

Consensus and Power: Kingship and Political Culture in Crusader Jerusalem (1100–1192)

The events of the crusading movement have stimulated human imagination for centuries, resulting in numerous references in contemporary mass culture. The Crusaders could not have realised that many people around the world, almost ten centuries after the capturing of Jerusalem in 1099, would imagine the ideal king through the creation of Baldwin IV (played by Edward Norton) or the ideal queen as Sibylla (by Eva Green) in the movie of *Kingdom of Heaven*, directed by Ridley Scott. Even with this brief introduction, it is worth mentioning the fact that medieval Europe, with the Kingdom of Jerusalem as its outpost, was a world of kings, and that the presence of the Crusaders, and their survival for 200 years in the Holy Land, was marked by the establishment of the Kingdom of Jerusalem in December 1100, when Baldwin of Boulogne (1100–1118), the first of his name, was crowned king of Jerusalem.

However, what did this actually mean for those who wore the crown and those who did not? Therefore, the questions of what the essence of kingship was, what the ideological basis of this type of rulership was, and what abstract norms meant in practice are crucial to understanding the mechanisms of politics in the Middle Ages. The main aim of the project is to present the idea and practice of kingship in the Kingdom of Jerusalem between 1100 and 1192, *i.e.* from the reign of Baldwin I to the end of the reign of Guy of Lusignan (1186–1192). Thus, the chronological scope includes the taking of the royal title by the first Latin monarch in Jerusalem and the loss of the Holy City, which had its practical and ideological dimensions related to the reduction of the Kingdom of Jerusalem's borders to the Levantine coast. This is because, it could be assumed that the loss of Jerusalem represented a clear milestone in the political life of the so-called Crusader states, and the idea of kingship, as well as the whole system of power in Outremer, needed to be reformulated.

The project assumes the following research objectives: **(1)** to determine the impact of Jerusalem, and the monarchs' ever-increasing emphasis on its sanctity, on the collective ideas about kingship in the Crusader states in the 12th c.; **(2)** to study the royal title(s), especially through the *intitulatio* of the charters produced by the chancery of the Kingdom of Jerusalem as the most comprehensive depiction of the king's presentation; **(3)** to establish the key ideas in the kings of Jerusalem's self-presentation: whether was it the *imitatio Christi* (the imitation of Christ)? **(4)** to indicate that the practice of royal power in the Kingdom of Jerusalem has never bore the character of the autocratic power, exercised against or without the will of the political elites, therefore, the Kingdom was never seen as the private property of the king and his lineage, who ruled not independently but within a framework defined by a political culture, which can be described as a rule by consensus. These research objectives of the project, although related to the currently dominant historiography of the Crusades and the broader strand of political history, have received little scholarly attention and need to be supplemented and verified.

The study will be based on a corpus of diplomatic sources (*ca.* 1100 documents), sphragistic, epigraphic, and numismatic materials supplemented by narrative sources, including the oeuvres of Fulcher of Chartres, Albert of Aachen, William of Tyre, and other sources describing the history of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, which convey information about its political culture. Hence, although this source type is much later (*ca.* 13th c.), the legal treatises as the *Assizes of Jerusalem*, produced in the Crusader states, will be used as supplementary material.

The project rectifies an important gap in understanding of the political history of the medieval Europe, while undertaking a vital step towards future comparative research with using the case of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.