1187: Caesarius of Heisterbach and a Muslim's French Critique of Christian Depravity in the Latin East

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Abstract: The *Dialogus miraculorum* is a collection of stories that serve to teach novices the ideals of monastic life. In this work, the Cistercian monk, Caesarius of Heisterbach, recounts a curious story related to him by the former chamberlain of his monastery, a certain William. Arriving in Acre in 1187, when the city had just been taken by Saladin's troops, William is said to have engaged with an Ayyūbid noble. Speaking French, this noble explained that the inhabitants of the Latin East owed their defeat to their growing decadence. In view of the story's obvious moral, the article discusses to which extent the anecdote reproduces a literary paradigm known from earlier Christian reactions to defeat. It investigates whether the narrative concords with Caesarius's attitude towards Muslims and crusading as depicted in the rest of the work. Last but not least, it uses the noble's French language skills as an example to illustrate what this story can tell us about Christian–Muslim interaction and communication in a crusading context.

Source

Caesarius Heisterbachensis, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Joseph Strange, 3 vols, Cologne: Heberle, 1851–1857, vol. 1, cap. IV,15, pp. 186–187, trans. Daniel G. König.

De pagano, qui apud Achonem dicebat Christianos propter superbiam et gulam de terra santa eiectos.

Of a pagan who said in Acre that the Christians were ejected [from the Holy Land] because of their pride and their greed for food.

Frater Wilhelmus aliquando camerarius noster, ante conversionem canonicus fuerat apud Traiectum inferius. Hic tempore adolescentiae suae cruce signatus, gratia Dominici sepulchri transfretavit. Antequam navis, in qua erat, portum Achonis attigisset, ignem facularum ante ortum aurorae circa civitatem in diversis locis tam ipse quam ceteri viderunt. Qui cum interrogassent nautas causam ignis, responderunt: Tempus est aestivum, et cives propter calorem tentoria sua ob refrigerium circa civitatem metati sunt. Hoc ita esse putantes, in portum Achonis devenerunt, et tunc primum quia

Our former chamberlain, Brother William was an inferior canon regular in Utrecht before his conversion. In this time of his youth, he took the cross and set out for the Lord's Sepulchre. Before the boat, in which he was, reached the port of Acre, they saw, just before dawn, the fire of torches in various places in and around the city. When they asked the sailors about the reason for this fire, they answered: "It is now summertime, and to become cooler, the inhabitants of the city have set up their tents around the city." Believing this, they landed in the harbour of Acre and only then

Sarraceni obtinuissent civitatem cognoverunt.

understood immediately that the Saracens had taken the city.

Eodem tempore, peccatis nostris exigentibus, data fuerat terra sancta in manus Salatini Regis Syriae, regnante Frederico Romanorum Imperatore. Noradinus autem filius Salatini, vir naturaliter pius et beneficus, tunc erat in civitate. Hic cum navim Christianam in portu vidisset, et eum causa adventus eius, eo quod esset sola, non lateret, misertus Christianorum, quendam nobilem paganum, in lingua Gallica satis expeditum, ad naven cum galea misit, per quem ne timerent mandavit. Usque ad illam horam fuerant in suspenso positi, ignorantes utrum essent occidendi vel capiendi.

In this time, because of our sins, the Holy Land had fallen into the hands of Saladin, the king of Syria, during the reign of the Roman Emperor Frederick I (Barbarossa). Nūr al-Dīn, the son of Saladin, a naturally pious and generous man, was currently in the city. When he saw the Christian boat in the port, the reason for its arrival not being a secret to him, he—full of pity for the Christians—ordered to send a certain pagan noble, who was quite capable of speaking the Gallic language, to the boat with a galley that would not cause any fear. Until this hour they were still in suspense, not knowing if they were going to be killed or captured.

Interim nobilis quidam Christianus de Alemannia oriundus, in extremis laborans, omnia sua arma valde decentia, cum tribus dextrariis per eundem paganum Noradino misit, pro vita fratrum illi supplicans. Ego, inquit, tribus annis voveram Christo in his armis servire, sed ut video, non est eius voluntas.

In the meantime, a noble Christian from Germany, who was about to die, sent his quite decent arms with three battle horses to Nūr al-Dīn through this pagan, thus pleading to him for the life of his brothers. "I," he said, "have sworn to serve Christ for three years with my arms, but now I see that this is not His will."

Destinati sunt et nuncii Christiani, ex quibus unus erat frater Wilhelmus propter scientiam linguae Gallicae, qui munera Principi praesentarent. Noradinus vero, ut vidit xenia transmissa, cum multa devotione suscepit, et singula, id est, loricam, clipeum, galeam, gladium, nec non et dextrarios deosculans, quia per semetipsum visitare vellet infirmum, remandavit.

So Christian messengers were sent, one of them being Brother William because of his knowledge of the French language, who presented these gifts to the prince. When Nūr al-Dīn saw the gifts that had been sent, he received them with great devotion and sent them back one by one—i.e. the breastplate, the shield, the helmet, the sword, even kissing the battle horses—because he himself wanted to visit the sick one.

Interim milite mortuo, et caute lapide appenso, eiecto ac demerso, alioque milite aegroto, aeque nobili viro, in loco infirmitatis eius reposito, Rex mane cum multis diversi coloris galeis egressus advenit, navem intravit, et de transmissis gratias referens, ante infirmum sedit, atque cum medico, quem secum adduxerat, de convalescentia illius disputavit. Obtulit ei et quaedam nobilissimi generis poma, quae

In the meantime the soldier had died, and—attached to the weight of a stone—had been thrown out [of the boat] and sunk, whereas another sick soldier, also a nobleman, had been put in the place of the sick one. In the early morning, the king came with many galleys of different colour, entered the boat and, referring to the transmitted gifts, sat down in front of the sick one and consulted a physician, whom he had brought with him, about his treatment. He offered him and

crevisse dicebat in horto patris sui apud Damascum.

other nobles fruit, of which he said that they had been grown in the garden of his father near Damascus.

Deinde ait infirmo: Propter te omnibus Christianis benefaciam. A quo cum peterent conductum ad civitatem sanctam Jerusalem, quam adhuc tenebrant Christiani, respondit: Non esset vobis tutum, neque mihi honestum, si latrunculi, qui modo per omnes vias illius vagantur, vos laederent, et conductum meum violarent. Egressus vero de navi, tam aegroto quam ceteris valedixit, dans eis licentiam repatriandi, contra impetus Sarracenorum signo teli regalis illos muniens.

Then he told the sick one: "Because of you I will be gracious towards all Christians." To the question, if they could be brought to Jerusalem, which the Christians had darkened until this time, he responded: "You will not have security and it would not be appropriate from my part, if robbers, who currently rove around the roads, harmed you and violated my safe conduct." When he went off the boat, he bade farewell both to the sick man and to the rest, giving them leave to return, and protecting them against the attacks of the Muslims with the banner of the royal weapon.

Tunc supradictus nobilis paganus reducens secum in civitatem fratrem Wilhelmum, interrogavit eum dicens: Dic mihi, o iuvenis, quomodo servant Christiani legem Christianam in terra tua? Ille dicere nolens quod verum fuit, respondit. Satis bene. Ad quod Admiraldus: Ego dicam legem Christianorum terrae huius. Pater meus erat vir nobilis et magnus, et misit me ad Regem Jerosolymitanorum, ut Gallicum discerem apud illum, ipse vero versa vice misit patri meo filium suum ad discendum idioma Sarracenicum. Unde omnis vita Christianorum bene et optime mihi mota est. Non fuit aliquis civis adeo dives in Jerosolyma, quin pro pecunia sororem, filiam, vel, quod exsecrabilius erat, luxuriae peregrinorum uxorem propriam exponeret, sicque illos mercedibus laborum suorum evacuaret. Ita omnes gulae et carnis illecebris dediti erant, ut nihil omnino a pecoribus different. Superbia vero sic in eis regnavit, ut excogitare non sufficerent, quali modo vestimenta sua inciderent, stringerent atque cultellarent. Idem dico de calciamentis.

When the abovementioned noble pagan led Brother William into the city, he asked him: "Tell me, o young one, how the Christians serve the Christian law in your country?" He did not want to say what was true and responded: "Quite well." Thereupon the admiral: "I will tell you about the law of the Christians in this country. My father was a noble and great man, and he sent me to the King of Jerusalem so that I would learn the Gallic language in this environment. The latter, however, sent his son to my father in turn to learn the Saracen language. At this time, the entire life of the Christians seemed good and excellent to me. At that time, there was no rich inhabitant in Jerusalem who would expose his sister, daughter or, what is even worse, his proper wife to the pleasure of the pilgrims so that they would be deprived of the benefits of their labours. But then, all became dedicated to the temptations of food and the flesh, so that they did not differ from animals in any way. Arrogance has ruled over them, so that they cannot think enough about how to cut, bind, or weave their clothes. The same goes for their shoes."

Et adiecit: Considera vestimenta mea, calciamenta mea, quam sint rotunda, quam ampla, quam simpliciter et humiliter formata. Sicut nobis retulit idem Wilhelmus,

And he added: "Consider my clothes and my shoes, how round they are, how wide, how simple and humble they are formed." As William informed us, his sleeves were loose

maniicas habebat laxas et amplas, sicut monachus. Nulla erat in vestibus plicarum multiplicitas, curiositas nulla, licet ipsa vestium materia foret satis pretiosa. Ecce, inquit, ista sunt vitia propter quae eiecit Deus Christianos superbos et luxuriosos de terra ista; non enim diutius potuit tantas illorum iniquitates sustinere

and wide just like the ones of a monk. There was no multitude of applications on his clothes, nothing that would attract curiosity, even if one has to admit that the material of the cloth was quite precious. "So look," he said, "these are the vices because of which God ejected the proud and luxurious Christians from this land, for he could not tolerate daily so many iniquities."

Authorship & Work

[§1] Caesarius of Heisterbach was a Cistercian monk and prior of the abbey of Heisterbach near modern-day Königswinter/Germany. Born around 1180, he received his elementary education at St Andrew's in Cologne, continuing his studies there and at the Cologne Cathedral school until around 1198. After a pilgrimage to Cahors, he entered the Cistercian monastery of Heisterbach in 1199. There, his erudition soon earned him the office of "teacher of novices" (*magister novitiorum*) until he became prior in 1227. He accompanied his abbots on several visitations in the Rhineland, the Moselle region, and the Netherlands. Judging from his "Life of the Landgravine Elisabeth" (*Vita s. Elyzabeth lantgravie*), he spent some time in Marburg around 1233. Apart from these travels, he never seems to have left his region of origin. He died after 1240.[1]

[§2] In a letter to the prior Peter of Marienstadt (*Epistola ad Petrum priorem de loco S. Mariae*), Caesarius lists thirty-six works, to be divided into theological and historiographical works. Among the former, we find sermons, homilies, commentaries on the psalms, and other exegetical works. Among the latter are the hagiographies of archbishop Engelbert I of Cologne (sed. 1216–1225, written 1226–1237) and Elisabeth of Thuringia (d. 1231, written 1236–1237), a catalogue of the archbishops of Cologne (written ca. 1238), and two volumes of edifying miracle stories—the *Dialogus miraculorum* (written 1219–1223) and the incomplete *Libri VIII miraculorum* (written 1225–1227).[2]

Content & Context

[§3] Containing the story quoted above, the *Dialogus miraculorum* is made of 746 chapters, which are distributed among two books (*codices*) addressing six topics (*distinctiones*) each. They deal with [1] conversion (*de conversione*), [2] contrition (*de contritione*), [3] confession (*de confessione*), [4] temptation (*de tentatione*), [5] demons (*de daemonibus*), [6] simplicity (*de simplicate*), [7] miracles associated with Mary (*de sanctae Mariae*), [8] visions (*de visionibus*), [9] the eucharist (*de sacramento corporis et sanguinis Christi*), [10] general miracles (*de miraculis*), [11] the dying (*de morientibus*), and [12] divine judgement (*de praemio mortuorum*). The individual chapters are organised in the manner of a didactic dialogue between an interrogating novice (*novitius interrogans*) and a responding monk (*monachus repondens*). This monk, obviously Caesarius himself, generally uses entertaining miracle stories to discuss contemporary Christian and monastic values and to convey his didactic message. The work can clearly be understood as the fruit of Caesarius's didactic experience as *magister novitiorum*, in

[1] Wagner, Caesarius, col. 1363; Brunsch, Caesarius; Burkhardt, Floßdorf, and Holste-Massoth, Ein Autor, pp. 55–66.
[2] Wagner, Caesarius, cols 1363–1365; Burkhardt and Holste-Massoth, Caesarius, pp. 593–619.

particular because its entertaining stories, couched in unaffected and simple language (*sermo humilis*), made the work accessible to a wider audience.[3]

[§4] The *Dialogus miraculorum* contains several references to Caesarius's personal experiences in Cologne.[4] More important in this context is that it frequently refers to issues of crusading, Jerusalem pilgrimage, and the settlements in the Latin East. William J. Purkis has identified over sixty stories in the *Dialogus*. Most of them only address crusading phenomena in passing and do not necessarily take place in the Holy Land. Others, however, are situated in the so-called Latin East and in Egypt.[5]

[§5] The story quoted above forms part of Chapter 4 on temptation (*de tentatione*) and is the last of fifteen moral stories on the subject. At the end of the fourteenth subchapter, the narrating monk introduces the subsequent anecdote to the listening novice, underscoring that

> "when Jews and heathens see pride or signs of pride in Christians, they abhor the Christian religion, and the name of Christ is blasphemed by them. I will tell you about this the words of a Saracen, very worthy of memory."[6]

[§6] The stage thus being set, the story's title conveys the essential message. It is the story "of a pagan who said in Acre that the Christians were ejected because of their pride and their greed for food." Referring to the testimony of a Brother William, former chamberlain of the abbey of Heisterbach and thus an acquaintance of the author, Caesarius relates how the latter made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, arriving by ship in Acre when the city had just been taken by Saladin's (r. 567–589/1171–1193) troops in the wake of the battle of Ḥiṭṭīn (583/1187).[7]

[§7] According to the story, the pilgrims eventually understand that the city has been captured. When they are approached by a ship sent to them by Saladin's son Nūr al-Dīn (al-Malik al-Afḍal, here *Noradinus*), a dying knight on board dedicates his entire fighting gear, including three battle horses, to the Muslim ruler, thus hoping to save the ship's passengers from death or captivity. Nūr al-Dīn's messenger, a "pagan noble, who was quite capable of speaking the Gallic language" (*nobilem paganum, in lingua Gallica satis expeditum*), takes back this generous present. He is accompanied by a Christian delegation from the ship, commissioned by the dying knight to convey a message to the Muslim ruler. He was giving these presents, the knight claims, because he had come to the realisation that Christ had not wanted him to fight.

[§8] The ship's delegation is said to have included Brother William "because of his knowledge of the Gallic language" (*propter scientiam linguae Gallicae*). Nūr al-Dīn receives the presents graciously and decides to visit the ship. He has his physician take care of the sick and grants all passengers a safe conduct (*conductum*). Asked whether they will be allowed to complete their pilgrimage, he discourages them from visiting Jerusalem and urges them to return home, providing them with a royal banner to show that they are under his protection.

[§9] When Brother William accompanies the "pagan noble" to the city, the Muslim sets out to explain to William why the Christians of the Latin East have succumbed to Muslim arms. When he was young, he claims, the Christian inhabitants of the Latin East still displayed good morals. At this time, his great and noble father (*vir nobilis et magnus*) had sent him to the King of

[3] Wagner, Caesarius, cols 1363–1365; Tewes, Dialogus, pp. 13–30; Burkhardt and Kimpel, Tugend, pp. 83–118; Purkis, Crusades, pp. 100–101.
[4] Wagner, Caesarius, col. 1363.
[5] Purkis, Crusading, pp. 102–103.
[6] Caesarius Heisterbachensis, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Strange, vol. 1, cap. IV,14, p. 185: "Ut enim taceam de scandalo saecularium in superbia religiosorum, cum Judaei et pagani superbiam vel signa superbiae vident in Christianis, religionem Christianam horrent, et blasphematur nomen Christi per eos. De hoc tibi referam verba cuiusdam Sarraceni, memoria valde dignissima."
[7] Buhl, ʿAkkā; Riley-Smith, Akkon.

Jerusalem (*ad Regem Jerosolymitanorum*), so that he would learn the "Gallic language," i.e. French, with him (*ut Gallicum discerem apud illum*). The King of Jerusalem, in turn, sent his own son to his father as to learn "the Saracen language" (*ad discendum idioma Sarracenicum*), i.e. Arabic. Soon, however, the Christian inhabitants of the Latin East became depraved: not only did they begin to dress up extravagantly, they also made money by offering their sisters, daughters, and wives as prostitutes to pilgrims seeking redemption in the Holy Land. The noble points out that the Muslims did not indulge in such luxuries and depravities, and makes William aware of his expensive, but simple and monk-like clothes. Had the Christians not succumbed to these vices, the noble claims, they would not have lost Jerusalem, for the Muslims had not won the Holy Land through their own powers.

[§10] The story ends with the noble's statement that the Muslims feared none of the Christian kings, not even the emperor Frederick. Their books said that an emperor called Otto would restore the Christian cult to Jerusalem. When he heard this, the monk-narrator says, he had hoped that this prophecy applied to the Saxon Emperor Otto (IV, r. 1209–1218), who had died two years ago, thus implicitly dating the dialogue with the novice to the year 1220.[8] Returning to the events in 1187, the narrator proceeds to explain that Saladin treated the Christians justly (*humanitatem exhibuit Christianis satis magnam*), allowing those who surrendered to remain in the cities they lived in. Yet, when he asked about their behaviour a few days later, he was told that, like beasts, they engaged in games, gluttony, and seduction. For this reason, Saladin expelled them from the cities. The novice concludes: "It is sad to see that the Christian seems to hold as law what the Jew abhors and the pagan regards as abominable."[9]

Contextualization, Analysis & Interpretation

[§11] A story that states its moral so bluntly at the beginning and at the end plainly calls for analytical deconstruction. The following passages will first engage with the story's narrative pattern and then discuss whether and how it fits together with Caesarius's depiction of crusading, Muslims, and the Ayyūbids, in the rest of the *Dialogus miraculorum*. Against this backdrop, the article raises the question whether we have to regard this episode as a fictitious literary construction or as a morally enhanced reflection of actual Christian–Muslim encounters in the Holy Land of the late twelfth century. In this context, the article will examine the role played by the French language.

[§12] The storyline clearly serves to illustrate the moral message that God punished the Christians for their vices by giving victory to their enemies, thus depriving them of the Holy Land. According to Purkis,

> "Caesarius came to address a question that was of great importance to western Europeans in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries: why was it that Jerusalem and the Holy Land had been lost to Islam in 1187? For his answer he looked to the words of the Muslim emir, who was supposed to have questioned William about how sincere the Christians of western Europe were in their religious observance because of his shock at the depravity of the Frankish settlers of the Latin East."[10]

[8] Caesarius Heisterbachensis, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Strange, vol. 1, cap. IV,15, p. 188: "sicut legimus in libris nostris, Christianus Imperator quidam cito surget, Otto nomine, qui terram hanc cum civitate Jerusalem cultui Christiano restituet. Nos ista audientes, sperabamus quia prophetia illa implenda esset in Ottone Imperatore Saxone, qui ante hos duos annos defunctus est."

[9] Caesarius Heisterbachensis, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Strange, vol. 1, cap. IV,15, p. 188: "NOVICIUS: Proch dolor. Quod abhorret Judaeus et quod exsecratur paganus, hoc quasi pro lege habet Christianus."

[10] Purkis, Crusading, p. 107.

[§13] By explaining Christian defeat with the Christians' moral depravity, Caesarius draws on an explanatory model already known from the Old Testament.[11] It was applied repeatedly by Christian authors to Christian–Muslim contexts. Sophronios, bishop of Jerusalem (sed. 634–638) already explained the Muslim conquest of Palestine by pointing to the Christians' sins, an opinion echoed in the later vision of Pseudo-Methodius.[12] In their late ninth-century interpretation of the Muslim invasion of the Iberian Peninsula (711), the *Dicta de Ezecielis profete* and the *Chronica Adefonsis regis III* claim that the fall of the Visigothic kingdom had been brought about "by the crimes of the Gothic people" (*propter delicta gentis gothicae*), which had resulted in their "deserved hard punishment" (*sententiam seueritatis per meritum*).[13] In the aftermath of the Second Crusade (1147–1149), the "Annals of Würzburg" (*Annales Herbipolenses*) assert that "God allowed the Western church, on account of its sins, to be cast down." They formulate a scathing critique of pseudo-prophets who "seduced the Christians with empty words," thus causing people to set out for the Holy Land who "lusted after novelties," who were "driven by poverty," who were "in hard straits at home" and "oppressed by debts," who "sought to escape the service due to their lords" or were even "awaiting the punishment merited by their shameful deeds." Consequently, many of them only "simulated a zeal for God."[14] Caesarius explains the failure of crusading campaigns with reference to the Christians's sins in connection with the Fifth Crusade against Damietta (1217–1221) as well (X,43: *peccatis nostris exigentibus … Christianus exercitus ex parte datus est in manus Sarracenorum*). His dialogue between a European-Christian pilgrim and a critical Muslim (IV,15) was then re-used by Jehan de Mandeville (d. 1371). In his *Livre*, he staged a discussion between an English knight and a sultan, the latter claiming that God had allowed the Saracens to conquer the Holy Land because of the Christians' sins.[15]

[§14] Medieval Latin-Christian interpretations of defeat did not always follow this explanatory pattern—not even in connection with the crusades. According to Salimbene de Adam (d. after 1288), the Christians of Gaul reacted to the captivity of Louis IX (r. 1226–1270) during the Sixth Crusade to Damiette (1248–1254) by treating Fransciscan and Dominican preachers contemptuously, telling them that Muḥammad was stronger than Christ.[16] Reacting to the fall of Acre in 1291, the Dominican friar Riccoldo da Monte di Croce (d. 1320) reproached God, Jesus, Mary, and the entire "Celestial Curia" for not having saved the Christians, thus engaging

[11] E.g. 2 Chron. 6:24–25; Lev. 26:6–8, 14–17, 25, 33, 36–39; Deut. 28:1, 7, 15, 25–26, 49–52.
[12] Kaegi, Initial Byzantine Reactions, pp. 139–141, 143–144.
[13] Chronique prophétique / Dicta de Ezecielis profete, ed. Bonnaz, cap. 2,1, p. 3; Chronica Adefonsis regis III, ed. Bonnaz, cap. 6,2, p. 42. On this explanatory model also see Bronisch, *Heiliger Krieg*, p. 363.
[14] Annales Herbipolensis, ed. Pertz (MGH SS 16), a. 1147, p. 3: "Occidentanam, exigentibus peccatis, Deus affligi permisit ecclesiam. Etenim perrexerunt quidam pseudoprophete, filii Belial, testes antichristi, qui inanibus verbis christianos seducerent, et pro Iherosolimorum liberatione omne genus hominum contra Sarracenos ire vana predicatione compellerent. (…) Erat autem diversa diversorum intentio. Alii namque, rerum novarum cupidi, ibant pro novitate terrarum consideranda; alii quibus egestas imperabat, quibus etiam res angusta domi fuerat, non solum contra inimicos crucis Christi, sed etiam contra quoslibet christiani nominis amicos, ubi oportunum videretur dimicaturi pro paupertate relevanda; alii qui premebantur ere alieno, vel qui debita dominorum cogitabant relinquere servitia, vel etiam quos falgitiorum suorum merita expectabant supplitia, simulantes se zelum Dei habere, festinabant potius pro incommoditate tantarum sollicitudinum reprimenda." Translation: Brundage, *Crusades*, pp. 115–121; Cole, *Preaching*, pp. 37–61.
[15] Higgins, Le livre.
[16] Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, ed. Holder-Egger (MGH SS 32), a. 1250–1251, pp. 444–445: "et contra religiosos et maxime Predicatores et Minores terribiliter insurgebant, eo quod ipsi predicaverant crucem et crucesignaverant homines ad transfretandum cum rege, qui a Saracenis fuerat debellatus. Irascebantur ergo Gallici, qui in Francia remanserant, tunc temporis contra Christum, usque ádeo ut nomen Christi super omnia nomina benedictum blasphemare presumerent. Nam petentibus illis diebus fratribus Minoribus et Predicatoribus a Gallicis helemosinam pro nomine Christi, stridebant dentibus super illos et illis videntibus, vocato aliquo alio pauere, dabant ei denarios et dicebant: 'Accipe pro nomine Machometti, qui potentior Christo est.'"

with the problem of theodicy that is occasionally regarded as alien to medieval Christian thought.[17]

[§15] Caesarius not only used his story to explain defeat in a "typical" medieval Christian manner. He also employed a literary device by putting criticism directed against Christians into the mouth of a Muslim. This is already known from earlier sources. In the "Annals of Genoa" (*Annales Ianuenses*), the Genoese historiographer Cafaro (d. 1166) claims that the crusaders attacking Caesarea in 1101 were approached by two Muslim envoys from the city. They addressed the papal legate, asking why

> "you teach your kin to kill us and to take away our land, if it is written in your law that no one should kill anyone else bearing the likeness of your God nor take away his property? Because if what is written in your law is so and we bear the likeness of your God, then you act contrary to the law."[18]

[§16] Muslim criticism of Christian violence was indeed formulated during the crusading period.[19] In some cases, Muslim critics referred directly to passages in Christian Holy Scripture that advocate a principle of non-violence. Citing both the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles, the Egyptian scholar al-Qarāfī (d. 684/1285), for example, claimed that

> „today's Christians all admit that they are incorrectable perpetrators who reject their own laws and follow their instincts. This is so in spite of the fact that theirs is a religion that endorses submission, the rejection of fighting and vengeance, the renunciation of defensive actions against infidels as well as of violent uprising."[20]

[§17] Against this backdrop, we should ask whether Caesarius had actually invented a story, in which an external Muslim perspective served to highlight Christian depravity by contrasting it with chaste and honourable Muslim behaviour, or whether he reproduced an eye-witness account which he emplotted in a way as to serve his didactic intention. To answer this question, it is first necessary to investigate what Caesarius actually knew and thought about the crusading movement and events in the Holy Land, and how he depicted Muslims and Islam in general. In a second step, we must deliberate to which degree the many details given in the story can be regarded as reflecting actual circumstances.

[§18] References to the crusades in the *Dialogus miraculorum*[21] illustrate that Caesarius had a general understanding of the history of crusading, although he ignores the First (1096–1099)

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[17] Ricoldus de Monte Crucis, Epistolae V, ed. Röhricht, pp. 258–296; Weltecke, Macht des Islam, pp. 265–293.

[18] *Annales Ianuenses*, ed. Belgramo, vol. 1, a. 1101, p. 10: "Interim vero Saraceni duo de civitate exierunt, et cum patriarcha et Romane curie legato taliter locuti fuerunt: 'O domini, vos qui estis magistri et doctores christiane legis, quare precipitis vestratibus, ut nos interficiant et terram nostram tolllant, cum in lege vestra scriptum sit, ut aliquis non interficiat aliquem formam Dei vestri habentem, vel rem suam tollat? Et si verum est, quod in lege vestra scriptum sit hoc, et nos formam Dei vestri habemus; ergo contra legem facitis.'" See Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, pp. 97–99; König, Genoese Predicament, pp. 206–208.

[19] Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, pp. 97–99.

[20] Al-Qarāfī, *al-Aǧwiba al-fāḫira*, ed. al-Šahāwī, pp. 148-49: "al-naṣārā al-yawm kulluhum muʿtarifūn bi-annahum ʿuṣā ǧunā, rāfiḍūn li-šarāʾiʿihim, muttabiʿūn li-ṭabāʾiʿihim, wa-ḏālika anna maḏhabahum al-istislām wa-tark al-qitāl wa-l-intiṣār, wa-ʿadam mudāfaʿat al-kuffār wa-tark al-aḫḏ bi-l-ṯaʾr, li-mā fī l-inǧīl: man laṭamak ʿalā ḫaddika fa-ḥawwil lahu al-āḫar. wa-qad taqaddama hāḏā l-faṣl mustawʿiban, wa-fīhi: aḥibbū mubġiḍīkum wa-ṣallū ʿalā lāʿinīkum wa-kafiya bi-hāḏā. wa-yaqūlūna: law arāda al-masīḥ (ʿalayhi al-salām) al-ḥurūb lam yastaslim, wa-qad qāla Būlus fī l-risāla al-ḥādiya ʿašar: ihrab min ǧamīʿ al-šahawāt wa-isʿa li-l-rabb wa-l-īmān wa-l-widd wa-l-taslīm, wa-utruk al-munāzaʿāt fa-innahā tūriṯ al-qitāl, wa-laysa yaḥill li-ʿabd an yuqātil. wa-hāḏā qawl Būlus wa-maʿa ḏālika fa-hum al-yawm ašadd al-nās qitālan wa-ḥirṣan ʿalā safk al-dimāʾ, wa-ittibāʿ al-ahwāʾ, wa-hum muwāfiqūn ʿalā l-faṣlayn, fa-hum ḥīnaʾiḏin muʿtarifūn bi-kufrihim bi-l-šarāʾiʿ wa-ittibāʿ al-ṭabāʾiʿ." König, *Arabic-Islamic Views*, p. 270.

[21] See Appendix for all references to Muslims and crusading in the *Dialogus miraculorum*.

and the Second Crusade (1147–1149), and generally refers to the Third Crusade (1187–1192, 1197) as the "first expedition" (*prima expeditio*). He mentions Saladin's victory, his uncle Sayf al-Dīn alias al-Malik al-ʿĀdil (V,37: *Sephadinus*) and his son Nūr al-Dīn alias al-Malik al-Afḍal (IV,15), as well as the counter-reaction of the Third Crusade involving Frederick I Barbarossa (r. 1152–1190) and Richard the Lionheart (r. 1187–1199). He regards the crusading effort of Henry VI (r. 1169/1191–1197) as a crusade in its own right (X,46–47). Several anecdotes deal with the valour of particular knights during the Third Crusade (I,34; X,12; XI,23). Caesarius then legitimises the Fourth Crusade against Constantinople (1202–1204) by claiming that it was brought about by the "perfidy of the Greeks" (*perfidia Graecorum*) (X,47; VII,6). He seems to have happily accepted a relic stolen from the Hagia Sophia during plundering and donated to his abbey by the knight Henry of Ulmen (VIII,54). This knight seems to have been one of his informants (X,43) on the Fifth Crusade against Damietta (1217–1221), which he associates with Frederick II (X,47) and which is dealt with several times (VII,3; VII,56; VIII,27–28; IX,13). Caesarius is aware that German and Frisian crusaders attacked Alcácer do Sal before arriving in Egypt (VIII,66). Last but not least, he deals extensively with the Albigensian Crusade (1209–1229: VII,3; VII,56). He condemns the Albigensians as heretics, who called the Almohads for help, thus provoking their conquest of parts of al-Andalus. The Almohads' wish to conquer all of Europe, Caesarius claims, was averted in 1212 by the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (V,21). Written between 1219 and 1223, the *Dialogus miraculorum* thus looks back on several crusading campaigns directed against Muslims, Christians, and "heretics."

[§19] At home, Caesarius was wellaware of activities supporting the crusading movement, which he fully endorsed. He mentions and had personally heard several preachers of the crusade who were active in the Rhineland and its environs (I,6; I, 16; III,6; III,14; IV,79; IX,3; XI,22; XI,37; XII,23; XII,49). Various miracles—crusaders receiving heavenly rewards (VII,56), crosses appearing in the sky during crusade sermons (XI,37–38; XI,40), preachers saved from assassination attempts (XII,23), badges worn by crusaders in the form of a cross that remain unscathed by fire (XI,32–33), crusader cloaks alleviating the pains of women giving birth (X,22) etc.—serve to illustrate that crusading was a good cause. The same is valid for stories, in which the devil tries to prevent knights from going on crusade (X,11), induces people to assassinate preachers of the crusade (XII,23), and punishes those who make fun of people going on crusade (III,33) or have sold arms to the Saracens of Ceuta (V,21). Crusaders who break rules are punished (IX,13); crusaders who display firm belief (X,46) and fight valorously against "the Saracens" are commended and rewarded (VII,56; X,11–12; XI,23).

[§20] Muslims—called "Saracens" (*Saraceni*), "infidels" (*infideles*), and "enemies of Christ" (XI,23: *inimici Christi*)—are not depicted very positively in the *Dialogus*. They rejoice about the death of a particularly valorous crusader and parade his head around (XI,23). They show disrespect towards an effigy of the crucified Jesus and are accordingly subjected to divine punishment (VIII,28). They persecute and crucify Muslims who have taken refuge with the crusaders and have converted to Christianity during the Crusade against Damietta (VIII,28). A monk tempted by the devil is chased by people looking like "Moors" (IV,96: *quasi multitudinem Maurorum*). In connection with the Christian attack on Alcácer do Sol, Caesarius describes the Christians as "inferior in numbers, but superior in faith" (VIII,66: *Christiani numero minores, sed fide maiores*). Given Caesarius's negative image of Muslims and Islam, the positive depiction of the French-speaking Muslim noble in the passage quoted above (IV,15) stands out. It cannot be regarded as representing Caesarius's general attitude towards Islam and Muslims. Caesarius was certainly no critic of the crusading movement. He believed that Muslims were brutal infidels who had to be fought.

[§21] The Muslim noble fulfils a particular function in the story. He confirms the Christians' sinful behaviour from an external perspective and thus justifies their divinely ordained

punishment at the hands of Saladin.[22] But can we reduce his figure to a mere literary device? We should also consider an alternative or additional reason that explains why the Muslim noble is depicted so positively. Descriptions of the Ayyūbids in contemporary and later sources from Christian Europe present Saladin as an "epitome of knightly and courtly virtues."[23] Since Caesarius seems to have been quite well informed about the Ayyūbid dynasty (V,37; X,47).[24] The latter had maintained intensive relations with the court of Frederick I Barbarossa, and continued to do so under Frederick II (r. 1198/1212/1220–1250), i.e. during Caesarius's lifetime.[25] We could surmise that the comparatively positive image of the Ayyūbid dynasty diffused among Caesarius's contemporaries "rubbed off" in one way or another on his depiction of the Muslim noble, clearly identified as belonging to the entourage of Saladin's son *Noradinus*, alias al-Malik al-Afḍal.

[§22] On several occasions, Caesarius is ready to credit Ayyūbid sultans with decent behaviour. In the story quoted above, the dying knight presents his fighting gear to Nūr al-Dīn al-Afḍal in the hope of saving his companions from the wrath of the Muslim ruler. This gesture includes giving up his crusading vows, which he does by claiming that he had come to understand that Christ did not want him to fight anymore. However, the dying knight's effort to mitigate the Muslim ruler's attitude towards the Christians on the boat is not necessary. In the story, Nūr al-Dīn, "a naturally pious and generous man" (*vir naturaliter pius et beneficus*), already feels pity for the Christians on the boat (*misertus Christianorum*) before he makes contact with them. He brings his physician who takes care of the sick, replies to the Christians' questions in a friendly manner, offers sound advice, and ensures the Christians' security by issuing a safe conduct (*conductum*). Saladin's son is thus presented as a model of piety and generosity. The Muslim noble, in turn, charged with dealing with the Christians on the boat, embodies the monastic virtues of simplicity, humility, chastity, and righteousness. This is illustrated by his qualitative but simple clothes as well as by his criticism of vanity and sexual debauchery. Not only Nūr al-Dīn and his noble assistant treat the Christian pilgrims well. Saladin allows the defeated Christians to remain in their cities, only expelling them when they continue to sin (IV,15). In another episode describing the captivity of Christians participating in the crusade against Damietta, Caesarius explains that, brought to Cairo (*Babylonem*), these prisoners were "treated quite humanely by the [Ayyūbid] sultan" (*satis humane a Soldano tractarentur*) and, as captives, even managed to baptise a sick "pagan" (X,43).

[§23] The analysis of Caesarius's depiction of the Ayyūbids shows that the *Dialogus miraculorum* contains details about the interaction between Latin Christians and Muslims, which do not agree with the stereotypical image of "Saracens" to be found in the rest of the work.[26] The positive depiction of the Muslim actors in the story can thus be explained in the following ways.

- Caesarius constructed these figures as a literary device to criticise Christian depravity. In this case, he consciously paid the price of depicting Muslims in a way that contradicted his other illustrations of Muslim behaviour. He then used members of the Ayyūbid dynasty as the most likely Muslim representatives of humane behaviour to be accepted by his readers.
- However, Caesarius may have really believed that some Muslims, such as the Ayyūbids, could actually embody what he regarded as Christian and monastic virtues, even if they

[22] Purkis, Crusading, p. 106: "Caesarius then proceeded to present a series of 13 stories about the dangers of pride and vainglory, which culminated in an exemplum that was intended to provide the most striking illustration of this theme (…)."
[23] Tolan, Mirror, p. 25 (quote); Möhring, *Saladin*, pp. 109–121; Phillips, *Life and Legend*, pp. 315–328.
[24] Caesarius Heisterbachensis, *Dialogus miraculorum*, cap. V,37, ed. Strange, p. 322.
[25] König, Zeitalter der Extreme; Thomsen, *Burchards Bericht*; Möhring, *Saladin und der dritte Kreuzzug*, pp. 93–134; Šaḥāta, *al-ʿAlāqāt*; al-ʿAryān, *al-ʿAlāqāt*.
[26] On such images, see König, Voices.

were “enemies of Christ” (XI,23: *inimici Christi*). His depiction of Nūr al-Dīn al-Afḍal as a “naturally pious and generous man” (*vir naturaliter pius et beneficus*) speaks in favour of this interpretation.

- Yet Caesarius—clearly raised in a social environment infused by crusading propaganda—may have only come to realise that not all Muslims were “enemies of Christ” thanks to the positive reports provided by Brother William and Henry of Ulmen, both of whom are identified as eyewitness sources for honourable behaviour of Ayyūbid representatives towards crusaders, pilgrims, and captives (IV,15; X,43; X,63).

[§24] Although it is squeezed into the literary framework of a moralising story using an ancient explanatory model, the anecdote conveys some insight into certain facets of Christian–Muslim relations in and around the Latin East, the issue of linguistic interaction, among others. In the story, the French language functions as a means of communication that allows a group of predominantly germanophone pilgrims to interact with an Ayyūbid representative via a mediator, i.e. Brother William, a monk from Utrecht whose knowledge of French is highlighted. The role of French in the Levant has been studied intensively by Cyril Aslanov.[27] Here, we shall focus on the question whether Caesarius’s description of a francophone Muslim who had learned French during a language tandem organised by his father and the King of Jerusalem, can be regarded as plausible. If at all, this language exchange must have taken place at some point during the decades preceding the Battle of Ḥiṭṭīn and Saladin’s capture of Acre in 1187, i.e. during the ruling periods of Fulk (1131–1143, with his wife Melisende), Baldwin III (r. 1143–1163, with his mother Melisende until 1153), Amalric I (r. 1163–1174), or Baldwin IV (r. 1174–1185), also taking into account that the last two kings maintained relations with the rising Ayyūbids.[28]

[§25] As already shown by Hussein M. Attiya, several Christian inhabitants of the Latin East spoke Arabic.[29] In the second quarter of the twelfth century, Stephen of Pisa produced a trilingual Greek–Arabic–Latin glossary of medications compiled from Dioscorides’s pharmacological treatise in the crusader principality of Antioch.[30] As concerns the Ayyūbid period, Saladin’s biographer Ibn Šaddād (d. 632/1235) recorded the Arabic skills of Renaud de Sidon (r. 1172–1202)[31] and Humphrey IV of Toron (d. ca. 1198), who acted as an interpreter between Richard the Lionheart and al-Malik al-ʿĀdil.[32] In the mid-thirteenth century, William of Tripolis documented various Arabic words, including a Latin transcription and translation of the Muslim creed (*al-šahāda*) in his treatise on Islam.[33] According to al-Qalqašandī (d. 821/1418), political representatives of the Latin East were able to negotiate treaties with their Muslim counterparts in Arabic. However, since they had problems understanding the much more sophisticated language used by chancery secretaries in formal documents, they feared that the concluded agreement had been falsified.[34] We know of Christian captives who integrated into Muslim social structures and then returned to their homes later.[35] We also find

[27] Aslanov, L’ancien français, pp. 3–19; Aslanov, *Evidence of Francophony*; Aslanov, *Le français au Levant*; Aslanov, Languages in Contact, pp. 155–181.
[28] Böhme, Letter of Condolence.
[29] Attiya, Knowledge of Arabic, pp. 203–213; König, Latin-Arabic Entanglement, pp. 84–88.
[30] Burnett, Antioch as a Link, pp. 38–39.
[31] Ibn Šaddād, *Al-Nawādir al-sulṭāniyya*, ed. al-Šayyāl, p. 155; Behâ ad-Dîn, *Life of Saladin*, trans. Wilson, pp. 142–143.
[32] Ibn Šaddād, *al-Nawādir al-sulṭāniyya*, ed. al-Šayyāl, p. 274; Behâ ad-Dîn, *Life of Saladin*, trans. Wilson, p. 288.
[33] Guilelmus Tripolitanus, *Notitia de Machometo*, ed./trans. Engels, cap. 3, pp. 204–205: “Forma vero talis est, per quam quis iudicatur et efficitur Sarracenus, quocumque modo eam proferat: Le Ellech ella Alla Machomet resol Alla, quod est: Non est deus nisi Deus et Machometus Dei nuntius.”
[34] Al-Qalqašandī, *Kitāb Ṣubḥ al-aʿšā*, ed. Ibrāhīm, vol. 14, p. 70; König, Übersetzungskontrolle, pp. 476–477.
[35] Usāma b. Munqiḏ, *Kitāb al-Iʿtibār*, ed. Hitti, pp. 129–131.

references to Christians who defected to the Muslim side.[36] All this suggests that at least some Christians of the Latin East were able to communicate in Arabic.

[§26] Examples of Muslims speaking French seem less frequent, and it is often difficult to interpret references in the sources.[37] The Syrian noble, Usāma b. Munqiḏ (d. 584/1188), for example, reports that he did not understand anything, when he was approached by a Frankish woman in one of the cities of the Latin East,[38] despite the fact that he transcribed the French term "bourgeois" (*burğāsī*) in his memoirs.[39] He was so intimate with the francophone nobility of the Kingdom of Jerusalem that, in the ruling period of King Fulk (r. 1131–1143), he received (but declined) the offer of a Frankish knight to take Usāma's son to France to teach him the French version of chivalry—an offer reminiscent of the language tandem organised, according to Caesarius, by the King of Jerusalem and the Muslim noble's father.[40] Language impediments existed as late as 1245, when the Ayyūbid governor of Ḥimṣ, al-Manṣūr Ibrāhīm, informed pope Innocent IV (sed. 1243–1254) that a theological debate between the religious specialists at his court and the pope's Dominican envoys was difficult, because the latter knew no Arabic and could only discuss theological issues in Latin or French (*lingua latina sive gallica*).[41]

[§27] Bogdan C. Smarandache has made the case for a much wider diffusion of second-language learning among Muslims engaging with European Christians in and around the Latin East than previously imagined.[42] Ibn Šaddād makes clear that Saladin and other members of the Ayyūbid family regularly used their own interpreters when communicating with crusaders, pilgrims, and inhabitants of the Latin East.[43] William of Tyre (d. 1186) mentions a Muslim political refugee in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, who had begun learning "Roman letters" (*litteras romanas*), before he was extradited by the Templars.[44] The members of this military order drew on the services of "Saracen scribes" (*escrivain[s] sarrazinois*) who must have had some knowledge of the language(s) used by the Templars.[45] A reference to translators from the Mamlūk chancery who checked the "Frankish" interlinear translation (*al-qalam al-faranğī*) of an Arabic text produced by a Genoese scribe in 1290, proves that the Mamlūk court had personnel able to read a Romance language.[46] Religious minorities under Muslim rule also seem to have acquired Romance language skills in this period, as is attested by an Arabic–Old French glossary in Coptic letters, possibly produced for Coptic travellers visiting Acre in the course of the thirteenth century,[47] and an Arabic–Castilian glossary in Hebrew letters, compiled between 1424 and 1430, probably used by Egyptian Jews in touch with the Iberian Peninsula.[48] Although

[36] König, 1250: Jean de Joinville, §§ 21–26.
[37] König, Latin-Arabic Entanglement, pp. 84–88
[38] Usāma b. Munqiḏ, *Kitāb al-Iʿtibār*, ed. Hitti, pp. 140–141.
[39] Usāma b. Munqiḏ, *Kitāb al-Iʿtibār*, ed. Hitti, p. 132; Aslanov, *Le Français*, 42–43; Smarandache, Re-examining, pp. 47–85.
[40] Usāma b. Munqiḏ, *Kitāb al-Iʿtibār*, ed. Hitti, p. 139.
[41] Lupprian, *Beziehungen*, ep. 24 (1245), pp. 162–163: "impedimentum lingue arabice (…) quia nisi in lingua latina sive gallica disputandi consuetudinem non habebant."
[42] Smarandache, Re-examining, pp. 47–85.
[43] Ibn Šaddād, *Al-Nawādir al-sulṭāniyya*, ed. al-Šayyāl, pp. 50, 68, 69, 130, 236, 248, 250, 267–268, 274, 301, 304; Behâ ed-Dîn, *Life of Saladin*, trans. Wilson, pp. 21, 41, 43, 115, 239, 252, 256, 279, 288, 321, 325.
[44] Guillelmus (Willelmus) de Tyro, *Chronicon*, ed. Huygens, vol. 2, lib. 18, cap. 9, 823: "litteras iam didicisset Romanas (…)."
[45] *La Règle du Temple*, ed. Curzon, §§ 77, 99, 111, 120, 125, 75, 87, 94, 100, 102; Riley-Smith, Some Lesser Officials, pp. 20–22.
[46] Genoese-Mamlūk treaty of 2 Ǧumādā al-ūlā 689 / 13 May 1290, in: Amari, *Nuovo ricordi*, p. 16 (AR): "wa-kataba bayna l-suṭūr bi-l-faranğī nusḫat ḏālika saṭran saṭran wa-kilmatan kilmatan (…)," p. 63 (IT); ibid., p. 17 (AR): "wa-qaraʾa mā fīhā min al-qalam al-faranğī al-manqūl ilā l-ʿarabī [*sic*] Šams ad-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh al-Manṣūrī wa-tarğama ʿalayhi li-taḥqīq at-taʿrīf wa-š-šahāda bi-ṣiḥḥatihi Sābiq ad-Dīn al-turğumān wa-ʿIzz ad-Dīn Aybak al-Kabkī at-turğumān fī l-tārīḫ al-maḏkūr (…)," pp. 64–65 (IT).
[47] Aslanov, Languages in Contact, pp. 157–158.
[48] Sheynin, Genizah Fragments, pp. 151–166.

this evidence is scanty and selective, it suggests that an Ayyūbid noble speaking French could have existed, although these skills were probably rather special and remarkable, as we are also made to understand in Caesarius's story.

[§28] To conclude: in his *Dialogus miraculorum*, Caesarius of Heisterbach gives us a rare insight into the interaction between victorious Muslims and a group of Christian crusaders and pilgrims about to set foot in the Holy Land. In a work that clearly endorses the crusading movement and generally depicts Muslims as violent enemies of the Christian faith, the positive depiction of two representatives of the Ayyūbid dynasty stands out. As a literary device, this positive depiction illustrated that the Christians of the Latin East were so depraved that even non-Christians regarded God's punishment as merited. In this way, Caesarius explained the loss of Jerusalem at the hands of Saladin, resorting to a narrative pattern already known from the Old Testament and earlier Latin-Christian authors. As a morally enhanced eyewitness account displaying an enormous love for detail, the story provides evidence for the positive image of the Ayyūbids in the Latin West as well as many plausible insights into the emotional, practical, and linguistic facets of Christian–Muslim interaction in a crusading context. In fact, it suggests that there was a short period in the history of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, during which full political integration into the surrounding Muslim-ruled orbit seemed within reach, to the effect that Muslim and Christian elites regarded it as useful to have their children learn Arabic and French, respectively. In the story's present, honourable Muslims interact with perceptive Christians who are alien to the local context. Both use a language that has gained such currency in and around the Latin East that it serves as the medium of exchange between Christians from Germanic-speaking regions and representatives of the Ayyūbid dynasty in Palestine. In this way, a narrative source, obviously following established literary patterns, provides an understanding for how Christian–Muslim communication in the Holy Land of the crusading period could have functioned.

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Appendix: Muslims and crusading in the *Dialogus miraculorum*

I,6	Bernard of Clairvaux preaches the crusade in Liège. A man decides to become Cistercian rather than going on crusade, because he has seen many crusaders sinning after their return from the Holy Land.
I,16	Bernard of Clairvaux preaches the crusade in the diocese of Konstanz.
I,34	Ludwig, son of the landgrave of Thuringia, died during the Third Crusade.
I,40	After the death of his wife, a man takes his much-loved daughter Hildegund to Jerusalem. On the way back, he dies in Tyre. Their servant flees with their possessions, leaving the daughter destitute in a country, in which she does not know the language (*non intelligens idioma terrae*). For one year, she begs in front of the schools of the city. A rich German pilgrim takes her back home to Germany, where she undergoes several calamitous adventures.
II,7	The *magistri* John and Oliver preach the crusade against the Saracens in Utrecht. Under peer pressure, the peasant Godescalcus has taken the cross. Clerics arrive who have been sent by Pope Innocent III (sed.1198–1216) to collect money from old men, the poor, and the sick, to dispense them from their vows. Godescalcus deceives them by only paying five *talenti*. Sitting in a tavern some time later, he makes fun of all those people who actually risk their lives by going on crusade. God subjects him to punishment at the hand of the devil.
II,30	A prophecy predicts the conquest of Jerusalem and the Holy Land at the hand of Saladin.
III,6	The scholasticus Oliver preaches the crusade in Brabant.
III,14	*Magister* Konrad, deacon of Speyer, preaches the crusade, when Frederick I (r. 1152–1190) is crowned in Frankfurt.
III,21	Pilgrims travelling across the sea are saved from a storm thanks to their confessions.
III,33	The archbishop Engelbert of Cologne (sed. 1216–1225) sends the deacon Hermann and the canon Godescalcus to Rome to obtain a dispensation for going on crusade.

IV,10	The scholasticus Oliver preaches the crusade in Bruges and Ghent. There, the priest Siger displays a brooch from Ceuta (*Septia*) which, he claims, has miraculous powers. Receiving the permission to preach the crusade, he breaks down, utters blasphemies, and is eventually killed by a demon five days later. Some report that he was excommunicated for being on a ship that had sold arms to the "Saracens" of Ceuta.
IV,15	Brother William from Utrecht engages with a French-speaking Muslim noble in Acre shortly after Saladin has taken the city.
IV,79	The Cardinal of Albano, sent to Germany in 1188 to preach the crusade against the "Saracens," is subtly criticised by a simple, uncorrupt monk, who preached the crusade in the Church of St Peter in Cologne. There he was heard by the youth Caesarius.
IV,96	The devil tempts a monk, among other things by having him chased by people looking like "Moors" (*quasi multitudinem Maurorum post se venientium vidit*).
V,21	Caesarius gives an overview over the Albigensian crusade and polemices against the heretics (*haeretici*). He shortly refers to another chapter where he describes how God punished the Muslim defenders of Damietta for having desecrated an effigy of Jesus (VIII,27). The Albigensians are said to have asked the *amīr al-muʾminīn*, the ruler of Morocco (*Miralimomelinum Regem de Marroch*), to help them. Hoping to conquer all of Europe and writing to pope Innocent IV (sed. 1243–1254) that he would park his horses in the narthex of St Peter, he came to Spain with a large number of troops. He was defeated in 1212 [Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa] with 40,000 soldiers and died of grief in Seville.
V,37	While Philipp of Swabia and Otto IV are fighting for the crown (1198), the devil takes the sick knight Everhardus to Rome, where the pope divorces him from his wife. The devil then takes him to Jerusalem, where the knight witnesses the troops of (Saladin's brother) Sayf al-Dīn (al-Malik al-ʿĀdil).
VII,3	Pope Honorius (sed. 1216–1227) obliges an excommunicated Frisian drunkard to take the cross. He sets out with a Frisian priest, both die near Damietta.
VII,6	Caesarius mentions the period in which Baldwin of Flanders (r.1194–1205) conquered Constantinople (1204).
VII,23	Mary rewards a clergyman, whose tongue has been cut off by Albigensians, with a new tongue.
VII,56	Mary consoles the crusader Kuno from Zülpich and rewards him with eternal life for having left his wife, children, and possessions to go on the Crusade against Damietta.
VIII,27	During the Crusade on Damietta (1217–1221), the besieged Muslims celebrate the victory of their troops against the crusader force by dragging an effigy of the crucified Jesus through the streets. God strikes them with a disease and allows the Christians to take the city. Caesarius has heard that Jews and "Saracens" have crucified Christians only recently, whereas he has never heard of Christians who have crucified someone else.
VIII,28	When Damietta is besieged by the crusaders, some infidels take refuge with the crusader force. They are pursued by the "Saracens" who crucify them and display the crosses on the city walls. The monk declares them to be martyrs for the faith.
VIII,53	A merchant travels to the Holy Land. In the hospital of the Knights of Saint John in Acre, he notices that the person guarding a relic of Saint John has an affair with a prostitute. The merchant pays the prostitute asking her to get the relic from her lover, which she does by refusing to have intercourse with him. The merchant takes the relic to Frisia, where he buys a house and hides the relic, which is discovered eventually.
VIII,54	The knight Henry of Ulmen participates in the pillage of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade (1204). He takes a tooth of Saint John from the Hagia Sophia back to Germany and gives it to the Abbey of Heisterbach.
VIII,66	Crusaders from Germany and Frisia travel to Lisbon with 300 ships. There, they besiege the city of Alcácer do Sal (1217), wrongly translated by Caesarius as meaning "the prison of all" (*omnium carcer*). The Christians fight against four "Saracen" kings (*Sarracenorum Reges*). "Inferior in numbers, but superior in faith" (*Christiani numero minores, sed fide maiores*), they are supported by heavenly troops witnessed by captive Muslims.
IX,3	Fifty people take the cross after the priest Adolf of Diever witnesses a miracle.
IX,13	A Frisian ship that forms part of the fleet setting out to the Crusade on Damietta (1217–1221) breaks apart because the priests on board have taken along a consecrated host in spite of a prohibition to do so.
X,2	The monk Winand from the diocese of Liège sets out on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem with a few people from the region. Thanks to a miracle, he is brought back to his home from Jerusalem within a single day.
X,11	The knight Albert Skodehart vows to go on crusade, but is tempted by the devil not to do so. He tells the devil to leave him alone, travels to the Holy Land and fights for two years for Jesus. On his return, he founds a large hospice for pilgrims and the poor where he serves as a Benedictine monk together with his wife.
X,12	During the siege of Acre during the Third Crusade, the young knight Dietrich of Reuland, suffers from dysentery (*fluxus sanguinis*). Although unable to leave his bed, he gets up to fight the Saracens when he hears that the Christians are fleeing. His fellow crusaders regain courage. He dies after three days.

X,22	The *scholasticus* Oliver of Cologne preaches the crusade in Flanders. The pregnant wife of a rich and noble knight is devastated by her husband's decision to go on crusade. The preacher counsels her to cover herself with her husband's crusader cloak (*veste signata*). In this way, she is able to avert the extreme pain that she usually feels when giving birth.
X,32	A man from the city of Soest has vowed to go on crusade. When his house burns down, the part of his cloak carrying the sign of the cross survives unscathed.
X,33	A fruit tree, decorated with the cross symbolising a crusader's vow, falls into a fire. The cross remains unscathed.
X,37	When the scholasticus Oliver of Cologne preaches the cross in Frisia, three crosses appear in the air.
X,38	A cross appears near the sun during a sermon preaching the crusade in Frisia.
X,40	A nun sees two crosses in the air during a sermon preaching the crusade near Cologne.
X,43	Parts of the Christian army fighting in Damietta are taken captive by the Saracens, the bishop of Beauvais among others. He and many others are brought to Cairo (*Babylonem*), where they are treated very humanely by the sultan (*satis humane a Soldano tractarentur*). A "female pagan" (*femina quaedam pagana*) dreams that the bishop can heal her sick son by baptising him. Several pagans standing around the baptismal font laugh at her, but stop laughing when the baptismal waters really heal her son. The monk-narrator has heard this story from the knight Henry of Ulmen, an eye-witness (*qui praesens erat*). He utters his hope that the young man has remained faithful to Christianity.
X,46	When Richard the Lionheart travels to Jerusalem during the Third Crusade (1189–1192), his belief in the power of the Cistercians' prayers saves him during a storm.
X,47	Caesarius lists the calamities that have taken place during his lifetime. These include Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Three crusades have already taken place against the "infidels," one led by Frederick I (Barbarossa), the second by his son Henry VI, the third by Frederick II (refers to the Crusade against Damietta). The Fourth Crusade was brought about by the perfidy of the Greeks and led to the conquest of Constantinople and great parts of Greece by the Latins.
X,63	Caesars mentions the novice William and his return from his first pilgrimage to Jerusalem via Rome.
XI,23	The knight Wiger from the diocese of Utrecht participates in the Third Crusade. His zealous fighting against the Saracens earns him the sympathy of the King of Jerusalem and all other Christians, but also the hate of the "enemies of Christ" (*inimici Christi*). A vision following the violent death of his servant makes him fight even more zealously. When he dies in battle, the Saracens carry around his head triumphantly. The Christians recover his body, bury it, and build a church on top of it.
XII,23	The *scholasticus* Oliver of Cologne preaches the crusade around Utrecht. Everwach, servant to the bishop of Utrecht, has made a pact with the devil to escape the persecution of envious colleagues, and follows the preacher with the aim of killing him. Afflicted by a disease, he dies, suffers the punishments of hell, but is resuscitated by God. When he returns to the living, he takes the cross and journeys to the Holy Land.
XII,39	During the conflict between Philipp of Swabia and Otto IV (1198), a pilgrim returns from the Holy Land and pawns his pilgrim's cloak to buy very strong wine. In a state of near death, he is given a glimpse of hell. Coming back to his senses, he swears never to drink again.
XII,49	A Premonstratensian priest dies while preaching the crusade. He is led off by demons, but saved by Christ because he has announced the word of Christ.