

Albert of Aachen's *History of the Journey to Jerusalem*

Volume 1: Books 1–6.
The First Crusade,
1095–1099



Translated by Susan B. Edgington



CRUSADE

TEXTS IN

TRANSLATION

CRUSADE TEXTS IN TRANSLATION

Volume 24

About the volume

Albert of Aachen's *History of the Journey to Jerusalem* presents the story of the First Crusade (1095–1099) and the early history of the crusader states (1099–1119). *Volume 1, The First Crusade*, is a long and richly detailed account of events well known from the reports of participants, such as Fulcher of Chartres, Raymond of Aguilers and the anonymous author of the *Gesta Francorum*, but told from a strikingly different perspective.

Albert did not go on crusade himself, but gathered reports and anecdotes from those who did, and wove them into narrative that foregrounds the activities of Peter the Hermit, Godfrey of Bouillon, Baldwin of Boulogne, and their followers. His *History* therefore offers a counter-balance, and sometimes a corrective, to the established view. Susan B. Edgington's English translation has been widely praised, following its first publication in the Oxford Medieval Texts series, and is here presented with a new introduction and updated notes and bibliography.

About the series

The crusading movement, which originated in the 11th century and lasted beyond the 16th, bequeathed to its future historians a legacy of sources which are unrivalled in their range and variety. These sources document in fascinating detail the motivations and viewpoints, military efforts and spiritual lives of the participants in the crusades. They also narrate the internal histories of the states and societies which crusaders established or supported in the many regions where they fought, as well as those of their opponents. Some of these sources have been translated in the past but the vast majority have been available only in their original language. The goal of this series is to provide a wide ranging corpus of texts, most of them translated for the first time, which will illuminate the history of the crusades and the crusader-states from every angle, including that of their principal adversaries, the Muslim powers of the Middle East.

About the translator

Susan B. Edgington is a Senior Research Fellow at Queen Mary, University of London, UK

For Hannah and Rebekah, Emma and Anne

ALBERT OF AACHEN'S *HISTORY OF THE JOURNEY
TO JERUSALEM*

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Albert of Aachen's *History of the Journey to Jerusalem*

Volume 1: Books 1-6. The First Crusade, 1095–1099

Translated by

SUSAN B. EDGINGTON

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Abbreviations

AA	Albert of Aachen, <i>Historia Ierosolimitana: History of the Journey to Jerusalem</i> , (ed. and trans.) Susan B. Edgington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)
AK	Anna Komnene, <i>The Alexiad</i> , (trans.) E. R. A. Sewter, rev. edn Peter Frankopan (London: Penguin, 2009)
BD	<i>Baldrici episcopi Dolensis Historia Ierosolimitana, RHC Occ</i> iv. 1–111
ChA	<i>The Chanson d'Antioche</i> , (trans.) Susan B. Edgington and Carol Sweetenham (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011)
Du Cange	C. Du Cange, <i>Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis conditum a Carolo du Fresne, domino Du Cange; cum supplementis integris D. P. Carpenterii, Adelungii, aliorum, susque digessit G. A. L. Henschel</i> (10 vols, Niort: Favre, 1883–87)
EA	<i>Ekkehardi abbatis Uraugiensis Hierosolymita, RHC Occ</i> v: 1–40
FC	<i>Fulcheri Carnotensis Historia Hierosolymitana (1095–1127)</i> , (ed.) Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1913)
GN	Guibertus abbas S. Mariae Nogenti, <i>Dei gesta per Francos</i> , (ed.) Robert B. C. Huygens, <i>CCCM</i> , 127A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996)
HL	<i>Lateinisches Hexameter-Lexikon: Dichterisches Formelgut von Ennius bis zum Archipoeta</i> (5 vols, Munich: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1979–89)
IA	Ibn al-Athir, <i>al-Kāmil fī 'l-ta' rīkh</i> , (trans.) D. S. Richards, vol. 1, 1097–1146 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006)
Kreuzzugsbriefe	H. Hagenmeyer (ed.), <i>Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacrae spectantes: Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100</i> (Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner'schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1901)
ME	Ara E. Dostourian (trans.), <i>Armenia and the Crusades, Tenth to Twelfth Centuries: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa</i> (Lanham, NY: University Press of America, 1993)
MGH SS	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores</i> , (ed.) G. H. Pertz et al. (32 vols, Hanover, Weimar, Stuttgart and Cologne, 1826–1934)

- OV *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, (ed. and trans.) Marjorie Chibnall (6 vols, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969–80)
- PL *Patrologia cursus completus. Series Latina*, publ. J. P. Migne (221 vols, Paris, 1844–54)
- PT *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere*, (ed.) John H. Hill and Laurita L. Hill, Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades, 12 (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1977)
- RA *Le "Liber" de Raymond d'Aguilers*, (ed.) John H. Hill and Laurita L. Hill, Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades, 9 (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1969)
- RC Ralph of Caen, (trans.) Bernard S. and David S. Bachrach, *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen: A History of the Normans on the First Crusade* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005)
- RHC *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades*, (ed.) Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres (Paris, 1841–1906)
- RHC Arm *RHC, Historiens Arméniens* (2 vols, Paris, 1869, 1906)
- RHC Occ *RHC, Historiens Occidentaux* (5 vols, Paris, 1844–95)
- RHC Or *RHC, Historiens Orientaux* (5 vols, Paris 1872–1906)
- RHGF *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, (ed.) Michel Bouquet et al. (24 vols, Paris, 1737–1904)
- RM Robert the Monk, *Historia Iherosolimitana*, (trans.) Carol Sweetenham, *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005)
- SSRH *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum tempore ducum regumque stirpis Arpadianae gestarum* (2 vols, Budapest, 1937–38)
- Wisconsin History *A History of the Crusades*, (ed.) Kenneth M. Setton et al. (6 vols, Madison, WI, 1969–89)
- WT William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, (ed.) Robert B. C. Huygens, CCCM, 63–63A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986)

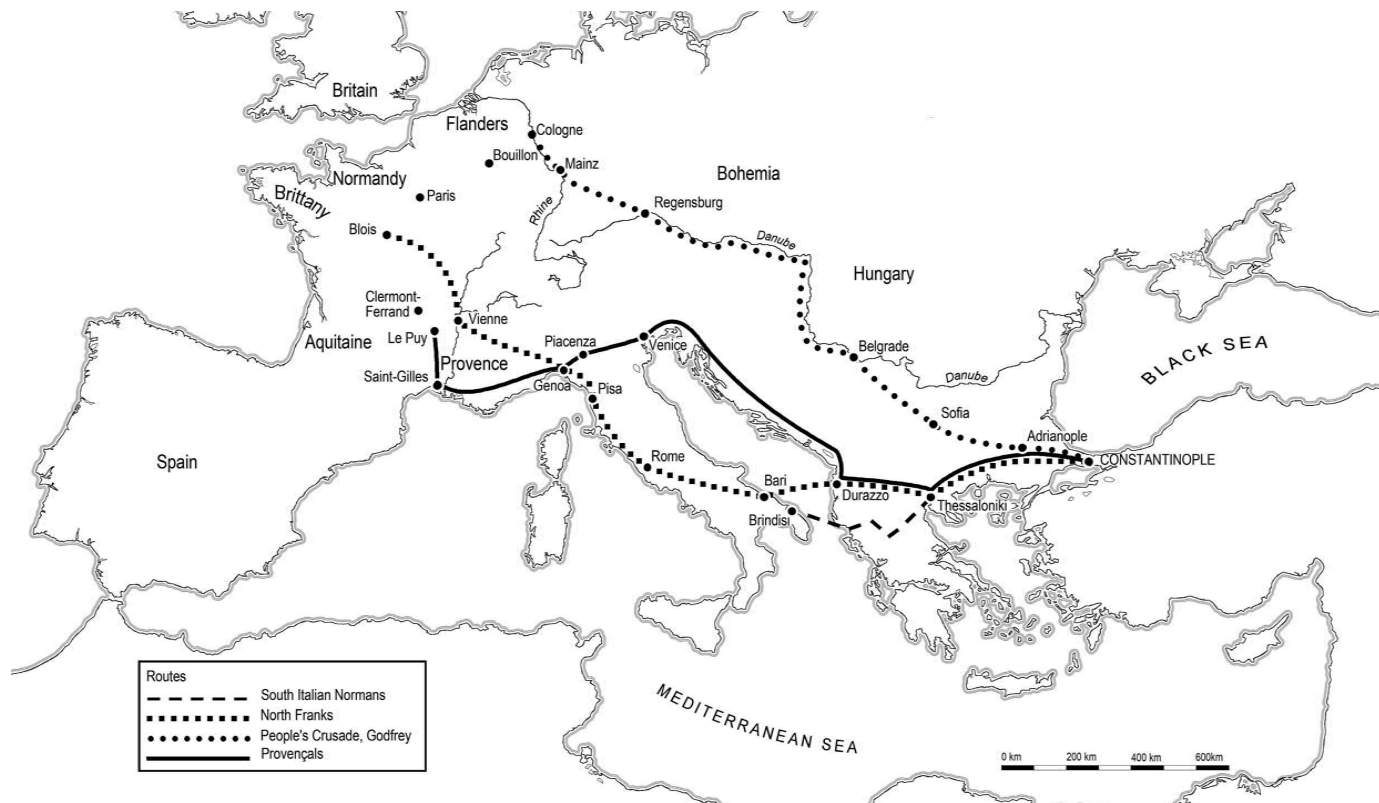
Preface

The publication of this paperback translation of Albert of Aachen's *History* is the culmination of a lifetime's work: I started to edit the *History* as my PhD thesis at the age of 21; I celebrated the publication of the edition and translation by Oxford Medieval Texts on my sixtieth birthday and now, six years later, I offer the translation, with updated introduction and notes, in a format which I hope will be accessible to students and all others who are interested in the First Crusade and the early years of the crusaders' settlement in the Latin East. Practical considerations have governed the decision to divide the work into two volumes and it does fall quite neatly into two parts. This volume, covering 1095–99, offers a different perspective on well known events, but the story does not stop with the battle of Ascalon, and Albert's account of events of the first twenty years of the Latin states (covered in volume 2) is yet more valuable, so I hope you will read that too.

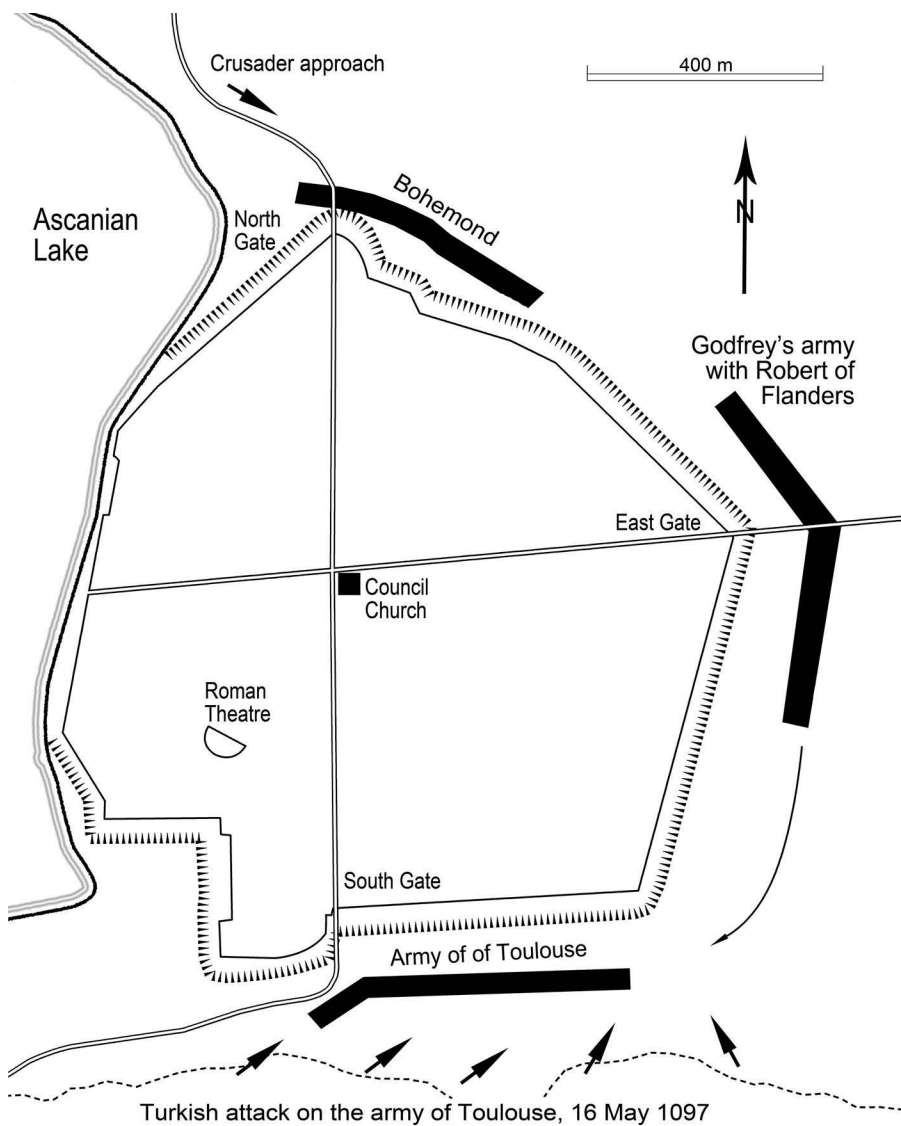
I am especially grateful to Oxford University Press for granting permission to publish the translation in this format. I have previously acknowledged the numerous libraries and individuals who have assisted me along the way. For this version of the book I thank, in addition, John France for permission to use his maps as a basis for those in volume 1, and Chris Worthington for the hours of work he put into adapting and redrawing them. I also want to pay tribute to the very many colleagues and students whose insights and challenges have often led me to rethink my conclusions and assumptions, and whose company has been a pleasure along the way.

I have also been fortunate in good friends and in my family. I now have four granddaughters and I hope when they are older they will enjoy reading this book. So this is for Hannah and Rebekah, Emma and Anne.

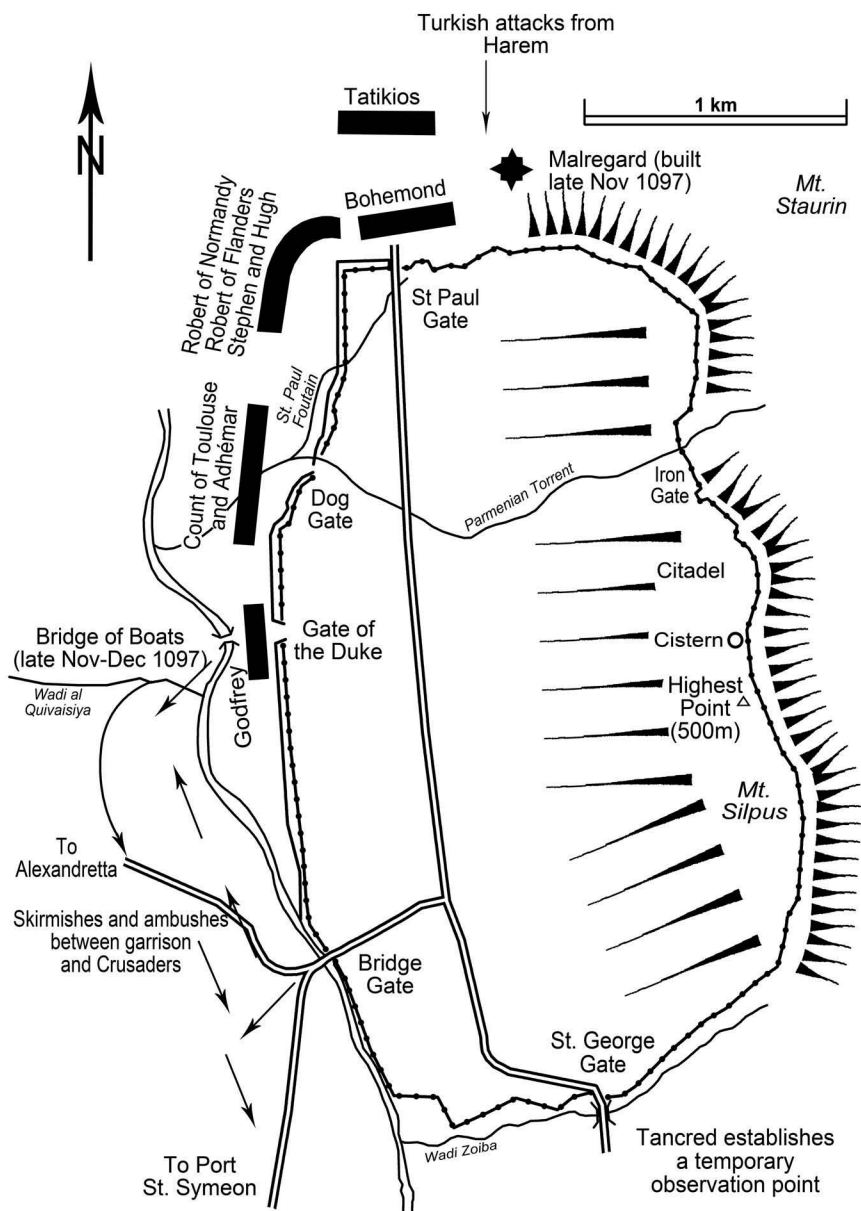
SUSAN B. EDGINGTON
January 2013



Map 1 Routes across Europe, 1096

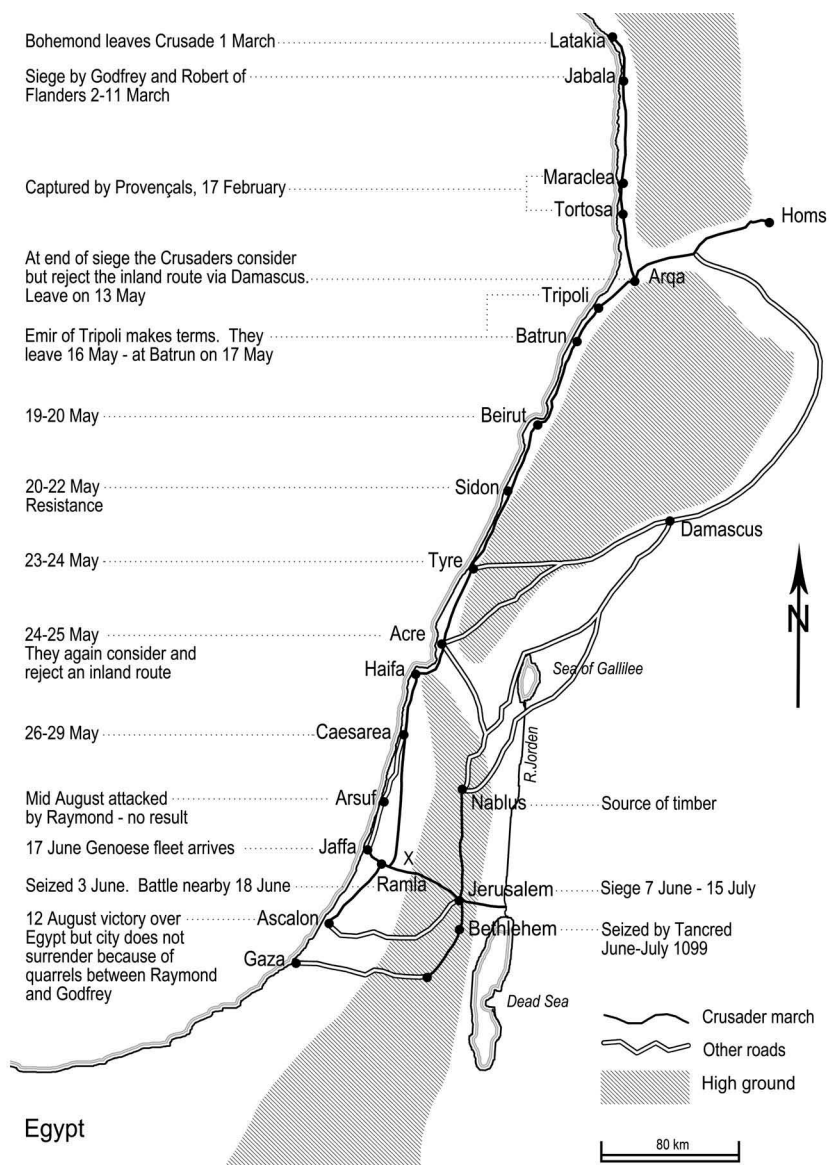


Map 2 The siege of Nicaea

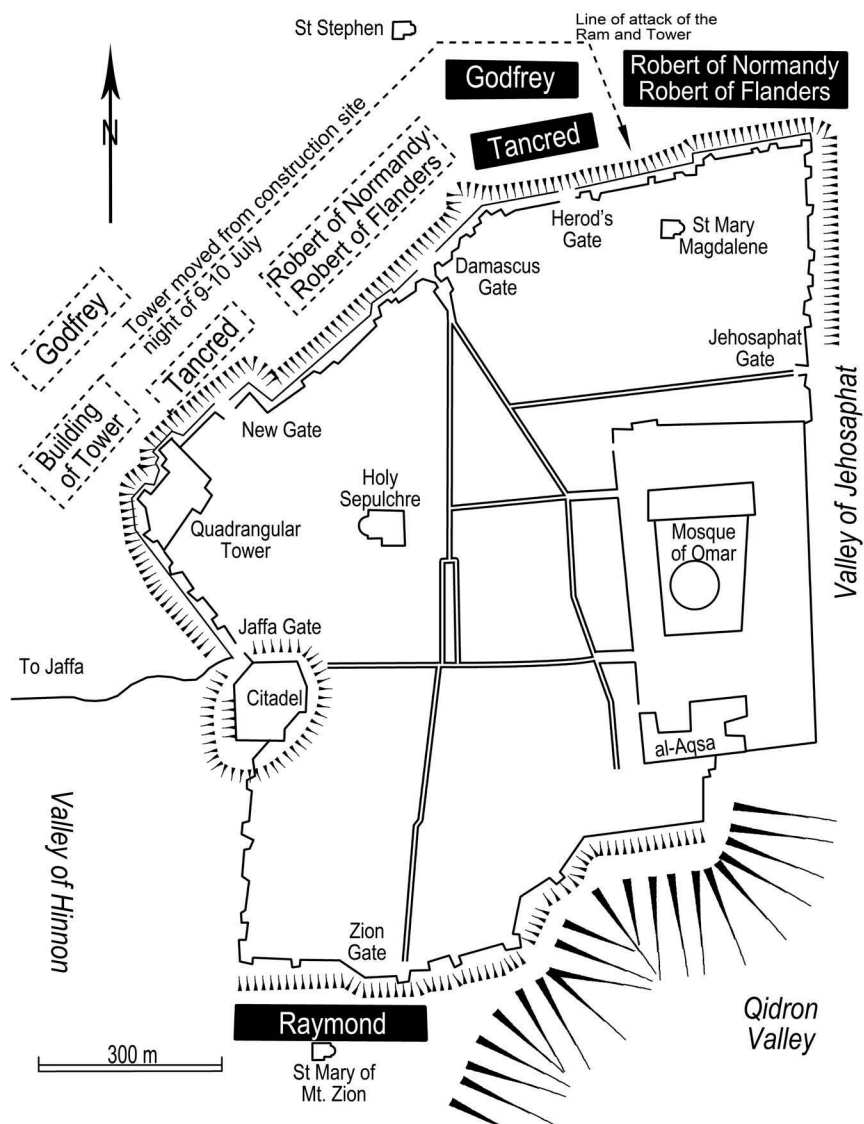


Map 3

The siege of Antioch, winter 1097-98



Map 4 The march south, March–July 1099



Map 5 The capture of Jerusalem, 15 July 1099

Introduction

The *Historia Ierosolimitana* and its Author

This first volume contains the first six books of Albert of Aachen's twelve-book *Historia Ierosolimitana*. The Latin title is difficult to translate in a few words: it is 'the story of people and things to do with Jerusalem'. More precisely, the *Historia* offers a narrative of the First Crusade (Books 1–6) and of the careers of the first generation of Latin settlers in Outremer (Books 7–12). It is a long and detailed account of events between 1095 and 1119, and the more important because its author apparently did not know the contemporary accounts written by Fulcher of Chartres, Raymond of Aguilers and the anonymous author of the *Gesta Francorum*.¹ Since these histories were to an extent interdependent, Albert's very different perspective on the same events is at the same time invaluable and – where his evidence differs from theirs – problematical.

We know very little about the author himself. The name 'Albert' (or 'Adalbert') is not found on the earliest manuscripts and seems to have emerged in the thirteenth century.² That the writer lived in or near Aachen in the Rhineland is not seriously in doubt. He has detailed knowledge of people and places in that region and a special interest in the crusaders whose homes were there. Also where we know the origins of the manuscripts they are from this area. However, we have no concrete evidence to help us identify 'our' Albert. The records from Aachen are patchy for the first decades of the twelfth century. They record an Adalbert as witness to a charter in 1134 and an Albert in 1158.³ Both men were canons of St Mary's in Aachen which was probably Albert's church,⁴ but the dates may be rather late, since the author Albert was probably born before 1080 (see below). Since there was a church dedicated to St Adalbert in Aachen, Albert (or Adalbert)

¹ *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, (ed.) R. Hill (London, 1962) [GF]; *Le "Liber" de Raymond d'Aguilers*, (ed.) J. H. and L. L. Hill (Paris, 1969) [RA]; Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana (1095–1127)*, (ed.) H. Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg, 1913) [FC].

² The name is found in the first part of manuscript E and in its copies. Although E is the earliest extant copy of the *Historia*, the opening chapters are in a different hand (E₃) and are thought to have been written in the early part of the thirteenth century. More detail on this and other manuscript-related matters are to be found in the introduction to my edition: Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana: History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, (ed. and trans.) S. B. Edgington (Oxford, 2007) [AA].

³ P. Knoch, *Studien zu Albert von Aachen* (Stuttgart, 1966), p. 65; E. Meuthen, *Aachener Urkunden 1101–1250* (Bonn, 1972), pp. 175, 195.

⁴ It figures in a vision (6. 36).

was probably a popular name there. Although it is unsatisfactory to know so little about the author, it remains convenient to refer to him as Albert of Aachen.

There are a very few personal insights within the *Historia*, but in his first chapter or prologue Albert explains that he himself longed to go on crusade but was prevented from doing so, and therefore he decided to write an account instead. This suggests that Albert was of an age to join the expedition in 1096. He refers to hindrances ('impedimenta') and it is possible that he was, like other religious, forbidden by his superior to go.⁵ He was born, by inference, no later than c.1080. As a canon of St Mary's, the cathedral church of Aachen, he will have received a monastic education, and he wrote serviceable Latin. He shows a rather superficial knowledge of classical literature, perhaps from reading anthologies ('florilegia') in the schoolroom. Predictably, he had a wider and deeper knowledge of the Old and New Testaments, though he never quoted at any length. It is impossible to guess, or deduce, whether Albert's native language was a form of French or German, but he was apparently able to gather oral testimony from returning crusaders and therefore probably had some facility in different vernacular dialects of northern France, Flanders and the Rhineland.

Dating

It is likely, and logical, that Albert wrote his prologue soon after the work was compiled, and hence it provides some clues to the date at which it was compiled. Albert says at the outset that the history concerns the journey and expedition to Jerusalem, that is, the First Crusade. He refers to the success of the campaign in opening the way to pilgrims, but he does not mention settlement, nor later expeditions, nor even the reign of Baldwin I (1100–18), all of which he is to chronicle in the second part of the *Historia* (Books 7–12).⁶ This strongly suggests that Albert's original intention was to write the history of the crusade, culminating in the liberation of the Holy Places, an aim he achieved in Books 1–6. Whether there was ever a first redaction (covering 1095–99) in circulation cannot now be established, though its existence would satisfactorily explain why in his first eight books William of Tyre shares so much information uniquely with Albert, but there is no shared information after 1099.

The first six books of the *Historia*, according to the evidence of the prologue, were written soon after the events they describe. Book 6 was produced in its final form after 1102: this can be deduced from chapters 26 and 27, 36 and 37. Each pair of chapters describes a prophetic dream, and in each case the interpretation of the dream demonstrates its truth by reference to a later death: chapter 27 the

⁵ See Pope Urban II's letter dated 19 Sept. 1096: H. Hagenmeyer (ed.), *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100* (Innsbruck, 1901), pp. 137–8.

⁶ More on the dating and other aspects of Books 7–12 will be found in volume 2 of this translation.

death of Stabelo the chamberlain, which took place in May 1102; chapter 37 the death of Duke Godfrey (July 1100). Albert may have intended to end his story at chapter 54, after the victory at Ascalon when many of the leaders set out for home. The first sentence has a fine valedictory ring to it: 'And so, with so many battles won, so many endeavours never before imaginable brought to victory and a good conclusion ...'. Whether or not this was Albert's intention, he became caught up in the story again and Book 6 ends, less artistically, with the machinations of Bohemond and Raymond. Thus it may be inferred that Books 1–6, translated in this volume, were completed in the first years of the twelfth century. The prologue suggests this strongly and there is nothing in the text to indicate a later date.

Sources

A composition date in the first decade of the twelfth century is consistent with Albert's having used the tales of participants as his main source of information. He may have used written sources but, as observed above, there is no evidence that Albert was familiar with any of the extant written accounts. In the nineteenth century, it was suggested that Albert used a 'lost Lotharingian chronicle', a theory that allowed historians to use Albert's text in a selective fashion: information of which they approved came from Albert's written source; material they rejected was legendary. As late as the 1960s Knoch advanced a variation on the theory: that both Albert and William of Tyre used the same lost written source, accounting for the similarity of their narratives for the years 1095–99.⁷ The difficulty is that no extrinsic trace of such a source survives, and, since we can therefore have no idea of its putative content, we still have to evaluate Albert's information by comparison with other sources which do survive. A further argument against the 'lost Lotharingian chronicle' is that it has been proposed only as a source for the First Crusade. Albert's *Historia* continues until 1119, and many events after 1099 are described with different levels of detail and apparent accuracy.⁸ More than one lost written source is even more unlikely.

Albert himself says that he compiled his *Historia* 'ex auditu at relatione' ('by listening to those who had been there and from their reports'), implying that he used oral sources.⁹ This helps to explain certain features of the text which may be accounted either strengths or weaknesses. Firstly, the informants were self-selected:

⁷ For a resumé of the debate and a critique see Knoch, pp. 29–63; S. B. Edgington, 'The *Historia Iherosolimitana* of Albert of Aachen: A Critical Edition', Ph. D. thesis (University of London, 1991), pp. 17–25.

⁸ See volume 2 of this translation, and C. Cahen, *La Syrie du nord* (Paris, 1940), p. 16: '... surtout pour les années postérieures à la croisade, la comparaison minutieuse avec les sources syriennes de toutes langues ne peut pas ne pas remplir d'admiration celui qui s'y livre devant l'étendue et l'exactitude de la plupart des informations d'Albert.'

⁹ See 1. 1 (preface); 1. 24, 25; 2. 33, 65; 4. 53, 55; 6. 24.

they survived to tell the tale and they made the journey back to the Rhineland, and this had implications for the type of stories they would tell. Furthermore, oral evidence is likely to be shaky on perceptions of number, of distance and of time, and vagaries of memory may lead to inaccuracies. Because personal and place names have only been heard, not seen written down, they have to be recorded phonetically. More insidiously, people yield to the temptation to make a good story, to show themselves in a flattering light, to exaggerate the hardships, perhaps, and to minimize their own weaknesses. They are prone to hero-worship and susceptible to prejudice. Add to this the consideration that Albert was dealing not with a single informant but with a multiplicity of them, and so their sometimes contradictory reports had to be recorded side by side, or else reconciled. All these characteristics of oral evidence are present in Albert's *Historia*.¹⁰ They demand caution, but they also account for the *Historia*'s vivid readability.

There is a demonstrable but complex relationship between Albert's *Historia* and certain poetic sources. Chief among these is the *Chanson d'Antioche*, an epic account of the First Crusade, culminating in the battle of Antioch, 1098. This *chanson*, unlike its companion pieces the *Les Chétifs* and the *Chanson de Jérusalem*,¹¹ incorporates authentic historical material, from which it has been hypothesized that it was based upon a 'primitive *chanson*' dating from soon after the events it describes. However, the *Chanson d'Antioche* survives only in a version written down early in the thirteenth century, and thus it is impossible to recapture its original wording. The correspondence between some passages in the *Historia* and the *Chanson d'Antioche* will be apparent in the notes to the translation below, but it cannot be determined which of the two has primacy. It is probable that both incorporate early poetic material which originated in the camps of the crusaders.¹²

Albert did not use any known and extant written source when he wrote the *Historia*. Furthermore, his work is independent of the three accounts of the First Crusade written by participants: the anonymous author of *Gesta Francorum*, Raymond of Aguilers, and Fulcher of Chartres. These narratives were inter-related and also share an approach that may be characterized as 'French'. This became the accepted interpretation through the work of three writers in the first decade of the twelfth century: Robert of Reims, Guibert of Nogent, and Baudri of Dol all reworked the *Gesta Francorum* and they emphasized both the 'Frenchness' of the

¹⁰ H. von Sybel subjected the *Historia* to a damning critique, identifying Albert's errors and contradictions: *Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzugs* (Leipzig, 1841); trans. as *The History and Literature of the Crusades* (London, 1861), pp. 159–96.

¹¹ The most recent editions of these two *chansons* are vols 5 and 6 in *The Old French Crusade Cycle: Les Chétifs*, (ed.) G. M. Myers (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1981) and *La Chanson de Jérusalem*, (ed.) N. R. Thorp (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1992).

¹² *La Chanson d'Antioche*, (ed.) S. Duparc-Quioc (2 vols, Paris, 1977); trans. as *The Chanson d'Antioche*, by S. B. Edgington and C. Sweetenham (Farnham, 2011). See the introduction to the translation for latest thinking on the relationship with Albert of Aachen's *Historia*.

participants and the central role of the pope as instigator of the First Crusade.¹³ Albert of Aachen, writing around the same time, preserved a different tradition about the origins of the crusade, stressing the role of Peter the Hermit. He also centred his account on the activities of Godfrey of Bouillon and his followers and, perhaps because Godfrey had been active in support of the German emperor Henry IV and against the papacy, he minimized the importance of the pope. Although William of Tyre, writing after the middle of the twelfth century, adopted Albert's perspective, this 'imperial' historiographical strand has been neglected in favour of the 'French' tradition.

Single Authorship

The above observations on dating and sources assume that the same person ('Albert') wrote the entire work as we have it now. An examination of the writing style leaves little room for doubt that the *Historia* is the work of a single author.¹⁴ Albert's attitude to his subject matter also seems to be consistent throughout the twelve books. For example, he recounts battles with enthusiasm from beginning to end; he has a slightly prurient attitude towards women (the renegade nun, 2. 37; the fate of women on the 1101 expeditions, 8. 19–20); his use of biblical and classical allusions and quotations shows no significant variation over the length of the work. The main discernible change in subject matter is between the incorporation of legendary, *chanson*-style material into the first six books and the more sober narrative of Books 7–12. This surely reflects the material available to Albert: settlement is more prosaic than crusade. Albert's materials were more copious for the earlier period, 1095–99, presented in this volume. The numbers involved in the crusading expeditions and returning from them were greater, and letters and stories of survivors were correspondingly more common. There is a reflection of this in Albert's uniquely detailed account of the 1101 expeditions (Books 8 and 9), which must likewise have drawn on survivors' accounts. That he continued to depend on similar sources explains the comparative sparseness of information for the last decade (c.1110–19), and the confused chronology in Book 12.

¹³ Texts of the three accounts are to be found in *RHC Occ.* as follows: Robert, iii, 717–880; Guibert, iv, 113–262; Baudri, iv, 1–110. (A new edn. of Guibert's *Dei gesta per Francos* by R. B. C. Huygens, *CCCM* cxxvii, is used in the notes; references to Robert [RM] are to the translation: C. Sweetenham (trans.), *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade* [Aldershot, 2005]). They are discussed by J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London, 1986), pp. 135–52; S. B. Edgington, 'The First Crusade: reviewing the evidence', *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact*, (ed.) J. Phillips (Manchester, 1997), pp. 57–77, at 59–60.

¹⁴ For discussion and examples, see AA, pp. xxviii–xxix.

Albert's Attitude to:

Crusaders

Received opinion has long been that Albert wrote the *Historia* as a panegyric of Godfrey of Bouillon. Aubé, for example, Godfrey's biographer, asserted that this was 'le but avoué' of Albert's work, and quoted in support 'la phrase liminaire' of the *Historia*: 'super passagio Godefridi de Bullione, et aliorum principum'.¹⁵ However, these words appear for the first time in a manuscript dated 1390. The simplified view that the *Historia* is a deliberately slanted account of Godfrey and the house of Bouillon is not borne out by an objective reading. Similarly, we should reject the opinion of Knoch, that Albert was not only writing a 'hagiography' of Godfrey, but was deliberately overstating the part played by the Germans in the First Crusade.¹⁶

Albert's close interest in Godfrey and his family and followers is only to be expected since he lived in Godfrey's home territory and seems to have gained his information from Godfrey's followers. Book 2 of the *Historia* is a detailed account of Godfrey's expedition across Europe, information found nowhere else. In Book 3 and later books Godfrey's brother Baldwin's career in Edessa is recounted, again with much circumstantial detail. The focus away from the pope as instigator of the crusade, and from Adhémar as its spiritual leader, differs from the eye-witness accounts and it is too easy to give Raymond, Fulcher, and the *Gesta* author credence because 'they were there', while imputing distortion to Albert because 'he was not there'. In reality, we should bear in mind the politics of Christendom: Godfrey had fought with the emperor and against the pope, and Albert continued to be a staunch supporter of Henry IV.¹⁷ Albert's bias should be accepted as no more and no less than that of other writers of his time. He disliked Raymond of Saint-Gilles, accusing him of avarice (e.g. 6. 28) and of being a source of discord (Book 6 *passim*). Albert expressed reasonable doubts about the Holy Lance, but avoided both the uncritical advocacy of Raymond of Aguilers and the hysterical anti-Provençal tone of Radulf of Caen.¹⁸ When doubts arose as to the relic's authenticity, Albert was again remarkably even-handed in his reporting (5. 32). In

¹⁵ P. Aubé, *Godefroy de Bouillon* (Paris, 1985), p. 357; P. Rousset, *Les origines et les caractères de la première croisade* (Neuchâtel, 1945), p. 23: 'Albert d'Aix écrit un panégyrique de Godefroid de Bouillon'; J. H. and L. L. Hill, *Raymond IV de Saint-Gilles 1041 (ou 1042)–1105* (Toulouse, 1959), p. 142: 'Parmi les écrivains contemporains (ou presque) Albert a fait l'éloge du pur et inactif Godefroy.'

¹⁶ Knoch, pp. 116–19, 125.

¹⁷ This is illustrated in 11. 48 (vol. 2).

¹⁸ RA pp. 68–75; Ralph of Caen [RC], trans. Bernard S. and David S. Bachrach, *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen: A History of the Normans on the First Crusade* (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 118–21; AA 4. 43.

reporting such conflicts between crusaders Albert's point of view counter-balances the shared bias of other contemporary accounts.

Byzantines

Albert's treatment of the Byzantines shows less prejudice than the eyewitnesses'.¹⁹ For example he describes the emperor Alexios Komnenos in very positive terms (1. 13; 1. 15). He emphasizes the emperor's liberality and supportiveness towards Walter Sansavoir and Peter the Hermit (1. 15); his hospitality towards the nobler leaders, especially Raymond (2. 18–20). Even where Godfrey's troops fought the emperor's, Albert makes it clear that the blame was not all on one side (2. 11), and at the end of it all Alexios showered the pilgrims with gifts.²⁰ Alexios also welcomed Svend of Denmark in 1097 (3. 57) and, in 1101, a stream of visitors.²¹ Knoch claimed that Albert's attitude towards the Byzantines changed after Book 1, but there is little evidence of this.²²

Albert's portrayal of the emperor may be contrasted with that in the anonymous *Gesta Francorum*. After the capture of Nicaea, Albert represents the emperor's behaviour as notably generous, while in the *Gesta* he is depicted as devious and calculating.²³ The *Historia*'s treatment of the incident when Stephen of Blois and other renegades from the siege of Antioch dissuaded the emperor from coming to the crusaders' assistance also shows Alexios in a different light from that cast by the *Gesta*.²⁴

The worst epithet which Albert applies to the Greeks as a people is 'effeminati': this occurs in a speech by 'Suleyman' (the Turkish leader Qilij Arslan: 4. 6). This is not an unusual prejudice among western writers. When Albert censures an act of treason against Svend, he makes it clear that this was the work of a defined group of people: 'certain wicked Christians, that is to say Greeks'.²⁵ On two occasions Albert records unfavourable opinions of the emperor: where Godfrey was warned against him by some Franks (2. 10), and where Bohemond hesitated to take the oath, 'because he was regarded as a crafty and sly man' (2. 18). In both cases Albert is reporting the opinion of others, not necessarily giving his own. Overall, there is little evidence that Albert was as anti-Byzantine as his contemporary

¹⁹ See B. Ebels-Hoving, *Byzantium in westerse ogen 1096–1204* (Assen, 1971), pp. 84–9. She refers to Albert's 'simple and objective' rendering of the facts, and his 'exceptionally independent and impartial mindset'.

²⁰ Although Albert had earlier pointed out, with a rare touch of irony, that the emperor did not lose by his generosity, as the money returned to him as payment for supplies (2. 16).

²¹ See volume 2.

²² Knoch, p. 57.

²³ AA 2. 28: *GF* p. 17.

²⁴ AA 4. 40: *GF* pp. 63–4.

²⁵ AA 3. 54. See Ebels-Hoving, p. 88: 'Generalizations are not Albert's style.'

authors – of course, this may just reflect his distance from events, but this is in itself interesting.

Other Eastern Christians

Albert's attitude to Christians of other rites than the Latin is surprisingly ecumenical. He never mentions doctrinal differences and treats all as 'fellow Christians'. This is true of the Greeks (see above); the Armenians (e.g. 3. 17), and the Syrians. All three groups are identified as assisting in the capture of Antioch – and as victims of the massacre which followed, when 'the earth was covered with blood and the corpses of the slaughtered, many of them also the killed and lifeless bodies of Christians, Gauls as well as Greeks, Syrians and Armenians mixed together' (4. 23). Co-operation seems to have been the norm: for example, a Syrian Christian was useful as an envoy (5. 7). During the siege of Jerusalem, 'native fellow Christians' aided the crusaders by showing them where to find timbers for siege engines and how to extinguish a form of Greek fire (6. 2; 6. 18), and 'a certain faithful Christian native of the city, fully instructed in Christ's law,' revealed a fragment of the True Cross he had concealed for safety during the Muslim occupation (6. 38). The Christian inhabitants of Bethlehem welcomed the crusaders into their city (5. 44). Whether Albert was truly unaware of doctrinal tensions between groups of Christians, or if he was deliberately underplaying them, just as he did the political differences between pope and emperor in western Europe, is a matter of speculation.

Muslims

Towards the Muslim enemy, Albert is no less remarkably impartial.²⁶ He usually refers to them simply as Turks or Saracens, and distinguishes between the two. He has an accurate idea of the Turks as former nomadic warriors, recent invaders of Byzantine lands and now the ruling elite over a large area. Their homeland, and the Saljūq Turkish Empire as a whole, he refers to as Khurasan; he uses 'Romania' (Rūm) for Turkish Asia Minor, formerly Byzantine ('Roman'). Saracens is always used for the Egyptians, and also for the indigenous Muslim population of Syria and Palestine. Less frequently, Albert refers to both peoples as 'gentiles'. He has some understanding of Islam and does not, like some other Christian writers, accuse the Muslims of idolatry. When the Christians captured the Turkish camp, they found a large number of books – not images (4. 56). Albert even spares some sympathy for the defeated enemy (e.g. 6. 30; 6. 47). He uses admiring adjectives when referring to the Muslim leaders (e.g. 3. 35; 4. 3, 5, 6, 7, 44, 45).²⁷ Albert

²⁶ H. Szklenar, *Studien zum Bild des Orients in vorhöfischen deutschen Epen* (Göttingen, 1966), pp. 193–5.

²⁷ R. C. Schwinges, *Kreuzzugsideologie und Toleranz* (Stuttgart, 1977), pp. 158–65.

even goes so far as to say that the ‘king of Egypt’ ruled justly and tolerantly in Jerusalem, 1098–99 (6. 32).²⁸

Jews

It could be argued that Albert’s objectivity with regard to the Byzantines and the Muslims was the outcome of his distance from the events he describes; that the eye-witness accounts were prejudiced as a result of their authors’ experiences. Yet Albert also shows a remarkable sympathy with the Rhineland Jews, and expresses condemnation of their Christian attackers (1. 26–9). He particularly says that forced conversion has no value (1. 29). Albert is unique among Christian writers in his criticism of the crusaders’ murder and enforced baptism of the Jews, and his sense of outrage is matched only by the Hebrew writers.²⁹

Women

Unexpectedly, Albert even shows some empathetic understanding of women. Norman Daniel remarked on this: ‘Albert had a genuine, imaginative understanding of the sorrows of the bereaved women “carried off by stern enemies to an unknown and alien land”’ (e.g. 3. 46).³⁰ Furthermore, Albert did not stereotype; he knew that the captive women were not necessarily unhappy, for example the renegade nun (2. 37), and the knight’s widow who married her Turkish captor (5. 5). He was aware that captivity was not a ‘fate worse than death’ to some young women, and shows them dressing up in order to appeal to their captors’ better natures (2. 39). Movingly, he describes women forced into premature labour and childbirth during the agonies of thirst suffered in Anatolia (3. 2).

Evaluation

Albert’s empathy is only one remarkable feature of the *Historia*. The work is notably secular in outlook. There are comparatively few biblical, patristic or liturgical citations, and these are usually found in speeches made by the leaders. Albert’s prose style is unsophisticated, but it is vividly descriptive. All of these features should be viewed as deliberate on Albert’s part. There is no reason to doubt that he saw himself as inventing a new type of literature to match a new

²⁸ R. M. Hill, ‘The Christian view of the Muslims at the time of the First Crusade’, *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades*, (ed.) P. M. Holt (Warminster, 1977), pp. 1–8.

²⁹ B. Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission* (Princeton, NJ, 1984), p. 62; L. Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism* (4 vols, London, 1974–84), vol. 1, p. 44.

³⁰ N. Daniel, *The Arabs and Medieval Europe* (2nd edn, London, 1979), p. 201.

kind of enterprise, as he indicates in his own preface. What sort of audience he envisaged is hard to gauge.

Albert was apparently unaware of other narratives emerging from the same expedition. His *Historia* achieved a modest circulation within the Rhineland area. At some point that part dealing with the First Crusade (Books 1–6) was used by William of Tyre as one of the sources for his chronicle, and it was in this form that Albert influenced mainstream historiography of the First Crusade thereafter. Although the second part of the *Historia*, Books 7–12, contains much unique and important information, it was (and still is) widely disregarded. Manuscript copies of the *Historia* continued to be made until the sixteenth century and the first printed edition appeared in 1584, but during these centuries the work seems to have been little read. Although interest revived in the nineteenth century, the work was dismissed as too problematical to be useful to historians, and it is only in the last half-century that the value of its unique, independent and vividly detailed narrative has been recognized.

Manuscripts

Albert's original manuscript does not survive, but there are eleven manuscripts extant which contain complete, or almost complete, copies of the *Historia*.³¹ In addition there is one which has lost significant portions (M), and another that survives only as fragments (J). They are as follows:

A Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 561 and 562 (Eberbach, s. xii)

B Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS latin 5128 (Noyon?, s. xii^{ex})

C Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Reg. lat. 509 (Utrecht, 1158)

D Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 1999 (s. xiii)

E Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, MS 102 (Liège, s. xii^{med})

[**F** and **G** were assigned to the early editions, see below.]

H Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS lat. fol. 677 (Gladbach, s. xi^{med})

J Hanover, Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek, MS xxxvii, 1808 (s. xii^{ex})

K Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Ottob. lat. 631 (s. xii^{ex})

L Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 7317 (s. xv)

M Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, MS Cent. II. 100 (s. xv)

N Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 1974/641 (Trier, s. xv)

O London, British Library, Additional MS 25440 (Liège, 1390)

P Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Plut. 66 No 33 (1517)

³¹ The manuscripts and their relationships are fully described in the edition: AA, pp. xxxvii–liv.

The modern edition, translated here, took ms E as its base and recorded variant readings from C, H, N, and A.

Previous Editions

1. Reinerus Reineccius, *Chronicon Hierosolymitanum* (Helmstedt, 1584). It was subtitled: ‘De bello sacro historia, exposita libris xii, et nunc primum in lucem edita’. In the preface Reineck explained that the codex had been given to him by Christian Distelmeyer (1552–1612), counsellor to the elector of Brandenburg. It was written on parchment, and there was no author’s name.
2. J. Bongars, *Gesta Dei per Francos* (2 vols, Hanover, 1611), i. 184–381. This was essentially a reprint of Reineck’s edition, but Bongars was able to add the author’s name. He owed this to David Hoeschel, who printed Albert’s name in the preface to his *Alexiad*, having discovered it from J. Gretzer. The superscription on the manuscript in question read: ‘Historia Hierosolymitanae expeditionis, edita ab Alberto, canonico et custode Aquensis Ecclesiae, super Passagio Godefridi de Bullione et aliorum principum.’
3. J. P. Migne, in vol. 166 of the *Patrologia Latina* (1854), used Bongars’ edition verbatim.
4. Paul Meyer (ed.), *Liber Christianae expeditionis pro ereptione, emundatione, restitutione sanctae Hierosolymitanae ecclesiae*, in *Recueil des historiens des Croisades: historiens occidentaux* (5 vols, Paris, 1841–1906), iv. 267–713. This was the first critical edition, but based on an unscientific selection of manuscripts available outside Germany, that is, disregarding three of the earliest and/or best ones.
5. Bernhard Kugler did not produce an edition of the *Historia*, although it is believed that he planned to do so.³² However in two books, *Eine neue Handschrift der Chronik Alberts von Aachen* (Tübingen, 1893) and *Die Deutschen Codices Alberts von Aachen* (Tübingen, 1894), he did the groundwork for a new edition using the German manuscripts.

Translations

F. P. G. Guizot used the Bongars reimpression of Reineck’s edition for his French translation, which appeared in two volumes as *Histoire des faits et gestes dans les régions d’Outre-mer*, volumes xx and xxi in *La Collection des mémoires relatifs à l’histoire de France* (Paris, 1824). J. F. Michaud published long extracts from the *Historia*, translated into French, in his *Bibliothèque des croisades* (4 vols,

³² H. Hagenmeyer, preface to FC, p. 81 note 2.

Paris, 1829), i. 43–81. The translated passages were linked by summaries and paraphrases. H. Hefele, *Geschichte des Ersten Kreuzzuges* (2 vols, Jena, 1923), used Meyer's *Recueil* edition for his German translation. He added very few historical notes, and although there were sixteen illustrations none was from an Albert manuscript. Albert is frequently quoted, particularly on the subject of the 'People's Crusade' of 1096, for which he has eye-witness status, but the first complete translation of the *Historia* into English accompanied my edition (Oxford Medieval Texts, 2007).

This Translation

The translation offered here is essentially the same as the one that accompanied the edition. An addition is the incorporation of chapter titles: these were not part of the first redaction of Albert's *Historia* and so were relegated to an appendix in the edition. The footnotes have been reduced by the removal of biographical and topographical detail and references to *Appendix 1: People* and *Appendix 2: Places* respectively.

My aim was to provide a translation which is both accurate and readable. Sometimes this has entailed breaking up or rearranging Albert's very long sentences, or rendering active as passive or vice versa. Albert rather frequently uses a singular (collective) noun with a plural verb; this has been silently amended except on a very few occasions where the change would be unreasonably pedantic.

A particular problem has been the rendering of names of people and places. For western European people, I have generally used the English equivalent for well known characters, e.g. Peter the Hermit (not Pierre or Pieter); for lesser known people I have not tried to be consistent, for example, Odo (not Eudes or Otto), but Rainald or Reinhard (depending on provenance) rather than Reginald. They are identified in *Appendix 1*. Greek characters have their modern transliterations, e.g. Alexios, Tatikios, Anna Komnene. Arabic and Turkish names are usually given in a form close to the one used by Albert in the text of the translation, and identified in *Appendix 1* with a transliteration of Arabic names. (However, Arab historians' names are customarily used without diacritics.) Place names are even more problematical. Certain well known places have accepted 'crusader' names; for example, for Nicaea and Antioch it would not be sensible to insist on İznik and Antakya. Having made this decision, it seemed more faithful to the text to keep medieval renderings of less well known places: Philippopolis and Adrianople, rather than Plovdiv and Edirne, for instance. However, sometimes an obscure place has a modern name similar to its medieval name, so, for example, Semlin has become Zemun. In two cases a modern term has been adopted to avoid confusion: the medieval 'Romania' represented Turkish lands conquered from the Greeks in Asia Minor and has been translated as Rūm; Albert's 'Babylonia' has been rendered as Egypt. Modern identifications of places are in *Appendix 2*.