1202, envoys from Philip of Swabia and his brother-in-

⁴² Robert of Clari, XIV, p. 14.

⁴³ Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, pp. 108–109.

⁴⁴ Gunther of Pairis, p. 74.

⁴⁵ Gunther of Pairis, p. 76, and Robert of Clari, XV, p. 15, place the departure of the embassy for Rome before the arrival of the Hohenstaufen-Alexian delegation, while Villehardouin, 105 (I, 104–106), appears to reverse the order. We believe, however, that Geoffrey has not written in simple chronological sequence, but has clustered together events that bear upon single subjects.

⁴⁶ Robert of Clari, XV, p. 15. Villehardouin, 106 (I, 106). Ernoul, p. 351, has Robert of Boves as the single envoy, which is not true, although it is easy to see how Ernoul received that impression from his Syrian vantage point.

⁴⁷ Only Gunther of Pairis, p. 74, names Martin among the envoys; but Gunther is confused, for he omits the lay members of the mission named by Villehardouin, 105–106 (I, 104–106).

⁴⁸ *Supra*, p. 449.

⁴⁹ Gunther of Pairis, pp. 79–80. See also Edmond Faral's criticism of Gunther's account of Abbot Martin's role and movements in "Geoffroy de Villehardouin: la question de sa sincérité," *Revue historique*, CLXXVII (1936), 542, n. 2.

⁵⁰ Gunther of Pairis, pp. 83, 104–107 and 120–121.

law, the young refugee prince Alexius, arrived at Zara. The envoys bore the mutually advantageous proposal by which the young pretender would gain his inheritance, presently held by his usurper-uncle, Alexius III, and the crusaders would receive men and money for their expedition to the Holy Land.⁵¹ The presentation of this proposal, however, had excited new dissension between the factions in the crusading army.

The faction opposed to the proposal to aid young Alexius was led by Simon of Montfort, who saw himself as the staunch defender of papal policy and Catholic morality. Abbot Guy, who was closely attached to the count of Montfort, asserted that those of his party would never consent to the plan, for they had not left home to fall upon Christians but to go to Syria. The abbot, as in his courageous resistance to the assault upon Zara, conceived himself as representing the papal will. The abbot of Cercanceaux was also of this faction. The opposing party responded that they could accomplish nothing in Syria, for it could be recovered only by going to Egypt or Greece. Simon, abbot of Loos, a follower of Baldwin of Flanders, earnestly prayed the host to hold together and to accept the proposal of the envoys. His pleas and the influence of the greater men finally brought about its adoption, although only twelve of the chief men would affix their signatures to the conventions. Villehardouin comments that it was no wonder that the laity were in discord, since the Cistercians themselves were at odds.⁵²

The decision of a few leaders to accept the offer by no means put an end to the debate. There remained much dissension in the camp, especially among the poorer pilgrims, who naturally suffered much more from the financial difficulties and delays than did the rich.⁵³ Some of them had not been able to meet the cost of the journey and had been subsidized with funds collected by the church. These had obligated themselves not to return home without letters from the king of Jerusalem or the patriarch, the master of the Hospital or the Temple, or the papal legate, attesting that they had completed their pilgrimage. Otherwise they would have to repay the money.⁵⁴ The poor mistrusted the Venetians and their own leaders, who, they were coming to believe, were more interested in material gain than in the holy cause. The rich were betraying the crusade, which was really the special privilege and calling of the poor, as the preacher Fulk of Neuilly had told them.⁵⁵

Under pressure the leaders did grant permission for about a thousand to leave the host and find their own way to fulfill their vows. Orders were given that no more should leave the camp, but orders could not suffice to check the flight of dissidents. Over a thousand more deserted.⁵⁶ Villehardouin takes evident pleasure

⁵¹ Villehardouin, 91–94 (I, 90–94). Anonymous of Halberstadt, p. 118.

⁵² Villehardouin, 95–99 (I, 94–100).

⁵³ *Devastatio*, p. 88.

⁵⁴ Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, William Stubbs, ed., Rolls Series, *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores*, 4 vols. (London, 1868–1871), IV, 111.

⁵⁵ Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (2nd ed., New York, 1961), p. 76. Paul Alphandéry, *La Chrétienté et l'idée de croisade*, II (Paris, 1959), 64–65, 273.

⁵⁶ *Devastatio*, p. 88; the figures may be exaggerations, but they do show that there existed a deep dissatisfaction within the ranks of the army.

in reporting that five hundred of the lesser soldiers who sought escape on an undoubtedly overloaded merchant ship were drowned and that others who tried to escape overland were attacked by peasants, who killed many and forced the others to flee back to the host at Zara.⁵⁷

Not all of the defectors were common folk. A highly ranked German knight, Garnier of Borland, managed to get passage on a merchant ship. He was blamed as a deserter by Villehardouin's party.⁵⁸ Prominent among the dissenters was Renaud of Montmirail, Louis of Blois' cousin. With Louis' support he was given permission to head an embassy to the Holy Land. He was accompanied by Hervé of Châtel, his nephew, and William of Ferrières, vidame of Chartres and subsequently Grand-Master of the Templars, as well as by Geoffrey of Beaumont, the brothers John and Peter of Frouville, and many others. Why a member of this dissident faction was given such a charge is a puzzle, like the sending of Robert of Boves to Rome. Perhaps the leadership hoped that Renaud would become convinced himself, then would convince his friends, that nothing could be accomplished in Jerusalem at that time. They may also have wished to display to the dissidents that the agreement with Alexius had not changed the ultimate goal of the expedition. Renaud and his companions promised that within fifteen days after they had delivered their messages they would return to the army. They did not, and nothing more was heard of them until after the conquest of Constantinople.⁵⁹

Perhaps the most notable of the defectors was the famous and powerful Count Simon of Montfort, who had so bitterly opposed the attack upon Zara. There is considerable confusion over the date of his defection, but it probably occurred during the winter, sometime after the conclusion of the treaty with the envoys of Alexius.⁶⁰ He was joined by his brother Guy, the abbots of Vaux-de-Cernay and Cercanceaux, and others.⁶¹ Enguerrand of Boves also defected at Zara, perhaps a little later.⁶² According to Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, Simon and his party made their way with great suffering by land up the coast of the Adriatic to Italy. In Apulia Simon hired ships to take his men to Syria.⁶³ The defection of so many knights and their followers was a grievous loss to the army.

The capture of Zara and the agreement to intervene at Constantinople in favor of Alexius aroused real moral dissatisfaction with the course of the crusade.

⁵⁷ Villehardouin, 101 (I, 100–102). The *Devastatio*, p. 88, reports that two ships were lost.

⁵⁸ Villehardouin, 101 (I, 100–102).

⁵⁹ Villehardouin, 102 (I, 102). *Devastatio*, p. 88.

⁶⁰ See Edmond Faral's discussion in Villehardouin, I, 112, n. 1; and Edgar McNeal's in Robert of Clari, p. 44, n. 27. Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, p. 110; *Devastatio*, p. 88.

⁶¹ Again there is much confusion among the sources. Ernoul, XXXII, p. 341, lists Renaud of Montmirail and Stephen of Perche. We know from Villehardouin, however, that Renaud went to the Holy Land at the head of the embassy discussed above. Stephen of Perche did not defect with Simon, for he was ill in Venice when the fleet sailed: *Supra*, p. 449. Stephen might possibly have sailed with Simon, however, since he did take ship from Apulia for Syria in the spring of 1203, as did Simon: Villehardouin, 79 (I, 81).

⁶² Villehardouin, 109 (I, 110–112).

⁶³ Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, p. 110.

Poverty was no longer as strong a factor as it had been at Venice in causing men to defect, although it did cause discontent. At Zara the poor found it difficult to leave the host, for they had to find money for passage on a merchant vessel or somehow supply themselves for an overland journey. Yet many were so disaffected that they somehow found the means.⁶⁴ The confusion, dissatisfaction, and dissension that were so rampant at Zara continued at Corfu and later before the very walls of Constantinople.

THE FLEMISH FLEET AND THE FRENCH WHO SAILED FROM MARSEILLES

Another very serious loss to the crusading army was the fleet that had sailed from Flanders in the spring of 1202 under John of Nesle, the castellan of Bruges, Thierry, son of Count Philip of Flanders, and Nicholas of Mailly.⁶⁵ This defection represents one of the most enigmatic issues of the Fourth Crusade. It scarcely seems logical that Count Baldwin of Flanders, one of the main leaders, a signatory of the Venetian treaty, and the baron who gave most generously of his own wealth to attempt to make up the deficit owed the Venetians,⁶⁶ would have contributed to the plight of the army by sending a part of his own force by another route. Yet he did divide his troops, leading perhaps half of them to Venice himself, while the remainder sailed from Flanders. Possibly only half of Baldwin's men had been taken into consideration in the calculation, or miscalculation, of the number expected at Venice. Another possibility is that the Flemish fleet had not originally been intended to sail to the Levant, but only to transport the Flemings to Venice for transshipment, although this does not seem a very practical arrangement. At any rate, Baldwin counted heavily upon the many good sergeants on board the ships from Flanders.

After a slow and difficult passage through the Straits of Gibraltar,⁶⁷ the fleet captured an unnamed Muslim city and took great booty on the North African shore, leaving the town in the safe-keeping of the Brothers of the Sword.⁶⁸ The Flemings arrived at Marseilles in early fall to pass the winter of 1202/1203 there. The leaders sent messengers to Baldwin at Zara to inform him of their whereabouts and to seek his instructions. They arrived not long after the debate on the proposal to sail to Constantinople to enthrone young Alexius and shortly before the news of Innocent III's relaxation of the threatened excommunication for the attack on Zara reached the camp.⁶⁹ Baldwin commanded the fleet to set

⁶⁴ Roberto Cessi, "Venezia e la quarta crociata," *Archivio Veneto*, 5th series, XLVIII-XLIX (1951), 34.

⁶⁵ Villehardouin, 48-49 (I, 50-52), refers to all three as *chevataines* of the *estoit*, but later, 103 (I, 102-104), calls John of Nesle the *chevataine* of the *ost*. Nicholas of Mailly later rejoined the crusaders at Constantinople after its fall on 12 April 1204: Villehardouin, 322 and 388 (II, 130 and 196-198).

⁶⁶ Villehardouin's reference to Baldwin's generosity concerning the deficit owed at Venice: 61 (I, 62-64).

⁶⁷ Bad weather made sailing difficult throughout the summer of 1202. See *Roberti Canonici S. Mariani Autissiodorensis Chronicon*, MGH SS, xxvi, 261.

⁶⁸ Ernoul, XXXII, p. 352.

⁶⁹ Villehardouin, 103 (I, 104).

sail at the end of March and to rendezvous with the Venetian fleet off Modon at the southwestern corner of the Peloponnesus near the place where the routes for Egypt and Constantinople diverged.⁷⁰ It may be assumed that the messengers also carried back to Marseilles news of the feared excommunication and of the proposal to go to Constantinople, and that the Flemings at Marseilles re-enacted the heated debate that had occurred at Zara over the Constantinopolitan adventure. But this time those who were determined to go directly to Palestine prevailed, and when warm weather arrived, the Flemish fleet sailed directly for Syrian waters.

Countess Marie of Flanders, Baldwin's wife, has been wrongly associated with this Flemish fleet.⁷¹ The confusion rests upon a misreading of Villehardouin, who says that Marie took ship from Marseilles sometime after the birth of her daughter Margaret.⁷² The fleet arrived in Palestine in the spring of 1203, probably before 25 April,⁷³ whereas Marie remained in Flanders and Hainaut at least until 9 July 1203.⁷⁴ She probably arrived in Acre in the late spring of 1204, for she had just landed when messengers brought news of Baldwin's election as emperor at Constantinople, which occurred on 9 May 1204.⁷⁵

The fleet from Venice did not leave Zara until shortly after Easter, 6 April 1203, and did not depart from Corfu until 26 May, so it could not have reached

⁷⁰ Villehardouin, 103 (I, 104).

⁷¹ Hurter, *Storia*, II, 238, n. 491.

⁷² Villehardouin, 103 (I, 104). Only one chronicle connects Marie with this fleet: *Ex . . . Chronico Sythiensi Sancti-Bertini ex Joannis Iperii*, M.-J.-J. Brial, ed., in *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France* (hereafter cited as *Recueil*), XVIII (Paris, 1822), 601.

⁷³ Gunther of Pairis, p. 80, states that abbot Martin of Pairis arrived in Acre on that date, and he does not mention the arrival of the Flemings after that time as he probably would have done if they had arrived after Martin.

⁷⁴ *Table chronologique des chartes et diplômes imprimés concernant l'histoire de la Belgique*, in *Collection de chroniques Belges inédites* (CCBI), XII: part 3, Alphonse Wauters, ed. (Brussels, 1871), 184, dated 1202 [the original is in *Analectes pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique de la Belgique*, III (1864–1899), 188]. CCBI, XII, part 3, 192–193, dated Feb. 1203 [the original is in Léopold Devillers, *Mémoire sur un cartulaire et sur les archives de l'abbaye d'Alne*, extr. des *Annales du Cercle archéologique de Mons*, v (1865), 252]. *Actes et documents anciens intéressant la Belgique*, nouvelle série, Charles Duvivier, ed. (Brussels, 1903), no. 184, p. 340, dated 9 July 1203: "Ego M., Flandrie et Hanonie comitissa, . . . nisi interim dominus meus comes vel ego de peregrinatione nostra redierimus, et usque ad predictum terminum dominus Willelmus, patruus domini mei comitis, villam et homines ville debet in pace custodire et debita justicia manutenere. . . ." For other documents by Marie as regent see: B. Hendrickx, "Het regentschap over Vlaanderen en Henegouwen na het vertrek van Boudewijn IX (VI) op kruisvaart (1202–1211)," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, XLVIII (1970), 382.

Before the end of 1203, Baldwin's uncle, William, began to issue documents as regent of Hainaut. Duvivier, *Actes*, nos. 195, p. 342, and 187, p. 344. *Chartes du Chapitre de Sainte-Waudru de Mons*, L. Devillers, ed., in CCBI, XXIX, i (Brussels, 1899), 90–92, dated 1204. *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Cambron*, in CCBI, v, ii, division 1, *Cartarum de Roseria*, J.-J. de Smet, ed. (Brussels, 1869), no. 11, pp. 359–360, dated 1204.

Those like Hendrickx who realize that Marie did not sail with the Flemish fleet assume her departure from Flanders in early 1204. None of the documents, however, place her in Flanders after 9 July 1203.

⁷⁵ Villehardouin, 317 (II, 126).

the rendezvous off Modon at the appointed time.⁷⁶ Hurter therefore argued that the Flemish fleet did follow the instructions of the count, and failing to find the Venetian fleet near Modon, naturally sailed directly for the Holy Land.⁷⁷ Both this old hypothesis and ours, that the Flemings defected from the leadership over the issue of young Alexius, lack documentary support, but both fit logically into the framework of documented events.⁷⁸

The Flemish fleet probably reached Acre before 25 April 1203, as previously stated.⁷⁹ At that time a truce was in effect between the Latin Kingdom and the Muslims⁸⁰ — the same truce that Renaud of Dampierre wanted the king to break — so the crusaders sought other employment. One contingent went to Tripoli and a second entered the service of the prince of Antioch, who was at war with the king of Armenia. John of Nesle, on the contrary, went to the aid of the Armenian ruler, and so came into conflict with many of his own countrymen. He was greatly criticized when his banners were seen before the besieged walls of Antioch, which was defended by his fellow crusaders.⁸¹ These activities raise the question that if the Flemings were so opposed to going to Constantinople, as we believe, why were they so ready to enter into another war between Christians? There are two factors which bear on the answer. First, by going to the Holy Land they had fulfilled their vows and so felt free to resume the normal fratricidal behavior of the feudal class. Second, they did not have to undertake the internecine war in the Holy Land at the side of excommunicants. When the truce with the Muslims was broken sometime before 5 November 1203,⁸² John of Nesle and the others hurried back to do battle with the Saracens.⁸³

A bizarre private enterprise was pursued by Baldwin, a knight in the Flemish fleet and a relative of Count Baldwin of Flanders. The eldest daughter of the last Greek emperor of Cyprus of the Comnenian line had been carried off to the West after her capture in 1191 by Richard Lion-Heart. Baldwin encountered her in Marseilles during the winter of 1202/1203, became enamored with her poten-

⁷⁶ Villehardouin, 108 and 119 (I, 110 and 122). *Gesta Episcoporum Halberstadensium* (Anonymous of Halberstadt), L. Weiland, ed., in *MGH SS*, xviii, 118. *Devastatio Constantinopolitana* (*Devastatio*), Charles Hopf, ed., in *Chroniques Greco-Romanes* (Berlin, 1873), p. 88.

⁷⁷ Hurter, *Storia*, II, 238.

⁷⁸ There was no way in which the Flemings could have known of Innocent's letter offering absolution to the crusaders, for it was not issued until near the end of March 1203, which is the date on which Baldwin had commanded the Flemings to set sail from Marseilles for the intended rendezvous at Modon: Villehardouin, 103 (I, 104).

However, one more possible cause of defection should be given some consideration: that the Flemings defected because they knew of the planned landing in Egypt, *infra*, p. 464. Knowing of the issue over Alexius as well as of the threatened excommunication by Innocent III, *supra*, pp. 451–452, may have added just enough weight to the Egyptian debarkation codicil to cause their estrangement from the Venetian fleet and their lord, Baldwin.

⁷⁹ *Supra*, p. 455.

⁸⁰ Ernoul, XXXII, p. 353.

⁸¹ Ernoul, XXXII, pp. 354–355.

⁸² Gunther of Pairis, pp. 82–83.

⁸³ Ernoul, XXXII, p. 356–357.

tial inheritance, and promptly married her.⁸⁴ Although he was among those who failed to obey Baldwin's order to rendezvous with the army of Venice, the knight had every confidence that he would have the support of the count of Flanders in his endeavor to gain Cyprus. This reveals a lot, we think, about the lack of discipline and fixed purpose in a crusading army. Not only was the commander's order ignored, but it was assumed that he would not mind and would even assist the private venture. Upon the Flemish fleet's arrival at Acre, the knight Baldwin hurried before King Amaury and demanded that he turn over the land of Cyprus. "Who is this beggar?" asked the king. "Let him clear out of here fast, if he values his life." This he did, joining other crusaders in the war between Antioch and Armenia.⁸⁵

In addition to the fleet from Flanders, a considerable body of French crusaders also took ship from Marseilles.⁸⁶ Like those who had sailed from Apulia, these French crusaders thought that they could make better arrangements elsewhere than Venice, and Marseilles offered a more accessible port.⁸⁷ While cost and convenience in themselves provided adequate incentives for their choice, the French at Marseilles, like the Flemings, were disquieted by the news of the negotiations at Zara. It is not absolutely clear that these French crusaders sailed from Marseilles in the company of the Flemings, but it seems more than probable.⁸⁸ They

⁸⁴ The continuator of William of Tyre, *L'Estoire de Eracles Empereur*, in *Recueil des historiens des croisades: occidentaux*, II (Paris, 1859), lib. XXXVIII, ch. 5, p. 256, engenders considerable confusion concerning the name of the Flemish knight. He writes that "li cuens de Saint Gile l'esposa" and then proceeds to talk about Baldwin, apparently confusing her first and second husbands, the first of whom was Raymond VI of Toulouse, Count of Saint Gilles. We are not even sure that the knight's name was Baldwin, for the same source says "il avait avec ces d'Amiens un chevalier qui était parent de l'empeur Baudouins avait nom." This could either mean that the knight was related to the emperor Baldwin or that the knight named Baldwin was related to the emperor. We have opted for the latter, but with some hesitation. We are grateful to James A. Brundage for helping us to untangle the knight's name — or, at least, to clarify the source of the confusion.

⁸⁵ Ernoul, XXXII, pp. 356–357. Louis de Mas-Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre* (Paris, 1852–1861), I, 156–160, relates the complete background and story of the incident.

⁸⁶ Villehardouin, 50 (I, 52–54), mentions Bernard of Moreuil, John of Villers, Hugh of Chaumont, Henry of Arraines, Walter of Saint-Denis and his brother, Hugh of Saint-Denis, Count Guy of Forez, Peter Bromont, and the Bishop of Autun.

⁸⁷ Ernoul, XXXI, p. 340. See Sir Charles Raymond Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, II (New York, 1949), 432–433: "Marseilles became a favorite point of departure for Western and Northern travellers to Syria; pilgrims from the North Sea coasts and the military monks of the Temple and the Hospital specially favored this route; and the Provençal pilots were among the first to make an open course out of sight of land across the Mediterranean. This shortening of landmen's agonies to a voyage of fifteen days, between Provence and Acre, begins in the middle of the twelfth century, but is only attempted in summer weather, and by the lighter class of vessels; heavier ships continue to coast along Italy, to pass through the Straits of Messina, and to touch at Crete, Rhodes, and Cyprus. . . . The Massiliots possessed, in 1190, a sufficient navy for the transport of the army of Coeur de Lion. . . ."

⁸⁸ Villehardouin, 48–50 (I, 50–54), places these two contingents in Marseilles at the same time: winter of 1202/1203. Later, the implication from Villehardouin, 229 (II, 28–30), is that the two fleets, those crusaders from Flanders and those who took ship from Marseilles, sailed together for Syria in early spring of 1203. Cf. Villehardouin, 230 (II, 30), and Ernoul, XXXII, p. 356.

likely sailed together for Acre and arrived there about mid-April 1203. Here they met others who had sailed directly to the Holy Land from various ports other than Venice, and set out with them in search of adventure. At least two of them, Bernard of Moreuil and John of Villers, were among those captured along with Renaud of Dampierre in the defeat at the hands of the Turks.⁸⁹

We conclude that the crusaders who failed to join the army at Venice, following Walter of Brienne or taking passage from Apulian ports or Marseilles, acted in good conscience, contrary to the allegations of Villehardouin.⁹⁰ Those in the count of Brienne's company planned to spend the interval before the crusade in Apulia and presumably to take ship from convenient ports in the South to join the crusaders sailing from Venice. Others who chose Apulian ports did so either because of the financial difficulties of the army at Venice or simply because they believed that they could find passage on easier terms. In addition to these motivations, the men of the Flemish fleet and the French who sailed from Marseilles also wished to avoid the excommunication that hung over the army at Zara and involvement in the Constantinople project. Thus, ideology and principle to a degree did contribute to the defection.

CORFU

The crusading fleet via Venice and Zara arrived at Corfu about 1 May 1203. Several days later young prince Alexius arrived, accompanied by the marquis of Montferrat and the Venetian doge, and was received warmly by most of the crusading leaders.⁹¹ But, although a few great men had sealed the covenants with the Hohenstaufen-Alexian envoys, the project to place young Alexius on the Byzantine throne did not have the support of all the important men, not to speak of the lesser knights and common people, who were more inclined to press on to Palestine. The pretender sought to arouse the compassion of the host by appearing before them on his knees as a suppliant,⁹² but the renewed proposal to assist Alexius to the Byzantine throne aroused only an uproar. The assembly got out of hand, the majority clamoring tumultuously to go on to Acre, shouting down the speakers for the opposing side. Robert of Clari quotes opponents of the proposal as saying: "Bah! What have we to do in Constantinople? We have our pilgrimage to make, and also our plan of going to Babylon or Alexandria. Moreover, our fleet is to follow us for only a year, and half of the year is already past."⁹³

⁸⁹ Villehardouin, 231 (II, 30–32), Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, p. 880.

⁹⁰ Villehardouin, 49, 85, and 100–101 (I, 52, 84–86, and 100–102). See also Jeanette M. A. Beer, *Villehardouin: Epic Historian* (Geneva, 1968), pp. 22–23.

⁹¹ Villehardouin, 113 (I, 116).

⁹² L. Usseglio, *I Marchesi di Montferrato*, II (Milan, 1926), 215–216. Hugo Comes Sancti-Pauli, *De Expugnata per Latinos Urbe Constantinopoli* (Hugh of St-Pol, *De Expugnata* . . .), in *Recueil*, XVIII, 517 [other copies of this letter by Hugh are: *De Capta Urbe Constantinopolitana*, in *Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum*, Edmond Martène and U. Durand, ed., I (Paris, 1717), 784–788; and *Annales Coloniensis maximi*, MGH SS, XVII, 812–814]. B. Hendrickx, "Les Chartes de Baudouin de Flandre," *Byzantina*, I (1969), 70, mistakenly assigns Hugh's *De Expugnata* . . . as pertaining to the charters signed at Zara between the Hohenstaufen-Alexian delegation instead of at Corfu between members of the leadership and the dissidents.

⁹³ Robert of Clari, XXXIII, p. 32. Apparently the year for which Venice owed the fleet began on 1

The proposed enterprise promised to be long and dangerous.⁹⁴ The dissenters argued that the refugee prince could not be restored without recourse to the sword and the shedding of blood, despite Alexius' assertion that he would be welcomed as the rightful heir.⁹⁵ Let those who were determined to be foresworn go to Constantinople. The dissenters would remain at Corfu and send word to Walter of Brienne in Apulia that he should send ships to take them to Brindisi.⁹⁶

Villehardouin lists as leaders of the dissenters Richard of Dampierre and his brother Eudes, Guy of Chappes and his nephew Clarembaud, Guy of Pesmes and his brother Aimon, Eudes of Champlitte, James of Avesnes, Peter of Amiens, Ogier of Saint-Chéron, William of Aunois, Guy of Conflans, Peter Coiseau, and Guy, the castellan of Coucy. Villehardouin, who would have every reason to minimize the opposition and to fix the blame on a few malcontents, admits that more than half the host refused to follow the leadership of the marquis of Montferrat, the counts of Flanders, Blois and Saint-Pol, and others of the pro-Alexian faction.⁹⁷ The leaders were now faced not merely with defections which weakened their army, but with its complete collapse.⁹⁸

The dissident majority withdrew from the camp and pitched their tents in a valley at a distance, firmly intending to send word to Walter of Brienne that they were prepared to serve him. Boniface of Montferrat urged those who wished to go to Constantinople to go to the camp of the dissidents, and to beg them humbly, for God's sake, to have pity on the army and not to dishonor themselves by being responsible for the failure of the crusade. The leaders of the expedition, along with Alexius, all the bishops and abbots, and many others went together to the valley

October 1202 with the sailing for Zara. In reporting the negotiation of the treaty for transportation, Villehardouin, 21 (I, 22-24), says that the doge offered food for nine months, although the treaty itself says a year. The *Chronicon Gallicum Ineditum*, in Tafel and Thomas, edd., *Urkunden*, I, 330, also speaks of nine months (this document is not accurately identified by Tafel and Thomas). If we reconcile these by accepting that Villehardouin was subtracting the three months from the scheduled date of sailing to 1 October, during the time the Venetians did feed the crusaders, then, at the time of the dispute at Corfu, the Venetians only owed supplies for two months or less. But then there would be a conflict with the *Devastatio*, p. 87, which specifically points to the sale of grain in Venice at inflated prices to the crusaders while encamped on the Lido. This seems to bolster the fact that the one year period for the supply of food began on 1 October 1202. Mr Queller is, therefore, no longer convinced that the discrepancy between the year of the treaty and the nine months of Villehardouin can be reconciled by subtracting the three months from 29 June to 1 October: see, D. E. Queller, "L'évolution du rôle de l'Ambassadeur . . .," *Le Moyen Age*, xix (1961), 490, n. 28.

⁹⁴ Villehardouin, 113 (I, 116).

⁹⁵ Gunther of Pairis, p. 77. See, *Concilium Narbonense, AD 1054*, in *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, J. D. Mansi, ed. (Paris, 1901-1927), xix, col. 827, cap. I: "quia qui Christianum occidit, sine dubio Christi sanguinem fundit." For a discussion of this, see H. E. J. Cowdrey, "The Peace and the Truce of God in the Eleventh Century," *Past and Present*, xlvI (1970), 42-67.

⁹⁶ Villehardouin, 113 (I, 116).

⁹⁷ Villehardouin, 114 (I, 116-118). Villehardouin tells us elsewhere, 229 (II, 28-30), that more than 50% of the entire crusading host defected at various times. Almost all of these were prior to the dispute at Corfu. We may therefore conclude that at least 75% of the whole army had defected or now threatened to defect.

⁹⁸ Villehardouin, 115 (I, 118).

where the dissidents were encamped.⁹⁹ There followed one of Villehardouin's dramatic scenes.¹⁰⁰ When the party of the leaders arrived, they dismounted, and the dissidents, who were also mounted and possibly even feared attack, also descended from their horses to greet their comrades. The chief men who wished to go to Constantinople then fell to their knees, protesting with many tears that they would not rise until those who had withdrawn would promise not to abandon the army. According to the marshal of Champagne, the dissidents had great pity on the suppliants, and they too shed many tears. They agreed to talk it over among themselves and withdrew to a distance. Afterwards, they returned with an offer to go to Constantinople, but only on condition that they would remain there no more than a month unless they consented to an extension of time. The leaders should swear on the Gospels, moreover, that any time after Saint Michael's day, 29 September 1203, ships for transportation to the Holy Land would be provided, in good faith and without any tricks, within fifteen days of their being requested. The leaders argued that a public act setting a term for their departure was not wise, for then the Greeks would know it to the disadvantage of the crusaders. The dissidents, however, having been put off time and time again, insisted that public guarantees be given,¹⁰¹ and so they were.¹⁰² The fleet sailed for Constantinople on 26 May 1203.

CONSTANTINOPLE

Dissent among the crusaders was now quieted until after the first conquest of Constantinople and the coronation of prince Alexius, which took place on 1 August 1203. Soon thereafter, the young emperor came to the crusaders' camp on the north shore of the Golden Horn to make a new proposal. He explained that his Greek subjects hated him because he had gained the throne with Latin aid. Many hated him so much, he said, that if his protectors abandoned him now, the Greeks would surely kill him. Alexius knew, of course, that the time for departure set by the dissidents at Corfu was near at hand and that the crusaders' contract with the Venetians was about to expire. Their projected sailing for the Holy Land was therefore imminent. He could not, however, fulfill his promises to aid them with men, money and supplies by 29 September or 14 October. Apart from his problems in the capital, he and his father controlled little beyond Con-

⁹⁹ Paul Riant, "Innocent III, Philippe de Souabe et Boniface de Montferrat," *Revue des questions historiques*, XVIII (Paris, 1875), 36–37, argues that in this crisis Alexius was compelled to bribe the leaders to keep them to their agreement.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 35–36. Riant here charges Villehardouin with using these dramatic scenes in order to resolve the critical situations in his account.

¹⁰¹ Hugh of Saint-Pol, *De Expugnata* . . . , p. 517.

¹⁰² Villehardouin, 113–118 (I, 116–120). Anonymous of Halberstadt, p. 118. Robert of Clari, XXXIX, p. 40. Villehardouin, 99 (I, 98–100), states that there were only twelve crusaders willing to sign the agreement at Zara between the minor Alexius and the crusaders. However, at Corfu, Hugh of Saint-Pol, *De Capta Urbe Constantinopolitana*, p. 784, names seventeen who signed the agreement with the dissidents and states that in all "pauci fuerunt plusquam viginti." However, Count Hugh of Saint-Pol, *De Expugnata* . . . , p. 517 and n.d., does not mention himself or Baldwin of Flanders as being among the signees, but they undoubtedly were.

stantinople. He therefore proposed that the crusaders and Venetians remain in his service until the following March. He would pay for the retention of the Venetian fleet for another year, until 29 September 1204. He would also supply them all until March, when they would be free to resume their pilgrimage with the whole summer campaigning season before them. The leaders realized that these proposals made sense, but after all the dissension which had torn their expedition, they dared not make a decision without consulting the host.

On the next day, the leaders summoned all the other barons and most of the knights to an assembly, where they informed them of the emperor's request. As had been anticipated, heated discussion ensued. Those who felt strongly compelled to accomplish their long-deferred vows promptly were understandably outraged. At Corfu they had been won over only at the sight of their leaders on their knees and in tears, promising that as soon as Alexius was restored, the pilgrimage would be resumed. Now they said to their leaders: "Give us the ships as you swore to do, for we wish to go off to Syria." The leaders were swayed by more complex considerations, and they argued that if they sailed to Palestine, winter would soon be upon them and they could accomplish nothing. Moreover, they needed the provisions and the aid promised by Alexius. Finally, the installation of an emperor in Constantinople who was committed to the Latins and to the crusade was too great an accomplishment to risk losing by denying him their support for another six months. Most of the dissidents were won over again, however reluctantly, and they agreed to the requested extension. "Thus peace and concord were established in the army."¹⁰³

This agreement prevailed until after the young emperor had been deposed and slain by the anti-Latin usurper of the throne, Alexius Mourtzouphlus. In consequence of Alexius IV's murder, the Latins unsuccessfully assaulted Constantinople on Friday, 9 April 1204. As a result of their failure to breach the walls, a wave of fear swept the crusading army, infecting even the leadership. Shortly after their retreat to the northern side of the harbor, the barons and the doge gathered in a church to determine what should be done. Villehardouin states that the French were extremely upset by their defeat.¹⁰⁴ Some thought that it was God's punishment upon them for their sins. The bishops and abbots assured them that the war against Byzantium was just, for the Greeks had rebelled against the true church.¹⁰⁵ Through sermons, the clergy sought to rally the host. The Greeks, they preached, were "traitors and murderers and disloyal, since they had murdered their rightful lord [Alexius IV], and they were worse than the Jews." They commanded the pilgrims to attack them as enemies of God.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Villehardouin, 197 and 199 (I, 200 and 202). The English quotation is from M. R. B. Shaw, *Joinville and Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades* (Baltimore, 1963), pp. 77–78.

¹⁰⁴ Villehardouin, 238 (II, 38). Robert of Clari, LXXI–LXXII, pp. 70–71.

¹⁰⁵ Pope Innocent III, *Epistola CI* (222), in *PL*, ccxv, 106–107, had specifically repudiated this argument, but the clergy in the field had to make do with any justification they could find. Villehardouin is silent about the preaching, but Robert of Clari, LXXIII, pp. 71–72, lays great stress upon it.

¹⁰⁶ Robert of Clari, LXXII, p. 72.

Villehardouin reports that when the doge argued that they could not try the sea walls along the Bosphorus lest the strong current sweep them into the open sea, some would have been glad to be swept away, no matter where, as long as it would be away from where they were. He admits that this was not surprising, since they really were in great danger. The advice of the doge, that they again attack the walls facing the harbor, prevailed, however, and on Monday they penetrated the fortifications: Constantinople fell to the crusaders on that day, 12 April 1204.¹⁰⁷

RETURNEES

Some of those who had failed to join the host at Venice or who had later defected from it to go directly to Syria later rejoined it. The first was a sergeant who had been among those sailing from Marseilles in the early spring of 1203. As the Venetian fleet rounded Cape Malea in late May or very early June of that year, it encountered two ships filled with pilgrims returning from Syria. They had found in Saint-Jean d'Acre a raging plague, no doubt spread by the numerous pilgrims coming and going via the Levantine port. Probably the pilgrims on the two ships were hastily returning home in flight from the epidemic.¹⁰⁸ According to Villehardouin, who was prejudiced against them, they did not want to make themselves known to those whom they had betrayed. However, Count Baldwin sent the small boat from his ship to inquire who they were. The sergeant jumped over the rail of his ship into the small boat, calling back to his companions on board: "You men can do what you like with anything I have left behind. I am going with these people, for it certainly seems to me that they will win some land for themselves." The crusaders naturally rejoiced over this prodigal son returned to his duty.¹⁰⁹

Another returnee was Martin, the Cistercian abbot of Pairis, who had proceeded to Saint-Jean d'Acre. When he landed there on 25 April 1203, he found many of the same Germans who had been committed to his charge by the papal legate Peter Capuano at Venice, and other nobles whom he had known in Germany. He, too, arrived in the midst of the plague. Unlike the aforementioned sergeant, Martin remained at Acre for six months ministering to the sick and dying. About the beginning of November the truce between the Christians and the Muslims in the Holy Land was broken, the Muslims seizing two Christian ships and the Christians despoiling six Muslim ships in retaliation. Open warfare followed. Particularly since the plague had weakened the defenses of the Christians, an embassy headed by Abbot Martin and Conrad of Swartzenberg, was sent to Constantinople on 8 November 1203 to seek aid from the crusading army encamped there.¹¹⁰ When they arrived in Constantinople on 1 January 1204, they found the army in deep trouble, engaged in a series of skirmishes against the Greeks preliminary to the great battle for the city. No man could

¹⁰⁷ Villehardouin, 239 and 248 (II, 40 and 50).

¹⁰⁸ For the plague and the health conditions at Acre, see Gunther of Pairis, pp. 80–82.

¹⁰⁹ Villehardouin, 121–122 (I, 124), The translation is by Shaw, *Joinville and Villehardouin*, p. 57.

¹¹⁰ Gunther of Pairis, p. 83.

then be spared for the Holy Land. Martin remained with the army before Constantinople and joined in the sack of the city on 13–15 April 1204. Shortly after its fall, he departed for Germany and his monastery at Pairis laden with the relics which had been his plunder.¹¹¹

After the fall of Constantinople and the election of Count Baldwin of Flanders as emperor, great numbers of pilgrims came from Syria to the Latin Empire to aid in its defense and to claim fiefs as their reward. Among them were Stephen of Perche, who had remained behind ill at Venice, and Renaud of Montmirail, who had failed to return to Zara from his mission to the Christians of the Levant. Renaud's kinsman Count Louis of Blois and the other barons welcomed them both, and Stephen was granted the duchy of Philadelphia. Both were shortly slain, however, along with the brave Count Louis, at the battle of Adrianople where Emperor Baldwin was captured.¹¹²

Geoffrey of Villehardouin, the chronicler's nephew, set sail from the Holy Land with Stephen, Renaud, and many others. A storm separated the ships at sea, however, and Geoffrey landed at Modon in the Morea. A Greek noble offered him an alliance, and together they conquered some of the Morea. When this noble died in 1205, his son led the Greeks against Geoffrey. Boniface of Montferrat, now king of Thessalonica, allowed one of his knights, William of Champlitte, to ride with his men to Geoffrey's assistance. After two years of fighting, they subjugated a large territory in the Morea. When William died, Geoffrey became Prince of Achaëa. He also allied himself with Venice and became a vassal of the Signoria, as well as seneschal of the Latin Empire, to which he also owed homage.¹¹³

Nicholas of Mailly, one of the commanders of the Flemish fleet which had sailed from Marseilles to Syria, can be numbered among the returnees. Although he pledged himself to Henry, Baldwin's brother, he did not receive a fief. He fought victoriously under Henry at the battle of Adramyttium on 19 March 1205. In June of the same year he was sent back to the West in the company of Bishop Nevelon of Soissons and John Bliaut, bearing Baldwin's letter requesting aid for the Latin Empire.¹¹⁴

CONCLUSION

A large majority of the non-Venetian crusaders who actually set out on the armed pilgrimage either did not assemble at Venice as expected, subsequently defected from the official leadership, or expressed more serious dissent in regard to the plans of the leaders than the usual soldierly griping. They did so for a variety of motives.

¹¹¹ Gunther of Pairis, pp. 83, 104–107, 118–119, and 121. Elizabeth A. R. Brown, "The Cistercians in the Latin Empire of Constantinople and Greece, 1204–1276," *Traditio*, xiv (New York, 1958), 76–77 and esp. n. 70.

¹¹² Villehardouin, 315–316, 322, and 361 (II, 122–124, 130, and 170).

¹¹³ *Chronique de Morée*, Jean Longnon, ed. (Paris, 1911), vi–vii. Villehardouin, 325–330 (II, 134–140). Jean Longnon, "The Frankish States in Greece, 1204–1311," in *A History of the Crusades*, K. M. Setton, ed., II (Philadelphia, 1962), 240–242.

¹¹⁴ Villehardouin, 322 and 388 (II, 130 and 196–198).

Walter of Brienne and his followers, who had the support and sanction of the pope, simply planned to use the time while the army was gathering at Venice to pursue personal goals. Unfortunately, they were delayed and never joined the crusade. Even if their plans had gone better, they still would not have returned to the head of the Adriatic, but rather would have taken ship from Apulia. Thus, they would have contributed to the financial problem which faced the crusaders at Venice anyway. The Flemish knight who married the Greek princess from Cyprus also thought it quite acceptable to drop out for a time to seek personal gain, expecting Count Baldwin to understand and approve.

Another motive concerned those who sailed from Apulia, Marseilles, or other ports, rather than joining the army at Venice. In many cases they did so for reasons of cost and convenience. Many French crusaders took ship at Marseilles simply to avoid the long march to Venice, while others embarked there or in Apulia because they thought they could get a better price than Venice offered. Their failure to keep the rendezvous had serious consequences for the crusade, for it not only reduced the army by their own number, but also caused others to hesitate or to turn aside from Venice entirely. Even if all of the crusaders who had set out from their homes had assembled in Venice, their number probably would have still been far too small to have fulfilled the numerically unrealistic transportation contract with the Venetians.

When many of those who had set out for the crusade failed to keep the rendezvous, it became increasingly apparent to an even greater number of their comrades-in-arms, who followed in their footsteps, that the crusade was in serious financial trouble. The disaffection snowballed as more and more crusaders took ship elsewhere or waited in Lombardy to see how matters developed in Venice. Even Count Louis of Blois gave serious consideration to taking ship elsewhere: only the pleas of Count Hugh of Saint-Pol and Geoffrey of Villehardouin changed his mind and brought him to Venice. Then, as departure was delayed due to the shortages of men and money, many of the poorer men had no recourse but to give up their pilgrimage and return to their homes for lack of funds. Moral or religious principle was not a significant consideration for most of the crusaders who failed to assemble at Venice.

The first defections on ideological grounds were not based upon fear of a diversion of the crusade to Constantinople or aversion to the attack upon Zara, but upon rumors (which were true) that the immediate objective was to be Egypt rather than the Holy Land. From a strategic viewpoint an assault upon the Nile Delta made a great deal of sense, but many crusaders took their vows, not only seriously, but very literally. They were sworn not merely to the Holy War, but to a pilgrimage to Palestine, and they wished to go there directly and at once. Some of them, in fact, had to receive certification in the Latin Kingdom that they had completed their pilgrimage or be saddled with a large debt to the church for money that had been given to them for the journey. For them there was no option, or so they thought; Acre, not Alexandria, had to be the point of debarkation.

The late fall and winter of 1202–1203 at Zara proved a turning point in the

history of our neglected majority. From this point the issue was sharply drawn on grounds of religious principle. The official leaders accepted the attacks upon Zara and Constantinople as necessary steps toward the Holy Land. The dissenters feared the religious consequences of these ventures. We believe that the former, the leaders and their party, also took their vows seriously, but they were the more practical men, determined to do what they thought had to be done to achieve their final goal, even though this meant moral and religious risk. The latter, the dissenters and defectors, were men of more tender conscience. They chose to hold strictly and literally to their vows, regardless of consequences. Contrary to the charges of Villehardouin, men such as Simon de Montfort, Enguerand of Boves, the abbot of Vaux-de-Cernay, and the abbot of Pairis defected from the army out of deep conviction that they would jeopardize their souls if they remained with it.

With some justice, on the other hand, Villehardouin points out that those who insisted on going directly to the Holy Land failed to accomplish anything against the infidel. They had taken a narrow interpretation of their vows, and their success was commensurately small. Not many of them arrived at Acre, and those that did found that King Amaury refused to break the existing truce with the Muslims. Crusaders who had been offended at the thought of shedding Christian blood at Zara or Constantinople somehow felt free to engage in internecine wars among Christians in the Levant. Even after the truce with the Muslims ended and they could turn to their purpose of making war against the infidel, they accomplished nothing toward the liberation of Jerusalem.

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