1270: Ibn Ḫaldūn on the Events Leading to Louis IX's Tunisian Crusade

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Abstract: This article examines and contextualizes Ibn Ḫaldūn's explanation for Louis IX's crusade to Tunis in 1270. Juxtaposing Latin-Christian and Arabic-Islamic descriptions of the crusade, it demonstrates that these texts drew back on different sources of knowledge and pursued different objectives. In doing so, they produced contrasting explanations of what actually motivated the crusade. This variety of interpretations emerged shortly after the death of Louis IX. In consequence, any attempt to understand the precise reasons for the campaign must resort to a certain degree of conjecture.

Source

Ibn Ḫaldūn, *Tārīḫ*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār; Ḫalīl Šaḥāda, 8 vols., Beirut: Dār al-fikr, 2000–2001, vol. 6, pp. 425–426, trans. Daniel G. König, Mohamed Qassiti, and John Aspinwall.

وهلك منهم عالم، وقيد سلطانهم أسيراً من المعركة إلى السلطان فاعتقله بالإسكندرية، حتى مرّ عليه بعد حين من الدهر وأطلقه على أن يمكّنوا المسلمين من دمياط فوفّوا له. ثم على شرط المسالمة فيما بعد فنقضه لمدة قريبة واعتزم على الحركة إلى تونس متجنّياً عليهم فيما زعموا بمال أدعياء تجّار أرضهم، وأنهم أقرضوا اللياني فلما نكبه السلطان طالبوه بذلك المال وهو نحو ثلثمائة دينار بغير موجب يستندون إليه، فغضبوا لذلك واشتكوا إلى طاغيتهم فامتعض لهم ورغّبوه غزو تونس لما كان فيها من المجاعة والموتان.

A great number of them [the crusaders] died [during Louis IX's crusade to Egypt, 1248–1254], and their sultan [Louis IX] was taken prisoner on the battlefield, brought before the sultan [of Egypt], and kept in Alexandria. After some time had passed, he released him on condition that they [the crusaders] would surrender Damietta to the Muslims, which they then surrendered to him; further, on the condition that they would henceforth observe peace. This [condition] he [Louis IX] soon broke and decided to leave for Tūnis, while making accusations against them [the inhabitants of Tūnis] concerning a sum of money, which lying merchants of their [i.e. Louis'] country said that they had lent to al-Lulyānī. When he fell out of favour with the Sultan, they demanded it—around 300 Dīnār—from him without producing any reliable evidence. Therefore, they became angry and complained to their tyrant who angrily sided with them, and demanded that he lead a raid to Tūnis at a time when it was afflicted by famine and a high mortality rate.

فأرسل الفرنسيس طاغية الإفرنج وإسمه سنلويس بن لويس وتلقّب بلغة الإفرنج روا فرنس ومعناه ملك إفرنس، فأرسل إلى ملوك النصارى يستنفرهم إلى غزوها، وأرسل إلى

Al-Faransīs, the tyrant of the Franks, whose name is Sanlūwīs b. Lūwīs and whose title in the language of the Franks is *Rawā Farans*, which means "King of France" (*malik Ifrans*), now sent envoys to the rulers of the Christians and urged them to raid [Tūnis]. He also sent a message the leader, who they claim is the successor of the Messiah (*ḫalīfat al-masīḥ*) [i.e. the Pope], who called on

القائد خليفة المسيح بزعمهم فأوعز إلى ملوك النصرانية بمظاهرته، وأطلق يده في أموال الكنائس مدداً له. وشاع خبر استعداد النصارى للغزو في سائر بلادهم، وكان الذين أجابوه للغزو ببلاد المسلمين من ملوك النصرانية ملك الإنكتار وملك اسكوسيا وملك نزول وملك برشلونة وإسمه ريدراكون وجماعة آخرون من ملوك الإفرنج، هكذا ذكر أبن الأثير.

the rulers of Christendom to assist him [Louis IX]. To support him, he allowed him access to the churches' treasures. The news of the Christians' readiness for this raid spread to their other countries. Among the rulers of Christendom who agreed to raid the lands of the Muslims were the ruler of the English (*malik al-Inkiṭār*), the ruler of Scotland (*malik Iskūsiyā*), the ruler of Naples (*malik Nuzūl*), and the ruler of Barcelona (*malik Baršalūna*), whose name is *Raydarakūn* (*Rei d'Aragón*), and other rulers of the Franks. This is how Ibn al-Aṯīr [historiographer, d. 630/1233 in Mosul] reported it.

وأهم المسلمين بكل ثغر شأنهم وأمر السلطان في سائر عمالاته بالاستكثار من العدّة، وأرسل في الثغور لذلك بإصلاح الأسوار واختزان الحبوب، وانقبض تجّار النصارى عن تعاهد بلاد المسلمين. وأوفد السلطان رسله إلى الفرنسيس لاختبار رحاله ومشارطته على ما يكف عزمه. وحملوا ثمانين ألفاً من الذهب لاستتمام شروطهم فيما زعموا، فأخذ المال من أيديهم وأخبرهم أنّ غزوه إلى أرضهم. فلما طلبوا المال اعتلّ عليهم بأنه لم يباشر قبضه ووافق شأنهم معه وصول رسول عن صاحب مصر، فأحضر عند الفرنسيس واستجلس فأبى وأنشده قائلاً من قول أبي مطروح شاعر السلطان بمصر:

Their [the Christians'] cause distressed the Muslims in all the port cities (*bi-kull ṯaġr*), and the Sultan ordered all his provinces to intensify their preparations. To this end, he sent word to the port cities to repair their walls and fill the granaries. He also denied the Christian traders their contractually guaranteed rights in the lands of the Muslims (*taʿāhud bilād al-muslimīn*). The Sultan sent his envoys to the French king (*al-Faransīs*) to obtain information about his itinerary and the conditions which would need to be satisfied for him to give up his request. They [the envoys] carried 80,000 gold pieces with them to fulfil the conditions they [the Christians] would formulate. He [the king] accepted the money from their hands and then informed them that his raiding party would go to their lands. When they then demanded the money back, he pretended not to know that he had accepted it. This business of theirs with him coincided with the arrival of an envoy from the ruler of Egypt. He was brought before the French king (*al-Faransīs*) and ordered to sit. However, he refused and recited an excerpt from the verses (*qāʾilan min qawl*) of Abū Maṭrūḥ, the poet of the Sultan of Egypt:

قل للفرنسيس اذا جئته | مقال صدقٍ من وزير نصيح

Tell the French king (*al-Faransīs*), when you come to him, / a frank word from an honest adviser;

آجرك الله على ما جرى | من قتلِ عباد نصارى المسيح

May God reward you for what has happened, / namely the killing of Christian worshippers of the Messiah;

أتيت مصراً تبتغي ملكها | تحسب ان الزمر بالطبل ريح

You came to Egypt with the desire to rule it, / You probably thought the sound of the drums was only wind;

فساقك الحين إلى أدهم | ضاق به عن ناظِرَيك الفسيح

This moment, however, led you into a black hole through which your eyes were deprived of foresight;

وكل أصحابك أودَعتهم | بسوء تدبيرك بطن الضريح

All your companions you have entrusted / to the inside of the grave through your misconduct;

سبعون ألفاً لا يُرى منهم | إلّا قتيل أو أسير جريح

Seventy thousand of whom nothing is to be seen / except the killed or the wounded prisoner;

ألهَمَكَ الله إلى مثلها | لعلّ عيسى منكم يستريح

May God lead you to something similar, / maybe then Jesus will have peace from you;

إن كان باباكم بذا راضياً | فربّ غشٍّ قد أتى من نصيح

If your pope was quite satisfied with this, / he nourished falsehood as if it came from a wise adviser;

فاتخذوه كاهناً إنه | أنصح من شقٍ لكم أو سطيح

Then take him to be a diviner (*kāhinan*): / He will surely be a "better" adviser than Šiqq and Saṭīḥ![1]

وقل لهم إن أزمعوا عودةً | لأخذ ثارٍ أو لشغلٍ قبيح

Tell them, if they plan to return / to take revenge or commit ugly deeds:

دار ابن لقمان على حالها | والقيداً باقٍ والطواشي صبيح

The house of Ibn Luqmān is still in the same state, / the chains and the eunuch (*al-ṭawāšī*) Ṣabīḥ are still in the same place.

يعني بدار ابن لقمان موضع اعتقاله بالاسكندرية والطواشي في عرف أهل مصر هو الخصي.

The house of Ibn Luqmān means the place of his [Louis IX's] custody in Alexandria, and "al-ṭawāšī" means "eunuch" in Egyptian usage.

فلما استكمل إنشاده لم يزد ذلك الطاغية إلا عتوّاً واستكباراً، واعتذر عن نقص العهد في غزو تونس بما يسمع عنهم من

Now, when he finished his recitation, it only increased the insolence and arrogance of this tyrant. He proceeded to justify (*iʿtaḏara ʿan*) his lack of compliance with the agreement (*naqṣ al-ʿahd*)—as shown by the raid on Tūnis—by making excuses for their going there in the same manner as has already been heard with regard to

[1] Šiqq and Saṭīḥ are two diviners of the Muslim tradition for whom several reports exist, cf. Levi Della Vida and Fahd, Saṭīḥ, pp. 84–85; Carra de Vaux and Fahd, Shiḳḳ, pp. 440–441. A characteristic feature of their prophecies in these narratives is that they also came true – including, for example, the predictions of the Abyssinian invasion and Persian occupation of southern Arabia in pre-Islamic times, which were attributed to them, the prophetic appearance of Muḥammad, and the fall of the Sassanid Empire in the aftermath of the Arab-Islamic expansion. I thank Mohamed Qassiti for pointing this out. The verse is thus probably to be interpreted with an eye to Ibn Maṭrūḥ's use of irony: since the French king and his entourage were so naïve as to believe the Pope's lies, they would certainly consider him a better interpreter of the future than two of the most reliable soothsayers in the Muslim tradition.

المخالفات، عذراً دافعهم به، وصرف الرسل من سائر الآفاق ليومه.

their misconduct. On that day he sent out envoys to all directions of the winds.

فوصل رسل السلطان منذرين بشأنهم وجمع الطاغية حشده وركب أساطيله إلى تونس أخر ذي القعدة سنة ثمان وستين وستمائة واجتمعوا بسردانية وقيل بصقلية. ثم واعدهم بمرسى تونس وأقلعوا ونادى السلطان في الناس بالنذير بالعدو والاستعداد له، والنفير إلى أقرب المدائن، وبعث الشواني لاستطلاع الخبر واستفهم أياماً.

So the Sultan's envoys returned with warnings concerning their [the Christians'] affairs, while the tyrant gathered his army and sailed with his fleet to Tūnis at the end of the month Ḏū l-Qaʿda of the year 668 [late July 1270]. They gathered in Sardinia, some say in Sicily. Then they agreed on a meeting place in the port of Tūnis and set sail. The Sultan called on the people to establish a warning system against the enemy, to prepare for him and to take refuge in the nearest towns. He also sent out his ships to gather information and conducted reconnaissance for days.

Authorship & Work

[§1] Abū Zayd ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḫaldūn (d. 808/1406) is one of the best-known Arabic-Islamic historians and historiographers of the pre-modern period. Due to his great erudition and his diverse experiences in various parts of the Arabic-Islamic sphere, his knowledge was extremely broad and characterised by great historical depth. In view of his many reflections on the functioning of societies, he has come to be regarded as a pioneer of sociological thought.[2]

[§2] His main work is a universal history which is entitled "The Book of Examples and the Treatise on the Origins and History of the Arabs, the Non-Arabs, the Berbers, and the Great Rulers Contemporary to Them" (*Kitāb al-ʿibar wa-dīwān al-mubtadaʾ wa-l-ḫabar fī ayyām al-ʿArab wa-l-ʿağam wa-l-Barbar wa-man ʿāṣarahum min ḏawī al-sulṭān al-akbar*). As the work also contains an autobiographical appendix, we are very well informed about Ibn Ḫaldūn's life.

[§3] According to Ibn Ḫaldūn, his family originally came from Yemen but moved to the Iberian Peninsula in the second/eighth century, where they belonged to the leading families of Seville for a long period. Shortly before 1248, the family migrated via Ceuta to Tūnis, where several of its members joined the service of the ruling Ḥafṣid dynasty.

[§4] Ibn Ḫaldūn was born in Tunis in 732/1332. At about the age of fifteen, he witnessed the conquest of the city by the Marīnid sultan Abū l-Ḥasan (r. 731–749/1331–1348) and lost his parents during the great plague of 749–750/1348–1349. At the age of twenty, he was appointed secretary (*kātib al-ʿalāma*) of the Ḥafṣid ruler Abū Isḥāq (r. 751–770/1350–1369), but soon left his service to complete his education at the Marīnid court in Fez. He stayed there for about eleven years and held various offices, including that of judge (*qāḍī al-maẓālim*).

[§5] A series of political difficulties, which cast him into prison for two years, caused him to emigrate to Granada. During his stay of about three years, Sultan Muḥammad V (r. 755–760/1354–1359 as well as 763–793/1362–1391) sent him as an emissary to Peter I of Castile (r. 1350–1369) who offered Ibn Ḫaldūn a place at his court.

[§6] After a brief stay in Béjaïa in North Africa, Ibn Ḫaldūn withdrew from politics for about four years between 1375 and 1379 and devoted himself to writing history for the first time. He then briefly returned to court, before leaving Northwest Africa on the pretext of a pilgrimage.

[2] Issawi, Preface, p. xi.

Settling down in Egypt, he first resided in Alexandria, and from 784/1383 in Cairo, where he worked as a judge (*qāḍī*) and teacher, for example at the al-Azhar Mosque. His family, whom he brought to Cairo a year later, tragically died in a shipwreck. Ibn Ḫaldūn remained in Cairo, where he held various high offices over the next few years. In addition to a pilgrimage to Mecca, his proximity to the Mamlūk elite took him to Jerusalem and Bethlehem among other places, but also to Damascus which was occupied by the Central Asian ruler Timur in 1401, and with whom Ibn Ḫaldūn had a long conversation. In 808/1406, Ibn Ḫaldūn died in Cairo, where he is also buried.[3]

[§7] Ibn Ḫaldūn's most important extant work is the aforementioned multi-volume universal history, which in the edition of Zakkār and Šaḥāda comprises seven volumes and an eighth index volume, each of about 700 pages.[4] The first volume consists of the so-called "Preface" (*al-muqaddima*), a theoretical introduction to the science of history and the general functioning of human societies. The *Muqaddima* is well known due to its high level of theoretical reflection. It has been translated into several languages[5] and also critically edited.[6] The actual universal history is available in several, partly different manuscripts. It has been critically edited only recently,[7] and remains only partially translated.[8] It takes its readership on a journey from the Creation through pre-Islamic and Islamic history up to the author's lifetime. In doing so, it compiles information from the works of numerous Arabic-Islamic historiographers of the last centuries and enriches this erudite knowledge with personal observations and experiences.

[§8] Ibn Ḫaldūn probably began his monumental work after he had decided to retire from politics. During his almost four-year stay in the fortress of Qalʿat Banī Salāma (now in Algeria), he wrote the first version of the *Muqaddima* as well as individual chapters on the history of the Maghreb between 776–780/1375–1379. In the years that followed, his universal history was completed and revised again and again until well into his later life in Egypt.[9]

Content & Context

[§9] In the source excerpt quoted above, Ibn Ḫaldūn gives his view of the events which led up to the crusade of the French king Louis IX (r. 1226–1270) against Tūnis.[10] His account offers insights into numerous different topics. These include the terminology used for European-Christian rulers, the portrayal of Louis IX and his motivations to embark on crusade, and finally the interplay of diplomacy and trade with the phenomenon of crusading.

[§10] Ibn Ḫaldūn begins by describing the outcome of the Egyptian crusade of Louis IX (1248–1256). This ended in the defeat of the French army and the capture of the king. His release was tied to the payment of a ransom and the promise that he would refrain from launching further attacks against the Islamic world.[11] Louis soon broke this promise when merchants (*adʿiyāʾ al-tuğğār*) from his kingdom approached him for help. They claimed to have never received back

[3] Talbi, Ibn Khaldūn, pp. 825–831; Singer, Ibn Ḫaldūn, pp. 316–317; al-Šaddādī, Muqaddima, pp. XXVII–XXXI.
[4] Ibn Ḫaldūn, *Tārīḫ*, ed. Zakkār and Šaḥāda, vol. 6, pp. 425–426.
[5] Ibn Khaldoun, *Prolégomènes*, trans. McGuckin de Slane; Ibn Chaldun, *Ausgewählte Abschnitte*, trans. Schimmel; Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, trans. Rosenthal; Ibn Khaldûn, *The Muqaddimah*, trans. Rosenthal, ed. Dawood; Ibn Khaldūn, *Buch der Beispiele*, trans. Pätzold; Ibn Khaldoun, *Discours sur l'histoire universelle*, trans. Monteil; Ibn Khaldûn, *Le Livre des Exemples. Tome I. Autobiographie Muquaddima*, trans. Cheddadi; Ibn Khaldun, *Die Muqaddima*, trans. Giese and Heinrichs.
[6] Ibn Ḫaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, ed. al-Šaddādī,.
[7] Ibn-Ḫaldūn, *Kitāb al-ʿIbar*, ed. Ibrāhīm Šabbūḥ et al. Usually, the first complete edition quoted, i.e. Ibn Ḫaldūn, *Tārīḫ Ibn Ḫaldūn* (Būlāq: al-Maṭbaʿa al-miṣriyya, 1867, reissued in Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-lubnānī, 1956–1961).
[8] Ibn Khaldoun, *Histoire des Berbères*, trans. McGuckin de Slane, vol. 2, pp. 361–362.
[9] Talbi, Ibn Khaldūn, pp. 825–831; Singer, Ibn Ḫaldūn, pp. 316–317; al-Šaddādī, Muqaddima, pp. XXVII–XXXI.
[10] Richard, Ludwig IX., col. 2184–2186.
[11] Eddé, Saint Louis, pp. 65–92.

a sum of 300 dīnār, which they had lent a certain al-Lulyānī.[12] As this man—whose political fate Ibn Ḫaldūn describes elsewhere[13]—fell from grace, the merchants turned to the Ḥafṣid sultan or caliph Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Mustanṣir (r. 647–675/1249–1277). However, since they lacked evidence, they did not receive compensation. As such, they asked Louis IX to carry out a raid against Tūnis which, at this time, was weakened by a famine.

[§11] Louis IX is said to have approached several European Christian rulers to solicit support for the crusade. In this context, the titles of *al-Faransīs* (*le Français*?) and *Rawā Farans* (*Roi de France*) are attributed to Louis by recourse to "the language of the Franks" (*luġat al-Ifranǧ*), whereas he himself is called *Sanlūwīs b. Lūwīs*, i.e. as "Saint [!] Louis, the son of Louis", who was a "tyrant of the Franks" (*ṭāġiyat al-Faranǧ*) and acted as "king of France" (*malik Ifrans*). Ibn Ḫaldūn thus gives precise details of the French sovereign's titles and differentiates between "Franks" as a generic term for European Christians on the one hand, and "France" as an independent dominion within the Frankish sphere on the other. This differentiation, which points to an update of the terminology previously used for the individual regions and dominions of Western Europe, is characteristic of Arabic-Islamic historiography written in the later crusading period.[14]

[§12] According to Ibn Ḫaldūn, Louis's attempt to rally support for his crusade threw the Ḥafṣid ruler into a state of panic and induced him to take precautionary measures. Among other things, he sent envoys carrying 80,000 gold pieces to Louis IX. They were tasked with not only investigating his plans, but also with preventing his attack on Tūnis—if necessary, by paying the king off. Louis IX accepted the money but did not alter his plans. The Ḥafṣid ambassadors' indignant demand to have their money returned coincided with the arrival of another legation from Mamluk Egypt. Their representative refused the offer to sit down and instead recited a poem by the Ayyubid court poet Abū [actually Ibn] Maṭrūḥ (d. 649/1251).[15] In this poem, Louis IX is reminded of the failure of the Seventh Crusade (1248–1254) and held responsible for the death and imprisonment of many Christians. Furthermore, he is warned against attacking again, as his former prison awaits him. According to Ibn Ḫaldūn, Louis IX was not intimidated by this poem. On the contrary, he proceeded to justify his intention to leave for Tūnis. He then dismissed the envoys and made arrangements for the crossing so that his fleet could set out from Sardinia or Sicily at the end of July 1270. At the same time, the coastal cities of North Africa prepared for the attack under the leadership of the Ḥafṣid ruler.

[§13] The aforementioned passage is part of a chapter entitled "News of the Tyrant of the Franks and his Attack on Tūnis with the Help of Some People Adhering to His Form of Christianity" (*al-ḫabar ʿan ṭāġiyat al-Ifranǧa wa-munāzalatihi Tūnis fī ahl naṣrāniyyatihi*), which describes the prelude, course, and aftermath of the Eighth Crusade. In Zakkār's and Šaḥāda's edition, it is part of the sixth volume, which is devoted to the history of the Maghreb after the eleventh-century invasions by the Banū Hilāl and the Banū Sulaym, and it follows on from the description of the Near Eastern Turkic groups which is found in the fifth volume.

[§14] The chapter itself begins with a brief historical overview of the Latin-Christian advance into the Mediterranean since the eleventh century and refers to these groups as Franks. Within

[12] Maḥfūẓ, *Tarāǧum*, § 493, p. 225, assumes that we are dealing with a sum of 300,000 dīnār.
[13] Ibn Ḫaldūn, *Tārīḫ*, ed. Zakkār and Šaḥāda, vol. 6, pp. 419–420; Ibn Khaldoun, *Histoire des Berbères*, trans. McGuckin de Slane, vol. 2, pp. 350–351.
[14] See König, *Arabic-Islamic Views*, pp. 211–228, as part of the chapter "From the Franks to France", especially pp. 268–299, under the chapter headings "The Documentary Effects of Expansionism (12th–15th Centuries)" and "New Players on the Mediterranean Scene (9th–15th Centuries)" as part of the chapter "The Expanding Latin-Christian Sphere".
[15] On Abū Maṭrūḥ, whose correct name is Ibn Maṭrūḥ, see Rikabi, Ibn Maṭrūḥ, pp. 875–876. The poem quoted by Ibn Ḫaldūn is part of a collection of poems (*dīwān*): Ibn Maṭrūḥ, *Dīwān Ibn Maṭrūḥ*, ed. Ḥusayn Nuṣṣār, Kairo: Dār al-kutub wa-l-waṯāʾiq al-qawmiyya, 2004; for this, see: Talib, A New Source, pp. 115–141.

this framework, Ibn Ḫaldūn elucidates specific details concerning the Crusades and first highlights Ayyubid successes. These more general remarks on the rise of the Franks and the crusades during the Ayyubid period probably derive from the work of the Iraqi historiographer Ibn al-Aṯīr, who died in 630/1233. Yet Ibn Ḫaldūn cannot have drawn his knowledge on the Egyptian and Tunisian crusades of Louis IX from this source, as these two crusades took place after the death of Ibn al-Aṯīr. The excerpt quoted above is followed by a description of the events of the crusade in Tūnis. This contains, among other things, theories concerning the reasons behind Louis's demise as well as remarks on the conclusion of a peace treaty. According to Ibn Ḫaldūn, these descriptions are partly based on what his grandfather related to him via his father.[16]

[§15] Information on the preparations for Louis's crusade against Tūnis, as well as on the crusade itself is also found in other sources. In the Arabic tradition, Ibn Ḫaldūn's account occupies an important place. This is due to its detail, but also to its proximity in time and place to the events it describes as a result of his grandfather's eyewitness testimony. In terms of the Latin accounts, biographies of Louis IX and numerous other histories provide further information. These include the biography of Louis IX by Geoffroy de Beaulieu (d. around 1274),[17] an almost identical report in the *Gesta Sancti Ludovici* of Guillaume de Nangis (d. ca. 1300),[18] the *Chronique de Primat* (d. after 1277) in the French translation of Jean de Vignay (d. after 1340),[19] the Sicilian Chronicle of Saba Malaspina (d. 1297),[20] as well as a continuation of the Chronicle of Matthew of Paris (d. 1259).[21] These sources are enriched by the register entries of the Angevin chancellery in Sicily,[22] as well as the peace treaty which was concluded on 5 Rabīʿ II 669 / 21 November 1270 in its Arabic version.[23] This document was possibly preceded by a now-lost Latin or French version which had been issued a few days earlier.[24]

[§16] Ibn Ḫaldūn's overview differs from the Latin-Christian reports: he understandably portrays Louis IX and the crusading enterprise in a negative light and, moreover, emphasises that it was unjustified. Although the Christian sources are fundamentally more positive about the crusading enterprise, it is nevertheless clear that they also criticise the king and his plans occasionally.

Contextualisation, Analysis & Interpretation

[§17] From these sources emerges a complex picture of political, economic, and also personal entanglements in the late thirteenth-century Mediterranean. The following paragraphs will deal with theories concerning the motives of Louis IX and his immediate entourage to attack Tūnis, the role of his brother Charles I of Anjou (r. 1266–1282) in this campaign,[25] the interplay of the crusading enterprise with the intensive trade relations in the Western Mediterranean, finally

[16] Ibn Ḫaldūn, *Tārīḫ*, ed. Zakkār and Šaḥāda, vol. 6, p. 426: "ḥadaṯanī abī ʿan abīhi raḥamahumā Allāh qāla (…)."
[17] Godefridus de Bello loco, *Vita Ludovici noni*, ed. Naudet and Daunou (RHGF 20), pp. 21–22; Geoffrey of Beaulieu's Life, in: *The Sanctity of Louis IX*, trans. Field, cap. 40–42, pp. 116–119.
[18] Guillelmus de Nangiaco, *Gesta*, ed. Naudet and Daunou (RHGF 20), pp. 446–447.
[19] *Chronique de Primat*, ed. de Wailly and Delisle (RHGF 23), cap. 24, p. 39; ibid., cap. 28, p. 44.
[20] Saba Malaspina, *Chronica*, ed. Koller and Nitschke (MGH SS 35), lib. V, cap. 1, pp. 228–229; for an English translation, see Lower, *The Tunis Crusade*, p. 144; for an Italian translation, see Saba Malaspina, *Cronisti e scrittori*, ed. del Re, pp. 293–294.
[21] Matthaeus Parisiensis, *Historia major*, ed. Wats, a. 1270–1271, pp. 882–883; Matthew Paris, *English History*, trans. Giles, vol. 3, a. 1270, pp. 374–375, 377.
[22] Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix*, pp. 156–157, 382–383.
[23] Mas Latrie, *Traité de paix*, pp. 93–96, provides the French translation from Sacy, Mémoire, pp. 461–467 (French translation), 469–471 (Arabic original).
[24] Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix*, p. 93, FN 1.
[25] Herde, Karl I. v. Anjou, col. 983.

with the official diplomacy and other forms of Christian-Muslim communication associated with the crusade.

[§18] For Ibn Ḫaldūn, the crusade was catalysed by a conflict between European-Christian merchants and a Ḥafṣid functionary named al-Lulyānī. After his rapid rise to power, al-Lulyānī received control of the provincial financial administration. Since his greed earned him many enemies so that he ultimately fell victim to intrigue. Under torture, he was forced to make massive payments and was finally executed, possibly by the leader of the European-Christian mercenaries (*kabīr al-mawālī min al-ʿulūǧ*) who fought for the Ḥafṣids. Al-Lulyānī's family and friends were also ostracised and killed on the orders of the Ḥafṣid ruler.[26] According to Ibn Ḫaldūn, the Ḥafṣid ruler refused to pay the sum of 300 dīnār which had been owed by al-Lulyānī to the European Christian merchants.[27] This prompted them to demand that Louis IX move against Tūnis.

[§19] A variant of this story, which also speaks of a conflict between European Christian merchants and Ḥafṣid officials, is found in the historiographical work of al-Yūnīnī (d. 726/1326). He explains that Frankish merchants minted counterfeit money (*darāhim maġšūša*) which was modelled on the coins of the ruler of Tunis (*ṣāḥib Tūnis*). In view of this, the Ḥafṣid authorities turned against the Genoese (*ahl Ǧanawa*) in their realm, confiscating their capital (*istiʾṣāl amwālihim*) and arresting them (*ḥabasahum*). The Genoese, in turn, complained to the French king (*raydafarans*), provided him with money and thus created an alliance that pursued the explicit intention of attacking Tūnis.[28]

[§20] According to Ibn Ḫaldūn, the French king backed the merchants. He was encouraged by the fact that Tūnis was weakened by a famine at the time. Louis' crusading plan had immediate economic consequences. The Ḥafṣid ruler is said to have denied the European-Christian merchants in Tūnis their contractually guaranteed rights (*wa-nqabaḍa tuǧǧār al-naṣārā ʿan taʿāhud bilād al-muslimīn*). This statement should be contextualised by reference to the fact that Tūnis was an important trading centre in the western Mediterranean at the end of the thirteenth century.[29] Its ruler was in direct contact with the papacy in the 1230s and 1240s,[30] and maintained economic relations with several European Christian societies.[31] These relations had been legally regulated in treaties of 1186, 1229 or 1234, 1231, 1236, 1250, 1251 and 1264.[32] After the end of the Crusade of 1270, they were renewed repeatedly.[33]

[§21] By describing the Tūnis campaign with reference to Louis's crusade against Egypt (1248–1256) and the pope's support for the enterprise manifest in the permission to use church funds, Ibn Ḫaldūn made it clear that the campaign formed part of the ideological framework of church-supported, European-Christian warfare against Muslim communities.

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[26] Ibn Ḫaldūn, *Tārīḫ*, ed. Zakkār and Šaḥāda, vol. 6, pp. 419–420; Ibn Khaldoun, *Histoire des Berbères*, trans. McGuckin de Slane, vol. 2, pp. 350–351. See the summary of several sources on al-Lulyānī in Maḥfūẓ, *Tarāǧum*, § 493, pp. 223–226. On European-Christian, especially Catalan mercenaries in late thirteenth-century Tūnis, see Barton, Traitors, p. 33; Dufourcq, *L'Espagne catalane*, pp. 101–104.

[27] Maḥfūẓ, *Tarāǧum*, § 493, p. 225, assumes that his sum amounted to 300,000 dīnār.

[28] Al-Yūnīnī, *Ḏayl mirʾāt al-zamān*, 3 vols., Hyderabad: Osmania Oriental Publications Bureau, 1954–1960, vol. 2, app. 669, pp. 454–455.

[29] Jehel, Tunis, col. 1094–1095; Sebag, Tūnis.

[30] For correspondence with Popes Gregory IX (1235) and Innocent IV (1246), see Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix*, p. 376; König, Phase, pp. 15–42; Lupprian, *Beziehungen*, pp. 22–24, 139–140, 176–178.

[31] These are reflected in correspondence with Pisa (1157, 1237), in a statute on the export of wine from the city of Marseille (1228), Genoese acts on trade relations (1155–1164, 1251) and a letter from Frederick II on Genoese and Venetian trade with Tūnis (1240): Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix*, pp. 377, 379–380, 382.

[32] Peace treaties with Pisa (1186, 1229 or 1234, 1264), Genoa (1236, 1250), the Kingdom of Sicily (1231), Venice (1231, 1251), in: Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix*, pp. 377–378, 380, 381, 384.

[33] Peace treaties with France (1270), Venice (1271), Crown of Aragon (1271), Genoa (1272), Kingdom of Mallorca (1278), in: Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix*, pp. 379–380, 384, 386.

[§22] The *Chronique de Primat* (d. 1277), translated into French by Jean de Vignay (d. 1340), explains Louis IX's decision to take the cross in a completely different way. It claims that Louis felt shame and had a bad conscience (*le remors de sa conscience*) because his Egyptian crusade had neither helped the Church nor the Holy Land (*que ele n'avoit fait d'onneur ne de proufit à l'Eglise de Jhesu Christ ne à la Terre sainte*) and had even harmed the kingdom of France (*honte et de damage et de reprouche au royaume de France*). The chronicle purports that Louis's decision not to move against the Holy Land but against Tūnis was made in consultation with his surprised barons, but does not give a further justification.[34]

[§23] According to Geoffroy de Beaulieu (d. c. 1274), Louis IX became convinced after an exchange of legations that the Ḥafṣid ruler was ready to convert to Christianity,[35] should it be possible that his conversion would not expose him to the Saracens' vengeance and would allow him to preserve his honour. As such, Louis IX allegedly saw an opportunity to revive the glorious times of Christian Late Antiquity in North Africa. He believed that the appearance of a Christian army at the gates of Tūnis would provide the Ḥafṣid ruler with the desired excuse to accept Christianity without losing his honour. In this way, he would be able to continue ruling as as a Christian. Should the ruler refuse conversion, Louis is said to have argued, then Tūnis and its surrounding countryside would at least provide the crusading army with many riches, since the city had not been plundered for a long time. These resources could then be used to conquer the Holy Land. For the barons, in turn, an attack on Tūnis seemed sensible as the region regularly provided military support in the form of cavalry, foot soldiers and weapons to the formerly Ayyubid, now Mamluk sultan of Cairo. So far, this support had made the reconquest of the Holy Land more difficult.[36]

[§24] The registers of Charles I of Anjou provide further information. After destroying the Staufen dynasty in 1266, Louis's younger brother Charles had assumed control over the Staufen possessions in southern Italy. The register entries show that the Angevin ruler had expected, but not received tribute payments from Tūnis in 1268.[37] Yet after the crusade, Charles I of Anjou received such payments again.[38]

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[34] *Chronique de Primat*, ed. de Wailly and Delisle (RHGF 23), cap. 24, p. 39; ibid., cap. 28, p. 44.

[35] For this motive, Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, pp. 161–169; Siberry, Missionaries and Crusaders.

[36] Gaufredus de Bello loco, *Vita Ludovici noni*, ed. Naudet and Daunou (RHGF 20), pp. 21–22: "Siquidem antequàm Dominus Rex hanc crucem ultimam assumpsisset, multos nuncios receperat à rege Tunicii, et similiter Rex noster plures nuncios remiserat ad eumdem. Dabatur etenim sibi a fide dignis intelligi, quod dictus rex Tunicii bonam voluntatem ad fidem christianam haberet, et valde de facili posset fieri christianus, dummodo occasionem honorabilem inveniret; et quod salvo honore suo, et absque metu Sarracenorum suorum hoc complere valeret. Unde Rex catholicus cum multo desiderio quandoque dicebat: 'O si possem videre, quod fierem tanti filioli compater et patrinus!' (…) Desiderabat quoque devotissime rex catholicus, ut christiana fides, quæ tempore beati Augustini, et aliorum orthodoxorum doctorum in Africa, et maxime apud Carthaginem, tam ab antiquo eleganter floruerat, nostris temporibus refloresceret et dilataretur ad honorem et gloriam Jesu Christi. Cogitavit itaque, quod si tantus exercitus tamque famosus apud Tunicium subito applicaret, dictus rex Tunicii vix posset apud Sarracenos suos tam rationabilem occasionem habere suscipiendi baptismum, videlicet ut per hoc posset mortem evadere tam sui ipsius, quam eorum qui secum vellent fieri christiani: et si etiam regnum suum sibi pacifice remaneret. (…) Præterea Regi dabatur intelligi, quod si omnino prædictus rex nellet fieri christianus, civitas Tunicii erat valde facilis ad capiendum, et per consequens tota terra. Suggerebatur insuper regi, quod civitas illa plena erat argento et auro, ac divitiis infinitis: ut pote quæ a multis retro temporibus a nullo fuerat expugnata. Unde sperabatur quod si, Deo volente, dicta civitas a christiano exercitu caperetur, ex thesauris ibidem inventis posset acquisitioni et restaurationi Terræ sanctæ multum efficaciter subveniri. Caeterum, cum de terra Tunicii venire soleret magnum subsidium soldano Babylonico tam in equitaturis, quam in armis et bellatoribus, in gravamen et nocumentum plurimum Terræ sanctæ; crediderunt barones nostri, quod si pestifera radix illa Tunnicii posset penitus extirpari, ex hoc Terræ sanctæ et toti christianitati utilitas maxima proveniret." Translation: Geoffrey of Beaulieu's Life, in: *The Sanctity of Louis IX*, trans. Field, ed. Gaposchkin and Field, cap. 40–42, pp. 116–119.

[37] Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix*, p. 156, p. 382.

[38] Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix*, p. 157, p. 382.

[§25] A complementary explanation is given in the Sicilian chronicle of Saba Malaspina (d. 1297–1298). The chronicler contrasts the motives of Louis IX with those of Charles I of Anjou, who took advantage of his brother to demand tribute from Tūnis "through another's virtue" (*virtute aliena*). The ruler of Tūnis had previously paid tribute to guarantee Sicilian grain deliveries and to secure the safety of Arab and Berber travellers from Sicilian pirates. However, following the bloody suppression of a rebellion in Sicily, he had refused to pay. This, in turn, Malaspina claims, motivated the real aggressor, Charles I of Anjou, to manipulate his brother to launch a crusade against Tūnis.[39]

[§26] The continuation of the chronicle of Matthew of Paris claims that Louis IX's expedition was motivated by a desire to regain the Holy Land. Here, Tūnis is portrayed as an obstacle to travel that had to be subdued first in order to facilitate future crusading activities. However, the chronicle's account of the peace treaty implies that other motivations were also at play. According to the continuation, the treaty stipulated that Christian prisoners must be liberated, and that the Dominicans and Franciscans were to be allowed to not only preach in the monasteries of the Ḥafṣid Empire, but also to convert people to Christianity. Moreover, the treaty is said to have reaffirmed the Ḥafṣid realm's tribute payment to Sicily. Interestingly, the text claims that the Sicilian fleet lost a ship on its return and interprets this event as God's punishment for the sins of Charles I of Anjou, whose role in this narrative is clearly not positive.[40]

[§27] Parts of the account given in the continuation of the chronicle of Matthew of Paris, are confirmed in the extant Arabic version of the peace treaty. As already known from earlier treaties, it obliges the Ḥafṣids to protect Christian merchants and their establishments in the Ḥafṣid realm (§ 4, 7) in return for corresponding protection from the European-Christian side (§ 1–3). Although the ruler allows the building of churches and monasteries in designated places, he permits free preaching only within these buildings (§ 6). He orders the release of Christian prisoners (§ 8). The treaty obliges the Christian troops to withdraw (§ 10) and the Ḥafṣid ruler to pay 210,000 ounces of gold (§ 12), to repay the outstanding tribute of the last five years, and to pay an annual tribute which amounting to double of what had previously paid to Frederick II (§ 20). It is unclear to which extent these results of the crusade represented motives for planning and carrying out the campaign.[41]

[§28] With an eye to these sources, it becomes clear that Ibn Ḫaldūn's account must be contextualised by reference to a series of factors which ultimately guided the crusade to Tūnis. It is striking that Christian historiography, unlike Ibn Ḫaldūn, says nothing about the internal conflict between the Ḥafṣid sultan and his functionary al-Lulyānī, nor about tensions between European Christian merchants and the Ḥafṣid sultan. Instead, these accounts emphasise the role played by Louis's emotions, aspirations to Christianise North Africa and to acquire booty, strategic considerations, and the role played by Louis's scheming brother. The historical significance of Charles I of Anjou for the campaign is confirmed by the diplomatic documentation which show that the demands for tribute payments were a high priority. Yet the suggestion that the peace treaty of 1270 secured greater rights for European Christians in Tūnis is disputable in view of earlier treaties. Indeed, the right of free conversion to Christianity—mentioned by both William of Nangis and the continuation of Matthew of Paris—is not

[39] Saba Malaspina, *Chronica*, ed. Koller and Nitschke (MGH SS 35), lib. V, cap. 1, pp. 228–229; Lower, *The Tunis Crusade*, p. 144; Saba Malaspina, *Cronisti e scrittori*, ed. del Re, pp. 293–294; Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou*, pp. 97–98, 100, 195–197.

[40] Matthaeus Parisiensis, *Historia major*, ed. Wats, a. 1270–1271, pp. 882–883; Matthew Paris, *English History*, trans. Giles, vol. 3, a. 1270, pp. 374–375, 377.

[41] Sacy, Mémoire, pp. 461–467 (FR), pp. 469–471 (AR). Divided into paragraphs by Mas Latrie, *Traité de paix*, pp. 93–96 (FR).

mentioned in the extant Arabic version of the treaty.[42] Thus, no crusade would have been necessary to strengthen European–Christian rights in the Ḥafṣid realm.

[§29] Ibn Ḫaldūn's account also differs from the Christian sources in another significant point, namely in his description of the diplomatic interaction between the Ḥafṣid sultan and the French king before the crusade began. Whereas Geoffrey de Beaulieu and William of Nangis also mention negotiations, these are of a completely different nature.

[§30] According to Ibn Ḫaldūn, the Ḥafṣid ruler only sent an envoy to Louis IX upon hearing of the latter's intention to launch a crusade. The aim of this envoy was to dissuade the king from his plans, if necessary, by paying him off. In this context, the king proves his cunning by taking the money, but sticking to his plans while pretending that he has never received any payments. He justifies breaking his promise never to attack Muslim-led countries again in a manner which is presented as typical of the Franks, namely "as one has already heard regarding their misconduct" (*bi-mā yusmaʿ ʿanhum min al-muḫālafāt*). The injustice which is suffered by the envoys is ultimately avenged in Ibn Ḫaldūn's narrative through the poem of the Egyptian envoy. He reminds Louis IX of his past disgrace, but does little to change the king's mind.

[§31] None of the Christian sources report on these specific events in a comparable way. Geoffroy de Beaulieu and William of Nangis claim that Louis IX received many envoys from the ruler of Tūnis and also dispatched his own emissaries to North Africa (*multos nuncios receperat a rege Tunicii, et similiter Rex noster plures nuncios remiserat ad eumdem*). However, these sources do not report on a confrontation. Rather, communications seem to have been characterised by such a high degree of trust that the French king gained the impression (*dabatur etenim sibi a fide dignis intelligi*) that the Ḥafṣid ruler was willing to convert to Christianity. According to both authors, the Ḥafṣid ruler's envoys even attended the baptism of a well-known Jew in the church of St. Dionysius during one of their visits. In this context, the king is said to have called the envoys to him and promised them in a most-Catholic manner (*verbum plane catholicum perfectione fidei et charitatis*) that he would happily spend the rest of his life in a Saracen prison if only the Ḥafṣid ruler would convert.[43] One can assume that this narrative was constructed by the authors, on the one hand to legitimise the crusade, and on the other hand to emphasise Louis IX's piety and devotion to save the Holy Land. This is supported by the fact that the *Vita* of Geoffroy de Beaulieu served as evidence for the king's sanctity in the context of discussions surrounding his canonisation (1272–1297)—a process which began almost immediately after Louis IX's death.[44]

[§32] Comparing the Muslim and Christian accounts of the events leading up to the crusade against Tūnis allows to show how varied sources of information and horizons of knowledge were brought together. The sources and the actors they depicted recognised different contexts, acted out different emotions, and pursued different agendas. The sometimes contradictory accounts of the economic, political, but also personal relations which were associated with this crusade make it clear how strongly the northern and southern shores of the western Mediterranean were entangled at the end of the thirteenth century. Ibn Ḫaldūn's account is significant because it gives us a rich, but also emotionalised, perspective on the crusade and the events which preceeded it. Unlike Christian historiography, his account suggests that internal tensions between European Christian merchants and local officials in the Ḥafṣid realm may have helped bring about a crusade that was also fueled by Louis IX's crusading ideals and the machinations of Charles I of Anjou. Unlike Christian authors such as Saba Malaspina, who

[42] Matthaeus Parisiensis, *Historia major*, ed. Wats, a. 1270–1271, pp. 882–883; Matthew Paris, *English History*, trans. Giles, vol. 3, a. 1270, pp. 374–375, 377; Guillelmus de Nangiaco, *Chronicon*, ed. Naudet and Daunou (RHGF 20), pp. 543–582, here a. 1270, p. 563.
[43] Godefridus de Bello loco, *Vita Ludovici noni*, ed. Naudet and Daunou (RHGF 20), pp. 21–22; Guillelmus de Nangiaco, *Gesta*, ed. Naudet and Daunou (RHGF 20), pp. 446–447.
[44] Carolus-Barré, *Procès de canonisation*, p. 29.

went as far as depicting Louis IX as a victim of his brother's ambitions, Ibn Ḫaldūn paints the French king as a cunning and rapacious tyrant. He not only betrayed the trust that had been shown to him by the Muslims, but ultimately proved to be an irresponsible ruler vis-à-vis his Christian co-religionists. According to the poem of the Egyptian court poet Ibn Maṭrūḥ that was quoted by Ibn Ḫaldūn, Jesus did not side with the crusaders. Referring to the many dead Christians, for whom Louis IX is held responsible, the poet says: "May God send you to the same place as them, / maybe then Jesus will have peace from you (*alhamaka llāh ilā miṯlihā / laʿalla ʿĪsā minkum yastarīḥ*)!"

(Translation: John Aspinwall)

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