

Article

The Crusades and the Latin East in the Memories of the Hispanic Hospitallers (14th Century)

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Abstract: A set of memories forged an institutional history, disseminated for and by the Catalan, Aragonese, and Navarrese Hospitallers, that paid attention to the crusader past in the Latin East as justification for their functional and administrative features after the Order was re-founded in Rhodes. The translated versions of the statutes were a key means for transmitting the Order's iconic references to the time of the crusades in the Holy Land. These images operated as a mirror that permitted Hospitallers to recreate identity functions and mythical characters in the most emblematic phase and places, after becoming the crusader Order par excellence in the eastern Mediterranean in Rhodes. Reports on military actions from the 12th to 13th centuries and other allusions stood out in a historiographical tour that extolled its mission and identified itself with symbolic places and people. All this was without forgetting the importance of their caring and religious roles in these narratives. This paper analyses the uses of the memory of the Eastern Hispanic priories of the 14th century found in the crusades and in the history of the Latin East fundamental arguments to affirm and guarantee the strong links between East and West in the headquarters in Rhodes.

Keywords: Hospitallers; memories; historical sources; history justification; crusading role



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1. Introduction

The Hospitallers' retelling of their role in the Latin East allowed them to emphasize and legitimize the functions that were redefined and then assumed during the long 14th century, after transferring their headquarters to Rhodes and receiving the inheritance from the Temple. The defence of Christianity was a recurring argument in the late medieval period, which was disseminated from the papacy, Rhodes, and within the priories (Sarnowsky 2011a, p. 5; 2011c). It was also, in part, a response to the criticism that the Military Orders had received after the final fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and to the new conditions that followed.

In this analysis of the memories of the Hispanic Hospitallers, we examine fundamentally the vindication of their crusading and caring activities, which became key iconic features in their past in the Latin East. This paper studies information that was spread by the Hospitallers of the Northeast of the Peninsula among their members, and its purpose was to revive the memory of the foundational context and identity functions, and so justify the Order's needs and reality in the Late Middle Ages. We will focus on the translated manuscripts of the statutes available, thanks to the editing work of R. Cierbide Martinera (1999, 2002), but taking into the account some other administrative, political, or historiographical sources.

The statutes have been the object of studies dedicated to the Hospitallers that show their importance in governmental dynamics (Delaville le Roulx 1887; King 1934; Riley-Smith 1967; Luttrell 2020). However, this work will pay attention to non-administrative uses and how they served to generate an official history of the Order in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, which was partly mythical and exemplary. The administrative information in the Catalan and Occitan statutes circulated in manuscripts that included narrative stories and

even historical documents referring to the Latin East. In this way, they helped to strengthen trans-Mediterranean links and to respond to the Convent of Rhodes' needs in particular. Remembering the crusading past in the Holy Land contributed to emphasizing the unitary character of the institution, its centrality and helped to legitimize the activities carried out from the island. These remembrances formed part of a communicative strategy to promote the administrative dependence of the Hispanic priories on the Convent, that favoured western contributions to Rhodes. With this information, the memory of the crusading and caring functions of the Hospitallers in the Latin East was revived. The aim was to highlight the past of the institution, as well as its ecclesiastical condition and papal protection, which had preceded the "new" Order that emerged precisely after the incorporation of the assets of the Temple. The first decades in Rhodes were clearly marked by the identification with the defence of Christianity and crusading ideology, such as the goal of recovering the Holy Land (Bonet Donato 2021, pp. 97–102). To complete these western visions of the Order's past, it is also worth addressing Juan Fernández de Heredia's views on crusades. In short, this proposal aims to account for the validation and aggrandizement of the crusading mission and the scope of the mythification of the Hospitallers in the Holy Land.

2. The Defence of the Crusader and Levantine Past

Remembering the crusader and Levantine past of the Order came in different textual shapes and sizes (Nicholson 2018; Bonet and Pavón 2021, pp. 255–56; Carraz 2021), such as the manuscripts of the statutes but also in documents from the period in which it was asking for help. These letters were preserved in the archival fonds of the Hospital and served to create memories. All those sources can be taken as early stages of the production of an official history, that came to take the form of a chronicle in the middle of the 15th century (Luttrell 1978).

2.1. *The Manuscripts of the Statutes*

The compilations of the Rule and the statutes helped to transmit the institutional memory in the western commanderies. Formally, they were administrative texts used for practical purposes (Sarnowsky 2011b). Despite their utilitarian function, they acted as key pieces in the construction of the institutional identity. Mentions of the most outstanding activities, such as crusading and caring, were there to ensure the dependency on and continuing contributions to Rhodes from the western priories. In these codices, the organization's *raison d'être* was recorded and revived, showing a body of regulations coming from the headquarters in Jerusalem and Acre. Obviously, the manuscripts also contained provisions from Rhodes, some of which referred to Convent life, East–West relations, and functions of the Order, especially in the East. These 14th century regulations came after those from the 12th to 13th centuries and were presented as a continuity of the quintessential crusading period. It was precisely this chronological, and therefore, historical sequence, that placed the updated measures taken in Rhodes into a legislative tradition implemented and promoted from the previous Eastern centres of power.

In addition, the copy of the statutes in a codex channelled the circulation of these memories in the houses of the Order and some statutes were occasionally read in Provincial Chapters (Barquero Goñi 2004, pp. 109, 297) and consulted for the government of the commanderies. On the other hand, the Masters and the priors found support for their solutions in the statutory literature, which thus constituted a fundamental legitimizing tradition¹. The interest in projecting these messages among the friars or even other audiences explains why they were translated into vernacular languages very early on, at the beginning of the 13th century (Delaville le Roulx 1887, p. 345).

A total of seven Catalan, Aragonese, and Navarrese manuscripts from the 14th century make up the documentary corpus of the communication of these norms and other memorial records (Cierbide Martinera 1999, 2002). In the creation of these memories, we can establish four different purposes in the texts compiled in the statutes: administrative, narrative, mythical, and legitimizing. The messages on rules for living and information

of a more historical nature were part of the same texts, and this highlights the connection between norms and narratives. However, these texts were tools for the government of the priories above all. This can be seen in the accompanying marginal notes in some of the statutes which refer to others on the same theme and to the *Usatges*, as is the case in the Perpignan manuscript.

2.2. Hospitallers' Archival Fonds

In some Hospitallers' archival fonds, various documents reported on the conditions in the Holy Land in order to request aid (Smail 1969), such as the ones sent by the Master to the Prior of Navarre, from the end of the 12th century and others from the 13th century². Likewise, the *Cartulario Magno* of 1350 compiled some papal letters that drew attention to the work of the Hospitallers in the Holy Land as defenders and "recuperators"³. This exceptional work in six volumes was promoted by the Castellan of Amposta, Juan Fernández de Heredia, known for his vocation as an historian and this is reflected in the use of diplomas for memory purposes since the contents of the documents were summarised in marginal notations. Many of the papal bulls in the second volume refer to the role of the Hospitallers and of the Templars, in the defence of the Holy Land, which had a proselytising rather than a governmental or administrative purpose. All this without forgetting that the pontifical records per se were highly valued as testimonies of the close ties with Rome, and ultimately revitalised papal patronage. For example, a letter of Pope Gregory IX recalls that when Saladin attacked the Holy Land, the Hospitallers and Templars, among others, were its defenders⁴. In addition, some of these pontifical instructions, which gave an account of the needs and vicissitudes of the knights in the Latin East, were preserved in the Hispanic Hospitallers' archives. Thus, in 1184, Alexander III addressed the prelates so that they would not interfere with the donation of arms and horses to the Order because they were to be used to defend the Holy Land⁵.

2.3. The Statutes Enacted in the Holy Land

The statutes themselves transmitted to their audience the functional, administrative, and day-to-day realities of the Convent in the Latin East, and these norms and pieces of news made up most of the statutes of the 12th and 13th centuries. Furthermore, their translation into regional languages made their contents available to the western Hospitallers. Regarding this transmission, we ask ourselves what the purpose was of a Hospitaller in a Catalan, Navarrese, or Aragonese commandery being familiar with this information. What was the use of their knowing about the administration of the Hospital of Jerusalem or Acre and the Convent's activities, such as military or daily life that had happened more than one hundred years before? These Eastern Hispanic Hospitallers had access to ancient solutions even though they were dealing with conditions and places that were far away in all senses. In this exercise of the imagination, we can recognise that beyond utilitarian information concerning behaviour and rules in communal life, the images of the Convent, the Master, and of the main identity activities were systematically projected through these norms. Moreover, we may ask ourselves why the Catalan manuscripts predominate, which together with the Occitan one and another in Aragonese make up the known corpus of regulations compiled in the long 14th century, especially at the end of the century, used at the priories of Catalonia and Navarre and the Castellania of Amposta (Cierbide Martinera 2002; Cierbide Martinera and Bonnet 2007, p. 14). It is easy to recognise a greater connection between the two aforementioned priories of the Crown of Aragon and the Convent of Rhodes among the Hispanic Hospitallers, especially with regard to the fulfilment of economic contributions, such as the so-called *responsiones* (Bonet Donato 2015, pp. 112–14; 2021, pp. 406–8). There was, therefore, a greater interest and need to communicate and disseminate the set of historical and recent rules that forged and reinforced the international identity of the Hospitallers. Indeed, as was highlighted earlier, these Military Orders played a role in the transmission of information given their international organisation (Menache 2020). Moreover Catalan, Aragonese, and even Navarrese knights were committed to the sense of

belonging to this trans-Mediterranean organisation, while keeping their regional identity as well (Bonet Donato 2015).

The Rule of Raymon du Puy offered general life regulations and was followed and completed by the statutes promulgated during the magisteries of Jobert of Syria and Roger des Molins, corresponding to the Jerusalem period. These defined key operational aspects in overseas relations, such as the functions of the central institutions, the role of the Master and Chapter, as well as alms and *responsiones*. The emphasis on caring with explicit reference to the Jerusalem Hospital was made very clearly. Moreover, the religious charism of the place is underlined by the statement that Master Jobert acted *in testimoni et en presentia de la passio de Ihesu Christ*, that is, reflecting how he bore witness to the legacy of Christ in the place of the Passion (Cierbide Martinera 1999, p. 89). It is also very significant that the first of the statutes is about the privilege of white bread for the sick of *Santa Mayzo del Hospital de Iherusalem*. Most of Jobert's statutes allude to Jerusalemite memory, and even those references to western parts were also related to Jerusalem, as it states that *los liegs dels morts siant tals cum aysels de Iherusalem* (Cierbide Martinera 1999, p. 90). We also note the statutes of Roger des Molins of 1181 concerning the Hospital of Jerusalem and its mission to serve the poor, as well as others relating to the payments of the western priories to it. These requirements and other references had no operational meaning for the institution in the 14th century, but they were an appeal to the tradition of western support for the Convent and to their remembering of the duty of caring for the sick and poor. Elsewhere, these formulations bolstered the pedagogical message that affirmed that members of regular orders managed wealth, without owning it, because its destination was the poor. This tradition was reformulated from the end of the 11th century when justifications for the wealth of the Church were made. These defined a Christian economic language, with a legal–institutional dimension, and characterized poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon as was also the case in the Hospitallers' regulations and their dissemination (Evangelisti 2017, pp. 59, 76–80).

During the second period in Acre, the statutes were described as promulgated by the general Chapters, referring explicitly to places in the Latin East, such as Margat, Acre, and Limassol. These regulations had a greater focus on organisational matters, although they maintained the emphasis on the life of the headquarters and its needs, particularly since *la recordacio e confirmació de les bones costums del Hospital feta per Maestre Alfonso de Portugal*. Its measures set the conditions for the internationalisation of the organisation, defining the positions of grand officers, the dynamics of the Chapter, and the election of the Master (Cierbide Martinera 2002, pp. 204–22; Riley-Smith 1967, p. 120). Of particular note are the allusions to the daily life of the Convent, to equipment, and the military retinue of the Master and the Marshal, and especially the reference to the *Quant responsions seran enviadas des d'Oltramar*, where "overseas" is the West. We also see an increase, compared to 12th century information, in references to military organization like those relating to the military entourage and the financial needs of this crusading activity (Cierbide Martinera 2002, pp. 213–20; Sarnowsky 2011b, p. 5).

The effects of the war, especially in the second half of the 13th century, were also felt in the normative texts, as in a statute from 1263 that stipulated what to do if *lo Maestre fos pres per sarrayns*, specifying that the knights who escaped from battle should choose his successor (Cierbide Martinera 2002, p. 225). Similarly, in 1270, it was established that, if the Master, Marshal, and most of the knights went to the land of Tripoli, the Grand Commander would choose another person to head the community in Acre (Cierbide Martinera 2002, p. 254). Both defined a procedure to avoid a power vacuum, but also noted the active role of dignitaries, especially the Master, and the strong threats that were looming. These provisions revealed the Order's commitment to the defence of the Latin East, but also recall the difficulties in the last decades there. Some other norms from the last third of the 13th century contained many references to the places of conventual life, such as the Church, the Hospital, and the Convent of Acre. Very specific matters were also the object of attention, such as a statute on the Sergeant-Surgeons of Crac, Margat, and Cyprus. It was

said that those statutes were provided in 1262 at the general Chapter held in Caesarea, Jaffa, and Acre. In fact, it was a confirmation from earlier Chapters at those places and others (Luttrell 2020, p. 110), as said in one of our manuscripts referring to Hugo Revel (Cierbide Martinera 2002, p. 130). These geographical references and others from the Jerusalem period identified the Order's spaces of power with emblematic places in the Latin East, which together located the organisation in some of the most iconic crusading scenarios.

The sending of *responsiones* and horses was also an object of regulation in the last decades at Acre (Cierbide Martinera 2002, pp. 230–31); other provisions on travelling to the Convent were also enacted (Cierbide Martinera 2002, pp. 251–53). These matters point to significant connections between the West and the Convent in the Rhodes period, and therefore, the recounting of these provisions prompted other later measures necessary for the internationalization of the Order in the 14th century.

The final stage of Acre and the transfer to Limassol coincided with a period of disrepute when Hospitallers and Templars were accused of having failed in their main task of fighting the infidel (Forey 1992, pp. 204–20; Nicholson 1995, p. 133). Some statutory provisions from 1280 to 1283 punished various failures of the crusader Hospitallers in the fight against the Muslims with the loss of the habit (Cierbide Martinera 2002, p. 260). The transfer to Cyprus opened a new age for the Order that was later to be continued in Rhodes and Malta (Luttrell 1999). The statutes of the various general Chapters in Cyprus from 1292 to 1304 brought about the creation of an important navy with its Admiral, and they reinforced the presence of western knights in the Convent. Other dispositions on the new conventual organisation were promulgated (Cierbide Martinera 2002, pp. 266–312; Luttrell 1999, p. 81). The failure in the Latin East was counteracted by a set of provisions that reflected greater attention to military organisation, initiating, or increasing the Order's maritime orientation, reinforcing the central headquarters, and strengthening the ties between the West and the Convent. This advocated the new Order that emerged after the incorporation of the Temple and relaunched the organisation with a crucial, stronger crusading commitment (Luttrell 1992b; Bonet Donato 2021).

2.4. Founding and Re-Founding Documents

In some of the compilations of the statutes, selected documents were copied that legitimated the foundational and re-foundational conditions of the Hospital as can be seen in the charter of donation of Godfrey of Bouillon and that of the confirmation of Pope Boniface VIII. Also, some other diplomas from the 14th century were inserted in some of these codices. These validations should be understood as references to an organisation that was re-founded in Rhodes after receiving the Templar inheritance (Luttrell 1980, pp. 249–52). In the context of these changes, the construction of memory emphasised the founding and transformational moments, showing that the institution had already been re-founded with the arrival of the crusaders when they received the donation of the Defensor of the Holy Sepulchre to Jerusalem. Later the papal blessing restored the statutes as they had been lost after the collapse in the Holy Land.

Godfrey's donation shows the Hospitallers' presence there before the arrival of the first crusaders and before the Templars, giving them the charisma of this unique beginning just as it recalls a transformational moment for the Order. Moreover, the Pope's confirmation amounts to another re-founding moment, when the institution was protected and relaunched by the papacy just before the Templars were prosecuted.

Godfrey of Bouillon's document was copied in the two most complete versions of the statutes (1314 and circa 1382) and Boniface VIII's bull was referred to in four of the manuscripts because it was central to the validation of the normative tradition of the Latin East. Godfrey's charter was issued in 1100 shortly after the conquest of Jerusalem, even if the Perpignan cartulary version says that it is from the same year. This comment suggests the concurrence between the great event and the first institutional transformation. It is worth noting that the document was copied after the pages devoted to the founding miracles, the account of the capture of Jerusalem, and the epigraph on how the "Hospital's

house was well adorned with spiritual goods" (Cierbide Martinera 2002, p. 163). With this chronological order and discourse, the pre-crusade tradition of the Order was linked to the main historical figure of Godfrey of Bouillon of the First Crusade. Moreover, the spiritual mission was emphasised thanks to his votive donation in Jerusalem, and, additionally, his establishment of Saint John the Baptist as its patron. The historical significance of the episode was evident from the fact that it was copied as documentary evidence of a quasi-foundational reality by the first dignitary of the crusader city. In the Navarrese Occitan version of 1314, this was made explicit when it was said that he *aya promes a la mayre gleya del Hospital fundar...una mayzo del hospital* (Cierbide Martinera 1999, p. 141). Godfrey's status as a crusader was underlined through the mention of his visit to the Holy Places once he came to Jerusalem and his veneration for Saint John the Baptist. This event is used in the narrative to clarify that the Baptist was the patron instead of another saint, Joan Almosnier, with whom he had been confused. The original document has not been preserved, although it was confirmed by King Baldwin III, crediting Godfrey's promotion in some of the early stages of the institution⁶.

The fall of Acre meant the loss of documentary fonds, as Pope Boniface VIII expressed in the confirmation of the Rule of Raymon du Puy, made at the request of Master William of Villaret (Cierbide Martinera 1999, p. 82; 2002, pp. 168–69). The confirmation of 1300 entailed some changes to the original regulation as noted in the same letter⁷. Interestingly, it is included in many of these Hispanic versions, as well as the Occitan ones (Cierbide Martinera and Bonnet 2007). Its purpose was to legitimise the Rule in new conditions after the loss of the Holy Land and to validate the regulations under pontifical authority. This papal letter was included after the account of the miracles in these codices and before the Rule itself. It was, therefore, a piece of documentation that endorsed the previous confirmation by Eugene III and ratified the statutes for the new age. In the manuscript of Perpignan, the loss of Jerusalem and Acre were mentioned in order to explain the disappearance of the confirmation of the Rule by Pope Eugene III and another given by Lucius III. This led to the confirmation of Boniface VIII, which made explicit the loss of the documentation of the headquarters of the Latin East (Cierbide Martinera 2002, pp. 127, 168–69).

3. Mythology and Masters as Key Matters in the Order's History

3.1. Mythical History: The Miracles

As in the case of those codices from southern France, in some of the Hispanic ones, the statutes and *Esgarts* were accompanied by the *miracula* and some lists or short notices of the Masters in addition to the documents already mentioned. Contacts between the commanderies on both sides of the Pyrenees explain the possible French influence in key aspects of the construction of a specific history of the Hospitallers. The miracles and the lists of the Masters were part of the Order's memories (Luttrell 1992a; Calvet 2000; Luttrell 2018), and their transmission in these volumes linked this tradition to the Hospitallers' rules for living, which provided an operational and ideological mission at the same time. A kind of story, which was partly legendary, was passed on to western communities and once again, it related to the Holy Land, the crusades and, significantly, the functions and sacredness achieved by the Hospital in the Latin East. The texts on the mythical origins had been generated in the second half of the 12th century, and these explicitly connected the Order with Jerusalem (Delaville le Roulx 1904, p. 1), traditions about which only the Hospitaller William of Santo Stefano expressed doubts in the late 13th century (Riley-Smith 2012, pp. 15–16). In some of the Hispanic versions, the miraculous stories were traced back to remote origins in biblical Jerusalem, prior to and corresponding with the coming of Christ, that implied that the institution enjoyed the sacredness of the origins of Christianity. One of the stories connected Jerusalem with Rhodes, where a miracle took place in which Christ himself saved Julian the Roman from a shipwreck and asked him to become a monk and shelter the poor in the House of Jerusalem (Cierbide Martinera 1999, p. 79; 2002, p. 157).

In the Perpignan text, however, the historical origins are traced to the foundation of a community of regulars by Italian merchants. The author specifies that although the House

was founded earlier, it was destroyed by Vespasian, like the Holy Sepulchre. For this reason, he entitled a chapter on how *la maysó del Hospital fou fundada après la passió de Jhesu Christ* (Cierbide Martinera 2002, p. 160). This comes close to the official story of the genesis of the Order from Guglielmo de Santo Stefano's *Exordium Hospitalis*, which took up William of Tyre's thesis that the Hospital had been founded by Amalfi merchants (Delaville le Roulx 1904, pp. 24–28; Calvet 2000, p. 34). After this, there follows a section which underlines the fact that the Hospital existed before the conquest of Jerusalem: *La religió fou comensada car debans no era religió mas Hospital de pobres e de la preza de Jerusalem* (Cierbide Martinera 2002, p. 161). In the Navarrese Occitan version from 1314, the legendary part from the time of Christ is shown to be contiguous with the supposedly historical part (Cierbide Martinera 1999, p. 79).

In the account of the First Crusade, Gerard, the Hospital's holy founder, helped the Christians break the siege by providing them with bread from within the city, offering a story that connected with the Order's original mission of caring. Another miracle prevented him being discovered by the Muslims. The brief narration of the First Crusade is very close to historical knowledge of the expedition. The stories of the *miracula* also explain the arrival of Christians from distant lands, Godfrey of Bouillon and the great Crusade of the Barons, the pilgrims responding to the call of the crusade, the capture of Antioch thanks to God's help, the conquest of Tripoli, Acre, and the siege of Jerusalem (Cierbide Martinera 1999, p. 80; 2002, p. 161; Cierbide Martinera and Bonnet 2007, p. 32). The defeat and death of the Muslims was achieved through Providence: *e la host dels crestians fou tant d'auant de Jherusalem que els prengueren la ciutat e ouciheren molts de sarrayns e hauien gran gog de la victoria que Déu los hauia donada e vengren al sepulcre de Nostre Senyor Jhesu Crist cantant e retent gracias al Nostre Senyor* (Cierbide Martinera 2002, p. 162). As a result, the crusader barons rewarded Gerard with many donations. From this point, the more historical account begins and it is reinforced by the inclusion of Godfrey's donation in the Perpignan version. It explains that Gerard was replaced by Raymon du Puy, who composed the statutes that *que al jorn de uy tenen los ffreres del Hospital*. Moreover, the list of the Masters in this manuscript begins with the figure of the founder, Saint Gerard. It states that he was inside Jerusalem before the arrival of the pilgrims of the First Crusade and mentioned Godfrey of Bouillon and the "other pilgrims who took the city" (Cierbide Martinera 2002, p. 127). In all these legendary references, the precedence of the Order's origins to the First Crusade is emphasised, mentioning its most charismatic leader and the importance of its origins back in biblical Jerusalem.

The mythical and sacred history of the Hospital of Jerusalem placed the institution at the very start of the Crusade, as it attributes miracles that led to the victory of the First Crusade to its saint. This antecedent placed the Order on a different and distinctive plane from other institutions and realities forged in the heat of the unfolding of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.

3.2. The Memory of the Masters of the Latin East

Two of the codices contained lists or brief eulogistic accounts of the Masters, whose genealogical presentation legitimized the continuity of the authority of the post of the Master. The complete references come from the Perpignan manuscript and the list from another Catalan manuscript from Toulouse from the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th centuries (Cierbide Martinera 2002, pp. 79, 80, 83). They were almost certainly inspired by the Occitan manuscripts as some of these also contained a brief list of the Masters and the *miracula* (Cierbide Martinera and Bonnet 2007, p. 56). These references were inspired by the Chronicle of the Deceased Masters, compiled a century after the fall of Jerusalem, (Delaville le Roulx 1904, p. 34), which according to A. Luttrell, possibly came from an obituary (Luttrell 2018, p. 90).

It was a list of a series of personages and actions that underlined the functions of the organization, beyond their historiographical value. These attributions had significant echoes from the Latin crusader past, since some Masters showed military charisma and

were exposed to the difficulties of warfare against the enemies of the faith. Through this narrative, the prestige of the Order is defended during the progressive loss of the Holy Places (Bonet Donato 2015). All these matters are made to fit in with the statutes and the stories of legendary and historical Jerusalemite origins, together providing an identity discourse.

Regarding the period of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the references to the military activity of some Masters are worth noting. The defeats and falls of Jerusalem and Acre are also mentioned in the explanation of the promoter of the Rule, Raymond de Puy (1120–1160). These crucial events were also recalled in the inserted bull of Boniface VIII and in a marginal note of the Cartulary Magno of 1350. This stated: *En este traslado . . . de papa Bonifacio . . . manda a los prelados que non contrastant que la ciudad de Acre sea perdida, en la qual era construido el sancto Hospital, with the aim of asking for las almosnas en subsidio de la Terra Santa*⁸.

In the brief references to the Masters, the founder was followed by mentions of Arnau de Comps (1162–1163). He was identified with the beginnings of the militarisation of the Order: *comença fet d'armes*, which had already begun in the time of the first Master, Raymond de Puy. However, it seems that the historicity of the Master is debatable (Delaville le Roulx 1904, pp. 45, 62–63). The later militarisation of the Hospitallers fits in with an official history of the Order that prefers to recall the original religious and caring tasks, as noted in the Rule and early statutes, despite a 'folk-memory' of the early stages of the Order's militarisation (Riley-Smith 2012, pp. 27–37). The figure of Roger de Molins (1177–1187) was remembered for having fought against the Muslims, during which, he met his death. The battle took place near Nazareth in the "Springs of Cresson" and resulted in the defeat of the crusaders, with many Templars and Hospitallers losing their lives (Delaville le Roulx 1904, p. 95; Baldwin 1969, p. 607). The institutional memory recalled the involvement of the top Hospitaller leaders in the critical years of the fighting and the eventual loss of Jerusalem; thus, contradicting suggestions, once again, about the lack of commitment that circulated especially at the end of the Levantine period.

In the record of the so-called Master Ermengaud of Aspa, it was recalled that "he had been persecuted by the enemies of the faith" when Jerusalem had been lost. Ermengaud's commitment was noted, although probably he was not the Master but only took charge of the temporary administration of the Order (Riley-Smith 1967, p. 106; Bronstein 2005, p. 147). His position in the source is erroneous in that he is placed after Garnier de Naples/Naplous (1189–1192), who was in fact his successor, and who was also described as a *bon garraiator* against the enemies of the faith. The brief accounts of the Masters of this complex period in the Holy Land emphasised above all their military contribution, as was also the case with Geoffroy de Donjon (1193–1202), who *pres lo Crach e lo Margat e fo molt saui home e prou d'armes e bon religios e de gran empresa*. As J. Delaville le Roulx points out, both Hospitaller enclaves had been granted to the Order earlier, in 1142 and 1186, respectively (Delaville le Roulx 1904, p. 129). Thus, the history told by and for the Hospitallers attributed these conquests to them after a critical moment like the retreat from Jerusalem and its consequences for the Third Crusade.

The accounts of the later Masters do not offer as much news on their military actions and yet maintain the iconic and laudatory references. The figure of Alfonso of Portugal (1204–1206) is highlighted by the confirmation of the statutes of Roger de Molins, as well as the promulgation of *Bons Establiments*. Despite the fact it was noted that he was the subject of rebellion, it was said that he improved the situation of the Order in parts of Spain, meaning Portugal, which largely fits with his trajectory as far as we know it (Riley-Smith 1967, p. 120). His successor, Geoffrey le Rat, was renowned for having acquired property in France and for participating in a council in Rome. His follower, Garin de Montaigu (1207–1227) had the prestige of *molt bon deffenedor de les almoynes* (Burgtorf 2008, pp. 518–23). These short reviews of their actions in the first third of the 13th century reflected how the institution had reinforced western sources of revenues. The comments served to emphasise the importance of western support, especially in this phase of the organisation's relocation.

Geoffrey le Rat's participation in a church council was also no trivial matter. Moreover, these comments are consistent with the process of the reorganisation of the Order at this time (Bronstein 2005, pp. 76–81).

Master Bertrand de Thexis (1228–1231) was well-known for his religiosity and his activity to ensure that the *senyors malauts fossen ben servits*. These eulogistic references lacked evidence, as do other magisterial portraits (Delaville le Roulx 1904, p. 166). Like other Masters, he embodied the spiritual and welfare missions which were crucial in a discourse that at once defended and proselytised the Hospitallers. The *laudatio* of his successor Garin (1230/1–1236) indicated that he had achieved “a great treasure and peace and truce” with the *enemies tant quant el regna en son magisteri per totes les terres deça mar*. This reference places him symbolically at the head of the Kingdom and as the bringer of peace. It should be remembered that Emperor Frederick II had achieved a truce with Sultan al-Kamil in 1229 lasting ten years, despite conquering some Muslim enclaves. However, Frederick was excommunicated just as he went on the crusade and later, there were conflicts among the Christians, such as a revolt in Acre against the emperor. Garin himself was involved in disputes with the Templars and other Christian leaders and conducted a short campaign against the Muslims. Although this was a period of peace, the most important Hospitaller and Templar strongholds were omitted from the peace agreement (Delaville le Roulx 1904, p. 183; Harwicke 1969, pp. 545–47). With this recreation of his figure, Garin was possibly being identified with Frederick in attributing to the truce and reigning “over all the lands of the Latin kingdom” as Master. Bertrand de Comps (1236/39–40) was presented as *conquistador de terres de sarrayns per sa prohesa e providencia*, who like his predecessor had increased “the treasure”. However, in 1238, the Pope issued a bull that tried to correct the scandalous and undisciplined life of the Hospitallers. Indeed, the Master's position in favour of the emperor clouded relations with the Pope (Riley-Smith 1967, p. 175). In short, Bertrand was recognised as being an outstanding crusader, who was guided by Providence, and a good administrator, which probably served to restore his and the Order's images in troubled times.

The reference to William of Châteauneuf (1242–1258) is important when it comes to observing the propagandistic arguments of the Order. This Master was indeed particularly active in the fight against the Muslims, although his image was probably once more overstated in the institutional historiography (Delaville le Roulx 1904, pp. 194–205). Although his military role was active, the Christians accumulated defeats, such as that of Gaza, where the Hospitallers lost men and William was taken prisoner and transferred to Cairo (Riley-Smith 1967, p. 181). However, our source devotes the longest account to him and does not deal with the fighting developments in which he took part, but rather with his interest in restoring order and protecting the pilgrims. This made him ask the Templars to cede *the garda de I pas que hauia en Suria* to the Hospitallers. The story explained that some members of the Order had requested him to take charge of the pass in Syria because no pilgrim passed through there without being robbed or killed. This pass had belonged to the Hospitallers and had been passed to the Templars, who finally sold it back to them for a horse. The episode is not very clear and indicates that the Hospital and Temple Masters involved were brothers, which was not true. However, there is a symbolic message in saying that the Hospitallers wanted to rescue a pass for pilgrims that the Templars had not been able to defend. It was a narrative and propagandistic solution aimed at underlining their commitment, in contrast with the Templars. This type of argument pointed out the legitimacy of the one in contrast to the decadence of the other, advocating the assimilation of one order by the other. The subsequent references to the Masters Hugo Revel (Burgtorf 2008, pp. 566–74) and Nicolas Lorgne dealt with matters such as statutes or bulls, up to the figure of Jean de Villiers (1285–1293). He is recognised for his statuary work and the fact that *e en son temps cristians perderen Acre e vench lo couent a Xipre*. This reference to the defeat of 1291 makes clear that he was not responsible for it. This is the single mention to the transcendent episode that led to the collapse of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, which caused such a shock throughout Christendom (Nicholson 2003, pp. 34–38).

4. The Historiographical References to the Crusades

In this journey through the stories and narratives about crusading and the Holy Land circulated by the Hospitallers, the history recorded under the Aragonese Master of the Order Juan Fernández de Heredia stands out (Luttrell 1978). He was a leading figure in the Hispanic priories of the 14th century and headed the Castellania of Amposta, and also held other posts such as prior of Catalonia, Saint Gilles, and Castile, and lieutenant general of the Hospital in Spain. An eminent politician and intellectual, he was close to the King of Aragon, Peter IV the Ceremonious, who had certainly influenced his interest in historiography, and to the popes of Avignon. His attraction for history led him to translate, compile, and promote works of history (Luttrell 1960), and as mentioned, he was the driving force behind the *Cartulario Magno*. This historiographical production was known to the Hospitallers, as is reflected in the fact that, after his death in 1396, King John I of Aragon wrote to the French priors and asked them to send him some of the Master's history volumes (Rubió i Lluch 1899, pp. 119–20). Additionally, we also know of the existence of other books of history in some commanderies (Miret i Sans 1910, p. 562).

Regarding our object of study, it is worth noting that some of the extraordinary manuscripts that Juan Fernández de Heredia ordered contained issues dealing with the East and Hispanic crusades, and later, those directed from Rhodes. The Eastern and Western crusades served as justifying or laudatory resources in the historiographical production which he promoted, especially in the period 1382–1396 (Mackenzie 1984, p. I; Nieto Soria 1999, p. 210). To some extent, he related these narratives to his political and military activities as Master. It should be noted that in the opening sentences of the manuscript of the *Flor de las Ystorias de Oriente*, it was highlighted that the volume could be of great benefit for the *soberana victoria de la Christiandat et ensalçamiento de la fe catolica*. This clearly claimed history as a source of inspiration for the crusader movement (Nieto Soria 1999, p. 188).

In the *Chronicle of the Conquerors*, the author traced the *fechos de armas* of the conquerors that were the object of a biography from Mark Antony in Egypt, King of the East to Jayme of Aragon, focusing on their outstanding actions. Particularly noteworthy are the mentions of Vespasian and Titus with the capture of Jerusalem, Tarik, and Musa with “the destruction of Spain”, Genghis Khan, Ferdinand III, and James I (Morel-Fatio 1885, p. XLIX). The work does not follow strict chronological order and it emphasised the importance of the Near East and the parallels with the Romans, as well as the Christian exploits against the Muslims under remarkable leaders, events in which he put East and West on the same plane. The narrative starts in the Near East, with episodes such as the Roman seizure of Jerusalem. Its Roman origins are alluded to in the aforementioned *miracula*, which give an account of the Hospital in Jerusalem, even though the narrative goes even further back to the time of Judas Maccabeus (Cierbide Martinera 1999, p. 138).

This aforementioned chronicle reflects the convulsive situation in the Latin East when the Mongols led by Genghis Khan failed to maintain their conquests and were neutralised by the Sultan of Egypt. In contrast, the translation into Catalan and Aragonese of the *Flor de las ystorias de Orient* under Juan Fernández de Heredia's patronage contained a part dedicated to the victory of the Mongols over the Muslims (Mackenzie 1984, p. III; Hauf i Valls 1996, p. 122). As the work in question reflects, there were intense diplomatic relations between the Mongols, the papacy, and western dignitaries. These relationships were also the case with James I as early as 1267, a fact of which we must not lose sight. The Master's predilection for this Aragonese King could partly explain this interest in the Mongols and the positive image of them in the context of the final decades of the Christian presence in the Holy Land, even after the loss of Acre, as contained in Aytón de Gorgios' version (Hauf i Valls 1996, p. 129). It also alluded to the “passage of the Holy Land”, which contained messages about the crusade that could be seen as inspiring other enterprises. According to Hauf, these versions translated to Catalan brought the figure of Genghis Khan closer to Aragonese and Catalan readers and led to the spread of the apology for the Mongol hordes (Hauf i Valls 1996, p. 113).

As Master of Rhodes, he organised an expedition for the conquest of Morea, where he was kidnapped, and these circumstances further awakened his interest in the history of Greece, which also arose from his post on the island (Luttrell 1969, p. 240; Nieto Soria 1999, p. 193). He commissioned the *Chronicle of Morea* from Bernardo de Jaca, who started from the chronicle of Morea written in Greek, French, and Italian, although it contains original parts relating to events after Muntaner's chronicle and up to 1377. This text is one of the most interesting of the Master's career as a historian (Luttrell 1960). It was also in line with the translation that he promoted of the *Chronicle of the Emperors*, in which he recorded the actions of the first crusaders in Greece, which in turn allowed the Hospitallers to justify their actions there (Mackenzie 1984, p. XIV).

5. Conclusions

The institutional memories that circulated among the Eastern Hispanic Hospitallers in the long 14th century found, in their past in the Holy Land, references for defending themselves as crusaders, a function that they assumed completely in Rhodes. The new location and conditions forced a significant re-foundation and reorganisation, in which the administrative links between the western priories and the headquarters on the island were strengthened and activated. All this entailed recourse to the Latin East's past, which made it possible to validate new developments such as their principal crusading role.

The transmission of the statutes in vernacular languages has helped to disseminate a series of images from the Holy Land, which emphasised foundational functions, Masters' leadership and Eastern conventual life, as well as the origins in Jerusalem. Although these were formally normative codices, they contained, in form and substance, historical references that reaffirmed the institution in its past in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Some of these books were embellished with the miracles of the Order and the stories of the Masters and their exemplary deeds. It was not a gallery of realistic portraits, but these figures embodied the caring and crusading vocation through, for example, their involvement in the defence of the Latin East. Likewise, the mythical story of the miracles deepened the roots or antecedents of the Order in biblical times that attributed a halo of exceptional sacredness to it. On the other hand, the inclusion of two significant documents such as a letter from Godfrey of Bouillon and another from Boniface VIII adds legitimating value and refers to different re-foundational moments, which give meaning to the new phase in Rhodes. Other documentary and historiographical memorialist elements shared this view of the crusading mission.

In short, it is possible to recognise a communicative strategy from and among the Eastern Hispanic Hospitallers that promoted a unitary understanding of the Order, the administrative dependence on Rhodes, and the western contributions to the Convent. Their commitment to international relations was strengthened and inspired by recalling these memories of their functions as defenders of the pilgrims and as crusaders in their mythical origins in the Holy Land.

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Notes

- ¹ National Library of Malta or NLM, codex or cod. 316, folio or f. 179r-v; NLM, cod. 327, f. 94v, 95 y 96r; NLM, cod. 350, f. 124v; NLM, cod. 351, f. 68v-69r; 355, f. 137v and (Miret i Sans 1910, p. 422).
- ² (García Larragueta 1957) II, n. 85, 86, 87, 322; AGN, Clero, Desamortizados, Convento de sanjuanistas de Puente la Reina, n. 36, f. 29v-30r. Other documents about requests to and contributions from Hispanic priories, Delaville, CH, n. II, 1815, 2211, 2467, 2495; n. III, 3631, 3677.
- ³ (Madrid Medina 2012, pp. 45, 48, 71–72, 111, 116, 121, 127, etc.).
- ⁴ Archivo Histórico Nacional or AHN, Órdenes Militares or OOMM, Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén or OSJ, código 649, n. 22.
- ⁵ AHN, OOMM, OSJ, carpeta 594, n. 5.

- ⁶ Delaville, CH, n. I, 1 and 225.
⁷ Delaville, CH, n. III, 4496.
⁸ (Madrid Medina 2012, p. 154) and AHN, código 649, n. 103 (1299).

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