To Isabella, Claire, and Jack
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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<td>Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Patrologia Cursus Completus, Series Latina.</td>
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<td>RHC: Occ 3</td>
<td>Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Occidentaux 3.</td>
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Because the clergy equated the First Crusade with an armed pilgrimage, thereby demanding the same behavioral reforms of warriors who participated in the crusade as those they expected of any pilgrim seeking to do penance for his or her sins, they also effectively required secular knights who participated in the crusade to abandon many of the key behaviors by which they had long defined themselves as men. Crusaders, if they wished to participate, were to take formal vows of humility and chastity, which represented quite a challenge to traditional notions of knighthood. Secular knights of the era were better known for establishing their manly identities through their sexual subordination of women and arrogant boasting of their deeds on or off the battlefield. Thus, the crusader, who vowed to abandon these traditional markers of knightly masculinity, represented a new holy warrior ideal that stood as a challenge to the secular model of knighthood. The problem with the crusader ideal, from the clerical reformer’s perspective, was that the crusader model of warrior masculine identity was temporary, lasting only until the fulfillment of a crusader’s vows. This problem was addressed by the formation of the Knights Templar as a permanent religious order of fighting monks dedicated to the defense of Christians in the Holy Land.
This dissertation argues that this alternative model of holy warrior identity institutionalized during and immediately following the First Crusade, and reaching its fulfillment with the foundation of the Templar order, should be recognized as a distinct hybrid form of masculine identity that represented a challenge to traditional notions of knightly masculinity in the Middle Ages. It should be categorized alongside the various masculine identities that gender scholars have already acknowledged when they consider the phenomenon of "multiple masculinities" existing concurrently in the High Middle Ages. While modern historians of medieval gender have identified the existence of distinct masculine identities accorded to knights, celibate clerics, merchants, and others, they have not recognized the role of crusaders, and their successors, the Templars, as having a unique place in the gender hierarchy of the era. This dissertation argues why they should.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION: CHRISTIANITY, MASCULINITY, AND THE CRUSADES

Writing around the year 1129, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, one of the most influential religious voices of twelfth century, found it troublesome that the knights of his era had grown to love “effeminate locks” and silk clothing decorated with silver, gold, and precious stones that were impractical for combat. Indeed, Bernard attacked the highly prized traditional masculine persona of secular knights when, regarding their flamboyant apparel, he asked, “Are these the trappings of a warrior or are they not rather the trinkets of a woman?”¹ This was in stark contrast, Bernard noted, to the unwashed Knights Templars, who dressed simply, wore their hair dirty and short, and always maintained what was, for Bernard, the properly rugged appearance of the true warrior.² In drawing such a sharp distinction between secular knights and Templars, Bernard highlighted two models of warrior masculine identity that existed at the time. Yet the differences of appearance identified by Bernard above only begin to scratch the surface of the much larger distinctions that existed between the two models in how they understood their roles as men and warriors in medieval European Christian society.

Bernard’s beloved Templars did not emerge fully formed in a vacuum. They were instead the product of a time-honored tradition in Christian thought that emphasized an ascetic ideal for Christian men; this vision had long been at odds with dominant lay ideals, from the early Church until the high medieval period that is the primary focus of


this dissertation. Thus, my work will consider, from the perspective of the *longue durée*, the theological and cultural innovations that influenced Christian thinking from the era of the *Gospels* to the decades that followed the First Crusade that made it possible for the Templars to emerge as a new type of holy warrior ideal. More specifically, this dissertation will consider how such innovations represented a challenge to traditional models of lay warrior masculinity as represented in the figure of the secular knight. Indeed, monastic and clerical authorities celebrated and promoted first the crusader and then the Templar as alternative models of warrior masculine identity that rejected many of the traditional means by which secular knights had defined themselves as men.

Regardless of whether or not the laity embraced their arguments, ancient and medieval clerical and monastic authors had long argued that ascetic masculine ideals were superior to the lay ideals of the nobility. This was in large part because the behaviors by which aristocratic laymen traditionally defined themselves as men, including sex, violence, boasting, and ostentatious dress, were behaviors that the clergy defined as sinful, symptomatic of spiritual weakness, and the path to damnation. Such behaviors were in stark contrast to the highest Christian ideals, which were reflected chiefly in the asceticism of the Christian monk. Unlike laymen, monks had defined

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themselves by how rigidly they could adhere to the demands of their ascetic calling, including sexual abstinence, humility, poverty, and physical, although not spiritual, non-violence.\(^4\)

What did it mean for a Christian male’s masculine identity if he sought to follow the highest ideals of Christian holiness as expressed by Christian leaders when such ideals were at odds with the key markers by which laymen defined themselves as men? If judged by lay masculine norms, such a man could be seen as losing the right to call himself as such. Yet Christian authorities argued there was an alternative; they acted to define and promote a different type of masculine identity that was based on an ascetic ideal, which had been long been present in Christian societies as a competitor to lay ideals.

While this dissertation considers the evolution of the clerical masculine ideal from the early Church until the twelfth century, as well as its competition with lay ideals from the early Roman Empire until the High Middle Ages, it particularly focuses on the tension between the emboldened reform-minded clergy and the aristocratic warrior class of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Church had long viewed the warrior class with suspicion and distrust. This was partly because when Europe’s Christian warrior class engaged in warfare, it was often with other Christians, and this resulted in social instability that also negatively impacted both the status and property of the

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Church. Moreover, Christian clerics since at least the era of the early Church Fathers had long condemned bloodshed, regardless of the circumstances, as a sin that needed to be expiated.

During the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, the clergy especially focused on the reform of the knightly class drawn from the nobility and at the top of the military hierarchy. As early as the Peace and Truce of God movements, spanning the late tenth and eleventh-centuries, the clergy sought to use its moral authority to bring about changes in knightly behavior. Subsequently, in the wake of the Gregorian Reform, the clergy renewed its historic push to reform the nobility as well. It was during this period, as I will argue, that ecclesiastical authorities made a unique effort to control the action and behavior of the knightly class by redefining the qualities of an ideal Christian warrior. This was done through an unprecedented effort by ecclesiastical leaders, including popes, prominent theologians, and influential canonists, to both legitimize (under limited circumstances) and control Christian violence at a level and scope that had never before been witnessed in Christian history.

Yet while ecclesiastical authorities during the late eleventh-century may have allowed for the necessity of warfare under some circumstances, they also argued that for Christian knights to win God’s favor on the battlefield, they had to embrace personal

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6 Although sometimes considered necessary, bloodshed, at least until the later 11th century, remained a sin that many clerics believed needed to be expiated even when committed for a noble cause. See Chibnall, The World of Orderic Vitalis, 139 and Maurice Hugh Keen, Chivalry (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 46.
holiness. In other words, to win on the holy war battlefield, the warriors themselves needed to be holy. This meant that knights needed to abandon the traditional markers of masculinity by which they had traditionally defined themselves as men, including having sex with women, exhibiting pride, wearing ostentatious clothing, and boasting arrogantly for the purpose of self-promotion. To the contrary, the clergy called on such knights, quite often with very limited success, to embrace long-established monastic virtues of chastity and humility.

More importantly for the purposes of this dissertation, the call for the First Crusade provided the clergy with a new and unprecedented vehicle not only for the control and direction of Europe’s warrior armed might, but also for the attempted reform of the aristocratic knightly class. This was because the Church dictated the ideological framework by which the crusade was established and organized. Clerical promoters of the First Crusade equated it with an armed pilgrimage, thereby demanding the same behavioral reforms of warriors who participated in the crusade as those they expected of any pilgrim seeking to do penance for his or her sins.7 Crusaders, if they wished to participate, were to take a vow that committed them to chastity and humility, two characteristics not normally associated with the knightly class, and put them (like pilgrims) temporarily under the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical law.8 But in addition to spiritual benefits, clerics argued, there were also practical benefits for knights who heeded clerical calls for greater personal holiness, since such knights could then be

7 For a more detailed analysis of the pilgrimage framework of the First Crusade, see Chapter 5. See also James A. Brundage, Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 3-29.

assured of God’s good will and support on the battlefield. As a result, the clergy promised that God would bless them with the two things they valued most as knights: courage and prowess.⁹

While only a tiny minority of Europe’s knights participated in the First Crusade, perhaps only 6000 according to one historian’s estimate, they nevertheless served as the basis of a newly emerging model of Christian warrior identity that differed significantly from the prevailing norms of secular warrior society.¹⁰ They represented an alternative model for devout Christian warriors who were now told that they could engage in their profession without fear of sin, so long as they were able to adhere to the standards of behavior outlined by the clergy. This opportunity allowed them to seek a reputation for warrior manliness that competed with secular notions of the same.

The problem with the crusader ideal was that it was temporary, lasting only until the fulfillment of a crusader’s vows. Indeed, clerical authorities writing after the completion of the First Crusade complained that former crusaders quickly returned to the sinful lives they had lived before the crusade; these circumstances made them question the degree of sincerity with which they had taken their crusading vows in the first place.¹¹ This problem, as this dissertation will show, was addressed by the formation of the Knights Templar in the wake of the First Crusade during the early

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⁹ See Chapter 5 for a fuller consideration of this issue.


twelfth century as a permanent religious order of fighting monks dedicated to the defense of Christians in the Holy Land.

The Templar ideal was the culmination of clerical efforts to reform the warrior class according to standards that would be acceptable to the Church. Those aristocratic knights who joined the Templars committed themselves to the three-fold monastic vow of chastity, poverty, and obedience to the Church, as well as the long held monastic ideal of humility.¹² In contrast to lay crusaders, however, the Templar's vows were permanent, and thus represented a more lasting level of commitment to the new clerical warrior ideal. Most significantly, for the purposes of this dissertation, the Templars defined themselves as men according to very different standards than the secular knights of the era, as Bernard of Clairvaux pointed out in the passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

It is my argument that this alternative model of holy warrior identity, institutionalized during and immediately following the First Crusade and reaching its fulfillment with the foundation of the Templar order, should be recognized as a distinct hybrid form of, particularly, masculine identity that existed in the Middle Ages.¹³ It should be categorized alongside the various masculine identities that gender scholars have already acknowledged when they consider the phenomenon of “multiple


¹³ While other scholars have already considered the hybrid nature of the crusader (and particularly the members of the knightly orders who would follow) as a blending of the monk or monasticized cleric and knight, none have considered the gender implications of such development on warrior masculinity. See, for example, Smith, War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture, 99 and Jennifer G. Wollock, Rethinking Chivalry and Courtly Love, (Santa Barbara, Calif: Praeger, 2011), 51.
masculinities” existing concurrently in the High Middle Ages. While modern historians of medieval gender have identified the existence of distinct masculine identities accorded to knights, celibate clerics, merchants, and others, they have not recognized the role of crusaders, and their successors, the Templars, as having a unique place in the gender hierarchy of the era. This dissertation will argue why they should.

Modern Historians, Ecclesiastical Reform, and Medieval Masculinities

This dissertation builds upon the work of a great number of scholars whose research focuses on a number of areas including religious, gender, and crusades history, as well as the history of knighthood. I have been particularly dependent on the conclusions of modern historians of medieval gender as my research assumes that multiple masculine identities existed in the Middle Ages and that the era of the Gregorian Reform was somewhat of a watershed period for redefining and expanding the scope of those identities. Indeed, Gender historians have long argued that the social and cultural effects of the Gregorian Reform movement were immense, particularly as they related to medieval notions of masculine identity.

A seminal essay on the subject in 1994 by Jo Ann McNamara characterized the effects of the Gregorian Reform as the cause of a masculinity crisis that she cleverly

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See, for example, various essays in *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages*. ed. Clare A Lees, Medieval Cultures, v. 7 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994, Jacqueline Murray (ed) *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West* (New York: 1999), and Dawn Hadley (ed) *Masculinity in Medieval Europe* (New York: 1999). Note two of the volumes, as demonstrated by their titles, are organized based on the assumption of multiple masculine identities in the middle ages. See also Ruth Mazza Karras in *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003). Karras arranges her study of multiple masculine identities in the Middle Ages by profession or occupation, such as knights, students or merchants, and considers the standards men in each group had to achieve to be fully deemed a man.
termed the *Herrenfrage*.\(^{15}\) While McNamara argued that the crisis broadly affected all types of men, her focus was on secular clerics who, by virtue of the institutional and popular demand for clerical celibacy from 1050 to 1150, were deprived of their wives and concubines and thus also deprived of “objects for the sexual demonstrations that proved their right to call themselves men.”\(^{16}\) McNamara proposed that such events raised “inherently frightening questions” about masculinity as such men wondered whether they could truly be men without “deploying the most obvious biological attributes of manhood.” Moreover, the domination of women was acknowledged as an important threat to clerical ideals of masculinity and so the unmarried cleric found himself removed from important opportunities to display his masculinity. These issues led to McNamara’s idea of a “crisis of masculinity” in which men questioned whether a person who did not act like a man, by having sex with and dominating women, could still be considered a man.\(^{17}\) In highlighting these questions, McNamara’s oft-cited essay provided numerous opportunities for historians to rise to the challenge and respond to such questions in ways that have significantly enhanced our understandings of medieval clerical masculinity.\(^{18}\)


\(^{16}\) McNamara, *The Herrenfrage*, 5.

\(^{17}\) McNamara, *The Herrenfrage*, 5.

Equally influential was Vern Bullough’s 1994 essay, “On Being Male in the Middle Ages.” By adapting the work of anthropologist David G. Gilmore to the study of medieval masculinity, Bullough’s work identified a simple and appealing threefold framework by which medieval society defined masculinity. Bullough argued that “the most simplistic way” to define medieval masculinity was to evaluate it in comparison with three key features of masculine behavior, including, “impregnating women, protecting dependents, and serving as provider to one’s family.” Bullough noted that failure in any of these tasks led “not only to challenges to one’s masculinity, but also to fear of being labeled as showing feminine weakness, however society defines that.”

Scholars recognized the significance of Bullough’s conclusions for the medieval clergy, who did not engage in any of the key markers of masculinity that he had identified. Indeed, Bullough’s assumptions seem to have been essential for a controversial 1999 essay by R.N. Swanson, who claimed that the medieval clergy, since they did not conform to Bullough’s threefold standard of masculinity, did not exhibit masculine characteristics. Yet while the medieval cleric was not masculine, according to Swanson, neither was he feminine. Indeed, Swanson pushed his conclusions further to make the claim that the celibate cleric, who disavowed the typical behavior of lay masculinity, constituted a type of hybrid third gender, which he called “emasculinity.”

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22 Swanson, Angels Incarnate, 161.
Swanson’s argument has not generally been well received by prominent gender historians, who have challenged his conclusions. However, Swanson’s work has prompted historians to focus more carefully on the complexities of medieval masculine identities by either reaffirming older theories or considering new ways of approaching the subject. Ruth Mazo Karras, for example, argued in a 2008 essay that rather than speak of “third (or fourth or fifth) genders, it is more useful to speak of variations on the basic two.” Indeed, it has long been standard thinking among historians of medieval gender to work within a plural framework of “masculinitities” rather than the singular “masculinity.” Such a conceptualization gives the historian options when dealing with differences in men’s behavior or attitudes that do not fit with hegemonic definitions of masculinity. Rather than merchants, knights, or celibate clerics representing multiple genders, they instead represent only one gender, masculinity, but in various forms (masculine identities) along a spectrum. Similarly, Maureen Miller argued that rather

See, for example, Maureen C. Miller, “Masculinity, Reform, and Clerical Culture: Narratives of Episcopal Holiness in the Gregorian Era,” *Church History* 72:1 (2001): 28; Karras, *Thomas Aquinas’s Chastity Belt*, 53; Thibodeaux, *Introduction: Rethinking the Medieval Clergy and Masculinity*, 4. Jacqueline Murray also seems to have criticized Swanson’s third gender theory for the clergy in a 2004 essay in which she wrote, “Here was a language and here were the role models who reaffirmed to celibate men that they were not a third gender nor were they effeminate or emasculated.” [emphasis mine] Murray, *Masculinizing Religious Life*, 37. Yet in a later study Murray is willing to allow for the possibility of a third gender in the Middle Ages. See Jacqueline Murray, “One Flesh, Two Sexes, Three Genders?” in *Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives*, eds. Lisa M. Bitel & Felice Lifshitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 49.

Karras, *Thomas Aquinas’s Chastity Belt*, 53. Such a view seems to work well with the earlier arguments of Jo Ann McNamara, who maintained that one’s gender could be located on a spectrum based on sex, class, vocation, and personal characteristics, with the male end of the spectrum representing the superior side and the female end of the spectrum representing the inferior side. The gender of a servile man, for example, might be located toward the inferior female end of the spectrum, while the manly warrior would be located toward the superior manly side of the spectrum. See Jo Ann McNamara, “City Air Makes Men Free and Women Bound,” in *Text and Territory: Geographical Imagination in the European Middle Ages*, ed. S. Tomasz and S. Gilles (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 144. See also Murray’s analysis of McNamara’s argument in Murray, *One Flesh, Two Sexes, Three Genders*, 36.

See, for example, the title of Claire A. Lees’ groundbreaking work, *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages.*
than “emasculinity,” what the medieval clergy were really trying to define was an “extreme masculinity” that was “more radically distanced from female impurity and one more powerful by virtue of its freedom from familial entanglements.”

This dissertation accepts and then moves beyond such claims to argue that the masculinity “crisis” among the clergy during the Gregorian Reform was extended, on a more limited level, to the knightly class as reformed or “monasticized” clerics then tried to extend their influence over the First Crusade as a vehicle to align knightly behavior with clerical ideals. Conceptually, I will argue that the crusaders and Templars, by virtue of their formal status as chaste warriors who committed themselves to clerical and monastic ideals of manhood, represented an extension of the monastically inspired clerical masculine ideal that emerged during the Gregorian Reform. Yet such an ideal did not represent a new gender, but rather a masculine variant that can and should be included in the spectrum of existing masculine identities described by modern historians. To date, such a consideration seems to be totally absent from existing studies of masculine identity in the Middle Ages.

**Modern Historians, The First Crusade and Knightly Masculinity**

This dissertation is also dependent on the scholarship of historians of the crusades and medieval knighthood. Studies by such scholars of the nature of knightly behavioral norms and the philosophical and theological underpinnings of the First Crusade are central to understanding how the clergy attempted to justify their calls for

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26 Miller, "Masculinity, Reform, and Clerical Culture," 28. Miller also notes that “to embrace the construct of a ‘third gender’ is to miss or undervalue competition between clerical and lay males over degrees of maleness.” Yet Miller’s view, as a response to Swanson’s notion of a third gender, seems to reaffirm a position that had long been favored by gender historians. Jo Ann McNamara, for example, made a similar argument in her 1994 essay on the *Herrenfrage*, suggesting that among monks, clerics, and laymen, the “highest order of men were those furthest from women.” See McNamara, *The Herrenfrage*, 7.
the reform of the warrior class. In more ways than one, the era of the First Crusade was a revolutionary period in medieval Europe. Not only was this a period of significant internal ecclesiastical reform, culminating in the Gregorian Reform, but it was also an era in which the legitimacy of Christian warfare was reinterpreted and redefined.\textsuperscript{27} As eleventh-century clerical authorities increasingly came to accept the role of a Christian warrior in defending Christian society and keeping the peace, such authorities also sought to exert greater control over the knightly class. Knights, after all, as members of the nobility, were near the top of the hierarchy of medieval Europe’s warrior classes, and so the ability to control the actions of knights through a combination of moral suasion and spiritual rewards offered the clergy the potential to prescribe when, where, and against whom Christian warriors could fight.

On account of the violence typically associated with Europe’s warrior classes, they had mostly been a source of suspicion for clerical writers since the early Middle Ages, but by the later eleventh-century such thinking began to change. Clerical authorities now argued that there were instances in which knights could exercise the profession of arms not only without sinning, but even as an act of love or charity if done for the right reasons.\textsuperscript{28} Such instances were limited, no doubt, with the Church claiming the right to judge under what circumstances Christians could, in good conscience, commit violence, but nevertheless this era marks a broader acceptance of the legitimacy of Christian warfare and a greater effort to establish clerical oversight. The high point of such efforts came in the birth of the crusading movement in 1095, during


which thousands of Europe’s knights took vows committing themselves to service in the First Crusade and thereby placing themselves, at least theoretically and temporarily, under the authority of the Church during their time of service. In exchange for doing so, the clergy promised knights that the hardships and dangers they faced during the crusade would be penitential, offering them a chance to atone for the sinfulness of their past lives.

Thus the First Crusade, clerics argued, offered knights the opportunity to employ the tools of their deadly profession in a way that could help bring about their salvation, rather than their damnation, so long as they carried out their efforts according to the guidelines provided by the Church. Indeed, clerics told recruits for the crusade that if they participated, they would be going to the aid of recently conquered eastern Christians now suffering under Muslim rule and that they would be restoring the Holy Land, no less than Christ’s patrimony, to Christian control and saving it from defilement under Muslim control. Under such circumstances, as framed by the clergy, knights could be assured that God willed their efforts and that their selfless suffering during such an effort would redeem their souls. As Jonathan Riley-Smith, Marcus Bull, and


31 In Robert the Monk’s Historia Iherosolimitania, for example, which claims to provide an eyewitness account of the Council of Clermont, Urban described the desecration of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and, in graphic detail, the rape and torture of Christians at the hands of their Muslim persecutors. See Robert the Monk, Robert the Monk’s History of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitania. Trans. Carol Sweetenham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 79-81. See also Peter Frankopan, The First Crusade: The Call from the East (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), 87-94. Frankopan convincingly argues that such accounts orginated with the Byzantine Emperor Alexios’ propaganda and were not an invention of Pope Urban II. Moreover, these reports of Christian suffering at the hand of the Seljuqs are confirmed in Muslim sources.
other leading crusades historians have argued, many Christian knights, although still only a minority of their class, worried about the state of their souls after a lifetime of living according to the sinful standards associated with secular knighthood and initially responded enthusiastically to the cause.³²

With the First Crusade, clerical authorities embraced the idea that Christians could fight in divinely approved wars, but they subsequently argued for the necessity of a new type of warrior to take part in such ventures on a more long-term basis. Put simply, holy wars needed to be fought by holy warriors if they were to be successful. This view was based on the theoretical reasoning that holy wars were won only with God’s support.³³ While God might support the cause, God also had to approve of the men who represented Him on the holy war battlefield. To do so, they had to be pleasing to God in terms of their commitment to personal holiness both on and off the battlefield. In other words, sinners could not effectively fight holy wars. Not only did sins result in defeat on the battlefield, but if they were killed under such conditions, they faced eternal damnation.³⁴ Thus crusaders were thus required to take the equivalent of pilgrimage vows intended to govern their behavior in a way that significantly differed from the

³² In addition to numerous works by Jonathan Riley-Smith already referenced in this chapter, see also, for example, Marcus Bull, Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade: The Limousin and Gascony, c. 970-c. 1130. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 165-166, and Marcus Bull, “The Roots of Lay Enthusiasm for the First Crusade,” in The Crusades: The Essential Readings, ed. Thomas Madden (Malden, Ma.: Blackwell, 2002), 189-190. For a more detailed analysis of this subject, see Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

³³ See, for example, clerical accounts of the events of the Battle of Antioch during the First Crusade as considered in Chapter 5, or St. Bernard of Clairvaux’s arguments in Chapter 6 that the Templars did not need large numbers to win on the battlefield so long as they had God’s support.

³⁴ The cleric Guibert of Nogent, for example, noted in his account of Pope Urban II’s preaching of the First Crusade that the pope warned his listeners that previously they had “waged wrongful wars” for which they “deserved only eternal death and damnation.” Guibert of Nogent, The Deeds of God Through the Franks: Gesta Dei Per Francos. (trans) Robert Levine, (Suffolk: 1997), 38, 43.
typical standards by which knights of the era judged and established their manly identities. Indeed, according to the clergy, the only type of warrior who could be successful on the holy war battlefield was a chaste and humble knight, who abandoned the sins of arrogance and lust that were typically associated with his class and were representative of some key standards by which knights often judged the manhood of other knights.

While such thinking may seem like a clear and logical extension of clerical assumptions about personal holiness and warfare, what is less clear is how the popularization of such thinking about the nature of Christian fighting men challenged long established identities of knights as men in secular society. As a result, this dissertation will consider how clerical efforts to reform the knightly class during this period presented a challenge to the existing warrior masculine hierarchy. While only a small percentage of Europe’s knightly class ever embraced the reformed Christian warrior ideal as presented by the clergy, continuing to live instead by the secular standards of manly behavior associated with their class, I will argue that the clergy nevertheless oversaw the creation and institutionalization of an alternative model of Christian warrior masculine identity through the promotion and appeal of the First Crusade and the subsequent establishment of the Knights Templar.

While modern historians have long identified the existence of multiple masculine identities in the Middle Ages, including, for example, the monasticized cleric, the merchant, and, of course, the knight himself, the crusader or his Templar successors, have never been identified among the current prevailing scholarly hierarchy of medieval

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35 For an overview of the evolution of the crusading vow, and its relationship to the pilgrimage vow, see Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader*, 30-65.
masculine identities. In contrast, I will argue that the crusader represented a unique hybrid masculine identity that drew from the traits typically associated with the secular knight, as he was expected to demonstrate courage and prowess on the battlefield, and the monk or monasticized cleric, beholden to vows of chastity and humility meant to insure his personal holiness. Thus the crusader ideal that emerged during the era of the First Crusade, which would reach its fullest expression with the emergence of the Knights Templar, represented a powerful form of masculine expression worthy of recognition and inclusion in the hierarchy of medieval masculine identities that has thus far not been identified and commonly accepted by modern scholars of medieval gender history.

The Challenge of Reforming the Knightly Class

Moreover, in addition to giving a place to crusader masculinity, as institutionalized in the form of the Templar order, in the gender hierarchy of the era, this dissertation will contribute to our understanding of the period by highlighting the extraordinary challenges the Church faced not only in reforming clerical behavior according to ecclesiastical masculine ideals, but especially selected members of the laity. Although medieval ecclesiastical authorities energetically promoted alternative models of manhood for the laity, few laymen were ever willing to embrace those models. This is perhaps best reflected in the often-limited lay aristocratic response to ecclesiastical institutional efforts such as the Peace and Truce of God movement and the limited effectiveness of any long-term reform derived from the pilgrimage framework of the First Crusade. Certainly, as this dissertation will show, some knights responded favorably to ecclesiastical reform efforts, but most did not. The Peace and Truce of God movements did not bring about the type of widespread reform of the knightly class that
ecclesiastical authorities had hoped for, nor did the pilgrimage framework of the First Crusade have a lasting effect on the small minority of Europe’s knights who took part in it, as their vows were only temporary and many former crusaders returned to lives the clergy viewed as sinful (based on lay models of masculinity) when (or even before) the crusade was over.

As this dissertation will show, the evolution of ecclesiastical efforts to reform the knightly class finally found its fullest expression in the founding of the Templars during the twelfth century. But the model of the Templars and the later military orders they inspired, calling on aristocratic knights to give up all they owned and commit themselves to a life of chastity, was a model that would only appeal to a small percentage of Europe’s knights. Just as traditional monks and chaste clerics, representing only a small percentage of Christendom’s total population, were considered exemplars of Christian ideals, which most lay Christians could never imitate, the Templars served in the same capacity, as exemplars of the ecclesiastically conceived knightly ideal that most lay knights would never aspire to fully either. Thus, in this sense, the ecclesiastically-conceived hybrid gender identity of the Templars, that was formed over the course of centuries and promoted among Europe’s knightly class in the High Middle Ages, can also be seen as a concession that most knights would never fully achieve this standard. Leading clerics like Bernard of Clairvaux could nonetheless console themselves that at least the Templars lived up to their desire for a warrior class that embodied a form of masculinity that might wield some influence over the institution of knighthood more generally during the High Middle Ages.
Organization

Crusades-era clerical views of proper Christian masculinity did not emerge in a vacuum. Instead, they were fundamentally influenced and shaped by texts and traditions that emerged in the ancient and early medieval Christian worlds. Consequently, Chapter 2 of this dissertation considers how Christian beliefs that developed during the first through fifth centuries provided the basis for a unique understanding of masculinity often at odds with typical Roman masculine ideals. Such beliefs are reflected in authoritative New Testament era writings and patristic commentaries, as well as hagiographical examples of ancient holy men ranging from Jesus to St. Martin of Tours. Through a careful examination of such texts, Chapter 2 considers the development of Christian masculine ideals in this era.36

Among the specific issues considered in Chapter 2 are the efforts on the part of ancient Christian holy men to reach an “ideal of manliness” through strict adherence to ascetic holy ideals.37 Unsurprisingly, many early Christian authors believed this was best represented in the figure of the late antique monk.38 As a result, this chapter will consider the emerging popularity of early monasticism and how monks set themselves apart from society at large in terms of their bodies, dress, hair, chastity, personal humility, courage, and devotion to God. Indeed, it was by these standards that ancient Christian authorities judged the manliness of Christian men. Roman men, for example,

36 Bernard of Clairvaux, for example, as considered in Chapter 6 of this dissertation, cites St. Paul (1 Cor. 11:14) in his condemnation of long haired knights in the twelfth century. See Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 138-40.

37 See Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 115. On the monastic model as representative of a “new masculine ideal” for Christian men see also pages 287, 292, 296, etc… See also Virginia Burrus, Begotten, Not Made: Conceiving Manhood in Late Antiquity (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2000), 5-6.

38 Brakke, Demons and the Making of the Monk, 182-183.
often defined their manhood according to their sexual subordination of women, their abilities to commit physical violence, and their ostentatious dress. In contrast, Christian authorities condemned Roman masculine norms and instead promoted a monastic masculine ideal that called for chastity, spiritual (rather than physical) strength, and humble dress and demeanor.

Chapter 3 considers the evolution of clerical views of Christian masculinity during the transitional period from the decline of the Roman Empire in the West through the Gregorian Reform of the eleventh-century. In particular, this chapter considers the effects of clerical reform throughout the Middle Ages on perceptions of Christian masculinity. During these centuries, the monk still represented for clerics a distinct form of ascetic Christian masculine identity, based on ideals born in the ancient and late antique Christian world. However, the medieval monk’s place at the top of the Christian masculine hierarchy as a chaste and obedient exemplar of Christian virtue was not assured as married priests, who had not renounced their sexuality, and fighting bishops, who were as willing to shed blood as any layman, coexisted alongside the medieval monk and represented competing and sometimes popular alternative clerical masculine identities.\(^39\) Indeed, as Conrad Leyser has noted, ascetic notions of masculinity as represented by monks were only part of a broader “fiercely competitive culture” that emerged in the early Middle Ages and sought to win the respect and obedience of other

\(^{39}\) That early medieval monks were still inspired by the late antique ascetic ideals is confirmed by the efforts of Jonas of Bobbio, for example, who still drew from late-antique ideals considered in Chapter 2 to construct and promote an idealized vision of monastic holy men like Columbanus in his own time. See Albrecht Diem, “Monks, Kings, and the Transformation of Sanctity: Jonas of Bobbio and the End of the Holy Man,” *Speculum* 82 (2007), 523-524.
men.\textsuperscript{40} As Chapter 3 will show, it was not until the era of the Gregorian Reform that priests were only finally effectively “monasticized” and the so-called “victory of monasticism” was achieved institutionally and culturally.\textsuperscript{41}

For the Carolingian era, ecclesiastical reform efforts focused on the monasteries and the need for purity, which was associated with greater spiritual authority and effectiveness.\textsuperscript{42} If a monk was known for an exceptional degree of purity, and therefore holiness, then that monk’s message and/or example was more influential and respected than other Christians who were not considered to have achieved as high a level of purity. Because monks adhered to the highest level of ascetic practices, they were generally considered to be exemplars of personal holiness in Carolingian society and so reform efforts focused on the maintenance or restoration of purity in the monasteries. Due to such reform efforts, Carolingian monks understood their ability to avoid sins related to sex and violence as major markers of what scholars have referred to as “monastic masculinity,” which was defined according to a monk’s adherence to the \textit{Benedictine Rule}.\textsuperscript{43}


\textsuperscript{41} Scholars have long presented the Gregorian Reform as representing the “victory of monasticism” over the secular clergy. See, for example, William Francis Berry, \textit{The Papal Monarchy: From St. Gregory the Great to Boniface VIII, 590-1303} (New York: Putnam, 1902), 193. More recently, see also, \textit{Chapter 8: The Victory of Monasticism in the West} in Raymond J. Lawerence Jr., \textit{Sexual Liberation: The Scandal of Christendom} (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2007), 45-50.

\textsuperscript{42} Rachel Stone, “‘In what way can those who have left the world be distinguished?’: Masculinity and the Difference Between Carolingian Men,” in \textit{Intersections of Gender, Religion and Ethnicity in the Middle Ages}, eds. Cordelia Beattie and Kristen A. Fenton (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011), 19.

\textsuperscript{43} This chapter highlights how monastic rules provide gender historians with excellent sources for understanding the behavioral ideals for Christian monks during this period. See Lynda L. Coon, \textit{Dark Age Bodies: Gender and Monastic Practice in the Early Medieval West} (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 73-79 and Marilyn Dunn, \textit{The Emergence of Monasticism: From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages} (Malden, Ma.: Blackwell, 2000), 82-138. On early medieval monastic
Yet while monasteries were reformed in the Carolingian era, comparatively little effort was made to reform secular priests, who often refused to give up the benefits of marriage or concubinage. Thus, as Chapter 3 will show, in the wake of the Carolingian decline of the ninth-century chaste monks and often-married priests continued to define their manhood according to different standards. It was not until the tenth century that the monks at Cluny emerged as leaders of a reform movement that would eventually culminate in the Gregorian Reform of the late eleventh century. It was during this time that advocates of clerical celibacy would finally, as historians have claimed, find success in their efforts to “monasticize” the clergy.44

Chapter 4 examines the broader impact of religious reform on society in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Specifically, this chapter focuses on how secular knights defined their masculinity according to their own worldly standards and the efforts of the recently reformed clergy to extend their reforms to the knightly class. While the clergy aggressively tried to align the behavior of knights with monastic ideals, by condemning their arrogance, flamboyance, reckless bloodshed, and lack of chastity, the problem they faced was that such behaviors were central to the way knights defined themselves as men to other knights. So while some pious knights embraced clerical calls for reform masculinity being defined according one’s adherence to the Benedictine Rule, see Coon, Dark Ages Bodies, 55.

44 The term “monasticize” has been used by various scholars to describe clerical reform efforts during the Gregorian Reform. See, for example, Giles Constable, The Reformation of the Twelfth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 6; Murray, Masculinizing Religious Life, 25; Ruth Mazo Karras, “Thomas Aquinas’s Chastity Belt,” in Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives, eds. Lisa M. Bitel and Felice Lifshitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 54; Raymond J. Lawerence Jr., Sexual Liberation: The Scandal of Christendom (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2007), 48-49; and Jennifer D. Thibodeaux, ‘Man of the Church, or Man of the Village? Gender and the Parish Clergy in Medieval Normandy,’ Gender and History 18:2 (August, 2006): 383. This heightened clash of competing monastic and secular ideals during the Gregorian Reform resulted in what one historian has described as a “masculine identity crisis” among the clergy. See McNamara, “The Herrenfrage,” 3.
and the penance of pilgrimage to atone for their sins, the vast majority seems to have had little desire to change. Indeed, while some knights may have been concerned about the status of their souls as a consequence of the traditional behaviors by which they define themselves as men, the reforms advocated by the clergy could damage a knight’s manly reputation and thereby threaten his status in the highly competitive world of the aristocratic elite.

Chapter 5 examines the ways in which the clergy used the First Crusade as a vehicle by which they could more effectively attempt to reform knights, or at least those knights who participated in the First Crusade. In doing so, this dissertation argues that the clergy promoted an alternative model of knightly masculinity based on a synthesis of traditional ascetic and lay warrior ideals whereby crusading knights could abandon many of the old behaviors by which they defined themselves as men, yet still maintain their masculine reputations as warriors.

The participation of thousands of knights in the First Crusade, which the clergy used as a vehicle for their reform, suggests (at least) a limited degree of success for the clergy in their efforts to reform (at least) some knights. Indeed, in contrast to once popular assumptions about selfish or economic motivations of the crusaders, a small but highly influential community of crusades historians has convincingly argued that rather than being motivated only by greed in one form or another, the sources suggest that many of the earliest crusaders were instead, motivated by pious reasons, often seeking to redeem themselves from a life of sin. As a result, when spiritual authorities presented the First Crusade in the context of an armed pilgrimage, those who took up

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45 In particular, the various works of Jonathan Riley-Smith and Marcus Bull.
the cross did so seeking to conform their lives and behavior more in line with the 
expectations of the clergy and confirmed their willingness to do so through the voluntary 
taking of a vow committing themselves to personal holiness.

Such reforms had significant implications for knightly masculinity as they led to 
the creation of an alternative model of warrior identity in which the knight who embraced 
such reforms carried himself in a wholly different way than had been the norm among 
the knightly class up to this point. This model, humble, chaste, and obedient to 
ecclesiastical authority, represented a theoretical, but direct, challenge to the way 
knights had defined themselves as men up until this point. Yet while the First Crusade 
had provided a vehicle for the establishment and promotion of an alternative model of 
warrior identity, it provided only a limited means of enforcing it, as many knights did not 
live up to their vows during the course of the crusade, or returned to their old ways once 
the crusade ended and their temporary vows had been fulfilled.

Chapter 6 deals with the emergence of the Knights Templar in the wake of the 
First Crusade and how they represented an attempt to make more permanent the 
crusader model established during the First Crusade. While the taking of vows 
committed the crusader to the reform of his life until he redeemed his vows, a process 
that could last years, it was nevertheless only a temporary vow. In contrast, those early 
knights who became Templars took permanent vows, like monks, rather than the 
temporary vows associated with pilgrims. Consequently, the Templars, heavily 
promoted and encouraged by Bernard of Clairvaux, perhaps the dominant religious 
voice of the twelfth century, represented the final step in the evolution and
institutionalization of the new masculine warrior identity first theorized by clerics during the era of the First Crusade.

Moreover, with the formation of the Templars, ecclesiastical reformers in the era of the Gregorian Reform seemed to be acknowledging that, for all their historic efforts to reform warriors, most knights would never embrace the clerical ideal of masculinity. Thus, the promotion of the Templar model of knighthood by ecclesiastical authorities, as a small and relatively exclusive group, represented a concession that originally larger ambitions to reform the broader knightly class simply could not be achieved on any broad scale. With the formation and existence of the Templars, at least a small group of knights could fulfill and represent the ecclesiastical ideal of warrior masculinity that emerged during the First Crusade.
Although this dissertation examines the efforts of the clergy to redefine warrior masculinity in the crusading era, this chapter recognizes how such efforts did not emerge in a vacuum and considers the early Christian basis for such reforms. The monastic ideals of Late Antiquity, which collectively amounted to what scholars have described as a “new” Christian masculine “ideal,” were so powerfully constructed and rationalized that they maintained their influence throughout the early Middle Ages and well into the high Middle Ages.¹ These representations of an idealized form of early Christian masculinity deeply influenced how later medieval clerics of the eleventh and twelfth centuries would construct a similar ideal in their own times, representing the “victory of monasticism” over the secular clergy during the era of the Gregorian Reform.² Consequently, any study of medieval images of Christian masculinity should be firmly rooted in ancient understandings of the same. Accordingly, this chapter will trace how early Christian authors promoted an ascetic ideal that influenced later Christian masculinity.

¹ For a survey of the scholarship on monastic ideals as a “new” Christian masculine “ideal,” see Mathew Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch: Masculinity, Gender Ambiguity and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 115, 287, 290, 292, and 296. See also, for example, David Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006), 182, 183. Such an ideal, once established, was subject to several challenges and modifications. In fact, the ascetic ideal was never normative, but instead represented a goal or ideal, promoted by influential Christian authorities, which all Christian men, particularly the clergy, were expected to emulate. See Chapter 3 for a more detailed examination of the evolution and transmission of the monastic ideal during the Middle Ages and its implications for early medieval Christian masculinity.

² Scholars have long presented the Gregorian Reform as representing the “victory of monasticism” over the secular clergy. See, for example, William Francis Berry, *The Papal Monarchy: From St. Gregory the Great to Boniface VIII, 590-1303* (New York: Putnam, 1902), 193. More recently, see also, Chapter 8: The Victory of Monasticism in the West in Raymond J. Lawerence Jr., *Sexual Liberation: The Scandal of Christendom* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2007), 45-50.
concepts of manhood. In doing so, it will help us, in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this dissertation, reach a greater understanding of how reform-minded clerics in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, many of whom were influenced by the surviving works of early Christian authors considered here, formulated their own understandings of proper Christian masculinity.

**Scholars and Early Christian Masculinity**

A number of recent scholarly books have considered why early Christian masculine ideals ultimately became so influential with both Christian and Roman men before or during the fourth century. Prior to the fourth century, Roman men and Christian men had defined masculinity in significantly different ways. Roman men, for example, had demonstrated their masculinity through military service and sexual activity, whereas, in contrast, influential Christian leaders had advocated sexual renunciation and rejected bloodshed. Yet during the fourth century, an increasing number of Roman men embraced Christianity and with it a new type of masculine expression.

Virginia Burrus argues that fourth-century Trinitarian debates led to a redefinition of Christian manhood that appealed to Roman men. Through an analysis of the works of Athanasius of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa and Ambrose of Milan, she maintains that the clear and unequivocal “confession of the full and equal divinity of Father, Son, and Spirit became for the first time the *sine qua non* of doctrinal orthodoxy” and resulted

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3 Thus, the goal of this chapter, in particular, is not to provide a new argument, as historians have already thoroughly considered the issues here, but rather to consider what we already know about the key masculine elements that made up the influential late antique Christian masculine ideal.

in the emergence of a new style of masculinity that "heightened the claims of patriarchal authority while also cutting manhood loose from its traditional fleshly and familial moorings."\(^5\) This new masculine identity promoted "a radically transcendent ideal" that replaced classical Roman ideals of civic manhood, which had been under threat with the decline of the Empire, with the Christian ascetic model of chaste spiritual fathers who fight for God’s truth.\(^6\)

Mathew Kuefler, on the other hand, points out that the “demilitarization” of the Roman elite and the decline of the legal power of the *paterfamilias* during the fourth century hampered the Roman elite male’s ability to demonstrate his sexual dominance.\(^7\) According to Kuefler, Christian notions of masculinity offered a chaste alternative masculine identity that elite Roman men, who were increasingly unable to demonstrate their masculinity on the battlefield or in the bedroom, could embrace without hindrance in the role of bishop.\(^8\) Thus the Roman man could become “a manly eunuch” by abandoning the increasingly unobtainable markers of traditional Roman masculinity in exchange for a “new masculine ideal.”\(^9\)

In investigating these issues, Burrus and Kuefler, among others considered in here, had to carefully examine how early Christian masculinity was constructed in an effort to understand its appeal to both Christian and Roman men. They, along with others, concluded that a specific form of Christian masculinity, defined by the various


\(^7\) Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, see pages 37-69 on demilitarization and pages 70-102 on the decline of the *paterfamilias*.


ascetic ideals of the emerging late antique monastic community, represented a new and appealing model of Christian masculinity. According to Kuefler, the monastic model was an “ideal of manliness” that came to be viewed by influential early Christian authors as an image of “masculine perfection” by which others could be judged. Similarly, David Brakke has argued that the monk represented a new form of Christian manliness and that monastic life represented a “meticulously cultivated version of manhood.”

Burrus, as well, has noted how, through the adoption of dominant fourth-century ascetic markers of Christian masculinity, late antique Christians created an “ideal of manhood,” which represented a “hypertranscendent masculinity.” In these cases, all of these scholars are referring to a mode of Christian masculinity based on ascetic ideals associated with Christian monks.

Consequently, in an effort to better understand the standard by which early Christians measured their manhood, a careful examination of the elements that made up the monastic ideal of the early Church are the focus of the remainder of this chapter. Some of the key elements of the early Christian monastic ideal, including sexual renunciation, humility, and the view of monks as spiritual holy warriors, remained integral to monastic identity until at least the Gregorian Reform. Moreover, such an ideal

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10 Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 115. On the monastic model as representative of a “new masculine ideal” for Christian men see also pages 287, 292, 296, etc… On the monastic model of masculinity representing “masculine perfection,” see Kuefler’s examination of the views of Jerome with regard to the former Roman emperor Nepotian on pages 289-290. Although Nepotian had been a good man he had not made “the final step toward masculine perfection, in Jerome’s eyes, because he had not become a monk.”


12 Burrus, *Begotten, Not Made*, 5-6. Burrus notes that Christian masculinity, through its adoption of characteristics traditionally marked as “feminine” to Roman men, such as virginal modesty, withdraw from the world, and the reluctance to compete (militarily, politically, or socially), all markers of monastic masculinity, are what made the Christian masculine alternative so appealing to Roman men during a time when so many of the traditional avenues for Roman masculine expression were cut off from them.
had significant consequences for how the clergy in the eleventh and twelfth centuries would attempt to use their limited control over the crusading movement as a vehicle for the reform of the warrior class. In seeking to reform the arrogant and lustful warrior class, the medieval clergy presented a chaste and humble warrior alternative with characteristics that were in significant part drawn from early Christian works that are the focus of this chapter.

**Sexual Renunciation and Early Christian Masculinity**

In contrast to Roman societal norms of the time, which in significant part defined masculinity by sexual aggression and playing the active, rather than passive, role during sexual activity, early Christians rejected popular markers of masculine identity by pointing to Jesus as having never married and having remained continent throughout his life. That Jesus was celibate and abstinent is not surprising in light of the Jewish influenced environment from which he is believed to have emerged. Near the Dead Sea, large communities of abstinent ascetic males are known to have preached repentance to nearby cities in a way similar to their better known contemporary, John

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13 The transmission of monastic ideals into the Middle Ages, the effects of the Gregorian Reform on clerical masculine identity, and the effort to reform Europe’s warrior class in the high Middle Ages are each individually the focus of later chapters in this dissertation.

While Jesus never preached the abolition of marriage, his followers interpreted his view of the married life as a hindrance to the highest levels of spiritual commitment, as he called on his followers to abandon their families to follow him.\textsuperscript{16}

Paul of Tarsus more directly promoted the unmarried life as superior to the married life when, in his mid-first century letter to the Corinthians, he compared how the married and unmarried states affected the Christian’s ability to serve God. For Paul, the unmarried state offered clear advantages over the married life, as he first cited his own commitment to celibacy before praising the singular devotion of the unmarried man who was more focused on the “affairs of the Lord.”\textsuperscript{17} In contrast, the married man was “concerned about the affairs of the world—how he can please his wife—and his interests are divided.” Indeed, Paul explicitly noted that men who refrain from marriage do “better” than those who marry, thus establishing a powerful basis for later Christians to view the unmarried man as superior to the married man in spiritual matters.\textsuperscript{18}

\footnote{15}{See Burrus, \textit{Begotten, Not Made}, 90, for a brief examination of how patristic authors such as Gregory of Nyssa cited John the Baptist as a biblical model of Christian celibacy. She cites Gregory as noting, “It is my belief that they [the biblical examples of Elijah and John the Baptist] would not have reached to this loftiness of spirit, if marriage had softened them.”}

\footnote{16}{Brown, \textit{The Body and Society}, 40-42 See also \textit{The Gospel of Luke} 18:29. The author of the \textit{Gospel of Luke} notes that many “left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God.”}

\footnote{17}{See \textit{1 Corinthians} 7: 32-35. On Paul’s declaration of his celibacy see \textit{1 Corinthians} 7:8. See also Richard M. Price, “Celibacy and Free Love in Early Christianity,” \textit{Theology and Sexuality} 12:2 (2006): 123. Concerning Paul’s arguments in \textit{Corinthians} 7, Price notes, “…these arguments reflect major themes in his own [Paul’s] theology- the need for single minded devotion to Christ, the nearness of the end, the unimportance of worldly concerns and interests. It is indeed likely that the Corinthians had learnt their love of celibacy from Paul himself.”}

Early Christian writers certainly took notice of these biblical examples as they also adopted the belief that sexual renunciation, in all its forms, was superior to married life. The second-century Christian apologist Justin Martyr, in an effort to show how some early Christians avoided marriage altogether and lived in complete continence, describes how a young Christian man in Alexandria petitioned, unsuccessfully, the Roman Prefect for the right to castrate himself to prove to critics that sexual promiscuity was not a secret rite among Christians. While Justin's apparent approval of the young man's efforts is striking, especially in light of the fact that the early Church generally disapproved of the practice, there nevertheless remained some early Christian thinkers who saw either spiritual justifications for castration or practical reasons in eliminating all suspicion over the potential to engage in sexual activity. The influential Alexandrian theologian Origen (d.254), for example, is reported by Eusebius to have castrated himself on the basis of his reading of the Gospel of Matthew 19:12 to avoid the temptations of lust and to enable him to tutor women without suspicion. Thus Christian

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20 On the general disapproval of castration in the early Church, see Daniel F. Caner, “The Practice and Prohibition of Self Castration in Early Christianity.” Vigiliae Christianae 51:4 (1997): 396 and Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 249. On Christian opponents of castration who claimed the practice was unmasculine, see Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 263. On the reasoning of those who sometimes found the practice acceptable, also see Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 260. Kuefler notes, “Readers of Biblical texts in Late Antiquity…could turn to any number of passages that condemned eunuchs and castration as religious unorthodoxy and sin. But the same readers could turn to other passages that depicted eunuchs and castration as symbols of orthodoxy and devotion.”

21 See Eusebius, Church History, Book 6, Chapter 8. Matthew 19:12 describes “eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.”
sources suggest that castration, while otherwise condemned by the broader early Christian community, still represented a symbol of extreme chastity for at least some Christians who invested the eunuch with the virtue of sexual continence.22

Other Christians took a less drastic approach, but still embraced the importance of sexual renunciation as essential to obtain the highest levels of Christian spirituality. Influential early Christian authors such as Tertullian, Cyprian of Carthage, and Augustine, for example, all authored works that elevated chastity above married life.23 Indeed, the importance early Christian leaders attached to sexual renunciation as a means of achieving greater spirituality manifested itself officially in canon 33 of the Council of Elvira in Hispania in 306, which attempted, without success, to formally impose continence on members of the Spanish clergy, whether married or unmarried.24

Perhaps the most dynamic Christian advocates of sexual renunciation were the Desert Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries, through whom sexual abstinence became a pillar of the ascetic movement.25 The ascetic par excellence was undoubtedly the Egyptian saint Anthony (d.356), whose life was made known to the

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23 See, for example, Tertullian, On Exhortation to Chastity (c. 196), Cyprian, Of the Discipline and Advantage of Chastity (c. 250), Augustine, On Continence (c. 421).


broader Christian world through a popular biography by Athanasius of Alexandria, which was translated into Latin and helped spread monasticism both in the East and West.\(^{26}\) In Athanasius’s account, Anthony is dramatically depicted as wrestling with demons to overcome his sexual desires and his *Life* served as an inspiration for many ascetics, both in the East and West, who would similarly renounce their sexuality and embrace the life of a monk.\(^{27}\)

Although many in Roman society prized sexual activity as a significant marker of one’s manhood, Christians who renounced sex did not view themselves as lesser men. To the contrary, sexual renunciation became a sign of manly strength and only contributed to the esteem with which chaste men were held within the Christian community.\(^{28}\) This was because sexual renunciation by Christians was understood as rooted in struggle with sin, always requiring a manly battle of the will.\(^{29}\) Even more than Anthony, Augustine of Hippo, who was perhaps the most influential Christian authority


\(^{28}\) Roman society would not have uniformly viewed a Christian male’s chastity with derision. Indeed, Stoic philosophical ideals held much in common with Christian ideals of chastity. The Stoic view of sexuality as called for restraint from sexual activity so much as it represents indulging in one’s passions. This was because passions represented undesirable impulses that led to “uncontrolled and unreflective actions, damage one’s well being, and conflict with human nature.” See K.L. Gaca, “Early Stoic Eros: The Sexual Ethics of Zeno and Chrysippus and their Evaluation of the Greek Erotic Tradition.” in *Aperion* 33 (2000): 207-238.

\(^{29}\) Ruth Mazzo Karras, “Thomas Aquinas’s Chastity Belt: Clerical Masculinity in Medieval Europe,” in *Gender & Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives*, eds. Lisa M. Bitel & Felice Lifshitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 56. See also Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 174. Kuefler notes, “…chastity was resistance to sin, a refusal to succumb to the weakness of temptation that had banished Adam and Eve from Paradise. The association of sexual renunciation with steadfastness and strength, in turn, helped to give it a masculine flavor and appeal.”
of Late Antiquity, became associated with the spiritual struggle against sexual desire. As one scholar has noted, his deeply personal *Confessions* are “…couched in metaphors of masculinity and focused upon powerful action, decisive strength, and honorable fighting.” Indeed, Augustine’s vision of Christian manhood is one that emphasizes his well-known struggle against sexual desire through physical warfare between the spirit and the flesh. To win a victory over the flesh was to express one’s masculinity in unmistakable ways for many Christians in Augustine’s era, as right moral action was deemed the essence of Christian masculinity. Conversely, moral weakness, as represented in one’s inability to overcome the desires of the flesh, was considered a characteristic of women.

**The Male Body and Christian Masculinity**

Because victory in the struggle over lust was considered a marker of Christian masculinity, so also were the tools that contributed to that victory including the widespread act of fasting. Tertullian, for example, claimed that a lack of fasting led to thoughts of lust, which then threatened one’s ability to remain chaste. In this, Tertullian was expressing a widely held view, based on Greek medical theory, that one could overcome or avoid lustful thoughts by eating less or avoiding certain foods. According

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33 Brown, *Body and Society*, 78. Christian women who embraced chastity were understood to have reached gender parity by being transformed into men, for which they were often admired. Dyan Elliot, “Tertullian, the Angelic Life, and the Bride of Christ,” *Gender and Christianity in the Medieval World: New Perspectives*, eds. Lisa M. Bitel & Felice Lifshitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 16.

34 Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism*, 16.
to this theory, the body was thought to have four humors, blood, black bile, yellow bile and phlegm, which then produced humors such as semen. Ideally, under these circumstances, the body would be kept dry, which would prevent it from producing semen. To keep the body dry one had to avoid meat, for example, which was seen as a primary cause of moist humors and, as a result, was banned from the monastic diet altogether.\textsuperscript{35} In addition to avoiding certain foods, a Christian man also made himself more susceptible to sin if overeating, and activity resulting in a surplus of energy that showed itself in the sexual urge.\textsuperscript{36}

Although excessive fasting might weaken the body, early Christians understood it as strengthening the spirit through obedience to God. Indeed, New Testament texts provide many examples of Jesus and the apostles fasting to please God, to atone for sins or to insure success in various spiritual ventures. Consider the well known example of Jesus who fasted for forty days in the desert (Matthew 4:2), or how the apostles are depicted as fasting before appointing elders and laying on hands (Acts 13:3, 14:23). Moreover, early Christians came to believe that the first sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden, as described in \textit{Genesis}, was not one of sexual misconduct, but rather their lust for physical food, which led to their disobedience from God. Irenaeus, for example, the second century bishop of Lyon, wrote, “by means of our first parents [Adam and Eve], we were all brought into bondage” and “made subject to death.” He explained that

\textsuperscript{35} Dunn, \textit{The Emergence of Monasticism},16-17.

this was because Adam and Eve “ate in disobedience.” Tertullian likewise argued, “Man was condemned to death for tasting the fruit of one poor tree.” As a result, when Christians fasted, they understood themselves as undoing a little bit of the damage caused by Adam and Eve’s disobedience.

Fasting also prevented obesity, an outward marker of femininity in both the Roman and Christian worlds of antiquity. The ideal man was hard bodied, rather than fat, unlike women who were considered to be soft, an exclusive attribute of femininity. It would have been unseemly to be obese for Christian men who were warned to avoid any mark of effeminacy on their faces or bodies. Obesity also hinted at the sins of gluttony and excess, which handicapped the spiritual strength of Christians and suggested weakness in their spiritual struggles to overcome immorality. The Desert Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries—representative of the monastic ideal—are never depicted as obese or fat. In Athanasius’s *Life of Anthony*, for example, those who came to see Anthony “wondered at his sight” because Anthony was “neither fat, like a man without exercise,” nor “too lean from fasting and striving with the demons.”

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42 Athanasius, *Select Works and Letters*, 200. Virginia Burrus interprets Anthony’s physical balance, as “neither fat...nor lean” as understood to have resulted from his recovery of the “paradisiacal condition of a humanity whose nature has been stabilized through the grace of participation in the Logos.” See Burrus, *Begotten, Not Made*, 73.
contrast to depictions of Anthony as neither too fat nor too lean, Basil of Caesarea presented a different bodily image of the ascetic as characterized by emaciation and paleness. According to Basil, such a state demonstrated that the Christian was an “athlete of God’s commandments” who spiritually overcame his enemy “by the weakness of his body.” Thus according to Basil, although physically weakened, the emaciated Christian was spiritually fortified on account of his sufferings and deprivations.

**Hair, Clothing, and Masculinity in Early Christianity**

Many early Christian commentators worried about the effeminization of Christian men on issues related to hair and clothing. Their concerns were primarily over the abilities of men, who had adopted hair and clothing styles that were perceived as feminine, to remain strong in an age of persecution. Tertullian, for example, worried that the Christian man who had lost the visible signs of manliness would fail when the virtue of his manhood was challenged by the threat of martyrdom. Thus, for many early Christian writers, it was important to promote a standard of masculine dress and hair that would, in their view, contribute to the manly resolve with which Christian men faced the physical and spiritual dangers of the world.

Concerns over Christians maintaining appropriate male hairstyles began as early as the era of the New Testament. Although some Old Testament texts had encouraged the growth of longer hair for men in some cases, Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians...

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45 Sterk, *Renouncing the World*, 52.

specifically prohibited long hair, noting that “…if a man grows his hair long, it is a dishonor to him.”

Paul’s condemnation was referenced well into Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages by Christian authors who sought to discourage men from growing their hair long because it was viewed as a sign of femininity. Indeed, Paul explicitly associated long hair with femininity observing that, in sharp contrast to men dishonoring themselves with long hair, long hair was a woman’s “glory.”

Paul’s views on hair may have influenced many later Christian authors who also saw the maintenance of long or non-traditional hair styles to be unbecoming of a man. Clement of Alexandria, for example, the early third century head of the noted Catechetical School of Alexandria and the teacher of Origen, also emphasized the distinction between men and women concerning hair, noting it was “womanly” for a man to comb himself “for the sake of fine effect and to arrange his hair at the mirror, shave his cheeks, pluck hairs out of them, and smooth them!” Clement objected because “God wished women to be smooth and to rejoice in their locks alone growing spontaneously, as a horse in his mane.” As for men, Clement noted, “But He has adorned man, like the lions, with a beard, and endowed him as an attribute of manhood, with a hairy chest, a

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47 See 1 Corinthians 11:14, Judges 13:5 and Numbers 6:5. Paul's concerns of hair may also have reflected Roman influence. Paul was a Roman citizen and Roman authors of the first century wrote of short hair as a distinctly masculine trait. See Bernadette J. Brooten, Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 52.


49 I Corinthians 11:14.

50 Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 225.
sign of strength and rule.” Indeed, the early fourth-century Christian apologist Arnobius lashed out against men who did not maintain such distinctions and instead feminized their appearance by curling their hair and shaving their bodies. He complained that although “in the forms of men,” they “…curl their hair with crisping-pins, to make the skin of the body smooth, to walk with bare knees.” In doing so, Arnobius argued, they “lay aside the strength of their manhood to grow in effeminacy to a woman’s habits.” One may also consider Prudentius’ fourth century account of the life and conversion of Cyprian of Carthage. Prudentius writes of a physical transformation that happens to Cyprian as a result of his conversion, in which his long hair, elegant style, and softness of skin were replaced by short hair and an austere look when he became a Christian.

The concern of these writers was not only that this type of effeminate behavior gave

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51 Clement of Alexandria, *The Instructor*, 275. The emphasis on hairiness for men and smoothness for women was not solely a Christian concept. Since at least the first century, Roman philosophers had written of hairiness as a natural distinction between men and women. See Brooten, *Love Between Women*, 276-277.


men the appearance and mannerisms of women, but that such behavior could also soften their moral resolve in times of crisis.\textsuperscript{54}

The beard also served as a sign of manhood in the early Christian community as the ability to grow facial hair separated men from boys.\textsuperscript{55} Additionally, many influential early Church fathers promoted the beard as a sign of Christian manhood. Clement of Alexandria, for example, noted that the beard was a sign of man’s superior nature while Lactantius held that the beard contributed to the “beauty of manliness and strength.”\textsuperscript{56}

Indeed, eunuchs, who by means of their castration had lost the ability to grow facial hair, were no longer recognizable as men in the Christian community.\textsuperscript{57}

Early Christian masculine ideals also extended to clothing and appearance, which provided for sharp distinctions to differentiate early Christians from non-

Christians.\textsuperscript{58} In the first and second centuries the toga clearly marked the Roman male citizen from the non-citizen. Early Christian men also used dress as a marker by favoring much simpler garments like the \textit{pallium}, a rectangular cloak associated with philosophers, and simply thrown over the body in contrast to the much more complicated stylish folding of the toga. Indeed, Tertullian argued that the cumbersome toga was not suited to the simpler and humbler life of the Christian man and asserted it

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\textsuperscript{54} Kuefler, \textit{The Manly Eunuch}, 218-219. Kuefler notes, “Such effeminate behavior not only gave men the appearance and mannerisms of women… but it also softened their moral complexions along with their physical complexions…the Christian man who had lost his manliness could not but fail when his virtue was tested by the threat of martyrdom.”

\textsuperscript{55} Bartlett, “Symbolic Meanings of Hair,” 43.


\textsuperscript{57} Brown, \textit{Body and Society}, 169.

\textsuperscript{58} Harlow, “Clothes Maketh the Man,” 44.
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would be wrong for a Christian to wear a toga because of its association with the Roman civic and political world, which was the traditional domain of Roman men alone. The Romans would have viewed the Christian unwillingness to embrace Roman fashions as a sign of their inferiority. Indeed, the Roman phrase *a toga ad pallium* referred to the lowering of one’s social status, and this also held significant gendered implications for how Romans viewed Christian men. To Romans, the Roman way of doing things, including dress, defined masculinity, and anything that fell outside that definition was inferior and feminized. Thus non-Roman men, as well as Roman men who did not abide by Roman norms, were not seen as masculine and were often equated with women.

Regardless of Roman criticisms, early Christians defined their own standards of masculine dress with seemingly little concern about Roman opinion on what Christians, either men or women, should wear. To begin with, Jesus saw it as unimportant for his followers to maintain the fashions of their day as he reportedly told his followers on multiple occasions to have no concerns for their clothing. Paul of Tarsus echoed the lack of concern Jesus had for fashion by calling for Christians to dress plainly and modestly. This was particularly the case for Christian women, whom he called on to dress, “with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive

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60 Harlow, “Clothes Maketh the Man,” 47.


62 *Matthew*, 6:25. “...do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?” See also *Matthew* 6:28, “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.”
clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God."\(^{63}\)

Thus both Jesus and Paul called on Christians, men and women, to have no regard for Roman ideals of clothing, regardless of whether such ideals promoted a particularly masculine or feminine appearance according to Roman standards. Indeed, Roman standards of dress were supposed to be irrelevant for Christians, who were to forge their own standards of appropriate masculine and feminine dress.

In defining new Christian standards of dress, early Christian writers would have been familiar with the prohibition on men wearing women’s clothes as found in *Deuteronomy*.\(^{64}\) Clement of Alexandria, for example, reminded his readers of the prohibition on men wearing women’s clothing: “What reason is there in the Law’s prohibition against a man wearing woman’s clothing? Is it not that it would have us to be masculine and not to be effeminate in either person or actions?”\(^{65}\) Similarly, Tertullian argued on multiple occasions that, according to God’s law, men who wore women’s

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\(^{63}\) 1 *Timothy* 2:9-10. Paul’s views on feminine dress were reiterated by the author of the *First Epistle of Peter*, which advises Christian women that their beauty “…should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.” See 1 *Peter* 3: 3-4. The Christian aversion to immodest dress was further reinforced in the *Book of Revelation*, in which the “great harlot”, who is “Babylon the Great,” is described as wearing “…purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries.” See *Revelation*, 17: 1-5.

\(^{64}\) *Deuteronomy* 22:5.

clothes were cursed. Indeed, Christian men and women dressed in recognizably different ways as men were expected to wear rougher clothing than women and women were expected to cover more of their bodies to avoid engendering lust in men. Thus Christian men were to avoid feminine clothing mostly for the same reasons they avoided womanly hairstyles; to avoid becoming “effeminate in person or actions.” Yet the issue of men as a temptation to women was also a concern as were practical issues related to gendered dress. In Clement’s gendered distinctions on footwear, for example, he notes that a woman should “for the most part” wear shoes as it is not suitable for the foot to be shown naked and because woman is a “tender thing.” In contrast, Clement argues that men, presumably much more rugged than women, should go barefoot with the exception of when they are on military service.

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67 For the risks associated with women engendering lust in men see Matthew 5:28 and Paul’s efforts to address such concerns in 1 Timothy 2. Clement held men should wear rougher clothing than women. See Harlow, “The Impossible Art of Dressing to Please,” 542. See also Cyprian of Carthage, who emphasized the importance of modest dress for the maintenance of “continence and modesty.” See Cyprian of Carthage, On the Dress of Virgins, 431.

68 Clement of Alexandria, The Instructor, 267. Another possibility is that Clement sought to be obedient to what he may have interpreted as a biblical prohibition on Christ’s disciples wearing shoes as found in the Gospel of Matthew 10:10. John Cassian, however, has a much more ambiguous attitude towards shoes. He acknowledges the concerns of earlier Christian writers, such as Clement of Alexandria, but also makes allowances for the wearing of shoes under certain circumstances. For example, while Cassian cites the biblical prohibitions on the wearing of shoes on holy ground to argue that monks should be barefoot when they “celebrate or… receive the holy mysteries,” he is also willing to allow for the use of sandals “if bodily weakness or the morning cold in winter or the scorching heat of midday compels them.” See Cassian, Institutes, 204. On the biblical prohibitions on wearing shoes on holy ground see Exod. 3:5 and Josh. 5:16.
During the fourth century, a number of Christian writers also condemned the pagan Galli priests, who represented one of Christianity’s chief rivals. Christian condemnations focused on the perceived femininity of Galli men, allowing for clear gendered distinctions between Galli norms and Christian masculine ideals. According to the mid-fourth century Latin Christian writer Firmucus Maternus, Galli men were impure, polluted, and unchaste, and transgressed the boundaries of gender through their hair, dress, and mannerisms. Maternus condemned the Galli for their “effeminately nursed hair” and “soft clothes,” which he claimed made them “alien to masculinity.”

The fifth-century theologian John Cassian wrote about the appropriate dress for monks. He devoted much of his *Institutes of Coenobia* to the issue and attributed his views on the issue to the teachings of the early Fathers. In outlining the proper dress of monks, Cassian noted that “as a soldier of Christ ever ready for battle, [a monk] ought always to walk with his loins girded.” The ideal he pointed to for emulation was based on a biblical description of the prophet Elijah, who Cassian claimed could be “recognized without the slightest doubt” as a “man of God” by the “evidence of the girdle and the look of the hairy and unkempt body.” He much preferred the modest and practical functions of the monkish robe, noting it should be used to cover the body,

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70 Roscoe, “Priests of the Goddess,” 196. Roscoe points out how, in a similar way, Augustine of Hippo had condemned the Galli for their “dripping hair” and “painted faces” as well as their “flowing limbs and effeminate walk.”

71 John Cassian, “The Twelve Books of John Cassian of the Institutes of the Coenobia and the Remedies for the Eight Principle Faults,” in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. Second Series, Vol. 11*. Eds Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Grand Rapids, Mich.: WM. B. Eerdmans, 1978) 403-708. Cassian notes, “And, therefore, whatever models we see were not taught either by the saints of old who laid the foundations of the monastic life, or by the fathers of our own time who in their turn keep up at the present day their customs, these we also should reject as superfluous and useless.”
prevent nudity and protect from the elements. It should also be modest in appearance and “so far removed from this world's fashions as to remain altogether common property for the use of the servants of God.” Monks also might wear sheepskin or goat skin, which was meant to signify that they had “destroyed all wantonness of carnal passions.”

Monks also sometimes wore hair shirts for the purpose of self humbling and as a form of mortification to impede the passions. Indeed, at the time of Anthony’s death in the mid-fourth century, his biographer Athanasius claims that all he left behind to his fellow monks was a hair garment and two sheep skins, literally the clothes on his back.

**Humility and Early Christian Masculinity**

Unlike Roman emperors or military leaders, who boasted of their deeds, sometimes in massive celebratory triumphs and parades, Christians were to be humble about their victories, which were believed to have been granted to them by God. Thus Christians were not to be haughty about their own achievements, which were in fact God’s. To act otherwise would have been seen as unmanly, as early Christians viewed expressions of pride as a mark of effeminacy, with humility as the masculine alternative. Consequently, humility was a requirement for leaders in the Church as a

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72 Cassian, *Institutes*, 201-203.

73 Sterk, *Renouncing the World*, 52.


75 Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 121. After citing a passage on spiritual combat from Peter Chrysologus, Kuefler notes, “What is being fought here, of course- lust, love of money, wrath and pride- are the vices that were long held to make a man effeminate.”
candidate’s suitability for ecclesiastical office was judged by their degree of manliness, which was often dependent on their degree of humility.  

Christian views on humility originated with the Apostles, as demonstrated in New Testament texts, for whom the humility of Jesus is presented as an ideal for all Christians. Paul of Tarsus’s Epistle to the Philippians, for example, advises Christians to have the same attitude as Jesus, who “…made himself nothing” by being “found in appearance as a man” and then “humbled himself and became obedient to…death on a cross!” The virtue of humility also became an important means of establishing social harmony in the early Christian community. The Apostle Peter, for example, admonished “young men” to be submissive to older men because God opposed the proud, but gave grace to the humble, with pride understood by later patristic writers as a decidedly feminine trait and humility as its masculine counterpart. Moreover, the author of the Epistle to the Colossians notes that Christians were to “clothe” themselves with “humility” and such humility, particularly in the form of submission to the Church, became one of the means by which Christians in the patristic era evaluated the masculinity of Christian men.

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76 For a more comprehensive discussion of humility and its relationship to Christian notions of masculinity, see Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 147-160.

77 Philippians 2: 3-8.

78 1 Peter 5:5-6. See also Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 145. Kuefler points out how the mid-third century Bishop Cyprian of Carthage, who emphasized humility as a prerequisite for proper submission to the authority of the Church, similarly emphasizes how Jesus who in his obedience to the Father “humbled Himself on earth.”

79 Colossians 3:12. See also Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 142-45. In this section of his work linking humility with Christian masculinity, Kuefler notes, “Membership in the Church was nothing more than submission to its bishop…Disobedience of the bishop equaled disobedience of God himself.”
Clerical warnings about the importance of Christian humility in the era of the early Fathers extended to a host of issues. Ignatius of Antioch, for example, the early second-century bishop of Antioch, warned men who had embraced sexual abstinence to avoid boasting of their virtue, for “if he boasts, he is undone.”\(^\text{80}\) Tertullian, emphasizing the need for Christian humility, claimed he was “the lowest in that right of fellow-servant-ship and brotherhood.”\(^\text{81}\) Even the most popular and renowned holy men did not take credit for their achievements. Athanasius, for example, the author of the influential Life of Anthony, was careful to give credit for the monk’s victories over demons to God alone, who worked through Anthony, rather than to Anthony himself.\(^\text{82}\)

The accounts of the Desert Fathers are also rife with examples of them running away from unwanted followers in the hope of gaining a few more years of solitude before other imitators would come to join them. The motivation for such behavior was as much to safeguard their humility, which could be threatened by having a large crowd of admirers around, as it was to enjoy the spiritual benefits of solitude.\(^\text{83}\) Many imitators, for example, followed the Egyptian monk Amoun, when he settled on Mount Nitria in


\(^{82}\) Athanasius, Select Works and Letters, 197. Athanasius notes “This was Antony’s first struggle against the devil, or rather this victory was the Saviour’s work in Antony.”

Unable to discourage them, Amoun later retreated to another isolated site to the south and the process repeated itself. In a similar way, the desert monks, on account of their perceived virtue, came to be highly desired candidates, although often unwilling ones, for leadership roles in the Church, which would have required a level of engagement in ecclesiastical and worldly affairs that was the antithesis of the solitude they had sought in the desert.

The apparent resistance to positions of leadership or authority within the Church was related to Christian views of masculinity. The Christian flight from the world, particularly in the case of avoiding secular office, would have been seen as an abdication of political authority that was central to Roman definitions of masculine identity. Thus, on one hand, such flight represented an explicit rejection of Roman masculine ideals. On the other hand, the Christian unwillingness to seek ecclesiastical office upheld the highest Christian masculine ideals; as such humility was central to Christian notions of manliness and in determining a bishop or monastic superior’s suitability for a leadership role within the Church.

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84 Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism*, 13.
85 Sterk, *Renouncing the World*, 5-6, 18, 63.
87 On the connection between humility and suitability for office, see Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 151-153. On humility as a marker of a Christian official’s masculinity, see Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 147, 159-160. Consider also the mid-fourth century Cappadocian father Basil of Caesarea, for example, who emphasized the importance of humility for Christian monks. He argued that superiors of monastic communities should be characterized by selflessness and humility to be able to serve their communities in the same way as Christ, who although he was God, was “willing to be a servant of the earth and clay which he had made and fashioned into man.” See Sterk, *Renouncing the World*, 51, Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism*, 39.
Martial Rhetoric and Early Christian Masculinity

Perhaps most interestingly in the context of Christian masculinity, humility also offered a practical benefit to monks as a weapon with which they could engage in spiritual warfare against demons. According to Anthony’s biographer, Athanasius, for example, the desert saint once reportedly taught his followers not to fear demons because the virtues of a holy man could be used as a “great weapon” against them. He then listed a Christian’s “contempt for vainglory” and “humility” among those key virtues. Thus in combat, the most masculine of activities, humility was also a weapon by which the Christian as a type of spiritual combatant could decisively triumph on the spiritual battlefield.88

While prowess in physical warfare had served as an important, if not the ideal, means by which Roman men could express their masculinity in the first through fourth centuries, Christians during this era generally avoided military service and thus found themselves cut off from this avenue of masculine expression.89 This was due to the concerns many early Christian writers had about the compatibility of Christianity and

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88 Athanasius, *Life of Anthony*, Chapter 30. See also the fourth century Latin poet Prudentius’ *Peristephanon*, which provides accounts of martyrs using humility as a weapon against their persecutors.

89 On the Roman military embodying the Roman masculine ideal, see Jennings Jr. and Liew, *Mistaken Identities but Model Faith*, 475. Although Christians generally did not serve in the military during the first through fourth centuries, there appear to have been many notable exceptions. Tertullian, for example, in his *Apology*, noted that Christians served in the Roman navy and army and fought under Marcus Aurelius (c.170-180). See Tertullian, *Apology*, 49, 22. See Chapter 42 on Christians serving in the Roman military and Chapter 5 on Christians serving under Marcus Aurelius. On early Christian attitudes toward the permissibility of Christians serving in the military, Mathew Kuefler notes, “it is also possible to see a broad path in Christian attitudes-- both before and after the year 312—in which participation in war happened and was permitted and yet not encouraged.” See Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 108.
military life due to the sacrificial obligations of a soldier to the state and the sinful effects of warfare on the faithful.  

Although early Christian men did not embrace the physical battlefield as a means by which they might assert their masculinity, they did, however, assert their manhood on the spiritual battlefield as “soldiers of Christ.” Paul of Tarsus, for example, described Christian life through the language and imagery of warfare, the most masculine of pursuits, as a means of compensating for perceived deficiencies in his masculine identity as attributed to him by non-Christians. In his second letter to the Corinthians, for example, Paul noted, “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.” In another letter to the Ephesians, Paul explained, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms.” In this struggle, Paul advised Christians to put on the “armor of God,” the “helmet of salvation,” the “shield of faith” and arm themselves with the “sword of the spirit.” Thus while Paul and other Christians rejected the dominant Roman social markers of masculinity through their aversion to warfare, they nevertheless asserted their masculinity as spiritual warriors


91 Calvin J. Roetzel, “The Language of War 2 Cor. 10:1-6 and the Language of Weakness 2 Cor. 11:21b-13:10,” Biblical Interpretation 17 (2009): 79-81. Roetzel suggests that the mockery of Paul’s masculinity by his Corinthian opponents was the basis for his adoption of the use of martial rhetoric as a counter to his critics. On the continuance of such views among late antique Christians see Harlow, Clothes Maketh the Man, 44. “Manliness [in Late Antiquity] was expressed particularly in military and political virtues.” See also page 68, “The key signifiers of the successful upper class male remained the virility expressed in military service and the devotion to the state expressed in office holding.”

92 2 Corinthians 3-4.

93 Ephesians 6: 12-17.
who battled spiritual opponents that were far more dangerous than those found on any physical battlefield.

In addition to Paul, many other ancient Christian writers embraced the use of martial rhetoric to describe a Christian’s relation to sin and the world. Ignatius of Antioch, in an early second century letter to Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, adopted and expanded on Paul’s martial theme. He equated Polycarp with an officer in Christ’s army, and warned his flock to be obedient so that they would not be found to be “deserters.” The early Christian apologist Marcus Minucius Felix equated the martyrs with those who do battle, noting it is a “beautiful…spectacle to God” when “a Christian does battle with pain.” In a similar way, Cyprian of Carthage compared the triumph of Christian martyrs over the Devil with the triumphs of worldly soldiers over their enemies and argued the accomplishments of martyrs as spiritual warrior were superior to those of the worldly warrior. Cyprian also explicitly referred to Christian martyrs as “soldiers of God” who should not refuse to go to “war” on God’s behalf.

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97 Cyprian wrote, “‘If to soldiers of this world it is glorious to return in triumph to their country when the foe is vanquished, how much more excellent and greater is the glory, when the devil is overcome…?’” See Cyprian of Carthage, “Exhortation to Martyrdom, Addressed to Fortunatus,” in *Fathers of the Third Century: Hippolytus, Cyprian, Caius, Novatian, Appendix. The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 5. Eds. Roberts, Alexander, James Donaldson, A. Cleveland Coxe, (Grand Rapids, Mich: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1951), 506. On the broader emphasis among early Christian authors of the superiority of the spiritual warrior over the secular warrior see Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 122-123.

Thus, with the writings of the early Fathers, the model of the Christian soldier became an ideal of Christian manliness, as the miles Christi could adopt for himself the military rhetoric so closely associated with traditional forms of masculine identity. Indeed, only men could be “soldiers of Christ.” While Christian women also often demonstrated courage in the martyrs’ arena or on the spiritual battlefield, the designation “soldier of Christ” was reserved exclusively for men in the surviving sources. Indeed, the attributes that made the Christian soldier successful on the spiritual battlefield, to include courage and endurance, were masculine traits and this did not change simply because a woman sometimes possessed them. Rather, when Christian women demonstrated masculine traits, it was because they were becoming like men on account of their virtues, not because such traits were feminine. In some cases women who exhibited extraordinary masculine virtues were referenced by Christian authors not as exemplars of femininity, but instead to shame men who were not masculine enough.

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100 Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 114. After highlighting the “strength and courage of the female martyr Blandina, executed in Lyon in 177, Kuefler notes, “Nonetheless, at no point did…any Christian writer of Late Antiquity ever call any woman a ‘soldier of Christ.”
101 Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk*, 183-184. Brakke notes that female monks could make “dramatically visible the masculinization that demonic combat and ascetic struggle produced in the monk in a way that male monks could not: they started out as female and could be ‘made male’” See also Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 115 and 226. On page 226 Kuefler argues that for early Christians the notion of a genderless ideal, based on the biblical notion of “no more male or female” really usually meant “no more female” as in practice such notions only resulted in a call for Christian women to become men. See also the discussion of the Carthaginian martyr Perpetua included in this chapter.
A “soldier of Christ’s” success on the spiritual battlefield also influenced greater and lesser perceptions of their masculinity. When Christian men battled spiritual forces, they “gained or lost” masculinity with each contest. Indeed, historian Peter Brown has referred to early Christian monks as “prize fighters” who earned their reputations battling demons. Such views were particularly relevant in the case of the Desert Fathers, who were often referred to as “Soldiers of Christ” by various early Christian authors. Indeed, many of those who pursued a spiritual life in the desert during this time were reported to be former soldiers, and were perhaps better accustomed to the hardships of life found in the desert than others and likely could more easily embrace the concept of themselves as “soldiers of Christ” and the martial rhetoric that accompanied it. Martin of Tours, for example, as a former Roman soldier who renounced the physical battlefield for the spiritual battlefield of Christian life, was the “soldier of Christ” par excellence. Indeed, according to Sulpicius, Martin himself used such language to describe his transition from an earthly soldier to a spiritual one, telling his former commanders, “Hitherto I have served you as a soldier: allow me now to become a

through the adoption of [Roman] feminine standards of conduct.” Christians had, of course, taken Roman notions of femininity, the avoidance of physical warfare or sexual activity for example, and turned them into Christian masculine virtues. See Burrus, Begotten, Not Made, 5-6. Burrus notes, “a hypertranscendent masculinity incorporated characteristics or stances traditionally marked as ‘feminine’—from virginal modesty, retirement from the public sphere, and reluctance to challenge or compete…”

103 Brakke, Demons and the Making of the Monk, 7.


105 Jerome and John Cassian, for example, often used the term “soldiers of Christ” to describe monks in their works. For Jerome, see, for example, The Life of Paulus the First Hermit, Chapter 3. For John Cassian, see Institutes of the Coenobia, where the term is used throughout. See Book 1, Chapter 1, Book 5, Chapter 19, etc...

106 See, for example, Athanasius, Select Works and Letters, 219, which notes, “many soldiers and men who had great possessions laid aside the burdens of life, and became monks…”

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soldier to God…” Martin then declared himself “I am the soldier of Christ.” Thus, by refusing to serve as a soldier and wage war on the physical battlefield, Martin rejected a traditional marker of Roman or worldly masculinity and embraced an alternative Christian masculine ideal as a spiritual warrior on a spiritual battlefield.

**Courage and Early Christian Masculinity**

As soldiers of Christ, it is not surprising that Christians, like secular soldiers on the physical battlefield, were expected to act bravely as they waged war against sin on the spiritual battlefield. In the Roman army, acts of cowardice were seen as unmanly and worthy of expulsion and often resulted in a declaration of infamy for the offending soldier. Similarly, a “soldier of Christ” was supposed to be bold both on the spiritual battlefield and when promoting their faith, whether by word, deed, or in defense of virtue, in times of either peace or persecution. Consequently, many early Christian authors celebrated Christian martyrs as having achieved the fullness of a new and militant Christian masculine ideal that was based on their steadfastness and courage.

Several *New Testament* texts demonstrate that Christianity was born as a confident faith that sought to promote religious truths as early Christians saw fit.

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108 Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 108. In response to Martin’s abandoning of the Roman army to become a “soldier of Christ,” Kuefler notes, “For it was not the Christian men of the army, but the men who refused to be made soldiers…or the soldiers who refused continued service, men like Martin [now a “soldier of Christ], who were seen as the Christian ideal.” See also Brakke’s examination of Christian works which associated masculinity with “demonic” or spiritual combat. See Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk*, 194.


110 Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch*, 111, 115-120, 124. On page 124, for example, Kuefler notes, “Roman men who were Christians could continue to aspire to a *vita militaris* of steadfastness and courage and wage victorious wars of conquest …by redefining those wars in Christian terms of sin, suffering, and salvation.”
Christians were never supposed to shy away from proclaiming the truths of their faith regardless of the potential dangers of doing so. The apostle Peter’s fearful threefold denial of Christ, in one instance even before a lowly servant girl, was later a source of personal shame that caused him to “weep bitterly.”\(^\text{111}\) Perhaps in response to the lessons he had learned, Peter later exhorted Christians not to be ashamed to suffer on account of their faith, but to glorify God for the opportunity.\(^\text{112}\) Other *New Testament* texts confirm such a view, including the *Second Epistle to Timothy*, which notes that God did not give Christians a “spirit of timidity”, but rather “a spirit of power.”\(^\text{113}\) Christians were not to fear those who could only “kill the body,” but rather God, who could “destroy both body and soul.”\(^\text{114}\) Because God was with them, Christians had no reason to fear proclaiming the Gospel, as God would give them strength and courage when they needed it.\(^\text{115}\)

Nowhere was the point that Christians were to be fearless in their promotion of the faith made more clearly than in the stories of the early Christian martyrs.\(^\text{116}\) Christian martyrs had more than only the assurance that God was with them in their time of persecution; they also had the promise of an eternal heavenly reward for their efforts. A martyr’s death was a sure means of obtaining salvation and was cited as a considerable

\(^{111}\) *Matthew* 26: 69-75.

\(^{112}\) 1 *Peter* 4:16-18.

\(^{113}\) 2 *Timothy* 1:7-9.

\(^{114}\) *Matthew* 10:28.

\(^{115}\) *Philippians* 1:14, 4:13.

\(^{116}\) Beginning with the Gospel accounts of Jesus himself, he willingly gave himself over for his crucifixion to the authorities without resistance and rebuked Peter for daring to defend him with a sword. See *John* 18:10-11. Additionally, the martyrdom of Stephen, as described in the *Book of Acts*, presents Stephen’s offense as a bold and unpopular speech to an un receptive crowd that will ultimately stone him for his offense. See *Acts* 7.
source of comfort in many of the accounts of early Christian martyrs. The sources
demonstrate that the belief among many early Christian martyrs that their relatively brief
torments in this world would be exchanged for an eternity of heavenly comforts
contributed substantially to the resolve with which they met their fates. 117

The martyrs’ accounts provide example after example of courage as a masculine
virtue, and those martyrs who most boldly and bravely faced their persecutors were
celebrated as representative of a new military ideal of Christian masculinity. 118 The
author of The Martyrdom of St. Polycarp, for example, describes Polycarp as an
outstanding witness to the faith who, when faced with death, courageously proclaimed
his faith. Consequently, we are told that because of his inspiring example, “all desire to
imitate” his martyrdom. 119 Clement of Alexandria, in particular, highlighted on multiple
occasions the “good courage” of those “truly brave” Christian martyrs who
“courageously await whatever comes.” 120 Origen emphasized how Christians reject

117 In the mid-second century account of the martyrdom of St. Polycarp the author describes the
mindset of the early martyrs as follows: “And, looking to the grace of Christ, they despised all the torments
of this world, redeeming themselves from eternal punishment by [the suffering of] a single hour. For this
reason the fire of their savage executioners appeared cool to them. For they kept before their view
escape from that fire which is eternal and never shall be quenched, and looked forward with the eyes of
their heart to those good things which are laid up for such as endure…” See “The Encyclical Epistle of
the Church at Smyrna Concerning the Martyrdom of the Holy Polycarp,” in The Ante-Nicene Fathers :
translations of the writings of the Fathers down to A. D. 325, Vol. 1, Eds. Alexander Roberts and James

118 L. Stephanie Cobb, Dying to be Men: Gender and Language in Early Christian Martyr Texts,
merely assert Christian masculinity—they provide examples of it. In situation after situation the martyrs
show self restraint, courage, and other masculine virtues while non-Christians display a less potent form
of masculine behavior.” On courageous martyrs representing the military ideal of Christian masculinity,
see Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 111.

119 The Martyrdom of the Holy Polycarp, 43. See also Leonard L. Thompson, “The Martyrdom of
Polycarp’s “courage, joy, and grace” with the “fear and shame” that might be typical of others condemned
to die in the arena.

120 Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata, 411, 541-542.
cowardice when the world “makes war upon them” while Cyprian celebrated the “bravery” of Christian martyrs who “contend in the extremist contest.”

While courage was considered among the manliest of values, it was nevertheless expected and encouraged for both male and female Christian martyrs. This is perhaps best seen in the account of the martyrdom of a young Carthaginian Christian woman named Perpetua in 203. In a dream, Perpetua was told not to be fearful of her pending death and was shown a vision in which she was led into the arena not to fight beasts, but instead to fight the Devil in the form of an Egyptian gladiator. Immediately before this clash took place, a curious thing happened as Perpetua “became a man.” As a man, she was then able to defeat her demonic opponent in a physical contest. At that point, she awoke and realized her real battle in the arena would not be between her and the beasts, but rather she would battle the Devil by maintaining her faith and trust in God, not fearing either the pain the beasts might inflict on her or her death, as God would provide her the strength she needed to give her the ultimate victory. Perpetua’s transformation into a man is significant in that it suggests it was, at least in part, because of her ability to overcome her fears, a decidedly masculine virtue, allowing for

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her transformation into a male, that she was able to endure her sufferings and successfully engage in combat with the Devil in the arena.\footnote{On the attribution of masculinity to Perpetua or other Christian virtuous women, see Jacqueline Murray, “One Flesh, Two Sexes, Three Genders?” in Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives eds. Lisa M. Bitel & Felice Lifshitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 41. Murray notes, “Perpetua (d. 203) describes how she saw herself preparing to go into the arena…Attendants rubbed her with oil and she then engaged in hand to hand combat with an Egyptian gladiator. These activities are described in vividly masculine terms.” See also Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 30-31, 214, 226-228, 294. On page 214, for example, in an examination of a martyrdom account of the Christian female martyr Agnes, who had refused to marry and was condemned to death, Kuefler notes that her “willingness to face martyrdom and sexual renunciation lent her an implicit manliness.” Her manliness in these circumstances was only “implicit” because women were understood by orthodox Christian fathers to become men only in a metaphorical (not physical or literal) sense. See again Kuefler, 232. On the more general issue of courage being a decidedly masculine trait, whether exhibited in men or women, see also Kuefler, The Manly Eunuch, 136-137, who examines Ambrose of Milan’s use of the “manly power of the martyrs,” without differentiation for their sex, as a means of bolstering episcopal authority. See also Cobb, Dying to be Men, 30. Cobb points out that courage is one of the “classical masculine virtues,” and cites Cicero in noting that the word for virtue is derived from the word for man. Consequently, she notes, in far stronger terms than Kuefler, who only sees an “implicit” manliness attributed to courageous women by early Christian authors, that for females “…to display the virtues of self-control or courage, they must suppress their femininity and become male.” Finally, see also Burrus, Begotten, Not Made, 31. Burrus points out that by the time of Lactantius, the influential early fourth century Christian advisor to the first Christian Roman Emperor, a “bold soul” among Christians was decidedly categorized as a uniquely masculine trait that differentiated masculine men, or even masculine women for that matter, from feminine men.}

Origen, writing in the mid-third century, made the notion that the ability to endure physical suffering was a manly virtue explicit. After highlighting the endurance of Christ in his sufferings, he noted that rather than bringing discredit on the faith, Christ’s example in dealing with his persecution “confirmed the faith among those who would approve of manly courage…”\footnote{Origen, Origen Against Celsus, 447-8.} Likewise, the Egyptian Bishop Phileas, writing in the early fourth century, asked what language would suffice “to narrate their [martyrs] virtue and their manly endurance under every torment?”\footnote{Phileas, “Fragments of the Epistle of Phileas to the People of Thmuis,” in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 6: Gregory Thaumaturgus, Dionysius the Great, Julius Africanus, Anatolius and Minor Writers, Methodius, Arnobius. Eds. Roberts, Alexander, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1978), 162.} Athanasius’s account of the life of Anthony also presents the holy man as an example of courage for others to emulate.
This is particularly the case when a Christian finds himself battling demons as under such circumstances demons are weak and cannot do anything but threaten.\textsuperscript{126} Moreover, Athanasius notes that even in the presence of the Devil, a Christian should never be “prostrate with fear,” as a Christian’s courage and confidence can make a demon “feeble, beholding your firm purpose of mind.”\textsuperscript{127} Indeed, courage, steadfastness, humility, and other Christian virtues were understood as decidedly masculine traits that could be used as spiritual weapons on the spiritual battlefield.\textsuperscript{128}

Perhaps the most prominent Christian in Late Antiquity to be associated with the virtue of courage was Martin of Tours. His biographer, Sulpicius Severus, emphasizes Martin’s exceptional courage in a number of instances, but most spectacularly when his former commanders accused Martin of cowardice on account of his refusal to shed blood on the physical battlefield. In this case, Sulpicius emphasized how Martin was “full of courage” as he trusted in God and boldly announced he would take his stand “unarmed before the line of battle tomorrow” and then, only protected by the sign of the cross, “and not by shield or helmet,” he would “safely penetrate the ranks of the enemy.”\textsuperscript{129} When the next day came the enemy surrendered, on account of God’s intervention, preventing a battle and the testing of Martin’s courage. While God could

\textsuperscript{126} Athanasius, \textit{Select Works and Letters}, 203.

\textsuperscript{127} Athanasius, \textit{Select Works and Letters}, 208.

\textsuperscript{128} See Brakke, \textit{Demons and the Making of the Monk}, 184. Brakke notes, “Many early Christian writings...shared antiquity’s general equation of virtue with manliness…” See also Kuefler, \textit{The Manly Eunuch}, 122. Kuefler cites Ambrose of Milan, who noted, “The Church conquers hostile forces not with physical weapons, but with spiritual ones.” See also the section on humility in this chapter which examines the use of humility as a spiritual weapon.

\textsuperscript{129} Sulpicius Severus, \textit{Life of St. Martin}, 6.
have “preserved his own soldier” from the weapons of the enemy in battle, He preferred to see the enemy “subdued without bloodshed” so that “no one should suffer death.”

**Conclusion: Forging an Early Christian Masculine Ideal**

The traits of masculine identity considered in this chapter became the basis on which influential fourth century Christian authors constructed a particular image of Christian masculinity that represented a powerful, new ideal. Indeed, by the fourth century, a number of influential Christian writers commonly drew from these traits to define Christian manliness. Lactantius, for example, an influential advisor to the first Roman Emperor Constantine I, compiled many of the same traits to define, explicitly, a Christian masculine ideal. Like the Christian fathers who came before him, Lactantius rejected as feminine those men who kept their bodies smooth and hairless, with soft voices and feebleness of soul, arguing instead that men, if they are to be masculine, should have a hairy face and demonstrate both manly courage in their faith and superior virtues through what he called their “boldness of soul.” In the same way, Jerome, among the most influential Christian fathers of Late Antiquity, believed that the ascetic ideal was the highest possible goal to which Christian men could aspire and described the monastic model as the model of masculine perfection.

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131 Burrus, *Begotten, Not Made*, 33-35. Burrus highlights Lactantius and Eusebius views of Christian manhood to demonstrate “male self fashioning” during this period as well as “the forging of a patristic corpus as bearer of a single transcendent sex of man.” Similarly, Kate Cooper has argued that during the fourth century the emergence of the celibate cleric represented “the forging of a powerful new mode of male authority.” See Cooper, “Insinuations of Womanly Influence,” 163.


In sum, if we are to consider the collective traits that comprised the monastic model of masculinity, as emphasized in the works of the early Christian authors considered here, then an idealized, although rarely obtainable, image of Christian masculine perfection begins to emerge. The man who met such standards would likely be barefoot and cover his chaste body, lean from fasting, with modest undyed clothes that covered the knees. Although his beard would be long and his chest hairy, the hair on his head would be its natural color, cut short, kept straight and left unattended with little concern for appearance. His humility would be apparent to all, except for those times that he proclaimed the glories of God, as then he would assert himself boldly and without fear, even in times of danger. Although not a warrior on the physical battlefield, he was a champion of Christ on the spiritual battlefield, where he wielded his humility and other virtues as weapons and asserted his manhood though his victories over sin and the Devil. Thus the ideal Christian man represented the ascetic ideal that found its roots in the texts of the New Testament and developed among the early Fathers to fully bloom in the era of the Desert Fathers.
CHAPTER 3
CLERICAL MASCULINITIES AND CLERICAL REFORM EFFORTS IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE, C. 500-1100

This chapter considers the development of important attitudes toward Christian masculinity from the early Middle Ages until the era of the Gregorian Reform, with a primary (although not exclusive) focus on developments in formerly Merovingian or Carolingian lands. Early medieval efforts by ecclesiastical leaders to promote greater holiness through the behavioral reform of Christian men, particularly the clergy, were primarily attempted through the elevation and promotion of ascetic practices. Yet such reform efforts seem to have had little effect on the early medieval secular clergy, as they required significant behavioral changes that were often at odds with how they defined themselves as men in the local communities in which they lived and worked. Married priests, for example, whose physical relationships with women, as well as the children they produced in such relationships, were asked to effectively redefine themselves as men when they were called on to embrace celibacy. In a similar way, fighting bishops, who had expressed their manhood in part through physical violence, were called on to avoid shedding blood. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, often such clerics were resistant to embracing such radical changes in how they defined themselves as men. As a result, the ascetic ideal, although promoted by some influential ecclesiastical leaders, and achieved to varying degrees by an elite and respected few, never became dominant among the early medieval clergy.

Then this chapter will consider the reinvigorated efforts of supporters of clerical reform to combat what they perceived as the growing laicization of the clergy in the wake of Carolingian decline. Unsurprisingly, monks, particularly those associated with the Cluny monastery, spearheaded and inspired this effort. Indeed, the emergence of
Cluny in the tenth century represented the beginnings of what would become an influential and formidable champion of ascetic, or monastic, virtues as a response to the increased influence of lay behaviors and values among the clergy following the decline of the Carolingian Empire.¹

Finally, this chapter will consider how the Cluniac reformers of the tenth century laid a foundation for the era of the Gregorian Reform (c. 1050-1085), during which the papacy effectively became the champion of reform for the broader Church until well into the twelfth century.² During the era of the Gregorian Reform, the papacy sought to bring about clerical reform primarily through an intensive effort to align the behavior of the secular clergy with monastic values in what historians have described as an attempt to “monasticize” the clergy.³

Masculinity and Monasticism in the Early Medieval West

As noted in Chapter 2, historians have demonstrated that a monastic model of masculinity forged in the fourth and fifth centuries represented an “ideal” of Christian


³ The term “monasticize” has been used by various scholars to describe clerical reform efforts during the Gregorian Reform. See, for example, Giles Constable, The Reformation of the Twelfth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 6; Murray, Masculinizing Religious Life, 25; Ruth Mazo Karras, “Thomas Aquinas’s Chastity Belt,” in Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives, eds. Lisa M. Bitel and Felice Lifshitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 54; Raymond J. Lawerence Jr., Sexual Liberation: The Scandal of Christendom (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2007), 48-49; and Jennifer D. Thibodeaux, ‘Man of the Church, or Man of the Village? Gender and the Parish Clergy in Medieval Normandy,’ Gender and History 18:2 (August, 2006): 383. This heightened clash of competing monastic and secular ideals during the Gregorian Reform resulted in what one historian has described as a “masculine identity crisis” among the clergy. See McNamara, “The Herrenfrage,” 3.
Correspondingly, scholars like Conrad Leyser have pointed out how such notions of ascetic masculinity then emerged in the “fiercely competitive culture” of the early Middle Ages in the post-Roman debate over “what entitled a man” to the “respect and obedience” of other men. Such a debate took place within the Church, among clergy and monks, and in broader Christian society as well, among monks, clerics, and laymen.

Early medieval monks, for example, like their late antique predecessors, judged one another’s degree of masculinity on the basis of their adherence to ascetic virtues, but they did so with a significant degree of regional adaptation and innovation. Bishop Caesarius of Arles (d. 542), for example, promoted a highly ascetic strain of monasticism in the houses he founded in Gaul when compared, especially in the case of female monastics, with the seemingly more moderate form advocated by Benedict of Nursia (d. 547), author of the influential Benedictine Rule. Yet while early medieval

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6 Concerning female monastics, for example, Caesarius, was the first to impose a totally enclosed cloister for women, but not for men, setting a standard that would be followed well into the Middle Ages. See Penelope D. Johnson, “The Cloistering of Medieval Nuns: Release or Repression? Reality or Fantasy?” in *Gendered Domains: Rethinking Public and Private in Women’s History* eds. Dorothy O. Helly and Susan M. Reverby (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992), 28 and Albrecht Diem, *Das monastische Experiment: Die Rolle der Keuschheit bei der Entstehung des westlichen Klosterwesens, Vita Regularis, Abhandlungen 24* (Münster: Lit, 2005), 154-202. On the greater rigor of Caesarius’ monastic rules for both men and women, much of it had to do with his total rejection of profane or classical non-Christian influences whereas the Benedictines, for example, had access to such sources. For a dated, but still valuable discussion of these and other differences between Caesarius’s and Benedict’s rules, see Henry Donald Maurice Spence-Jones, *The Golden Age of the Church* (New York: E.S. Gorham, 1906), 68-69. On Caesarius’s background and influence on monasticism in early Gaul, see also William E. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles: The Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul*
monks developed and abided by multiple strands of monastic behavior and rules, the sources nevertheless show that they also seem to have universally endorsed or forbidden some behaviors that firmly distinguished them from other groups of Christians and defined them as monks.

In contrast to the lay nobility, for example, early medieval monks, regardless of the regions from which they came, were formally forbidden to marry, have sex, and shed blood, all of which were essential behaviors or acts necessary for the construction of lay aristocratic masculine identities. Moreover, according to the various prescriptive Rules that circulated in this period, monks were supposed to embrace sobriety and humility, both in appearance and attitude, which was again in contrast to the boasting or ostentatious displays of pride that were common among male members of the nobility. Consequently, regardless of any innovations and variations in how they regulated their lives as monks, early medieval monastic authors and their admirers still depicted medieval monks, by virtue of their adherence to key ascetic disciplines, as possessing a


superior type of holiness and thereby a superior type of Christian masculinity that placed them above other classes of Christian men.⁹

Because early medieval monasteries were organized according to written Rules, which regulated both the activities of the monastery and the lives of the monks who lived within them, they provide an excellent source for making us aware of the major behavioral ideals that were established for monks (regardless of their ability to always adhere to such ideals).¹⁰ Perhaps the most important of the early medieval monastic rules, due to its later influence, was the Rule of St. Benedict, which was attributed by medieval sources to the early sixth-century Italian abbot Benedict of Nursia.¹¹

Some prominent earlier rules clearly influenced both the content and form of the Benedictine Rule, particularly the anonymously authored Rule of the Master and the Rule written by Benedict’s contemporary Caesarius of Arles (who was in turn influenced

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⁹ On the association of holiness with masculinity in Late Antiquity, see Christopher C. Craun, Matronym Monks: Theodoret of Cyrhys’ Sexual Imagery in the Historia Religiosa,” in Holiness and Masculinity in the Middle Ages, eds. P.H. Cullum & Katherine J. Lewis (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 43. For a consideration of such views in the early medieval West, see Rachel Stone, ""In what way can those who have left the world be distinguished?: Masculinity and the Difference Between Carolingian Men," in Intersections of Gender, Religion and Ethnicity in the Middle Ages, eds. Cordelia Beattie and Kristen A. Fenton (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011), 20-21. For a primary source example, see Gregory of Tours, who equates spiritual power with holiness. Gregory of Tours, Libri Historiarum Decem, ed. W. Arndt, MGH Scrip. Ret. Merov., 11, ed. 2a, (Hannover: Hahn, 1951), 1:44.

¹⁰ For an overview of the origins and purpose of early medieval monastic rules, beginning with the Benedictine Rule, see Lynda L. Coon, Dark Age Bodies: Gender and Monastic Practice in the Early Medieval West (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 73-79. For a lengthier overview, see Marilyn Dunn, The Emergence of Monasticism: From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages (Malden, Ma.: Blackwell, 2000), 82-138.

by earlier Rules). Moreover, the martial rhetoric used to describe monks and monastic ideals in Benedict’s Rule is also very similar to the martial rhetoric found in prominent monastic texts of Late Antiquity. Indeed, Benedict admittedly drew his ideas from the surviving works of patristic era and late antique Christian authors to define monasticism in his era. Consequently, Benedictine monks are described, like their late antique predecessors, as warriors engaged in the most masculine of professions, waging spiritual warfare for Jesus using spiritual weapons.

After framing the monastery as a type of boot camp for those monk-soldiers who fight in God’s army, the Rule then outlines the key aspects of their training with a central focus on the application of no less than twelve grades of humility. As had been the case in the ascetic writings of Benedict’s late antique predecessors, the Rule’s emphasis on humility represented quite a difference between secular and spiritual warriors and how they expressed their martial masculinity. In the Rule’s “eleventh grade of humility,” for example, monks are admonished to speak “…gently and without laughter, humbly and with gravity, speaking few but reasonable words; and that his

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13 See Chapter 2, for example, which considers martial rhetoric in early Christian texts from the Pauline epistles of the New Testament era to later texts by Church Fathers including Jerome, John Cassian, and Sulpicius Severus.

14 Lawrence, Medieval Monasticism, 34: “Apart from the Old and New Testaments, the only works that St. Benedict expressly commends to his monks are the books of the Catholic Fathers, the Lives of the Fathers, Cassian, and the Rules of St. Basil.”

15 The Rule of St. Benedict, 2-3: “Ad te ergo, nunc mihi sermo dirigetur, quisquis abrenuntians propriis voluntatibus, Domino Christo vero Regi militaturus, oboedientiae fortissima atque praeclera arma sumis.” See also The Rule of St. Benedict, 8-9: “Ergo praeparanda sunt corda nostra et corpora sanctae praeeptorum oboedientiae militanda.”

16 The Rule of St. Benedict, 35-49. Chapter 7 of the Rule is entirely devoted to humility.
voice is not clamorous...” Such a view was in sharp contrast to the masculine standards of early medieval aristocratic warriors, for whom boasting was a key means by which they expressed their masculinity. Yet it is clear that it is primarily through humility, which is stressed repeatedly in the Rule, that Benedictine monks were disciplined and trained for spiritual combat as members of God’s army, as demonstrations of pride would alienate them from God and leave them helpless on the spiritual battlefield.

In addition to monastic Rules, medieval clerical authorities also promoted the late antique monastic model through other genres. Especially influential were hagiographical accounts of the lives of holy men which employ martial rhetoric very similar to that found in Benedict’s Rule. The works of Pope Gregory the Great (r. 590-604), for example, whose papacy straddled the late sixth and early seventh centuries, promoted ascetic virtues and celebrated the same ascetic attributes as those that had been celebrated by St. Benedict. Indeed, Gregory was only the second former monk, following Pope

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17 The Rule of St. Benedict, 46-47: “…leniter et sine risu, humiliiter cum gravitate, vel paucis verba et rationabilia loquatur, et non clamosus in voce…”

18 See Brown, The Rise of Western Christendom, 335. For the continuation of such views into the Carolingian era, see Bachrach, Early Carolingian Warfare, 126, 238. See also Gregory of Tours, Libri Historiarum Decem, 4:24.

19 The Benedictine Rule also provides considerable guidance on maintaining a humble appearance. In doing so, the Rule calls for standards very much in keeping with the late antique monastic model of masculinity as early medieval monks were also to dress simply and avoid ostentatious clothing or hair styles. The twelfth grade of humility, for example, calls for a monk to “humilitatem videntibus se semper indicet…” (The Rule of St. Benedict, 46). Indeed, the Rule expressly commands its adherents to purchase only cheap clothing that is in accordance with local customs. Moreover, aside from the standard issue of a cowl, a gown, shoes, and boots, no other superfluous clothing was permitted (The Rule of St. Benedict, 126-129).

20 Robert Markus, Gregory the Great and His World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 64, 70. On page 70, Markus notes that “everywhere Gregory wished to enforce the rules of chastity, poverty, obedience and perseverance in one community which were laid down by Benedict for his monks…”
Pelagius II (r. 579-590), to become a pope. This period appears to have brought more widespread acceptance of monasticism in the highest circles of ecclesiastical authority.\(^{21}\) As a former monk and vociferous promoter of monasticism, it is not surprising that Gregory advocated an ascetic model of masculinity, exemplified foremost by monks, in answering the question of what type of man should have authority in the Church.\(^{22}\) For example, Gregory praised virgins and declared celibacy to be superior to marriage.\(^{23}\) Yet in keeping with the monastic ideal of humility, Gregory also noted that those who had been given this gift should not vainly exalt themselves.\(^{24}\)

Martial themes concerning the role of monks, similar to those found in the \textit{Benedictine Rule}, may also be found in writings on saints and holy men elsewhere in the early medieval West. In the highly influential \textit{Vita Columbani}, for example, the seventh-century monk Jonas of Bobbio provided an account of the life of the renowned Irish reformer that borrowed heavily from late antique representations of holy men and uncompromisingly promoted ascetic values.\(^{25}\) Indeed, Jonas showed Columbanus as a soldier defending his chastity from the dangers of lust. For example, as a result of

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Columbanus’ physical attractiveness as a young man, Jonas noted that demons used lascivious maidens as deadly weapons against Columbanus to stifle his rapid growth in grace.26 In response, Columbanus, “that excellent soldier…” used the Gospel as a shield to defend his chastity and defeat his spiritual enemies.27 Indeed, Jonas then instructed the reader on how mortification of the flesh and extreme fasting could combat lust and expel “the plunderer and robber of all virtues.”28 Thus Columbanus, like Benedict and other monks who observed ascetic practices, was portrayed as a holy man (viro Dei or vir sanctus) at war with the Devil, who demanded moral improvement from all who he encountered.29

The *Vita Columbani* also serves as a source for understanding how Columbanian monasteries were governed and organized. Indeed, as Albrecht Diem has noted, “if we look for a written version of the *Regula Columbani*…the most likely such text is Jonas's *Vita Columbani*...”30 Jonas himself stated that one of his goals in writing the *Vita* was to preserve the *instituta* of Columbanus as it was taught by Columbanus and his successors.31 More significantly, Jonas portrayed the monasteries associated with Columbanus as an extension of the holy man’s power, embodying what Diem refers to an “institutionalization of sanctity” resulting from a “transfer [of sanctity] from the holy

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26 Jonas of Bobbio, *Vita Columbani*, 1:3.

27 Jonas of Bobbio, *Vita Columbani*, 1:3.


29 For multiple references to Columbanus as a *viro Dei* or *vir sanctus*, see Jonas of Bobbio, *Vita Columbani*, 1:7. On Columbanus demanding moral improvement from others, see Jonas of Bobbio, *Vita Columbani*, 1:6.

30 Diem, "Monks, Kings,” 528.

31 Jonas of Bobbio, *Vita Columbani*, 145. See also Diem, "Monks, Kings,” 528, f.n. 44.
man to a monastic institution."\textsuperscript{32} As a result, in an effort to avoid offending God, kings and other powerful men were encouraged by such examples to be respectful in their dealings not only with holy men like Columbanus, who by virtue of his sanctity was also a powerful man, but also in their dealings with monasteries as institutions.\textsuperscript{33} Thus holy men, by virtue of their adherence to monastic values, were not lesser men, but were instead elevated and respected on account of their spiritual power.

\textbf{Masculinity and the Secular Clergy in the Early Middle Ages}

If medieval European monks, formally committed to a life of ascetic virtue, represented one end on a spectrum of Christian masculine identities, then the lay nobility were at the opposite end. According to clerical sources, Christian laymen, who lived and worked in the world, defined masculinity much differently than monks. Indeed, the behaviors, customs, and fads of the wealthier upper class nobility often represented the very worldly influences monks, who had theoretically rejected worldly influences, were trying to avoid. While monks were not supposed to marry or shed blood, for example, marriage and violence were the means by which many aristocratic laymen established their manly reputations and achieved higher status throughout the early Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{34}

Unsurprisingly, secular priests and bishops, who lived and worked among the laity, were often influenced by local lay customs on matters that related to how they

\textsuperscript{32} Diem, "Monks, Kings," 557.

\textsuperscript{33} Diem, "Monks, Kings," 528, 530, 537, 543, and 548. Diem also notes that this represents a significant moment in the early history of monasticism, as well as the status of monks, as Jonas’s argument about the necessity of lay rulers respecting monastic communities was unheard of until this time. See Diem, "Monks, Kings," 528.

defined themselves as men in such communities. The problem was that ecclesiastical leaders had long called on the clergy to embrace Christian ascetic ideals of holiness, particularly celibacy, that were often at odds with these local lay customs. Individual members of the clergy responded differently to these influences, as clerics in various regions or locales embraced varying combinations of Christian and lay masculine ideals. The lack of centralized ecclesiastical authority is what made such a variety of clerical behaviors possible. The early medieval papacy, for example, had not yet emerged with sufficient authority to dominate broader European clerical affairs as it would in later centuries. Thus, in the early Middle Ages, ecclesiastical authority was often localized and influenced by the local nobility.

Clerical Masculinity in Merovingian Gaul

Some early medieval bishops advocated ascetic ideals, but others seemed to have had little concern for such ideals as their behaviors suggest far greater influence of lay masculine norms. This particularly seems to have been the case in sixth-century Merovingian Gaul where the saint and court poet Venantius Fortunatus, for example, wrote a poem praising Placidina, the wife of the Bishop Leontius of Bordeaux, for her contribution to her husband's church building program. Not only was Leontius married, but his wife was celebrated by one of the leading poets of the time as a helpful wife,

35 See Murray, Masculinizing Religious Life, 25 and Miller, The Formation of a Medieval Church, 56.

36 For an overview of the various types of bishops that existed in Merovingian Gaul (e.g. monk-bishops, married bishops, and celibate bishops drawn from the secular clergy), see Brian Brennan, “Episcopae’: Bishops' Wives Viewed in Sixth-Century Gaul,” Church History 54:3 (1985): 311-323.

who only enhanced her husband’s ability to lead the Church.\textsuperscript{38} Moreover, Venantius himself, who was heavily influenced by lay aristocratic culture, was ordained around the year 576 and later became the bishop of Poitiers. His works downplay the necessity of a monastic background or adherence to monastic values as a prerequisite to episcopal office.\textsuperscript{39}

In contrast to Venantius Fortunatus, however, many other Merovingian ecclesiastical sources portray clerical marriage in negative terms.\textsuperscript{40} Gregory of Tours, for example, a contemporary of Venantius, presented adherence to ascetic values, particularly sexual renunciation, as among the key attributes of a good bishop.\textsuperscript{41} In his Histories, for example, suggesting episcopal sexual abstinence was the established custom in the West since at least the fourth century, Gregory cites the example of Urbicus, the early fourth-century bishop of Clermont-Ferrand, to promote conjugal abstinence and the renunciation of cohabitation between clerics and their wives.\textsuperscript{42} In


\textsuperscript{39} On Venantius as a bishop see, Brian Brennan, “The career of Venantius Fortunatus,” Traditio, 41 (1985): 49-78 and White, Early Christian Latin Poets, 164. On Venantius downplaying the monastic background of bishops see, Coates, Venantius Fortunatus and the Image of Episcopal Authority, 1125. Coates notes, “Venantius described the lives of several other monk-bishops, …but he did not dwell on their monastic lives…Unlike Sulpicius Severus…Venantius did not primarily concern himself with St. Martin’s career as a monk and chose instead to emphasize how Martin represented the ideal bishop.”

\textsuperscript{40} Dyan Elliot, Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Wedlock (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 89. Elliot notes that during the Merovingian era, “Only occasionally does one catch a glimpse of a peaceful and uncomplicated clerical union.”

\textsuperscript{41} Coates, Venantius Fortunatus and the Image of Episcopal Authority, 1125.
another instance, referring to his own era, Gregory refers to marriage as both a drawback and distraction from the duties of a bishop.\(^{43}\)

Gregory also contrasted the episcopates of two later sixth-century bishops of Langres, one drawn from the secular clergy and the other a former monk. The first bishop, Pappolus, a former archdeacon at Autun, was known for his many wicked deeds until he was given a supernatural warning to stop “polluting” his see, but Pappolus ignored the warning and died three days later.\(^{44}\) In contrast, his replacement, the former abbot Mummolus, carried his monastic values into the episcopate and, as a result, Gregory notes that he was widely praised for his chastity, sobriety, and love of charity.\(^{45}\) Through such examples Gregory drew a firm distinction between the types of men who should have authority in the Church, namely those adhering to monastic values, and those who should not.

Merovingian bishops also seem to have been of two minds on the issue of warfare and its appropriateness for the clergy. In the broader Merovingian society the warrior class represented the most dominant lay masculine identities of the nobility;


\(^{43}\) Gregory of Tours, \textit{Libri Historiarum Decem}, 5: 46

\(^{44}\) Gregory of Tours, \textit{Libri Historiarum Decem}, 5: 5. Pappolus was given a vision of the recently deceased former bishop, St. Tetricus, who admonished Pappolus for despoiling his diocese and robbing from the Church, warning him to resign his bishopric and leave the town. An examination of this incident is found in Isabel Moreira, \textit{Dreams, Visions, and Spiritual Authority in Merovingian Gaul}, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 91-92. Tetricus had been the bishop of Langres from 539 until sometime before 573, when we know Pappolus was in office. See John Robert Martindale, \textit{The Procopography of the Later Roman Empire} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 179.

\(^{45}\) Gregory of Tours, \textit{Libri Historiarum Decem}, 5: 5.
thus, the bearing of weapons was among the most significant masculine markers of the era.\textsuperscript{46} While ecclesiastical authorities had long expressed concern over Christian participation in warfare, with the clergy (in particular) explicitly forbidden from shedding blood, such prohibitions seem to have been ignored by many prominent early medieval bishops drawn from the aristocratic class.\textsuperscript{47} Gregory of Tours, for example, described as criminal how two contemporary bishops in his time, Salunius and Sagittarius, whom he compared with laymen, armed themselves to wound and kill their enemies.\textsuperscript{48} In other cases, the participation of early medieval bishops in military activities is not necessarily surprising, as often they effectively ruled early medieval towns or cities and so, in times of conflict, were obligated to participate in their defense. Even Hilary of Arles, for example, who otherwise held an esteemed reputation for adherence to monastic

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\item \textsuperscript{46} On varying Merovingian lay masculine identities see Merovingian Masculinities in Guy Halsall, Cemeteries and Society in Merovingian Gaul (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 357-382. On the bearing of arms, in particular, as a major marker of lay masculinity, see page 358.


\item \textsuperscript{48} Gregory of Tours, Libri Historiarum Decem, 5: 20.
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principles, came into conflict with Pope Leo the Great over his use and oversight of military force.49

The Limited Growth of Monastic Influence Under Carolingian Rule

Following the rise of the Carolingians in the eighth century, Carolingian lay leadership eventually emerged as a powerful advocate for ecclesiastical reform. This intervention would have important consequences for understandings of Christian masculinity during the era. Yet, for a number of reasons, the primary focus of Carolingian reform efforts was centered on monastic reform rather than the secular clergy.50 Because monasteries were seen as important centers of local authority, it was important for Carolingian authorities to maintain and assert control over them and the abbots who led them.51 Moreover, Carolingian imperial reforms sought to exploit the cultural and pedagogical potential of the monasteries for the benefit of the empire.52

However, perhaps the most important reason the reform of monasteries received so much attention during the Carolingian era was due to the increased emphasis by monks on the need for purity, which was equated with greater spiritual authority and

49 For a consideration of the military activities of Hilary of Arles, and the resulting conflict with Pope Leo the Great that resulted, see Friedrich E. Prinz, “King, Clergy, and War at the Time of the Carolingians,” in Saints, Scholars, and Heroes: Studies in Medieval Culture in Honour of Charles W. Jones, 2 vols. (Collegeville, Minn: Hill Monastic Manuscript Library, Saint John’s Abbey and University, 1979), 2: 308.

50 Lynda Coon, for example, has argued, “The drive for [monastic] uniformity was part of a larger cultural imperative of promoting Romanizing styles over diverse regional ones.” See Coon, Dark Age Bodies, 52.

51 Andrew Louth, Greek East and Latin West: The Church A.D. 681-1071 (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2007), 103-104.

effectiveness. Thus Carolingian monasteries were seen as storehouses of spiritual purity that offered pure prayer to heaven and served on the front line of the spiritual battlefield. Carolingian leaders, like their Merovingian predecessors, primarily understood the source of monastic spiritual power to come from chastity and the refusal to bear arms, two key markers that separated holy men from worldly men. In 811, for example, Charlemagne asked religious leaders what distinguished men who left the world from those who remained in it, asking, somewhat despairingly, if it was only celibacy and non-violence. Moreover, Carolingian monks understood their ability to avoid sins related to sex and violence, among others, as a major marker of what historian Lynda Coon has described as “monastic masculinity.”

For the Carolingians, monastic orthodoxy, and thereby monastic masculinity, came to be defined by adherence to the Benedictine Rule. Indeed, the standardization of monastic regulations under the Benedictine Rule had been a goal of monastic reformers working in Frankish lands dating back to the Anglo-Saxon missionary Boniface in the mid-eighth century. This goal of having all monks live according to the Rule of St. Benedict was ultimately embraced by Carolingian authorities and realized in the Aachen synods of 816 and 817 with the influence of the reformer Benedict of

53 Stone, Masculinity and the Difference, 19.
54 Stone, Masculinity and the Difference, 19.
55 Capitula de Causis Cum Episcopis et Abbatibus Tractandus, in MGH Cap. 1: 72, Legum ed. Alfred Boretius (Hannover: Hahn, 1883), 163. See also Rachel Stone’s analysis of this text in Stone, Masculinity and the Difference, 12-16.
56 Coon, Dark Age Bodies, 11. Coon also notes, “Strong monks continually fight against ‘vices of body and mind,’ allurements closely associated with the feminine.” Coon, Dark Age Bodies, 78-79.
57 Coon, Dark Ages Bodies, 55.
Carolingian intellectuals hailed Benedict as “our abbot” and Charlemagne himself believed he had obtained an original copy of the *Benedictine Rule*, composed by Benedict, which he then treated as an object of near veneration at Aachen.\(^{59}\) Indeed, by the time of Charlemagne’s rule, the goal of Carolingian monastic leaders was to impose a uniform understanding of the *Benedictine Rule* that would also regulate a wide range of monastic practices ranging from liturgy to hygiene.\(^{61}\)

As a result, when reform efforts were extended to the secular clergy, the monastic model seems to have provided a partial framework for placing significant emphasis on clerical celibacy and the establishment of greater distinctions between clerics and laymen.\(^{62}\) For all their efforts, however, reformers ran into significant challenges in trying to convince Carolingian priests to give up the benefits of marriage or concubinage. The aforementioned Benedictine monk and reformer Boniface, for example, complained in a letter to Pope Zacharias (d. 752) that some priests had as many as four or five concubines at once.\(^{63}\) Pope Zacharias condemned such behaviors as scandalous and replied that Boniface was not to believe any priests who claimed

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60 Coon, *Dark Ages Bodies*, 73, 55.

61 Coon, *Dark Age Bodies*, 52-53.


they had received papal permission for such behavior. Nevertheless, Boniface seems to have had little success in his efforts to reform priests. Two years later, in another letter to Zacharias, he complained that he was being persecuted by fornicating clerics for trying to reform them.

Yet while early Carolingian reformers like Boniface undoubtedly experienced considerable frustration in their efforts to reform the clergy, historians such as James Brundage, Rachel Stone and Mayke de Jong argue that the reform of the clergy became a major goal of lay and ecclesiastical leaders in the Carolingian era. Brundage points out, for example, that Charlemagne, following in the tradition of earlier Christian councils, incorporated provisions into Carolingian capitularies that sought to prevent women from living with bishops or priests. Indeed, celibacy during the Carolingian era, according to Stone, became “…vital for clerical masculinity” due to the “…ever greater emphasis on the need for the cultic purity of priests.” Concern over women as a source of pollution for the clergy was reflected in legislation designed to limit clerical contact with women. The Council of Paris in 829, for example, declared that those women religious who had veiled themselves (e.g. made only private vows of

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65 Council of Rome (745), *MGH, Concilia* 2:39.
chastity and did not belong to a formal community), were to be barred from churches as they were too great a temptation to priests and thereby the purity of the sacraments.⁶⁹

Some Carolingian clergy openly protested calls for clerical chastity and argued that the act of parenting children should not prevent them from remaining in clerical office. In a letter to a Roman synod in 745, for example, Boniface complained about a bishop named Clemens who protested that he had a right to remain in his office even though he had two children born of an adulterous relationship after he had become bishop.⁷⁰ Something that may have also hampered Carolingian reformers, as opposed to the later Gregorian era reformers, was that the Carolingians were hesitant to denigrate the lay masculinity of their lay patrons and protectors for the purpose of elevating monastic ideals.⁷¹ Consider, for example, Einhard’s Vita Caroli Magni, which he opened by celebrating Charlemagne as his dominus et nutritor.⁷² He then provides a lengthy and positive description of both Charlemagne’s exploits as a conquering monarch as well as a curiously judgment-free description of Charlemagne’s extensive sexual relations with various wives and concubines (which only praised how he treated his various children from these relationships).⁷³ Indeed, as Rachel Stone has pointed

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⁶⁹ Concilium Parisiense (829), ed. A. Werminghoff, MGH Conc. 2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1908), 637-638. See also Wemple, Women in Frankish Society, 167.


⁷¹ Stone, Masculinity and the Difference, 22-23.

⁷² Einharti [sic], Vita Caroli Magni, eds. Philipp Jaffé, and Wilhelm Wattenbac (Berolini: Weidmann, 1876), 25.

⁷³ Einharti, Vita Caroli Magni, 29-40, 40-42.
out, while Carolingian secular and ecclesiastical authorities may have advocated the benefits of ascetic practices for monks and clerics, “clerical intellectuals” also continued to “…valorize lay noblemen’s roles of warfare and marriage.” Lynda Coon has also highlighted the tensions that confronted advocates of monastic virtues in the “competitive” gender system of the Carolingian era, noting, “…on the one hand clerical writers promote the superiority of monastic masculinity, but, on the other, they frequently yield to the greater authority of lay potentates.”

Such an environment, in which lay masculine ideals continued to be celebrated along side monastic ideals, made it easier for many Carolingian priests and bishops to act in (at least some) ways more aligned with lay norms than monastic norms. While Carolingian clergy were formally forbidden from warfare and hunting (which offered training in the use of arms for warfare), for example, these were markers of aristocratic manhood that held extraordinary appeal for many clerics, particularly bishops. Indeed, many Carolingian bishops had once been aristocratic laymen and they often reasoned that clerical prohibitions on bloodshed were really meant only for the lower clergy. The persistence of such attitudes during the Carolingian era among the higher clergy likely contributed to the broader clerical acceptance of lay values and behaviors that emerged more fully during the period of Carolingian decline in the later ninth century and after.

74 Stone, Masculinity and the Difference, 22-23.
75 Coon, Dark Age Bodies, 11.
76 See, for example, canon 2 of the decisions of the Concilium Germanicum held in the year 742/743 and presided over by Boniface, which prohibits the bearing of arms and hunting with falcons and hounds. See MGH. Cap. I. p. 25, No. 10 c. 2.
77 On many Carolingian bishops having aristocratic backgrounds, see Reuter, Germany in the Early Middle Ages, 26. On the participation of Carolingian bishops in warfare, see Prinz, Klerus und Krieg, 166-168; Brundage, Crusades, Clerics, and Violence, 149. On the participation of Carolingian bishops in hunting, see Moro, La caccia in età carolingia, 55-61.
Carolingian Decline and its Effect on Clerical Masculinity

The decline of the Carolingian Empire in the late ninth century brought significant institutional changes to regional and local ecclesiastical affairs in former Carolingian lands. With the decline of centralized Carolingian authority, the appointment of bishops and clerics, as well as the oversight of monasteries, increasingly came under the authority of the lay nobility. Lay nobles often appointed clergy based primarily on their familial or socio-political connections rather than their perceived holiness or commitment to Christian ideals.\(^7^8\)

The office of bishop was deeply affected by the newly emerging power structures that took form in the tenth century after the dissolution of the Carolingian Empire. During this period laymen were appointed to bishoprics through the influence of lay authorities, who then openly carried lay notions of masculinity into the episcopate.\(^7^9\) The practice grew to the point that even Otto the Great, the first Holy Roman Emperor, began to regulate all appointments to important ecclesiastical positions within his empire during the mid-tenth century.\(^8^0\) Otto believed it was important to control episcopal appointments because it allowed him to turn away from efforts to rule through dependence on (sometimes rebellious) dukes. Instead he sought to extend his authority

\(^7^8\) McLaughlin, *Sex, Gender, and Episcopal Authority*, 11.

\(^7^9\) McLaughlin, *Sex, Gender, and Episcopal Authority*, 11.

through the episcopate.\textsuperscript{81} For Otto, bishops, especially if drawn from the royal family, represented a safer and less competitive alternative to dependence on dukes or other high-ranking lay positions as Otto could simply appoint new bishops if he did not like the old ones.\textsuperscript{82} Thus, archbishops, bishops, and abbots came to be known as the emperor's men because they had been appointed or confirmed in office by him.\textsuperscript{83} Similarly, local lords in areas where Otto's authority was contested or weak also began to exercise authority over many bishoprics and local ecclesiastical offices.\textsuperscript{84} As a result, the type of man that would execute authority in the Church was often chosen according to his loyalty to the lay authorities that appointed him, and not necessarily for his adherence to ascetic ideals.\textsuperscript{85}

Monasteries in the ninth and tenth centuries were similarly affected by the disintegration of the Carolingian Empire. Abuses became particularly common in monasteries in former Carolingian lands that were placed under the control of lay abbots, which contributed to a general overall decline in both the number of monasteries and monks as well as the observation of Benedictine Rule.\textsuperscript{86}

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\footnotetext{81}{Reuter, \textit{Germany in the Early Middle Ages}, 156-157.}
\footnotetext{82}{On Otto I's appointment of his brother as a bishop, for example, which set a precedent that would be followed by monarchs and princes until the era of the Protestant Reformation, see Scaglione, \textit{Knights at Court}, 23.}
\footnotetext{83}{Arnold, \textit{German Knighthood}, 8.}
\footnotetext{84}{Fanning, \textit{A Bishop and His World}, 8-9.}
\footnotetext{85}{Fanning, \textit{A Bishop and His World}, 9.}
\end{footnotes}
Monastic and Clerical Reform Efforts in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries

As a result of such widespread lay influence over the Church, including lay control over many bishoprics and monasteries, a married clergy again carried on as openly as it had prior to the Carolingian reforms. Surviving charters and other sources of the period show that many priests lived like the laity and raised families for which they provided from church revenues, with some attempting to pass on their ecclesiastical offices as hereditary positions to their children.⁸⁷ In a mid-eleventh-century charter attributed to the priest Martin and his wife Anziverga, for example, the couple openly expressed their love for their son Adam, a deacon, who is to receive their property.⁸⁸ Indeed, some eleventh-century clerics defiantly resisted prohibitions on priestly marriage by arguing marriage was an established custom and an honorable state and cited biblical and canon law in its defense.⁸⁹

Priestly marriage would flourish especially in places where bishops did not bother to enforce the celibacy requirements of their diocesan clergy. The eleventh-century French bishop Hubert of Angers, for example, a cleric “more expert in wielding a sword than in praying to God,” initially had two archdeacon-treasurers who were married with children and at least one priest with children who held lands from Hubert himself.⁹⁰

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⁸⁷ Fanning, A Bishop and His World, 9.

⁸⁸ Codex diplomatico padovano, ed. A Gloria, 3 vols. (Venice: Deputazione di storia patria per le Venezie, 1877-1881), 1: 212 (no. 181). See also Maureen C. Miller, The Formation of a Medieval Church: Ecclesiastical Change in Verona, 950-1150 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), 46. Miller also considers a case in which the Holy Roman Emperor Berengar I, for example, gave the chapel of Nogara as a gift in the early tenth-century, it came with “…the cleric named Leo with his wife and sons and daughter.”

⁸⁹ McLaughlin, Sex, Gender, and Episcopal Authority, 33-34. McLaughlin cites, for example, Landulf of Milan, Historia Mediolanensis, 3, 7, MGH SS 8: 78-79.

⁹⁰ Fanning, A Bishop and His World, 2, 81, 87.
the Council of Pavia in 1022, which called for married priests to resign, the bishop of Verona complained that if he were to enforce clerical celibacy he would have no priests.91

Although the advocates of clerical reform found themselves on the defensive in the wake of Carolingian decline, an important event took place in 909 that would have significant later consequences for the spread and influence of reform ideals. Duke William III of Aquitaine founded a little known Benedictine monastery at Cluny, located in Burgundy, independent of secular and local ecclesiastical control, at a time when, according to one historian, monasticism “had reached a very low ebb.”92 Yet William’s founding of Cluny, with its independence secured, turned out to be a foundational step for the emergence of a new reform movement that would combat lay influence in the broader Church over the next two centuries.93 This was largely the result of the dedication to monastic ideals held by its extraordinarily influential abbots over the same period.94 Consequently, its abbots became influential international statesmen and

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94 Hunt, Cluny Under Saint Hugh, 21.
played an important role as mediators in disputes between emperors, kings, and popes.95

The Cluniac promotion of monastic values, including sexual abstinence, and by extension celibacy, or the rejection of marriage, was argued to be good for the whole Church, including clerics and laymen, not just monks.96 Abbot Odo of Cluny (c. 926-944), for example, who was perhaps the most zealous of Cluny’s reforming abbots, was active in calling for sexual purity for both monks and priests. Yet while Cluniac reformers may have been a voice for broader social and ecclesiastical reform in the tenth and early eleventh centuries, their effectiveness was primarily limited to monastic reform. In regions where Odo of Cluny had been invited to introduce his reforms, for example, worldly clerics often met him with bitter attacks.97 Yet the Cluniac reformers were persistent, even if not always effective, as they embraced the masculine rhetoric of warriors and envisioned themselves as *milites Christi*, soldiers of Christ, who, through their efforts to align both monastic and clerical behavior with monastic ideals, believed they were saving souls.98

While the Cluniac monks may have been an inspiration for clerical reform in Europe during the tenth and eleventh centuries, the decision to reform was ultimately up


96 McNamara, “The Herrenfrage,” 7. Also consider, for example, Odo’s hagiographical account of the life of Gerald of Aurillac, a French nobleman that Odo portrays as chaste and fighting without bloodshed. For the critical edition, see Odon de Cluny, *Vita sancti Geraldii Auriliacensis*, ed. A.M. Bultot-Verleysen (Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 2009).

97 On Odo’s commitment to the promotion of sexual purity, see Nelson, *Monks, Secular Men, and Masculinity*, 128-132. On the resistance of worldly monks and clerics, see Hunt, *Cluny Under Saint Hugh*, 22. Hunt notes, for example, the resistance of the monks of Fleury to Odo’s reform efforts. See f.n. 3 in Hunt, “John of Salerno, III, viii, p. 79 for the initial resistance of Fleury.”

to local ecclesiastical authorities and lay communities that had to create institutions that fostered the existence of a chaste clergy. The establishment of collegiate churches, for example, meant to support communities of clerics that fostered a life in common, was among the primary means by which this was done. Such endowments provided an alternative to clerical marriage and functioned as training centers for chaste priests whose lives more resembled those of monks than their married counterparts. Some local or regional synods might issue condemnations of married priests and impose penalties on them and their wives and children. Popes and emperors also sometimes involved themselves in reform efforts, but they were inconsistent in their leadership and never provided central direction for these efforts. In 1022, for example, Pope Benedict VIII and Emperor Henry II jointly presided over the Council of Pavia, which called for the imposition of celibacy on the whole clergy. Yet later eleventh century reformers saw little value in such prohibitions by notorious Tuscalani popes like Benedict VIII since the measures were not properly enforced.

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100 Miller, Masculinity, Reform, and Clerical Culture, 26-27, 51.

101 McLaughlin, Sex, Gender, and Episcopal Authority, 32-33 and Henry Charles Lea, An Historical Sketch of Sacerdotal Celibacy in the Christian Church (Boston: Houghton, 1884), 149. Consider, for example, the Synod of Engelheim in 948 under the presidency of Marino, the Bishop of Ostia, who condemned clerical marriages as incestuous and unlawful. Or the Council of Augsburg in 952, attended by German and Italian prelates, in which depositions was pronounced against any sub-deacon, deacon, priest, or bishop who took a wife, as well as called for the separation of those who were already married.

102 McLaughlin, Sex, Gender, and Episcopal Authority, 33.


104 Robinson, Introduction, 4.
The Gregorian Reform: From Leo IX until Gregory VII

It was only in the mid-eleventh century, at the beginning of the so-called Gregorian Reform, with the pontificate of Pope Leo IX, that the leadership of the reform movement effectively passed from Cluny to the papacy. Indeed, it was then that popes began to assert their authority actively and consistently as a means to attack priestly marriage and demand that local bishops support such efforts, whether they wanted to comply with such efforts or not.\(^{105}\) While earlier popes had attacked clerical marriage and lay control of the Church, it was only with the invigorated and committed papacy of Leo IX that ecclesiastical reform became a major goal of the papacy.\(^{106}\) Indeed, under Leo, the papacy began to put pressure on individual clerics to comply with calls for greater chastity and obedience to the Church through organized lay boycotts of the rituals they performed and penalties directed against their wives and children.\(^{107}\)

After Leo’s death in 1054 his immediate papal successors, including Victor II\(^ {108}\), Stephen IX\(^ {109}\), Nicholas II\(^ {110}\), and Alexander II\(^ {111}\), all carried on in the reform spirit and

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\(^{105}\) McLaughlin, *Sex, Gender, and Episcopal*, 33.


\(^{107}\) McLaughlin, *Sex, Gender, and Episcopal Authority*, 33. At the Council of Reims, for example, Leo condemned clerical marriage. See Fanning, *A Bishop and His World*, 10; Frazee, “The Origins of Clerical Celibacy,” 162; and Hunt, *Cluny Under Saint Hugh*, 141. In the Easter Synods of Rome in 1051, more decrees against married priests were issued under Leo’s watch, including the surprising call for the enslavement of wives and mistresses of the clergy. See Frazee, “The Origins of Clerical Celibacy,” 162. Although never implemented, Leo’s idea of enslaving priests’ wives seems to have been popular with the more zealous promoters of clerical reform. The reformer Peter Damian, for example, whom Leo had brought to Rome as an advisor and made a cardinal, praised and advocated Leo’s call for enslaving clerics’ wives as late as 1064, a decade after Leo’s death. See Peter Damian, “Letter 112” in *The Letters of Peter Damian*, 91-120: *The Fathers of the Church: Medieval Continuation* trans. Owen J Blum (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 5: 270-271, 285. On Peter’s service as an advisor to Leo, see Frazee, “The Origins of Clerical Celibacy,” 162.

\(^{108}\) When Leo died in 1054, Pope Victor II (1055-1057), who had been recommended by Hildebrand, was elevated to the papal office. Among his first acts was the condemnation of clerical marriage at the Council of Florence in June of 1055. See Bonizo of Sutri, *Liber ad amicum*, ed. E. Düümmler, *MGH Libelli de lite*, 7 (Hannover : Hahn, 1891), p. 589.
solidified the papacy’s position as a champion of clerical reform. With the death of Alexander II in April of 1073, the reform movement gained fresh momentum with his successor, the monk Hildebrand, who was immensely popular with reformers and wasted little time in setting an ambitious and aggressive reform agenda under the name of Pope Gregory VII.\(^{112}\)

From the beginning of Gregory’s papacy, he asserted the authority to determine what type of man would hold authority in the Church by appointing or deposing clerics based on their commitment to chastity. In demanding a celibate clergy, as Jo Ann McNamara and Jacqueline Murray have both pointed out, Gregory was also, by extension, calling on married or unchaste clerics to abandon one of the chief means by which they had traditionally defined themselves as men in the lay-dominated local communities in which they lived and worked: the sexual and marital subordination of women.\(^{113}\) Indeed, the ideals of the Gregorian Reform represented a significant gendered threat to priests who defined themselves according to lay masculine ideals as


\(^{110}\) At the Lateran Synod of 1059, for example, Pope Nicholas II, for whom the influential monk and reformer Hildebrand served as one of his closest advisors, forbade attendance at masses said by priests who were known to be married or have concubines. See Bonizo of Sutri, *Liber ad amicum*, 594. On Hildebrand serving as Nicholas’ advisor, see Frazee, “The Origins of Clerical Celibacy,” 164. This was also the period that the *Pataria*, which was primarily a lay movement seeking to enforce clerical celibacy through violence and intimidation, first emerged in Milan with the approval of the papacy. See Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy*, 95. For scholarly overviews of the Patarene movement, see Cesare Alzati, “I motivi ideali della polemica antipatarina: matrimonio, ministero e comunione ecclesiale secondo la tradizione ambrosiana nella *Historia* di Landolfo Seniore,” in *Nobiltà e chiese nel medioevo e altri saggi: Scritti in onore di Gerd G. Tellenbach*, ed. Cinzio Violante (Rome: Jouvence, 1993), 199-222 and H.E.J. Cowdrey, “The Papacy, the Patarenes and the Church of Milan,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series*, Vol. 18 (1968): 25-48.

\(^{111}\) Frazee, “The Origins of Clerical Celibacy,” 164.

\(^{112}\) Frazee, “The Origins of Clerical Celibacy,” 165.

Gregorian reformers sought to fully exclude clerics from exercising their manhood according to traditional lay norms, including sexual intercourse and the bearing of children, as well as demonstrations of military prowess.\footnote{Murray, \textit{Masculinizing Religious Life}, 26. Murray notes, "...when secular priests were deprived of their wives, what mechanisms were open to them to prove their manhood in a world that looked for clear and visible markers of gender? The normal avenues by which secular men proved their masculinity—sexual intercourse and engendering children and the exercise of military prowess—were now closed to the clergy."}

Gregory zealously pursued rumors and charges of married clerics. On October 16, 1074, for example, Gregory wrote a letter to Archbishop Udo of Trier asking him to investigate claims that the Archbishop of Toul was living in an unchaste relationship with a woman he was planning to marry. Gregory noted that if the charges proved to be true, then the Archbishop of Toul would be excommunicated.\footnote{Gregory VII, ep. II, 10, ed. by Erich Casper (Berlin: Weidmann, 1920), 140.} In another letter of late 1075, Gregory advised the clergy and laity of Germany that they did not have to obey bishops who allowed for married clerics.\footnote{Gregory VII, “To All the Clergy and Laity of Germany,” in \textit{The Epistolae Vagantes of Pope Gregory VII}, ed. and trans. H.E.J. Cowdrey (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 26.} In a letter to Bishop Josfred of Paris, dated March 25, 1077, Gregory commanded him to forbid all priests who refused “to give up the crime of fornication” from celebrating the mass. Additionally, Gregory commanded Josfred to prohibit rebellious bishops who refused to punish rebellious priests from “receiving their offices any further.”\footnote{Gregory VII, ep. IV, 20, ed. by Erich Casper (Berlin: Weidmann, 1920), 328.} Moreover, in 1078, having created many enemies among the higher clergy as a result of his tactics, Gregory pushed even harder, declaring at his autumn Synod in Rome, that any bishop who tolerated the fornication of priests should be suspended from office.\footnote{McLaughlin, \textit{Sex, Gender, and Episcopal Authority}, 33.}
Gregory also dictated to secular rulers how they should deal with married clergy in their domains. Early in his papacy, before the two men became bitterly divided, in a letter to Henry IV dated December 7, 1074, Gregory commended Henry for his efforts "to use every effort to cure the inveterate disease of clerical unchastity."\(^{119}\) In another letter dated July 20, 1075, Gregory again praised Henry for reports of his efforts to enforce the chastity of the clergy.\(^{120}\) In a letter to Countess Adela of Flanders, dated November 10, 1076, Gregory advised her that unchaste clerics were not allowed to celebrate the mass and should be removed from Church offices.\(^{121}\)

For all his efforts, Gregory never fully won the battle against married priests, much less unchaste priests, but he did have some important successes in the battle for ecclesiastical reform. To begin with, he mostly won popular opinion to his cause of clerical chastity.\(^{122}\) Gregory also firmly asserted the authority of the papacy to appoint or depose churchmen and formally forbade the practice of lay investiture in 1075. Thus the papacy, at least according to supporters of ecclesiastical reform efforts, could largely determine what kind of man would hold authority in the Church, which in their view was a chaste and unmarried man.


\(^{121}\) Gregory VII, ep. IV, 10, ed. by Erich Casper (Berlin: Weidmann, 1920), 309.

\(^{122}\) Frazee, “The Origins of Clerical Celibacy,” 166.
CHAPTER 4
THE GREGORIAN REFORM, THE MASCULINE HIERARCHY, AND THE EFFORT TO REFORM CHRISTIAN KNIGHTS

During the era of the Gregorian Reform, secular priests, heavily influenced by lay norms of masculine behavior, were cut off from some of the key avenues by which masculinity was demonstrated in the societies in which they lived and worked. On threat of excommunication or loss of their offices, Christian authorities maintained secular priests could no longer be or remain married, engage in sexual intercourse, have children, or exercise military prowess.¹ Under such circumstances, if they did not do the things that they believed men were supposed to do, how could they still count themselves as men?

Reformers in the Gregorian era responded to these concerns by pointing out that not only were those who conformed to monastic notions of holiness still men, but they were superior men, whose masculinity was at the very top of the masculine hierarchy.² Thus, as historian Jennifer Thibodeaux has pointed out, “to monasticise the secular clergy did not involve feminizing them,” but instead made them better men.³ Monks or


monasticized priests were “real men” who possessed the same sexual prowess as other men and were also tempted by lust, but they were fully armed and engaged in a manly “battle for chastity,” whereas married or sexually active clerics had cowardly avoided the battle. In this view, not only were monks and reformed priests superior to worldly priests, but they also represented a distinct, separate, and superior order from the laity. The influential Gregorian reformer Humbert of Silva Candida, for example, argued during the mid-eleventh-century that the clergy and laity should be separate both in “behavior and conversation” so that they did not transgress each other’s boundaries.

Scholars have also identified how the ecclesiastical literature of the Gregorian Reform era elevated ecclesiastical masculinity over lay masculinity. This was particularly the case during the papacy of Gregory VII, as ecclesiastical writers like Bernold of St. Blaisien celebrated Gregory for desiring to see the clergy elevated by virtue of their holiness.

Much of the justification for ranking chaste clerics at the top of the masculine hierarchy had to do with what historians have described as the “battle for chastity.”

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5 Humbert of Silva Candida, Adversus Simoniacos, Liber III, 9, ed. F. Thaner, MGH Libelli de lite, 1, (Hannover: Hahn, 1891), 208.

6 See, for example, Miller, “Masculinity, Reform, and Clerical Culture,” 33.


While fighting the “battle for chastity” monks and clerics borrowed the language of military prowess to frame themselves as warriors, among the most manly of occupations, who waged war against the demons of lust on behalf of virtue. It was through this rhetoric of manly warfare, borrowed, as we have seen in Chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation, from monastic and ecclesiastical literature that dated back to the earliest Christian authors, that reformers depicted themselves as virile “soldiers of Christ.” The monk and influential reformer Peter Damian (d. 1072), for example, employed martial rhetoric in his works written for fellow spiritual warriors. In one letter to a hermit who had delayed joining Peter’s monastic community at Fonte Avellana, for example, Peter took the tone of a commander ordering one of his men into battle. Indeed, he called on the hermit to stop postponing and, like a famous warrior (insignis bellator), take up arms “manfully” (viriliter), then “rush in a rage to where the battle seems most desperate” while “bearing Christ’s banner.”

Such language was often used against the opponents of clerical chastity. Pope Alexander II, for example, portrayed the reformers as spiritual soldiers waging war against the demonically inspired opponents of reform. This is perhaps made most clear


in his short letter written in 1067 to Christian reformers at Cremona, in which he described the reformers as “armed” by God with “weapons of His virtues” so that they can “destroy…the filthiness of unchaste clergy.”\textsuperscript{12} Indeed, the reformers were at war with “the ancient enemy” who “like a two-headed snake, wickedly vomited over [them] through his twin gullets the poison of his iniquity.”\textsuperscript{13} Moreover, the faithful defenders of chastity were incited by God “to attack the members of the Devil with greater and greater vigour” as they would be “transfixed by the javelin of [their] holy zeal and stabbed by the dagger of [their] virtue.”\textsuperscript{14} Thus the clergy manfully engaged in spiritual combat every bit as dangerous, or even more so, as the physical warfare fought by laymen.

In the same way that the ideal lay warrior was expected to demonstrate courage on the physical battlefield, the ideal spiritual warrior was also expected to demonstrate courage on the spiritual battlefield.\textsuperscript{15} While the clergy may not have been allowed to engage in physical combat, they did manfully engage in spiritual combat with opponents. In employing such a framework to describe the monk or chaste cleric’s relationship to the world, reformers were not simply trying to co-opt aristocratic masculinity as the \textit{milites Christi} predated the existence of the knightly class.\textsuperscript{16} To the contrary, clerical reformers claimed to \textit{transcend} the secular models of masculinity by

\textsuperscript{12} The full text of Alexander II’s \textit{Letter to the Church of Cremona}, is included in Bonizo of Sutri, \textit{Liber ad amicum}, ed. E. Dümmler, \textit{MGH Libelli de lite}, 1 (Hannover : Hahn, 1891), 597-598.

\textsuperscript{13} Bonizo of Sutri, \textit{Liber ad amicum}, 597.

\textsuperscript{14} Bonizo of Sutri, \textit{Liber ad amicum}, 597.

\textsuperscript{15} Smith, “Spiritual Warriors,” 89.

virtue of their superior holiness and commitment to chastity.\textsuperscript{17} In the words of P.H. Cullum, \textquotedblleft…the 'struggle for chastity' was re-envisioned as a specifically masculine arena of battle…Knights may see themselves as the truly masculine ‘hard men’, but their lives were soft in comparison to the spiritual battles to be fought by monks and clerics in ensuring the submission of the body to the will, in the practice of chastity and in the triumph of martyrdom.\textsuperscript{18}

Moreover, as reformers began to argue, if secular clerics could exchange traditional lay masculinity for the superior masculinity of monks, then perhaps members of the laity could follow them. Thus, emboldened in the Gregorian era, ecclesiastical advocates of reform made a secondary effort to reform the warrior class with a particular emphasis on the lustful and violent knights of Europe, on whom the Church depended for protection and the administration of justice.

**Ecclesiastical Views of Warfare and Warriors until the Early Eleventh Century**

Medieval ecclesiastical, particularly monastic, views of knights, and the profession of arms in general, were dominated by suspicion and concern.\textsuperscript{19} Prior to the Gregorian Reform, for example, clerical authors from Late Antiquity to the first half of the eleventh century had systematically expressed concern over the morality of

\textsuperscript{17} Smith, \textquotedblleftSpiritual Warriors,	extquotedblright 86-87.

\textsuperscript{18} P.H. Cullum, \textquotedblleftIntroduction: Holiness and Masculinity in Medieval Europe,	extquotedblright in Holiness and Masculinity in the Middle Ages, eds. P.H. Cullum and Katherine J. Lewis (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 4. See also Smith, \textit{Spiritual Warriors}, 88, 103.

shedding blood, regardless of the circumstances.\textsuperscript{20} While some influential figures like St. Augustine had advocated a theory of just war as early as the fifth century, some historians have argued that ecclesiastical leaders found it difficult to embrace such a view due to political discord in the West in the early Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{21} A significant change in the Church’s view of Christian participation in warfare came during the era of Carolingian dominance, as western European Christians faced the common threat of Magyars, Norsemen, and Muslims. Indeed, during this period even popes actively participated in campaigns against non-Christians and promised eternal life to Christian warriors who died during the same campaigns.\textsuperscript{22} Yet the weakness of the papacy in the tenth century severely curtailed its centralizing role in the spread of the ideology of holy war, allowing for a gradual return during the tenth century to the traditionally hostile clerical and monastic view of the profession of arms.\textsuperscript{23}

The inherent tensions between a class of Christian warriors who committed themselves to warfare as a duty and mark of manhood and a clergy that condemned such behavior are demonstrated in the unusual account of the life of the Carolingian


\textsuperscript{22} Gilchrist, \textit{The Papacy and War Against the ‘Saracens’}, 174-175.

Count Gerald of Aurillac (855-909). Authored in the early tenth century by Odo of Cluny, the *Life of St. Gerald of Aurillac* was intended to show how it was possible for the laity, as well as lax monks, to live lives of holiness according to monastic virtues. Yet it also paradoxically suggests how difficult it was for layman to live according to those same virtues as demonstrated in the constant challenges facing Gerald. For Gerald to embrace a type of monasticized holiness, he would have been required to avoid sex and bloodshed, both things necessary for a lay nobleman to perpetuate and defend both his bloodline and authority. Yet Odo nevertheless presented Gerald as an aristocratic lord who was able to live a life of holiness, but attend to his aristocratic duties; who engaged in warfare, but spilled no blood; who desired women, but with God’s help was able to live his life as a celibate; who was wealthy, but acted and dressed with humility and ate modestly.

As a consequence of such stories, George Duby and other historians have seen the promotion of Gerald’s cult during the tenth and eleventh century as part of a broader Cluniac effort to “monasticize the laity.” While the degree of influence of Gerald’s cult

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26 On Odo writing his *Life of Saint Gerald* as an example for the laity, see the *Praefatio* of Odon de Cluny, *Vita sancti Geraldi*, 132. On the difficulties of laymen living lives of holiness, as made apparent in Odo’s *Life of Saint Gerald*, see also Karras, “Thomas Aquinas’s Chastity Belt,” 59 and Murray, “Masculinizing Religious Life,” 24-25.


on the broader laity is uncertain, there is evidence that it had a considerable impact in
some areas. Bernard of Angers, for example, writing in the early eleventh-century, a full
century after Odo penned his *Life of St. Gerald*, complained that during his travels to
Languedoc he witnessed lay veneration of St. Gerald that bordered on idolatry. Such
was the intensity of devotion that Bernard feared that if he spoke out against it, he
would have been punished as if he had committed a crime.29

Odo described how Gerald, once committed to the fight, for the right reasons,
became “invincible” on account of his holiness, and thus could order his forces to fight
only with the backs of their swords in an effort to avoid bloodshed.30 Odo noted that
Gerald could get away with such tactics, although they might have appeared “ridiculous
to the enemy,” if not initially so to his own troops as well, because of Gerald’s
invincibility due to God’s intervention. By such measures, Gerald allegedly never lost a
conflict and was never wounded in battle. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly for
Odo, Gerald was claimed to have never wounded another man, despite his many
victories.31

Odo named several instances in which Gerald’s rivals regarded him as less than
a true man; they thought they might take advantage of him, because of his unusual
efforts to aspire to a holy code of behavior more aligned with monks than with


31 Odon de Cluny, *Vita sancti Geraldi*, 144-146.
Consequently, Odo was preoccupied with defending the manhood of Gerald against such charges. Although Gerald did not engage in sex and warfare, Otto framed him in the most masculine of terms by suggesting that he was part of a heavenly army and fought manfully ["viriliter"] against the forces of evil. Indeed, for Odo, Gerald’s masculinity represented a different type of manhood than his peers, more aligned with monastic masculinity than lay masculinity, and while he did not do the things that men of his class were expected to do, he retained his manhood on account of his holy virtues. Thus, in some important ways, Odo’s account of Gerald appears to have foreshadowed a monasticized ideal of knighthood promoted by clerical reformers in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, reaching its fullest expression in the crusading orders (considered in Chapter 6 of this dissertation).

The Peace and Truce of God Movements and their Effects on Knights

Like Odo of Cluny, whose praise of Gerald emphasized his careful deliberation of where and when to fight, later tenth-century ecclesiastical leaders were equally concerned with the violent and disruptive behavior of the military class in the wake of the collapse of Carolingian royal authority. Efforts to address those concerns manifested themselves in the late tenth-century movement of Cluniac inspiration known as the Peace of God, which was followed in the early eleventh-century by the Truce of God.

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32 Odon de Cluny, Vita sancti Geraldi, 142-144.

33 Odon de Cluny, Vita sancti Geraldi, 198. See also Karras’ commentary in, Thomas Aquinas’s Chastity Belt, 59.


Post-Carolingian ecclesiastical leaders were concerned with the effects of such violence both on the clergy and Church property, as well as the peasants and merchants whose lives, as well as the tithes, rents, and services they provided to the Church, were equally disrupted by knightly violence. As a result, ecclesiastical leaders invested themselves in the peacemaking process in a unique way. Through the Peace of God movement, of which the earliest Peace canons that survive are from the Council of Charroux in 989, the Church sought to protect certain classes of non-combatants from knightly violence at all times. In doing so, ecclesiastical leaders attempted to regulate and limit martial activity by appealing directly to the conscience and vanity of the individual warrior, rather than secular authorities. The Church realized that the knightly class was comprised of proud men, fearful of public shame, but eager for public honor, so the

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clergy forced them into public settings in which knights would be shamed if they declined to abide by the Peace movement, but would be praised if they agreed.39

Early in the eleventh century, the second part of the movement emerged with the Truce of God, which sought to impose a type of ascetic discipline on fighting for knights and nobility. Just as penitents were required to fast on certain days, knights were required to abstain from warfare and fighting on Sundays and holy days and refrain from violence in or around churches. Over time, as the Truce of God gained some acceptance, the list of truce days grew to include Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, all the saints’ days, and all of Advent and Lent, thus attempting to narrowly limit when warfare could be carried out.40 Yet even when fighting took place within the boundaries set by the Truce of God, this did not leave obedient warriors in the clear. Bloodshed, until at least the later eleventh century, even in a just cause, remained a sin to be expiated.41

The results of the Peace and Truce of God were mixed. Sometimes respect for the sanctuary offered to non-combatants and fear of excommunication restrained otherwise violent knights, but the discipline of large armies often broke down.42 When this happened, clerics were often active in condemning violations of the Truce. Bishop Ivo of Chartres, for example, excommunicated so many knights who had broken the


40 Gies, *The Knight in History*, 19.


Truce of God that, in a letter to Philip I, he explained that he could not bring an armed force to escort the king because almost all the available knights had been excommunicated for breaking the Truce. Accounts such as Ivo’s demonstrate the limited ability of the clergy to enforce the provisions of the Peace and Truce of God. Indeed, knightly compliance with such provisions seems to have been dependent on degree of seriousness with which knights took the spiritual sanctions of the Church and many knights clearly seemed to have had little concern over such sanctions.

Nevertheless, there are also many examples of prominent knights who submitted to penance imposed on them by the clergy when they violated clerical rules on the acceptable use of force. In doing so, such knights acknowledged the authority of ecclesiastical leaders to dictate when and against whom they could fight. The influential crusades historian Jonathan Riley-Smith, in particular, has highlighted through his various works how a significant number of lay noblemen were apparently genuinely drawn to the pilgrimage movement throughout the eleventh-century, one of the most encouraged forms of penance during this period, to atone for their various sins.

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44 Eleventh-century clerics appear to have relished their new role as referees and authorities on knightly violence, which they connected to their pastoral duty to provide “correction” of the laity in general. See, for example, Pope Gregory VII’s March 15, 1081 Letter to Hermann of Metz in which Gregory describes it as the duty of the clergy to exhort everyone according to his station. See Gregory VII, ep. VIII, 21, ed. by Erich Casper (Berlin: Weidmann, 1920), 558. The clergy justified its moral, and by extension political, authority over the laity partly by reference to the purity of the clergy. Indeed, it was the corporeal purity of the bishops that served as the basis of their spiritual and moral authority, which they believed gave them the right to condemn the sinful behavior of knights, fine them, and force them to seek penance. See Andrew G. Miller, “Knights, Bishops and Deer Parks: Episcopal Identity, Emasculation and Clerical Space in Medieval England,” in Negotiating Clerical Identities: Priests, Monks and Masculinity in the Middle Ages, ed. Jennifer D. Thibodeaux (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), 206.

45 Riley-Smith’s works have heavily influenced the current historiography on the issue. See, for example, The First Crusaders (already cited in this chapter), as well as The First Crusade and the Idea of
Consider the example of Count Fulk III, who had violently ruled Anjou for more than half a century, and took a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulcher only six or seven years before its destruction by al-Hakim in 1009. Fulk’s motivation, as expressed in a letter to the Archbishop of Tours, was his fear of Hell as a result of all the blood he had shed. Fulk made three other pilgrimages during his lifetime and with his final arrival in Jerusalem, as an old man nearing his death, he called on Christ to forgive him while a servant scourged his back and he was led with a halter draped around his neck to the site of the Holy Sepulcher. In 1039, Guy I of Leval, for example, set out on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem “not despairing of the Lord’s mercy, but desiring to obtain remission of punishment.” Moreover, Guy’s charter confirmed his renunciation of rights not justly claimed. In another case, Count Thierry of Trier, who had killed an archbishop in 1059, also made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem as a means of atoning for his sin. By the later eleventh century in particular, on the eve of the calling of the First Crusade, an apparently significant number of knights had committed themselves to the

_Crusading_ (London: Athlone, 1995) and the influential article “Crusading as an Act of Love,” _History_ 65 (1980): 177-192. On the popularity of the pilgrimage movement during this period, see Hans Eberhard Mayer, _The Crusades_, trans. John Gillingham (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 14. Cluny used its prestige and influence to organize distant networks of contacts to help facilitate pilgrimages and improve facilities for pilgrims. The increasing popularity of pilgrimages during the tenth and eleventh centuries suggests that many laymen responded to the clergy’s call for corrective action. Indeed, during this period the pilgrimage came to be viewed as the climax of a Christian’s spiritual life, with the pilgrimage destination as the place a pilgrim would remain until their death. In the case of Jerusalem as a type of shrine in which to die, see Benedicta Ward, _Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record, and Event, 1000-1215_ (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 124-5.


47 Riley-Smith, _The First Crusaders_, 28.

48 _Cartulaire de l’évêché du Mans_, ed. B. de Broussillon, 2 vols. (Archives historiques du Maine 1, 9, Le Mans, 1900-8), 1.2.

49 _Annales Hildesheimenses_, ed. G. Waitz, MGHS in usum scholarum (Hannover, 1878), 47.
hardships of pilgrimage as a penance for their sins. Around 1080, a citizen of Cologne received the penance of a multiple pilgrimage to all the great shrines to atone for the murder of his brother. In 1087, for example, Herbert of Sennecé reportedly bewailed “the enormity of his sins” in front of the altar of the Church of Beaujeu before departing on a pilgrimage to the East. Indeed, citing these and other examples, Riley-Smith has described the attitude of later eleventh-century Christians toward Jerusalem, on the eve of the First Crusade, as no less than “obsessive.”

Despite the successes described above, clerical efforts to curb the excesses of knights were clearly limited. This is perhaps best demonstrated by the continued widespread clerical condemnations of knightly behavior that continued throughout the eleventh-century and extended into the twelfth century and beyond. Throughout the eleventh-century clerics regularly sent unsolicited letters to kings and other members of the nobility condemning their various vices and urging their correction. During the second half of the eleventh century, even popes increasingly condemned violent

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50 Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, 20. “Large number of people were regularly departing for Jerusalem with the encouragement of monasteries and there was traffic right up to the eve of the [First] crusade and beyond.”


52 *Cartulaire de l’église collégiale de Notre-Dame de Beaujeu*, M.C. Guigue (Lyons, 1864),17.

53 Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, 21. Several knights seem to have been planning pilgrimages to Jerusalem in the months leading up to the calling of the First Crusade. Count Roger of Foix, for example, was known to have made preparations for such a pilgrimage around the same time as a knight named Odard, who appears to have traveled to the Holy Land as a traditional pilgrim and returned to Europe in 1098, at a time when the first crusaders were battling their way through Asia-Minor. See pages 20-21.

members of the nobility who did not abide by the Church’s emerging rules and limits on Christian warfare. This was particularly the case with those laymen who harassed the Church or ecclesiastical property. Pope Gregory VII, for example, condemned “…emperors, kings, princes, and other ranks of men—made captive by their wretched greed” for having “invaded” and “plundered” the Church’s lands and possessions without repenting and seeking penance after they had been admonished for their deeds.\footnote{Pope Gregory VII, “To All the Faithful (1084),” in The Epistolae Vagantes of Pope Gregory VII, ed. and trans. H.E.J. Cowdrey (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 134-136: “Nonnulli enim imperatores reges et principes allorumque ordinum personae misera cupiditate capti…eius possessions inuaserunt, distraxerunt, et in proprios usus redegerunt…ne ad penitentiam redirent…” For additional examples of the continued disobedience of knights during this period, see also Orderic Vitalis, The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis: Volume II, Books III and IV, ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), 120, and Suger, The Deeds of Louis the Fat, trans. Richard C. Cusim and John Moorhead (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992), 30. See also Scaglione, Knights at Court, 32.}

Yet while clerical efforts over knightly behavior during this period were limited, they nevertheless clearly had an impact on some prominent knights.\footnote{On reform efforts having a broader impact on knightly behavior, see John France, Western Warfare in the Age of the Crusades, 1000-1300 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999), 57.} The heightened pilgrimage activity of knights during the eleventh and early twelfth centuries can serve as evidence for the heightened influence of the reformers on the knightly class during this period.\footnote{Riley-Smith, The First Crusaders, 28-34.} Indeed, some prominent knights, as demonstrated in the examples of Count Fulk III and Count Thierry of Trier provided above, appear to have taken the admonitions of clerical critics seriously and seem to have been well aware of their sinfulness as they sought ways to make amends through pilgrimage.\footnote{Marcus Bull, Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade: The Limousin and Gascony, c. 970-c. 1130. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 165-166, and Marcus Bull, “The Roots of Lay Enthusiasm for the First Crusade,” in The Crusades: The Essential Readings, ed. Thomas Madden (Malden, Ma.: Blackwell, 2002), 189-190. See also Mayer, The Crusades, 14.}
The Basis for Knightly Masculinity

For those knights resistant to clerical reform efforts, undoubtedly representing the majority, the problem was that the proposed reforms would have curbed behavior that was usually considered essential to how knights defined themselves as men. Their ability to inflict violence and demonstrate courage and military prowess through warfare, for example, was essential to their social and economic success and a key means by which they could distinguish themselves from other men.\(^{59}\) As a result, knightly combat was seen as the most masculine of pursuits as nothing more clearly demonstrated one’s courage or dominance over other men, thus making military prowess the virtue admired most by fellow knights.\(^{60}\)

Because warfare was a public event, one’s actions on the battlefield were often known and could serve as the basis of either personal shame for cowardice or ineptness, or glory for demonstrations of courage and skill.\(^{61}\) Moreover, defeating or dominating other knights in battle could elevate victorious knights in the social order.\(^{62}\) Indeed, in the case of the medieval knight, it was other medieval warriors who observed him in battle and judged his ability to inflict violence as the basis by which his


\(^{62}\) See, for example, Abbot Theofred of Echternach’s *Vita Willibrordi*, 36 *MGH SS*, 23:28, which provides an account of how combative Flemish knights fought each other as a means of establishing themselves higher in the social order.
masculinity was validated among other warriors. Consequently, such knights almost certainly would not have wanted or wished for peace, as a lack of warfare also meant a lack of opportunity to amass the two things that mattered most to knights of all ages: a personal fortune and greater honor through the demonstration of courage and military prowess. Thus a knight’s reputation for bravery and ability to inflict violence was central to his identity.

Knights could also build their reputations through a nearly institutionalized form of boasting, particularly about one’s achievements on the battlefield, real or imagined, which could sometimes establish one’s martial reputation as quickly as the actual performance of such deeds. The establishment of a reputation for martial prowess had significant benefits for a knight as such a reputation could win followers and supporters among those who sought to enrich themselves through plunder and ransoms. Similarly, boasting about one’s sexual prowess could also help build a manly

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63 Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 56-58.

64 Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 59.


66 See, for example, Frank Barlow, *William Rufus* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 436. See also Stephen Morillo, *Warfare Under the Anglo-Norman Kings, 1066-1135* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994), 45. On the prevalence of examples of knightly boasting in popular literature of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, as well as many references to such examples, see William Wistar Comfort, “The Character Types in the Old French Chansons de Geste,” *PMLA* 21:2 (1906): 321. “Every poem presents examples of this obligation incumbent on the hero to do a certain amount of blustering and boasting before undertaking a task.”

reputation. Just as one’s martial prowess should be demonstrated on the battlefield, real men were expected to demonstrate sexual prowess in the bedroom, which could be established through the bearing of children. Taken together, martial and sexual prowess represented the key avenues by which the nobility demonstrated their manliness, and thus prideful bragging about both were to be expected by those seeking to establish a manly reputation.

If arrogant boasting about sinful deeds were not enough to disturb clerical reformers who preached a life of humility, the bold and audacious hair and clothing fashions that became popular among the aristocratic knightly class during the eleventh century further ruffled the feathers of conservative clerical critics. Clerical criticism of such styles seems to have been particularly prominent by the end of the century on the eve of the First Crusade. On Ash Wednesday in 1094, for example, Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury refused to give ashes or blessings to young men who, according to him, had grown their hair “like girls.” He asked that they first cut their hair. In 1096, the Council of Rouen went as far as to forbid long hair as unbefitting of a Christian male.

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69 Murray, “Masculinizing Religious Life,” 26. Murray, focusing on the eleventh-century, refers to sexual intercourse, engendering children, and the exercise of military prowess as the “normal avenues by which secular men proved their masculinity.”


threatening exclusion from Christian burial for those who persisted in such fashions.\textsuperscript{72} Hairstyles varied by region in the tenth and for much of the eleventh century. In the battle scenes of the Bayeux Tapestry, for example, the Saxons have short, cropped hair and the Normans have mustaches.\textsuperscript{73} Yet by the end of the eleventh century, to the chagrin of the clergy, long hair had become popular with aristocrats in western continental Europe.\textsuperscript{74} Clothing, as well, in both England and on the Continent, became more colorful and flamboyant during the later eleventh century.\textsuperscript{75}

Regardless of clerical concerns, by the eleventh century, aristocratic warriors had, unlike their more practical tenth century predecessors, largely adopted such fashions.\textsuperscript{76} Indeed, it was also during this period that knights increasingly became identified with the nobility, rather than simply in service to them, so it is not surprising that they became increasingly attracted to aristocratic fashions.\textsuperscript{77} Indeed, during the eleventh century, adherence to popular fashions was an important element of a knight’s masculine identity, so much so that personal style could build a knight’s manly reputation almost as effectively as actual campaigning.\textsuperscript{78}

In addition to violence, prideful boasting, and ostentatious hair and dress, knights also defined themselves as men in part according to their relationship to women. A


\textsuperscript{73} Leo Braudy, \textit{From Chivalry to Terrorism}, 67.

\textsuperscript{74} Jaeger, \textit{The Origins of Courtliness}, 265 and Bennett, \textit{Military Masculinity}, 79.

\textsuperscript{75} See Braudy, \textit{From Chivalry to Terrorism}, 67; Bennett, \textit{Military Masculinity}, 79; and Jaeger, \textit{The Origins of Courtliness}, 265.

\textsuperscript{76} On the practicality of 10\textsuperscript{th} century knights, see Leo Braudy, \textit{From Chivalry to Terrorism}, 61.

\textsuperscript{77} See Coss, \textit{The Knight in Medieval England}, 6-7; Duby, \textit{The Chivalrous Society}, 158-170; Morillo, \textit{Warfare Under the Anglo-Norman Kings}, 45; and Bennett, “Military Masculinity,” 86.

\textsuperscript{78} Morillo, \textit{Warfare Under the Anglo-Norman Kings}, 45. See also Bennett, “Military Masculinity,” 86.
youth, regardless of his age, might be dubbed a knight, and even engage in successful warfare, but not yet be considered a man (\textit{vir}) by his peers until he married and became a father.\textsuperscript{79} Thus a knight could not be seen fully as a man until he had become the head of an independent house and founded his own family, which was often his chief goal early in his career.\textsuperscript{80} Yet many young knights were in no position financially to become heads of a household, as they had not yet made their fortunes. Thus many of them resorted to a “life of vagabondage,” a period of development in which the young knight belonged to a band of youthful knightly friends who loved each other like brothers.\textsuperscript{81} This “company” or “household” was sometimes founded immediately after the dubbing ceremony and centered on a more established leader who provided them with arms and direction. Unmarried knights might remain in such a household until they were prepared to marry, have children, and establish their own household.\textsuperscript{82} While the main pursuit of these bands of youthful knights was the opportunity for fighting, clerics complained that they also often pursued pleasure, squandered money, and exhibited loose morals on a number of fronts.\textsuperscript{83}


\textsuperscript{80} See Aird, \textit{Frustrated Masculinity}, 46 and Megan McLaughlin, \textit{Sex, Gender, and Episcopal Authority in an Age of Reform, 1000-1122} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 166.

\textsuperscript{81} Duby, \textit{The Chivalrous Society}, 114. Duby cites the example of young Arnould of Pamele in the \textit{Acta Sanctorum}, August III, 232 A.

\textsuperscript{82} Duby, \textit{The Chivalrous Society}, 114.

The Clerical Effort to Reform Knights

Clerical reformers faced a daunting task in trying to correct the behavior they found most objectionable in knights. This was because knights understood the same behavior that the clergy was trying to correct as key to defining themselves as men in knightly society. To convince knights to stop doing things the clergy found objectionable, clerics needed to convince laymen that such behavior was irredeemably sinful and promote an alternative model of behavior based on models of Christian holiness that redefined knightly masculinity itself. But, to do that, the clergy had to provide an alternative masculine identity that provided significant benefits for embracing such a change. The clergy attempted to do this by arguing for the elimination of certain knightly behaviors or characteristics involving sex, pride, and appearance, while also arguing that increased holiness and humility would please God and enhance the most prized of knightly virtues: martial prowess.

Consider the moral example provided in a monastic text authored by Bernard of Angers around the year 1020. In it, Bernard described a prideful knight named Rainon who had been excommunicated by the monks of St. Foy. One day Rainon encountered a group of these monks and, filled with pride, he decided to attack them. Yet because he was acting against God’s wishes, Bernard claimed that divine intervention caused his horse to stumble as he charged the defenseless monks and in the resulting fall he broke his neck and fractured his skull. Bernard ended the story with the reminder that Rainon’s pride was the cause of his clumsy downfall, whereas presumably he could have avoided such troubles through the practice of humility.84

84 *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis* 1, 5, ed. Auguste Bouillet (Paris, 1897), 24-26. For a fuller examination of this text, considering the issue of Rainon’s pride, see Lester K. Little, “Pride Goes Before
Though celibate clerics might not have done the things that knights did to establish their manhood, the reformed clergy nevertheless believed they represented a superior type of masculinity by virtue of their representing a superior type of warrior: the miles Christi. Clerical reformers argued that spiritual combat was purifying whereas worldly warfare led to damnation. Whereas worldly knights easily succumbed to vices like greed, vanity, and wrath, the miles Christi employed humility, obedience and chastity as their chief weapons on the spiritual battlefield.85 Indeed, because clerics claimed that spiritual warriors fought against far deadlier enemies than their secular counterparts, they commanded a greater store of masculine virtus than their secular counterparts, and had far more powerful allies than even the strongest secular warrior could boast.86 Thus the chaste cleric, who rejected women and arms, believed he represented a superior and elevated masculine identity that was spiritually purer than that of knights, over whom he argued he had authority.87

In attempting to reform the old sinful knighthood as a new Christian knighthood, churchmen advocated changes of behavior in three areas. First, as considered earlier in this chapter, from at least the late tenth century onward, ecclesiastical authorities attempted to restrain and to limit how and when knights could conduct warfare. They insisted that knights, following in the traditions of the Peace and Truce of God

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movements, become far more restricted in their choice of when, where, and against whom they fought, as well as in the motivations that inspired them to fight, if their warfare was to offend God to the least degree possible. At a council in Narbonne in 1054, for example, the terms of the Truce of God were expanded to forbid any Christian from killing another Christian with the startling admonition that whoever did so “spills the blood of Christ.”\(^8^8\) Few knights, as evidenced by continued inter-Christian conflict in the following decades, could accept this literally, but nevertheless the proclamation of the Truce of God promoted the idea that they could only be fully justified in exercising their profession of war when they did so against the enemies of Christ.\(^8^9\)

Although some earlier clerical authorities had argued the warrior’s work was always sinful, requiring penance regardless of the circumstances, by the time of the Gregorian Reform the Church depended significantly on the force of arms for the defense of its persons and property. Thus we see more emphasis on redefining the warrior class as a new and essential order of Christian society, with a new set of warrior values, under the moral oversight of the reformed clergy.\(^9^0\) Representative of their new authority over the knightly class, the clergy gradually began to oversee many of the ceremonies of knighthood.\(^9^1\) Ceremonies associated with knighthood, beginning with the blessing of arms, were conducted in such a way as to demonstrate the authority of

\(^8^8\) For the canons of the Council of Narbonne, see Giovanni Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. 19 (Venice, 1774), col. 827. The first canon notes, “…quia qui Christianum occidit, sine dubio Christi sanguinem fundit.”


\(^9^1\) Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, 143-144.
the Church over the profession of arms. Sometime before 1093 at Cambrai, for example, there is evidence that a fully developed ritual was devised that contained prayers for blessing the lance, the banner, the sword, shield, and the knight himself, followed by the knight’s girding with his sword by the bishop himself.92

The second change of behavior reformers advocated for knights had to do with humility. In short, knights were rarely humble, but the Church wanted them to be. Consequently, the clergy called on knights to adopt a humble manner, long considered a virtue of monks, if they were to make themselves acceptable or even pleasing to God. Arrogantly boasting of one’s achievements, as if such achievements were really their own, rather than giving God the credit for their successes, was a sure way to alienate God and bring about his disfavor. Because God granted the victories, then good knights, clerics argued, would give the credit and glory for such victories to God alone. Moreover, the clergy argued there were practical benefits for warriors who embraced a humble manner, as only a humble warrior could be assured of God’s good will.93

Indeed, according to the clergy, virtues like humility had long been considered a spiritual weapon of monks and a mark of superiority of the monk over the knight.94 In attempting to reform knights reformers argued that humility could insure God’s good will toward the Christian warrior, whereas arrogance could turn God against him. In Pope Gregory VII’s letter rebuking Henry IV, for example, Gregory contrasted the fortunes of the biblical

92 Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, 143-144.


kings Saul and David by comparing the haughtiness of Saul with the humility of David as a warning to Henry.\textsuperscript{95}

Before knights could properly embrace humility before God, they had to demonstrate it in their daily lives. This included how they dressed and appeared in public. The problem was that knights sent unmistakable signals through their ostentatious dress and well groomed appearance that were meant to bolster, or at least ensure, their place among other men of their class.\textsuperscript{96} Yet the reformed clergy sought to align lay fashions with the common clerical norms, as they had always considered worldly fashions to be effeminate and inferior to the simplicity of humble and manly clerical dress.\textsuperscript{97} In the court of William Rufus, for example, the second Norman king of England (1087-99), St. Anselm of Bec condemned otherwise popular long hair styles as a sign of effeminacy and homosexuality.\textsuperscript{98} Moreover, during the Middle Ages hairiness was associated with virile heat, which for clerics could also be a sign of potential sexual pollution.\textsuperscript{99} Indeed, for reformed clerics of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, being clean-shaven with short and tonsured hair was a symbol of one’s abandonment of the dominant traits most commonly associated with aristocratic masculinity during this

\textsuperscript{95} Gregory VII, ep. VIII, 21, ed. by Erich Casper (Berlin: Weidmann, 1920), 558.

\textsuperscript{96} Bennett, “Military Masculinity,” 80: “Some believed that fine warrior fashions indicated the virility of the wearer.”

\textsuperscript{97} Caesarius of Heisterbach, Dialogus miraculorum, 7. 55, ed. Strange vol. 2, 74-75. See an examination of this text in Murray, “Masculinizing Religious Life,” 32-33.

\textsuperscript{98} For an overview of hostile clerical commentary (e.g. by Eadmer, Orderic Vitalis, and William of Malmesbury) on the court of William Rufus, including accusations of effeminate hair, unmanliness, and sodomy, see Barlow, William Rufus, 103-104 and Bennett, “Military Masculinity,” 80-81.

Moreover, if knights embraced ostentatious clothing and hair styles to impress women, it is not certain that such styles always appealed to women, as at least one anonymous, twelfth-century clerical source has argued, noting that women instead preferred men who avoided such “evil ways” and practiced virtue by providing “service rendered with humility.”

The third change of behavior reformist clerics advocated for knights had to do with sexual purity. Reform clerics emphasized the importance of spiritual purity for warriors whose lives were regularly at risk. This was to be achieved primarily through chastity and the avoidance of sexual pollution associated with women. The knight who managed to maintain a pure soul at the time of death, after all, had a greater chance of eternal salvation. Moreover, the spiritually pure knight might even have a greater chance of avoiding death than his non-pure comrades, as the spiritually pure knight was more pleasing and less offensive to God, who then aided him with greater courage and prowess on the battlefield.

The clerical effort to address the sexual immorality of the laity is, of course, nearly as old as Christianity itself, but during the tenth century, we see the beginnings of a targeted focus of such pronouncements on the warrior class. This was perhaps best

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100 Murray, “One Flesh, Two Sexes, Three Genders?,” 44.


102 The anonymous knight who authored the Gesta Francorum (c. 1100), for example, explained the extraordinary bravery of the Norman knights Bohemond and Tancred on the battlefield by pointing out that God loved them “…exceedingly beyond all others” and therefore granted them “…excelling courage in battle.” See Anonymous, Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolitanorum: The Deeds of the Franks and the Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem, ed. Rosalind Hill (London, Edinburgh, Paris, Melbourne, Toronto, and New York: Thomas Nelson, 1962), 56: “…Boamundus et Tancredus mortals sunt sicut alii omnes, sed Deus eorum ualde diligit eos prae omnibus aliiis, et virtutem preliandi date is prae ceteris.” See also Kaeuper, Chivalry and Violence, 48-49. Kaeuper notes that prowess was portrayed as “the divine gift to knighthood.”
illustrated by the Cluniac promotion of the cult of Gerald of Aurillac. As noted earlier in this chapter, the influential abbot, Odo of Cluny, had written a *Life of St. Gerald* in which he attempted to monasticize the layman. He did so by portraying Gerald as a man who avoided bloodshed on the battlefield, but who strove to maintain his chastity.\(^{103}\) Odo reports on Gerard’s early struggles to pursue a life of sanctity while continuing to exercise worldly power. These struggles include avoiding a marriage proposed by his overlord, his effort to resist the temptation to fornicate, and the psychosomatic blindness that resulted from this incident.\(^{104}\) Thus, Odo depicted sexual pollution as a threat to Gerald, even making him blind, a great handicap for a warrior.

Evidence that reform-minded clerics continued to try to tame the sexual passions of the warrior-elite is abundant throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries. While their focus was primarily on members of their own group during much of the later half of the eleventh century, they also promoted the benefits of chastity, or even celibacy, for the laity and particularly condemned the lack of chastity among the nobility and knightly class. That clerical views on chastity had at least some impact among the lay elites seems to be suggested by ideals reflected in the popular literature of the era. *The Song of Roland*, for example, popularized a monasticized form of knighthood, while later

\(^{103}\) See Odon de Cluny, *Vita sancti Geraldi*, 146-150. See also Karras, “Thomas Aquinas’s Chastity Belt,” 59.

twelfth- and thirteenth-century Arthurian tales emphasized the heroic purity of knights like Percival and Galahad.  

**Knightly Resistance to Clerical Reform**

While ecclesiastical sources suggest that reformers may have had limited success in reforming some knights, the same sources suggest that many more knights seem to have continued to act as they always had, in ways that were deemed essential to building a manly reputation and maintaining one’s place in society. Indeed, violence (as well as a reputation for violence) remained a political necessity for men of the aristocratic classes and clerical admonitions to the contrary may have effectively induced some guilt, but little else for many knights. As already noted earlier in this essay, even though the Church had offered the opportunity for knights to belong to a slowly emerging Christian knighthood in the tenth and eleventh centuries, many knights refused to serve in such a capacity, preferring instead to live by the secular standards of knights in their era. Knightly masculinity, perhaps the most powerful ideal of medieval manhood, required fighting, and the Church’s efforts to limit such fighting must have seemed to many knights like an effort to limit their manliness.

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107 See Pope Gregory VII, ”To All the Faithful (1084),” in *The Epistolae Vagantes of Pope Gregory VII*, ed, and trans. H.E.J. Cowdrey (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 133. Gregory lamented, “Qui vel quot sunt qui pro timore vel amore omnipotentis Dei, in quo uiuimus, mouemur, et sumus, tentum desudent vel usque ad mortem laborent, quantum secularis militis pro dominis suis etiam pro amicis et subditis? Ecce multa milia hominum secularium pro dominis suis cotidie currunt in mortem; pro caelesti uero Deo et redemptore nostro non solum in mortem non currunt, uerum etiam quorumdam hominum inimicitias subire contemptur.”

For similar reasons, clerical efforts to restrict and limit traditional knightly sexuality, particularly their wooing of women and bearing of children, was not well received either. Medieval aristocratic men took pride in their progeny, both legitimate and illegitimate, and thus many did not view the clerical model of manhood, which emphasized chastity, as real manhood.\textsuperscript{109} Moreover, clerical masculinity, which claimed to be superior to all other forms of masculinity by virtue of the clerical separation from women, represented an unappealing alternative to knightly masculinity.\textsuperscript{110} Indeed, for many knights, as well as many monks and reformed clerics, clerical and knightly models of masculinity came to represent competing opposite ends on a spectrum of medieval masculine identities to which members on each side could aspire.\textsuperscript{111}

For most knights the benefits offered by the clergy in exchange for reform of the knightly class were not enough. What would it mean to please God if by doing so one was viewed as weak or a lesser man in the competitive world of knightly aristocrats? Nevertheless, the reforming Church had directly confronted the Christian warrior class and presented an alternative model of behavior that had at least, as demonstrated in the examples considered in this chapter, registered on the consciousness of some knights. While the benefits of knightly obedience to the values advocated by the Church did not yet outweigh the negatives for most knights, a foundation was laid for the next step in the development of a more appealing and institutionalized form of Christian

\textsuperscript{109} Karras, “Thomas Aquinas’s Chastity Belt,” 67.

\textsuperscript{110} McNamara, “The Herrenfrage,” 5.

warrior identity with the rise of the crusading movement at the end of the eleventh century.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{112} Riley-Smith, \textit{The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading}, 8. "It cannot be said that before 1095 the appeals of the reformers to the laity had been outstandingly successful. Only a few laymen, scattered throughout Europe, had become fideles sancti Petri or had answered the Church's call for physical aid in other ways. It was only with the response to the preaching of the crusade that this particular message of the reformers seems to have really got across."
CHAPTER 5
BETWEEN WARRIOR AND PRIEST: THE CREATION OF A NEW MASCULINE
IDENTITY DURING THE CRUSADES

As considered in Chapter 4, the new assertiveness and confidence of the
reformed clergy in the later eleventh century emboldened them to seek important
societal changes outside their ranks, with a particular focus on the knightly class. It was
then that ecclesiastical leaders engaged in a campaign to appropriate warfare for
purposes they deemed worthy, or even holy. In doing so, they called on Christian
warriors to abandon the behavior that had long defined them as men in favor of a new
Christian ideal. Yet by the later eleventh century the reformers had experienced very
limited success in this endeavor. While historians like Jonathan Riley-Smith and Marcus
Bull have argued that many knights demonstrated remorse over the sinful deeds their
profession often required of them, and even became accustomed to having the clergy
tell them when and where they could fight, they did not, in significant numbers, embrace
the new, holier, warrior ideal advocated by reformers. ¹ Indeed, such changes would
have required them to redefine how they viewed themselves as warriors, the most
masculine of professions, by new and untested standards.²

Consequently, this chapter will first consider how new clerical thinking about
Christian participation in warfare in the later half of the eleventh century laid a
foundation for the emergence of the crusading movement at the end of the century.

¹On the hesitantycy of knights to embrace the ideals of clerical reformers prior to the First
Crusade, see Jonathan Riley-Smith, The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading (London: Athlone,
1993), 8.

²Among the best studies on reformed knights in this era are Marcus Bull, Knightly Piety and the
Lay Response to the First Crusade: The Limousin and Gascony, c. 970-c. 1130. (Oxford: Clarendon
Indeed, this is a foundational issue that must be considered carefully, since before the clergy could define a new type of warrior, they had to define an alternative type of warfare as would be seen in the birth of the crusading movement. Once established, the crusading movement gave clerical reformers a more appealing vehicle by which they attempted to convince Christian knights to embrace the reformers’ holy warrior ideal. Indeed, the clergy claimed that crusading presented knights with a means by which they could employ the tools of their deadly profession in a way that was pleasing to God.3

Once the clergy had presented the First Crusade as a worthwhile type of holy war, they then promoted the necessity of an alternative type of warrior ideal. Clerics argued that those sinful knights seeking redemption through the crusade, if they were to be successful, would have to take and maintain vows like those required of the humble and penitential pilgrim.4 In becoming crusaders, clerics argued, the formerly worldly warrior entered into a new vocation in which he became a temporary ecclesiastic, who, as we have seen, embraced a different model of manhood.5 From the time they had

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3 This was because clerical leaders promoted the anticipated hardships of an extended military campaign in the form of the First Crusade as of the equivalent of an armed pilgrimage, involving redemptive suffering as expected of any other pilgrim, by which Christian knights could bring about their salvation. The cleric Guibert of Nogent, for example, noted in his account of Pope Urban II’s preaching of the First Crusade that the pope warned his listeners that previously they had “waged wrongful wars” for which they “deserved only eternal death and damnation.” Yet with the calling of the First Crusade, Urban argued, the knightly class now had the opportunity to fight in battles that offered “the gift of glorious martyrdom” and could earn them the “present and future praise” that such warriors saw as essential to establishing and maintaining their manly reputations. Guibert of Nogent, The Deeds of God Through the Franks: Gesta Dei Per Francos. (trans) Robert Levine, (Suffolk: 1997), 43. See also Fulcherio Carnotensi, ‘Historia Iherosolymitana,’ RHC Occ 3, 321-23. For an excellent overview of the pilgrimage origins of the First Crusade, see James A. Brundage, Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 3-29.


taken their vow until its redemption, a process that could take several years, crusaders were required to avoid sin and receive the sacraments regularly. Indeed, according to the ideal presented by the clergy, knights who had taken up the cross were supposed to avoid offending God at all costs, as they were dependent on his goodwill for success on the crusade. Thus clerical understandings of the necessity of personal holiness to wage successful spiritual warfare carried over to their understandings of how to conduct successful holy warfare on the physical battlefield. Such thinking thus provided the clergy with the opportunity to offer those knights who embraced the crusader ideal something that they desired above all else - victory on the battlefield.

One of the consequences of constructing a monasticized holy warrior ideal, which made the once sinful knight suitable for the crusading battlefield, was that such an ideal, by extension, created an alternative warrior masculine identity that could compete with the traditional model embraced by secular knights. Indeed, with the clerical creation of the crusader, the clergy rejected many traits commonly associated with less pious secular knights and replaced them with virtues traditionally associated with monks.6 Unlike his arrogant and haughty secular counterpart, who established his reputation through his sexual prowess as much as his military prowess, the ideal crusader was to be humble and chaste, giving glory to God for his victories and kept...

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6 On the reasons for why the clergy condemned much of the behavior of secular knights, see Chapter 4. On the monasticization of warfare, see Katherine Allen Smith, War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 2011), 106. “Throughout the chronicles, the crusaders are referred to as milites Christi and athletae Christi, terms traditionally used for monks, and are credited with possessing the very qualities- humility, righteousness, and even chastity- from which the later drew their spiritual authority.” See also Jonathan Riley-Smith, The Crusades, Christianity, and Islam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 32-33. “Contemporaries used in relation to the crusade phrases that until then had been customarily applied only to monks and the monastic profession...comparisons between monasticism and crusading were being made even before the armies marched.”
pure for the holy war battlefield by his avoidance of women. Thus, as this chapter will consider, if a knight were to embrace the masculine ideal embodied in the clerical vision of the crusader, they would have to redefine themselves according to monastic virtues as men and warriors, rather than by the traditional standards on which knightly masculinity was gauged.

Finally, after considering clerical efforts to define a warrior masculine ideal during the era of the First Crusade, this chapter will also consider evidence that gives us insights into how effective such measures were in bringing about the conversion of knights to the masculine model represented in the clerically constructed crusader ideal. To be clear, the vast majority of Europe’s knights never became crusaders. Nevertheless, while acknowledging they were only a minority, we should recognize that thousands of knights voluntarily participated in the First Crusade under the specific provisions laid out for them by clerical reformers who oversaw the birth of the crusade.\(^7\) It is this group of knights, some of whom were among the most influential in Europe, that allowed for the first test of what had been up to this time only a largely theoretical model of the Christian warrior proposed by reformed clerics in the late eleventh century. This is not to suggest that even this minority of knights who voluntarily took the crusading vows prescribed by the clergy wholeheartedly submitted to the model of Christian warrior identity advocated by the clergy. They undoubtedly participated with a wide range of personal motives and, as clerical sources make clear, many of those who had taken crusading vows, regardless of their initial intentions, did not always live up to

the pious ideals and requirements of those vows during the course of the crusade. Yet, as this chapter will document, there were also many knights who reportedly took their commitment to the principles of crusading seriously. By doing so, they came to represent the alternative model of warrior masculinity promoted by the clergy, which finally achieved surprising success during the era of the First Crusade.

Pope Gregory VII and the Foundations of the Crusading Movement

Although historians have chronicled how the roots of crusading ideology emerged during the papacies of Leo IX, Pope Nicholas II, and Alexander II, none of them

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8 Faced with a number of lay threats to papal and ecclesiastical authority in the later half of the eleventh century, which seemed to require military force as a response, Gregorian-era popes and their supporters increasingly began to argue that the new order of Christian knighthood had a divinely inspired obligation to defend the Church by force if necessary. Among the chief advocates of such a view was Pope Leo IX (1049-1054), who historians have generally considered the first pope of the era to embrace and implement such principles. When Leo, early in his papacy, felt threatened by the influence and growing power of the Normans in Italy, he sought to address the problem with a military solution. Although Leo’s strategy ultimately failed, resulting in his humiliating capture and imprisonment by the Normans in Benevento for nearly a year, there are three remarkable features of Leo’s efforts worth highlighting. First, Leo took personal command of the campaign in southern Italy and his army marched as a papal army, under a papal banner. Second, to the Germans who took part in the campaign, Leo offered absolution for their sins and remission from their penance. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, after his defeat and eventual return to Rome, Leo prominently promoted a cult of martyrdom for those soldiers of his papal army who had fallen in battle against the Normans. See “The Life of Pope Leo IX,” in The Papal Reform of the Eleventh Century: Lives of Pope Leo IX and Pope Gregory VII, Selected Sources Translated and Annotated by I.S. Robinson (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2004), 151; Bonizo of Sutri, “The Book of Bishop Bonizo of Sutri, Which is Entitled ‘To a Friend,’” in The Papal Reform of the Eleventh Century: Lives of Pope Leo IX and Pope Gregory VII, Selected Sources Translated and Annotated by I.S. Robinson (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2004), 181. See also Smith, War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture, 100-101; Hans Eberhard Mayer, The Crusades, trans. John Gillingham (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 19; and Riley-Smith, The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading, 5.

9 Pope Nicholas II (1058-1061) also embraced the use of force to further the goals of reform, but in doing so he turned to the same Normans that had so troubled Leo IX for military support. Through his alliance with the Normans, Pope Nicholas effectively came into the possession of a powerful military that could be used for the purposes of holy war while the Normans also saw great value in having the sanction of the Church for their conquest of northern Sicily from the Muslims. See Riley-Smith, The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading, 5 and Mayer, The Crusades, 19.

10 Even more so than the Norman wars against Muslims in Sicily, the mid-eleventh century fight against Muslims in Spain has been described as a type of “proto-crusade.” This is particularly the case of the conquest of Barbastro in 1064, where French Christians seeking spiritual merit joined with Spanish Christians in a war against Muslims with the support of Pope Alexander II (1061-1073). Alexander even granted a kind of indulgence, the first in connection with wars in Spain, to all who participated and may have given Spanish Christian armies the right to bear a papal banner. See Riley-Smith, The First Crusade
had as much of an impact on the development of holy war doctrine as Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085).\textsuperscript{11} According to Jonathan Riley-Smith, Gregory’s achievement was “unprecedented in Christian history” and “revolutionary” in that he “put the act of fighting on the same meritorious plane as prayer, works of mercy and fasting.”\textsuperscript{12} Gregory’s justification was simple; he argued that fighting in a just cause was penitential because the penitent was exposed to hardships and danger, possibly even death, and so participation in such a war represented an act of self-punishment, which was the very basis of the concept of penance.\textsuperscript{13}

Moreover, with the accession of Gregory VII to the papacy, the miles Christi, who previously was only represented by the monk or reformed cleric who waged spiritual combat on a spiritual battlefield, was expanded by ecclesiastical authors to include the layman who, on behalf of the faith, waged physical warfare on earthly battlefields.\textsuperscript{14} Gregory argued there were two types of warfare; one was fought for worldly glory and possessions, and was spiritually damaging, whereas the other was fought on behalf of the faith and represented a form of imitatio Christi, which elevated laymen to the status of soldiers of Christ.\textsuperscript{15} The second type of warrior, the layman who also served as a


\textsuperscript{11} Erdmann, \textit{The Origin of the Idea of Crusade}, 223. Erdmann notes, “It is no exaggeration to say that Gregory VII sought to make the papacy into a military power…” For Erdmann’s reasoning, see also pages 210-211.

\textsuperscript{12} Riley-Smith, \textit{What Were The Crusades}, 56-57.

\textsuperscript{13} Riley-Smith, \textit{What Were The Crusades}, 56-57.

\textsuperscript{14} Smith, \textit{War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture}, 101-102.

\textsuperscript{15} See, for example, Gregory’s distinction between the two types of warriors in Pope Gregory VII, “A Call to the Faithful to Protect the Church from Her Enemies (1084),” in \textit{The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII: Selected Letters from the Registrum}, trans. Ephraim Emerton (New York: Octagon, 1979), 194. See also Smith, \textit{War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture}, 101-102.
soldier of Christ, did not supplant the traditional *miles Christi*, but rather joined him on the spiritual battlefield. This established an important precedent, considered later in this chapter, for the emergence of an identity as a holy warrior, ultimately embodied in the crusader, that would compete with ideal behaviors expected of secular warriors.

Another important issue that contributed to the formation of Gregory’s views on the legitimacy of Christian warfare, which would influence the development of crusading ideology and, by extension, the clerical conception of the holy warrior ideal during the First Crusade, was the Turkish threat that confronted the Byzantine Empire in the later half of the eleventh century. In 1071, two years before Gregory had become pope, the Seljuk defeat of a major Byzantine army at Manzikert had left most of Christian Asia Minor open to invasion, an opportunity on which the Turks would soon capitalize to conquer most of the region. In Gregory’s correspondence on the matter, he called on western Christians to defend their brothers in the East who were “daily being slain like sheep” or “slaughtered by the heathen like cattle.” Under these circumstances, were Christian knights to provide military aid to eastern Christians, Gregory argued that such service would be seen as a “defense” of the Christian faith and a service to Christ. The development of such thinking in this era laid an important foundation for the ideological underpinnings of the First Crusade and, by extension, the establishment of a clerical

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constructed warrior ideal embodied in the crusader. The hardships of warfare, if suffered for pious reasons and conducted by righteous warriors who avoided behaviors that offended God, were pleasing to God, who, according to Gregory, provided spiritual benefits and support for those who took part.

**Pope Urban II and the Calling of the First Crusade**

While the distraction of the Investiture Controversy delayed any direct papal involvement in the affairs of the East, many westerners were nevertheless aware of events in the Holy Land during this period.\(^{19}\) News from the region was often sought from those who had traveled to the Levant and pilgrims were a primary source of information about conditions there and the hardships that afflicted both pilgrims and eastern Christians. Consequently, the recent Turkish conquests of much of Christian Anatolia and the invasion of Palestine were a cause for alarm.\(^{20}\) Moreover, the Byzantine Emperor Alexius I Comnenus had begun to negotiate with members of the western Christian nobility for military assistance, which was a clear sign of trouble in the East.\(^{21}\)

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\(^{21}\) See, for example, the oft-cited letter of Alexius to Count Robert of Flanders. The letter is reprinted in the original in *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacri spectantes, quae supersunt aevocaequales ac genuinae: eine Quellensammlung zur Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzuges*, edited by Heinrich Hagenmayer (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1901), 129-136. For additional background information, see, Andrew Holt and James Muldoon, eds. *Competing Voices from the Crusades* (Oxford: Greenwood, 2008), 4-5, 9-12, and Einor Joranson “The Spurious Letter of Alexius.” *American Historical Review* 55 (1949-1950), 811-832. There is considerable doubt about the authenticity of the letter as it has come down to us, but it was often referenced during the era of the First Crusade and some scholars think the surviving version is likely based on an original document. Guibert of Nogent, for example, references the letter authoritatively in his *Gesta Dei per Francos*. In English translation, see Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, trans. Robert Levine (Middlesex: The Echo Library, 2008), 32. Alexius had already used western knights for his military campaigns in the Balkans against the Pechenegs. For example, 500 Flemish knights are mentioned by Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, trans. E.R.A. Sewter (Harmondsword, 1969), 229 as in Alexius’s service, as a consequence of the emperor’s agreement with
While Pope Urban II began his pontificate in exile as a result of the Investiture Controversy, he eventually won sufficient support from powerful allies to return to Rome in 1094. Once there, he wasted little time in directing his attention to events in the East. Indeed, in the first week of March in 1095, the Council of Piacenza was held to settle a number of issues resulting from the Investiture Controversy. Although a large number of bishops and representatives of secular western powers from France, Germany, and Italy attended the Council; perhaps the most significant representative was Alexius’ envoy, who asked the pope to encourage westerners to help defend the Eastern Church against the Turks. Indeed, by this point Muslim armies had conquered most of Asia Minor and threatened the Byzantine capital of Constantinople itself.

The situation in the East nearly perfectly fit the Church’s thinking on the appropriate conditions under which holy war could be waged. Thus it is not surprising that Urban seized the Byzantine cause as his own. In such an effort, he envisioned Christian knights fighting on behalf of suffering fellow Christians and working to restore Christian lands and holy places to Christian control. Framed this way, such a conflict met the conditions of being defensive, morally just, and directed against non-Christians.

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Robert I, Count of Flanders, whom Alexius met upon Robert’s return from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. See also F.L. Ganshof, “Robert le Frison et Alexis Comnène,” Byzantion 31 (1961), 57-74.


Urban immediately responded, while still at the Council of Piacenza, with a sermon urging western knights to assist the emperor.\textsuperscript{25} Urban then spent much of the next six months traveling throughout France accompanied by an entourage of senior ecclesiastical leaders and local bishops. He met with knights and nobles, during which he stirred support for an expedition to the East.\textsuperscript{26} These efforts in France, as well as his earlier efforts at Piacenza, set the stage for the events of November 27, 1095, where just outside the French town of Clermont, Urban gave a speech calling for the First Crusade.

\textbf{The Concepts of the Crusade and the Crusader}

Because some level of merit historically had been attached to Christian warfare under limited and less defined circumstances, it was not particularly hard for clerical promoters of the First Crusade to convince Christian knights that fighting in defense of fellow Christians on God’s behalf was a virtuous act. Indeed, as Riley-Smith has demonstrated, the charters of knights participating in the First Crusade sometimes explicitly referenced the desire to aid eastern Christians suffering under Islamic rule as one of their motivations for participating. A charter of two brothers, for example, written shortly before they embarked on the First Crusade, notes that they were going on the crusade, in part, “…to wipe out the defilement of the pagans and the immoderate madness through which innumerable Christians have already been oppressed, made captive and killed with barbaric fury.”\textsuperscript{27} In this case, Muslims were depicted as


barbarians without reason and self control, dominated by rage, which of course was in contrast to what clerics were now asking knights to do, namely refrain from indiscriminate violence as they put their military skills to use in defense of fellow Christians.

In calling on Christian knights to go to the aid of their fellow Christians, Urban II’s rhetoric on behalf of what would become the First Crusade was not particularly new or revolutionary. What historians have argued was unique about the First Crusade, its most radical and defining feature, was that it was penitential. Because the penitential nature of the First Crusade made it a unique form of holy war, clerical authorities reasoned, it also required a different type of warrior. The reformed clergy thus dictated the framework for this model of warrior by borrowing in significant part from, of all places, the pilgrimage tradition. Indeed, the combatants who took part in the First Crusade were technically considered to be pilgrims and were required to take pilgrim’s vows, thus taking part in no less than an armed penitential pilgrimage. According to Robert the Monk, for example, who attended the Council of Clermont in his capacity as the Abbot of the monastery of Saint-Remi, Pope Urban II at Clermont (1095) referred to

28 See Riley-Smith, What Were The Crusades, 55.

29 Perhaps some of the best examples of a clergyman citing the necessity of a new type of warrior to take part in a crusade are found in the various versions of Pope Urban’s speech at Clermont. See, for example, Guibert of Nogent, The Deeds of God, 43.

30 For an excellent overview of the pilgrimage origins of the First Crusade, see James A. Brundage, Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 3-29. Brundage also points out how the now popular term crucesignatus, or “crusader,” only much later became the normative term to describe those who participated in a crusade, as the term peregrinus, or “pilgrim,” was instead commonly used in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. See Brundage, Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader, 31. For a primary source example, see the lay authored Gesta Francorum, the earliest surviving account of the First Crusade, in which the participants of the First Crusade are called “pilgrims” rather than crusaders. This Gesta’s use of this term is considered more fully later in this chapter. Anonymous, Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum: The Deeds of the Franks and the Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem, ed. Rosalind Hill (London, Edinburgh, Paris, Melbourne, Toronto, and New York: Thomas Nelson, 1962), 8.
the crusade as a ‘holy pilgrimage’ (sanctae peregrinationis) and demanded the same vow from the crusaders as was expected from pilgrims.31

The idea of a crusade as a form of pilgrimage was well in keeping with the notion, promoted by clerical leaders, that the anticipated hardships of the First Crusade represented a type of redemptive suffering for those who participated. In Fulcher of Chartres’ account of Urban’s speech at Clermont, for example, Urban made clear that the proposed crusade involved warfare with a holy purpose, pleasing to God, who would generously reward crusaders with the remission of their sins (remissio peccatorum) for their efforts and sacrifices.32 Indeed, according to Urban and many crusades preachers who came after him, participation in a crusade, and enduring all the hardships and dangers that came with it, represented no less than an act of love for both God and fellow Christians.33

Moreover, as Jonathan Riley-Smith has highlighted in a number of works that consider the reactions of knights to the calling of the First Crusade, many of those who volunteered for the crusade also understood its penitential character as demonstrated in either their charters to religious houses composed before they embarked or letters they wrote during the course of the crusade.34 In one instance, for example, two brothers


wrote that they were taking part in the crusade “for the grace of the pilgrimage.”  

Another crusader’s charter enthusiastically described the crusade solely in pilgrimage terms, emphasizing its penitential effects, noting, “Considering that God has spared me, steeped in many and great sins, and has given me time for penance, and fearing that the weight of my sins will deprive me of a share in the heavenly kingdom, I, Ingelbald, wish to seek that sepulcher from which our redemption, having overcome death, wished to rise.”  

Consider also the example of Raymond of Saint-Gilles, who abandoned his position as one of the richest and most powerful men in France to participate in the First Crusade. Riley-Smith has convincingly argued that his actions are hard to understand without considering his spiritual motivations. Indeed, Raymond himself explained his decision by noting he was “… going to Jerusalem on the one hand for the grace of the pilgrimage and on the other, under the protection of God, to wipe out the defilement of the pagans…”  

Furthermore, at Clermont, the pope also drew a clear distinction between the crusade and the wars in which knights had typically engaged during this period. Urban


reportedly admonished western knights for their violence against one another and called on them to abide by the rules of the Peace and Truce of God.\textsuperscript{40} Urban then warned the knights in his audience that previously they had “waged wrongful wars” against other Christians for which they “deserved only eternal death and damnation.”\textsuperscript{41} After rebuking knights for their violence against one another, which was a key marker by which knights defined their masculinity in the era, Urban then framed his proposed crusade as a holy alternative to the sinful inter-Christian conflicts he had just condemned. In doing so, Urban directed his listeners’ attention on the abuses of Christians and desecration of important Christian holy places in the East, thus providing knights with an alternate avenue, acceptable to God, by which they might employ the tools of their trade in a worthy cause.\textsuperscript{42} The pope’s words seem to have hit their mark, as the sources agree that they had a powerful effect on his listeners.\textsuperscript{43}

The major difference, or innovation, that distinguished the crusader from the traditional pilgrim was that the crusader carried weapons. Thus, the First Crusade, was

\textsuperscript{40} A consideration of four prominent accounts of Urban’s speech at Clermont is included in Holt and Muldoon, \textit{Competing Voices}, 3-22.

\textsuperscript{41} Guibert of Nogent, \textit{The Deeds of God}, 38.

\textsuperscript{42} In Robert the Monk’s \textit{Historia Iherosolimitana}, for example, which claims to provide an eyewitness account of the Council of Clermont, Urban described the desecration of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and, in graphic detail, the rape and torture of Christians at the hands of their Muslim persecutors. On Robert’s background and attendance at the Council of Clermont, as well as the dating of the \textit{Historia Iherosolimitana}, see Carol Sweetenham, “The Textual History of the Historia Iherosolimitana.” in \textit{Robert the Monk’s History of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana}. Trans. Carol Sweetenham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 2-7. For Robert’s portrayal of Urban’s remarks on the abuse of eastern Christians and holy places, see Robert the Monk, \textit{Robert the Monk’s History of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana}. Trans. Carol Sweetenham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 79-81.

\textsuperscript{43} Robert the Monk, for example, notes that at the end of Pope Urban’s call for a crusade, “all present were so moved that they united as one and shouted ‘God wills it! God wills it!’” See Robert the Monk, \textit{Historia Iherosolimitana}, 81. As historian Thomas Madden has noted, “For knights steeped in a culture of militant Christianity, these were stories to make the blood boil.” See Thomas F. Madden, \textit{A Concise History of the Crusades} (Lanham: Rowman, 1999), 9. See Riley-Smith, “Crusading as an Act of Love,” 33.
considered a pilgrimage, but an armed pilgrimage, just as the first crusaders were considered pilgrims, but armed pilgrims. Indeed, the very term “crusade” was not used at the time to describe the expedition, which was instead commonly referred to as a pilgrimage in letters written by crusaders, who described themselves as pilgrims, while on the march. The unknown knight who authored the *Gesta Francorum*, for example, the earliest surviving account of the First Crusade, which was mostly composed during the course of the crusade and completed no later than the year 1101, complained that the crusaders had trouble buying provisions during their march because the people of Macedonia did not believe that the crusaders were pilgrims, but thought that they had come only as soldiers to lay waste to their land and kill them. Moreover, once Jerusalem had been successfully conquered in 1099 during the First Crusade, many surviving crusaders reportedly threw away their weapons and armor and returned to Europe carrying only palm fronds as a symbol that they had completed their pilgrimage.

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45 See Riley-Smith’s consideration of the contemporary terminology used to describe the First Crusade and its participants in, *The First Crusaders*, 67-69.


47 See Riley-Smith’s consideration of this in Riley-Smith, *The Crusades, Christianity, and Islam*, 30.
The Crusader and the Creation of a New Warrior Identity

Because the clergy equated the First Crusade with a pilgrimage, the first step in making formerly sinful knights into acceptable participants was the taking of vows equivalent to those of pilgrims.\textsuperscript{48} Indeed, Urban and his preachers called on knights to take the cross, which is to say that they were to take a public vow committing them both to participate in the First Crusade and renounce their sins.\textsuperscript{49} Completing the journey to the Holy Land and participating in the liberation of the Eastern Church would act as a satisfactory penance for all confessed sins.\textsuperscript{50} At the moment they did so, they were also required to attach a cloth cross to their clothing which they were to wear continuously until their vow had been fulfilled.\textsuperscript{51}

The pilgrimage/crusading vow demanded much from its adherents, requiring them to behave in specific ways that were often at odds with the prevailing norms of

\textsuperscript{48} For an overview of the evolution of the crusading vow, and its relationship to the pilgrimage vow, see Brundage, \textit{Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader}, 30-65.

\textsuperscript{49} According to the eyewitness account of Robert of Rheims. Urban told those assembled at Clermont that anyone who would participate in this “holy pilgrimage” shall make a “vow to God” to that effect. See Robert of Rheims, “Historia,” 729. The pope’s letters regarding the crusade also confirm that the crusaders were required to take vows. In a letter sent to “all the faithful” in Flanders, for example, the pope ordered that any men who took “this vow” were required to depart for Jerusalem on Assumption Day [August 15, 1096]. See \textit{Die Kreuzzugsbrief aus den Jahren 1088-1100}. Ed. H. Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner’schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung,1901); r.p. New York, 1973), 136; \textit{The Crusades: Idea and Reality, 1095-1274}, trans. L. and J. Riley-Smith (London: Arnold,1981), 38. Such fleeting references to the vow suggest that laymen were already aware of its form and requirements.

\textsuperscript{50} According to Baldric of Bourgeil, for example, all who wished to partake in grace of the pilgrimage were required to confess the “disgrace of their sins” and priests were commanded to pardon them. Baldric of Bourgeil, “Historia,” 16.

\textsuperscript{51} Riley-Smith, \textit{What Were The Crusades}, 3. In a more general sense, the pilgrim headed to Jerusalem at the end of the eleventh century, to include the participants of the First Crusade, was required to offer prayer at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the holiest Church in the Christian world, without which no such pilgrimage could be deemed complete. See also Brundage, \textit{Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader}, 18.
aristocratic knightly society.\textsuperscript{52} To begin with, the vow taker was to avoid all forms of sin. The pilgrim was, after all, seeking to fulfill a holy mission that would serve as a penance for his previous sins, so he could not then compound those sins during the course of such a mission. In voluntarily taking such a vow, which was similar to those taken by ecclesiastics, the crusader theoretically became what historians have described as a “temporary ecclesiastic.”\textsuperscript{53} As Jonathan Riley-Smith has pointed out, “…it is easy to see how the giving of pilgrim status to crusaders…made it possible for the pope to control them to some extent, since pilgrims were [at the time of the First Crusade] treated in law as temporary ecclesiastics, subject to Church courts.”\textsuperscript{54} Thus, in taking crusading vows, the crusader was formally required by the clergy to embrace a unique combination of ideal associated with both knights and clerics if they were to adhere properly to their vows. While the crusader was expected to be brave and demonstrate prowess on the

\textsuperscript{52} It should be noted that no written record of the specific phrasing of the crusading vow survives before 1226. Brundage, Medieval Canon Law, 116-118. As Jennifer Ann Price notes, “the nature of the vow- a verbal act made in the presence of witnesses- rendered written records unnecessary. In order to discern the substance of the crusade vow one must examine a variety of sources related to the business of the crusade- papal bulls, charters, chronicles and the like. Oftentimes the actions of crusaders provide the clearest evidence of what individuals believed their obligations to consist.” See Jennifer Ann Price, Cruce Signatus: the Form and Substance of the Crusading Vow, 1095-1216, Thesis (Ph. D.)--University of Washington, 2005.

\textsuperscript{53} On the crusader as a “temporary ecclesiastic,” see Jonathan Riley-Smith, What Were the Crusades? Third Edition (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), 66 and Riley-Smith, The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading, 23. Chapter 6 of this dissertation more fully considers the issue of the crusader’s vow in relation to those taken by ecclesiastics and then considers how the Templars, as a more permanent manifestation of the crusader ideal, took more extensive triple vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in the tradition of monastic vows. Thus, while crusaders took vows that aligned them with the reformed regular clergy (e.g. “temporary ecclesiastics”), the later Templars took vows that firmly aligned them with monks.

\textsuperscript{54} Riley-Smith, The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading, 23. See also Jonathan Riley-Smith, What Were the Crusades? Third Edition (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), 66. One can only speculate about the psychological effects this may or may not have had on how a formerly sinful knight then acted in public, as he was then not only subject to the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts, but also prominently marked with the sign of the cross, revealing his public commitment to the service of Christ. Under such circumstances, sinful public behavior likely would have been characterized as a breaking of his vows and a sign of personal hypocrisy and shame.
battlefield, like a knight, he was also expected to demonstrate humility and embrace a life of holiness and chastity like a monk or a priest. Thus the crusader ideal represented a hybrid identity that drew from the idealized traits of both the recently reformed cleric and the combative secular knight in an effort to create a breed of holy warrior.

While other scholars have already considered the hybrid nature of the crusader (and particularly the members of the knightly orders who would follow) as a blending of the monk or monasticized cleric and knight, none have considered the gender implications of such development on warrior masculinity. It is my argument that because the crusader ideal was based on standards of behavior that were far different from those by which secular knights typically defined their masculinity, that the new crusader ideal, by extension, resulted in the creation of a hybrid masculine identity, which can be catalogued and ranked alongside the varying multiple masculinities of the High Middle Ages that have already been identified by scholars. While unique and differing masculine identities have been attributed to celibate clerics, knights, merchants, and other men in the Middle Ages, they have not been attributed to crusaders, whereas the conditions for doing so, as considered in this chapter, warrant the inclusion of the crusader as embodying an alternative manifestation of masculine identity.

55 See, for example, Smith, War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture, 99 and Jennifer G. Wollock, Rethinking Chivalry and Courtly Love, (Santa Barbara, Calif: Praeger, 2011), 51.

56 See, for example, the consideration of multiple medieval masculine identities in such influential works such as Jacqueline Murray’s, Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West (New York: Garland, 1999) and Lees, Clare A., Thelma S. Fenster, and Jo Ann McNamara’s Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).
The Traits of the Crusader and the Forging of an Alternative Masculine Identity

As we have seen, the masculine ideal proposed by Urban II for the late eleventh-century crusader was built on the theological and strategic premise that a holy warrior, just like the repentant pilgrim, had to make himself pleasing to God to have any hope of success on the battlefield.\(^57\) This was to be accomplished, clerics argued, by the crusader humbling himself before God in manner, behavior, goals, and appearance. The crusader was not to celebrate his manly deeds through boasting of his achievements, but instead give the credit to God. The traditional arrogance of the aristocratic knight, with his ostentatious dress and display of bravado was unacceptable in wars waged for the cross; and no distractions, even the concerns of his wife, should impede his manly pursuit of serving God in a crusade. In some cases, clerics thus retained and promoted some of the traditional masculine features of secular warriors, but applied theological reasoning to modify or enhance them. A crusader’s courage and military prowess, for example, which were among the most prized of manly virtues, were supposed to be even greater than other warriors because he fought on behalf of God. Thus, the clerical ideal of the crusader involved a complex mix of traits associated with both the clergy and the knighthood resulting in a Christian masculine ideal that encompassed a unique blend of these earlier concepts.

Humility and Modesty

Humility had never been associated with the persona of brash or arrogant knights, who affirmed their masculinity in part by reveling in their status as warriors and

\(^57\) Consider, for example, the events that took place at the Battle of Antioch during the First Crusade, as examined extensively later in this chapter.
boasting of their manly achievements. Yet humility was, nevertheless, long considered a virtue of those in the service of God. Because the clerical and warrior classes had different masculine ideals, the imposition of the monastic ideal of humility posed a conceptual problem for knights whom typically boasted on their conquests, whether on the battlefield or in the bedroom, as a means of promoting their manliness. Indeed, crusaders were, because of their vows, in the service of God, so arrogant knightly boasting was, according to the clerical authors of the crusading ideal, unacceptable under such circumstances.

To resolve this dilemma, clerical authors argued that crusaders must embrace an alternative type of warrior identity: that of the humble warrior, who through his fear of God had abandoned the unseemly arrogance and haughtiness of Europe’s traditional warrior class. The crusade was, after all, a penitential act, effectively an armed pilgrimage. Thus, like penitential pilgrims, the crusaders had both the obligation and the opportunity to demonstrate their repentance through visible acts of humility and make atonement for their sins through the hardships of the journey.

Crusaders, influenced by a competing ideal of masculinity, were also expected by the clergy to “triumph manfully” in battle, but they were also expected to avoid the

58 Indeed, personal style and boasting of military achievements was an effective way for a knight to establish their manly reputation, and could sometimes build a knight’s reputation just as well as actual campaigning. See Stephen Morillo, Warfare Under the Anglo-Norman Kings, 1066-1135 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: 1994), 45. See also pages 21 and 96 for additional commentary on the motivations behind knightly boasting.

59 For an overview tracing the development and necessity of humility for the clergy from St. Augustine to the high middle ages, see Julius Schwietering, ‘The Origins of the Medieval Humility Formula,’ PMLA 69:5 (1954): 1279-1291.

60 According to Robert the Monk, Pope Urban II at Clermont (1095) referred to the crusade as a ‘holy pilgrimage’ (sanctae peregrinationis) and demanded the same vow as from pilgrims. See Roberti Monachi, ‘Historia Iherosolimitana.’ RHC: Occ 3, 729.
excessive boasts of their secular counterparts.\textsuperscript{61} At Clermont in 1095, for example, Pope Urban II stressed modesty (\textit{modestum}) as one of the supreme Christian virtues.\textsuperscript{62} Indeed, ecclesiastical writers had long promoted the virtue of humility in a number of contexts and this was especially the case in the reform era of the late eleventh-century.\textsuperscript{63}

Lay accounts of the First Crusade as well as the surviving charters of crusaders confirm that the laity understood the clergy’s message on the importance of humility for the new crusader ideal. The anonymous knight and author of the \textit{Gesta Francorum}, for example, notes that the Pope warned his listeners against arrogance, arguing that they would only be able to save their souls through the crusade by “humbly” taking up “the way of the Lord.”\textsuperscript{64} According to the Pope, western Christians had little to be haughty about anyway in light of the poor state of the Holy Land. Urban argued that his listeners ought to be ashamed even to speak of the defilement of Christian places at the hands of Muslim conquerors.\textsuperscript{65} He then contrasted the crusader ideals of humility and modesty with the “great pride” of those who reveled in their status as knights while only killing other Christians in their pursuit of secular goals.\textsuperscript{66} So while knights may have

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[61]{Pope Eugenius III, ‘Quantum Praedecessores,’ \textit{Epistolae et privilegia} PL 180: 1065, ‘viriliter triumphavit…’}
\footnotetext[62]{Fulcherio Carnotensi, \textit{Historia Iherosolimitana}, 322.}
\footnotetext[63]{As considered in prior chapters of this dissertation, humility was a “vital requirement” for monks, for example, who otherwise set the standard for Christian holiness due their dedication to ascetic practices. See also Phyllis G. Jestice, \textit{Wayward Monks and the Religious Revolution of the Eleventh-Century} (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 93, 239-240.}
\footnotetext[64]{\textit{Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum}, edited by Rosalind Hill (London, 1962), 1. ‘ut is quis animam suam saluam facere uellet, non dubitaret humiliter uliam incipere Domini…’}
\footnotetext[65]{Baldrici, \textit{Episcopi Dolensis}, ‘Historia Jerosolimitana,’ \textit{RHC: Occ} 4, 13.}
\footnotetext[66]{Baldrici, \textit{Episcopi Dolensis}, 14. ‘Vos accincti cingulo militiae, magno superbitis supercilio; fratres vestros laniatis, atque inter vos dissecamini.’}
\end{footnotes}
tradi\n
tionally boasted of their achievements as a means of affirming their manliness, the crusaders were ideally supposed to avoid such boasts, giving the credit for any successes to God, and instead establishing their manliness through only their deeds rather than their words.67

Correspondingly, the charters of crusaders who participated in the First Crusade were always expressed “in terms of penitence and humility.”68 This was particularly the case with charters of endowment to churches or monastic houses or in charters of renunciation of claims on ecclesiastical properties. Consider the example of Eudes of Burgundy, who in 1101 entered the chapter of St. Bénigne de Dijon attended by his leading vassals. There, surrounded by monks, Eudes records how he “…corrected the injuries which I had been accustomed to inflict until now’ and “recognized” his fault as he “sought mercy” and asked for absolution. He then promised “amendment in the future” if he should happen to survive the crusade.69 Eudes then arranged another dramatic ceremony before the Cluniac monks at Gevrey-Chambertin, in which he renounced claims he had unjustly imposed there.70

67 If the sources are to be believed, Crusaders did often credit God for their victories, rather than boasting of their own abilities as the cause of their success. In the well known Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimita, for example, which is one of the most important sources of the First Crusade authored by a layman, the anonymous knight describes an incident in which he and other crusaders narrowly escaped from their Turkish attackers, noting ‘Et nisi Dominus fuisset nobiscum in bello, et aliam cito nobis misisset aciem, nullus nostrorum euasisset, quia ab hora tertia usque in horam nonam perduravit haec pugna. Sed omnipotens Deus pius et misericors qui non permisit suos milites perire, nec in minibus inimicorum incidere, festine nobis adiutorium misit.’ See Rosalind M. T. Hill, The Deeds of the Franks and the Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem (London: 1962), 21.

68 Riley-Smith, The First Crusaders, 121.

69 Chartes et documents de Saint-Bénigne de Dijon, ed. G. Chevrier and M. Chaume (Dijon: Bernigaud & Privat, 1943), 2.175. This text is considered in Riley-Smith, The First Crusaders, 121-22.

In conjunction with the idea of humility, and because they were technically considered pilgrims, crusaders were supposed to dress modestly and practically as their penitential journeys were not supposed to be trips of luxury. Indeed, as crusaders prepared for the First Crusade they very clearly embraced ceremonies associated with pilgrimage, including, in the case of Herbert of Thouars, the reception of “the habit of pilgrimage” from his bishop. Indeed, pilgrims were expected to be unkempt, allow their beards to grow, and not have many changes of clothes, which insured that over the course of a long journey their limited supply of clothes became worn and tattered.

Around the end of the eleventh-century, the standard pilgrim uniform came to be centered on the sclavein, a long course tunic that symbolized the austerity of the pilgrim and was in sharp contrast to the flamboyance associated with the dress of the nobility, from which the knightly class was drawn.

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74 On the sclavein, see Jonathan Sumption, *The Age of Pilgrimage: The Medieval Journey to God* (Mahwah, N.J.: Hidden Spring, 2003), 244-6. As for the dress of the nobility, popular aristocratic literature of the era reflected the popular fashions of the time. The *Nibelungenlied*, for example, described a knight named Siegfried as having ‘dressed in eloquent clothes’ which were made of silk and adorned with jewels and gold trimmings. See, *The Nibelungenlied* edited and translated by Arthur Thomas Hatto, (Baltimore: Penguin, 1965), 20-1. Clerical concerns over knightly dress are more fully considered in Chapter 6 of this dissertation, particularly with regard to Bernard of Clairvaux’s views on the subject.
The Rejection of Women and the Maintenance of Chastity

Because crusaders were similar to clerics, as they also made vows committing themselves to the service of Christ, preachers of these armed pilgrimages eventually came to understand crusading in terms of a *vocatio hominum ad crucem*. In this sense, crusading was a temporary vocation, which began with a vow that involved a spiritual reformation of the crusader’s life and included the imperative of chastity for both the married and unmarried. Certainly some crusaders failed to live up to such vows, as demonstrated in clerical texts examined later in this chapter, particularly in the case of the events that took place at the siege of Antioch during the First Crusade, but they nevertheless initially agreed to such conditions in a public forum at the time that they took their vows.

Beginning with the Council of Clermont, it was assumed by Pope Urban II that married crusaders, who in taking crusading vows would effectively hold two vocations, would put their responsibilities to the crusade before their responsibilities to their wives. Urban specifically urged his listeners to avoid letting concerns about their families and possessions keep them from joining the crusade. He cited the Gospel of Matthew (19: 29) in arguing that those who abandoned their wives, other family members, and homes for the crusade would receive a hundred times more in return along with everlasting life. According to Guibert of Nogent, who was possibly in attendance at Urban’s

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75 By the end of the 12th and early 13th centuries, crusades preachers commonly recognized and portrayed the taking of the cross as a vocation. See Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, 54.

76 Complete sexual abstinence was expected of people doing penance, such as pilgrims. See James Brundage, “Prostitution, Miscegenation, and Sexual Purity in the First Crusade,” In *Crusade and Settlement*. Ed. Peter W Edbury (Cardiff: University College Cardiff Press,1985), 57.

77 See Robert the Monk’s account of Urban’s speech in Roberti Monachi, *Historia Iherosolimitana*, 728.
speech at Clermont and wrote his account between 1106 and 1109, the Pope also made an effort to alleviate more pragmatic concerns when he offered the family members of crusaders a degree of legal and financial protection through the pronouncement of a “horrible anathema” upon all of those who might “dare to harm the wives, sons, and possessions of those who took up God’s journey for all of the next three years.” Consequently, the Pope’s listeners had, at least theoretically, no reason to fear for the well-being of their families who were supposed to be protected at home while they were away on the crusade.

Finally, crusaders, like all pilgrims, were to be chaste. As observed earlier in this essay, this expectation was remarkably different from traditional standards of acceptable behavior for the warrior class. Indeed, according to many clerical sources from the First Crusade, chastity was viewed as an essential part of the crusaders’ identity and any question of sexual immorality during a crusade was likened to treason and resulted in swift and severe punishments. Although chaste crusaders could not boast of their sexual exploits with women, as did their secular counterparts, their masculinity was never in question. The celibate clergy, after all, had already acted as trailblazers in this regard as during the Gregorian Reform they had forcefully argued, with considerable success among their own ranks, that an important class of men could be both celibate and masculine if done for spiritual reasons.

It was also the case that events during the First Crusade seemed to confirm the necessity of sexual purity during a holy war for military victory. For example, one of the

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78 Guibert of Nogent, The Deeds of God, 45.
79 For the seminal work on this issue, see Brundage, Prostitution, Miscegenation and Sexual Purity. See also the primary source examples of Raymond of Aguilers, Bartolf of Nangis, and Albert of Aix considered later in this chapter.
earliest and most significant associations of military defeat with sexual immorality took place during the lengthy and bloody siege of Antioch in 1098. At one point discouraged crusaders and clerics gathered together to discuss the reason it was taking them so long to conquer the city. According to clerical sources, they agreed that God must have been punishing them for their sins by prolonging their final victory. They came to the conclusion that to purify their forces, they needed to expel the women, both married and unmarried, from their camps to avoid ‘the sordidness of riotous living.’\(^{80}\) Obviously, such a finding was transparently supportive of clerical calls for chastity among the crusaders, as particularly reflected in their initial crusading vows, as in this case the clergy argued their success on the battlefield depended on it.

After the crusaders sent away the women, their fortunes did indeed seem to improve as a short time later they captured nearly all of the city of Antioch with only the exception of a well-defended citadel. Yet with the late arrival of a relief force of Turks, the besiegers found themselves under siege as they struggled to defend their gains against a fresh and powerful Muslim army. In this predicament, the crusaders again searched for the source of their misfortune. After all, they had dismissed the ‘sinful’ women from their camps and were still having problems. Clerics again determined that immoral acts with sinful women were the cause of their misfortune, yet another finding that was transparently supportive of clerical demands for chastity among the crusaders. In this case, however, they argued it was because crusaders had consorted with

\(^{80}\) Fulcherio Carnotensi, *Historia Iherosolymitana*, 340. ‘Tunc facto deinde consilio, egecerunt feminas de exercita tam maritatas quam immaritatas, ne forte luxuriae sordibus inquinati Domino displicerent.’
‘unlawful’ local women. As a result of these sins, they believed God had ‘doubled’ their punishment.\footnote{Fulcherio Carnotensi, \textit{Historia Iherosolymitana}, 345. ‘Quibus visis, non minus solito iterum Franci sunt desolati, quia, propter peccata sua poena est eis duplicata.’}

The anonymous lay knight who wrote the \textit{Gesta Francorum} confirmed that the crusaders themselves were well aware of such concerns at Antioch. He described an incident, also at Antioch, in which a priest had a vision of Jesus. In the vision Jesus complained to the priest that the crusaders’ evil pleasures with Christian and pagan women were indeed the cause of their misfortunes. Jesus imposed five days of prayer on the crusaders as a penance for their sins and, if this was done, he promised divine aid. Sometime later, in what must have seemed a confirmation of that promise, the repentant and obedient crusaders were victorious.\footnote{\textit{Gesta Francorum}, 58.}

The surprising victory at Antioch seemed to vindicate those clerics who had argued that sexual immorality was indeed the cause of the crusaders’ problems. After the battle for Antioch, instructions were sent to the West that all non-combatants, especially women, should remain at home.\footnote{Elizabeth Siberry, \textit{Criticism of Crusading: 1095-1274}, (Oxford: 1985), 44.} A large number of clerical accounts appeared in the early twelfth century that emphasized that sins involving sexuality were the cause of setbacks in the otherwise successful First Crusade. The cleric Raymond of Aguilers, for example, told the story of how the apostles Andrew and Peter appeared to Peter Bartholomew at Antioch to warn him that the Crusaders were having problems because of adultery.\footnote{Raymond D’ Aguilers, \textit{Historia Francorum Qui Ceperunt Iherusalem}, translated by John Hugh Hill & Laurita L. Hill, (Philadelphia: 1968), 76-7.} Bartolf of Nangis cited an instance in which a man and woman...
were caught in the act of adultery and were publicly whipped to make atonement to God.\textsuperscript{85} The priest Albert of Aix noted that ‘the Lord is believed to have been against the pilgrim [crusader] who had sinned by excessive impurity and fornication.’\textsuperscript{86}

The degree to which the rejection of sexual activity influenced the ideology of crusading is also suggested by the efforts of clerical authors to deny instances of rape during the crusades.\textsuperscript{87} While the rape of conquered women was a sadly common experience of battle in the Middle Ages, with even Muslim authors boasting of the rape of Christian women during the crusading era, Christian clerical authors claimed that the crusaders avoided such behavior, taking what they argued was the more honorable course of killing female captives instead.\textsuperscript{88} This was because a crusader who engaged in the rape of captive women was at least as sexually impure as those who had sex with prostitutes or camp followers. In either case, they would have defiled themselves through their sexual activities, thereby risking God’s disfavor during the course of the crusade. In regard to the Muslim women taken captive after the crusaders’ victory at Antioch, for example, the cleric Fulcher of Chartres notes that the crusaders “did them no evil,” but instead killed them, which he believed the more honorable of the two

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{85} Siberry, 91. Siberry cites, Bartolf of Nangis, \textit{Gesta Francorum Iherusalem expugnantium}, in RHC Occ 3, 498-99.
\item \textsuperscript{86} Alberti Aquensis, ‘Historia Hierosolymitana’ RHC Occ 4, 295. ‘Hic manus Domini contra peregrinos esse creditur qui nimiis immunditiis et fornicario concubitu in conspectus ejus peccaverant…’
\item \textsuperscript{87} On the ideological rejection of rape during the crusades, as suggested in clerical texts, see Yvonne Friedman, “Captivity and Ransom: The Experience of Women,” in \textit{Gendering the Crusades}, eds. Susan B. Edgington and Sarah Lambert (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 127-128.
\item \textsuperscript{88} On sexual conquest as an otherwise normal part of medieval warfare, as well as the rejection of such thinking by clerical authors of crusades texts, see Friedman, \textit{Captivity and Ransom}, 127. On the boasting of rape in Islamic accounts of the crusades, see Imad ad-Din, “Imad ad-Din on the Abuse of Christian Women After Saladin’s Capture of Jerusalem in 1187,” in \textit{Competing Voices from the Crusades}, eds. Andrew Holt and James Muldoon (Oxford: Greenwood, 2008), 231-32. This text is also examined in Friedman, pages 126-27.
\end{itemize}
choices.\textsuperscript{89} Moreover, the testimony of the victims, at least in one significant case, seems to confirm such claims. Concerning the fate of Jewish women in Jerusalem following its conquest in 1099, a letter from Jewish elders in Ascalon, lamenting the crusaders’ conquest of the city, demonstrates that they had received news that the crusaders had not sexually assaulted their Jewish female captives. They note, “We have not heard-thank God, the Exalted- that the cursed ones known as Ashkenaz violated or raped women, as others [do].”\textsuperscript{90}

**Increased Courage and Military Prowess: The Manly Benefits of Crusading**

A knight’s status among his peers was important, and clerical promoters of the crusade realized that the new warrior identity they proposed demanded significant changes in how the knightly class defined themselves as men. Yet the clergy also knew that while the warrior class might place great value on its appearance, knights’ ability to boast of their achievements, real or imagined, and their sexual prowess, there were other elements of their masculine identity that they valued above all others: their courage and skill on the battlefield.\textsuperscript{91}

A crusaders’ courage in battle was, in keeping with traditional views of warrior masculinity, upheld as a decidedly masculine trait. Indeed, it had long been held in medieval Europe that combat was a ‘manly’ pursuit and the crusaders maintained this view.\textsuperscript{92} Pope Urban, for example, cited the success of the Franks’ heroic ancestors,


\textsuperscript{90} Friedman, *Captivity and Ransom*, 127-128.

\textsuperscript{91} On the importance of courage and skill to knightly identity, see Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

\textsuperscript{92} Megan McLaughlin, ‘The woman warrior: gender, warfare, and society in medieval Europe,’ *Women’s Studies* 17 (1990): 194.
including Charlemagne and Louis, to spur his listeners to ‘manly’ deeds or achievements. Such thinking was first made clear during Pope Urban’s calling of the First Crusade in which he told his listeners that crusaders, in contrast to those who waged unjust wars, should have no fear of death as the crusade provided the opportunity for the ‘glorious reward of martyrdom’ and eternal praise for their sacrifice.

Late eleventh- and early twelfth-century clerics built on such notions to add additional benefits for the newly ordained warriors of Christ, arguing they would receive increased courage and prowess on the battlefield as a gift from God. According to the cleric Ralph of Caen, for example, the reaction of the Norman knight Tancred to the preaching of the First Crusade was typical. He notes that prior to the calling of the First Crusade, Tancred frequently “burned with anxiety because the warfare he engaged in as a knight seemed contrary to the Lord’s commands.” But with the calling of the First Crusade, “then at last, as if previously asleep, his vigor was aroused, his powers grew, his eyes opened, his courage was born.” Thus the calling of the First Crusade is presented as offering knights a chance to realize their full potential as Christian warriors through their holy service.

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93 Roberti Monachi, *Historia Iherosolimitana*, 728. ‘Moveant vos et incitent animos vestros ad virilitatem gesta praedecessorum vestrorum.’


95 See Kushing, *Papacy and Law*, 130 and Smith, *War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture*, 105. Smith notes, “The equation of the miles Christi with the crusader persists in clerical narratives of the expedition to Jerusalem, which, unsurprisingly, often employed scriptural language or metaphors to describe the events of 1096-99. The Christian army’s exploits were likened to those of the ancient Israelites, especially the Maccabees, though it was generally agreed that the crusaders far surpassed their predecessors in their courage and enjoyment of divine favor.”

Thus, if a secular knight were to devote himself to the mission of the cross, according to clerics during the First Crusade, they could be assured of an increase in the things they valued the most, including greater courage and greater fighting ability, a combination of benefits that would have held extraordinary appeal for devout knights. Indeed, above all else, a warrior's identity and reputation was based on his ability to make war successfully, and this required courage. And, the greater his courage, the greater his accomplishments on the battlefield. The clergy, well aware of the esteem with which the warrior class held the virtue of courage, took advantage of this point to adapt long-held notions of spiritual courage among Christian holy men and martyrs to the position of warriors on the spiritual battlefield. They argue that by abiding by the ideals of a holy warrior, a knight could expect to be far more courageous on the physical battlefield. Formerly sinful knights might need to give up some of the lesser markers of knightly masculinity, such as an elegant appearance or reputations for sexual prowess, but such objections were to be mitigated by the much more important increase in courage and military effectiveness on the battlefield.97

The clergy based their claims concerning the superior courage of the crusader on three factors. First, they argued that God loved the crusaders for their service to Him and, as a result, granted them greater courage on account of that service. Robert the Monk, for example, reported that Pope Urban told the crowd at Clermont that God had conferred "great courage" on the Christian warriors who were present.98 Such arguments seem to have influenced at least some pious knights from the very start of

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97 On secular knights promoting their masculinity through an elegant appearance or reputations for sexual prowess, see Chapter 4.

98 Roberti Monachi, Historia Iherosolimitana, 728.
the crusading movement. Bohemond of Taranto, for example, is reported to have roused his demoralized troops during the siege of Antioch by commanding them to “charge at top speed, like a brave man, and fight valiantly for God and the Holy Sepulchre, for you know in truth that this is no war of the flesh, but of the spirit. So be very brave, as becomes a champion of Christ.” Later the author offered an explanation for Bohemond’s extraordinary bravery, noting that God loved Bohemond “…exceedingly beyond all others” on account of his service in the crusade, and therefore God granted him “…excelling courage in battle.”

Second, clerics argued that God protected the crusaders from harm, so they could act far more boldly in dangerous situations than other warriors. The Poitevin priest Peter Tudebode, for example, who participated in the First Crusade and later wrote an account of the expedition, argued that the crusaders were ‘knights of the true God,” and thus were “protected on all sides by the sign of the cross.” The early twelfth-century cleric Gilo of Paris claimed that the crusaders had no cause for fear of the Turks because they were “protected by the arms of faith (arma fidei).” That some knights embraced such claims is demonstrated in the Gesta Francorum, itself authored by an apparently pious knight, in which the Muslim opponents of the crusaders were

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said to complain bitterly that normally they would easily be able to defeat the crusaders, but “their God fights for them every day and keeps them day and night under his protection.”¹⁰³

Third, and perhaps in apparent contradiction to the second point, clerics argued that the crusaders could fight without fear of death on the battlefield, unlike those who waged sinful wars, because they could be assured of a martyr’s heavenly reward if they were killed during the course of a crusade.¹⁰⁴ The clerical notion that the crusader’s courage in battle would be superior to that of secular knights, after all, seems to have rested in large part on the assumption that the crusader’s service and sacrifices during the course of a crusade were, in contrast to all other types of warfare, redemptive and pleasing to God. Thus it is not surprising that for those occasions when otherwise pious crusaders died in battle, the clergy emphasized their status as martyrs, who enjoyed eternal heavenly rewards for their sacrifice. The cleric Guibert of Nogent, for example, noted that Pope Urban II, during his preaching of the First Crusade at Clermont in 1095, argued that the knightly class now had the opportunity to fight in “battles which offered “the gift of glorious martyrdom.”¹⁰⁵ Thus, the clergy emphasized the divine protections and benefits afforded to the crusader, including increased courage and prowess, as well as a martyr’s death, as a means of promoting a new chaste and humble Christian warrior ideal, more aligned with the values of the clergy. They attempted to sell such

¹⁰³ *Gesta Francorum*, 53.


concepts to secular knights who prized courage and prowess in battle, and viewed these as the chief means by which they measured their manhood.

This is not to suggest that the crusader ideal promoted by the clergy ever replaced the traditional secular model of knighthood that existed in the high and later Middle Ages. Indeed, only a very small percentage of Europe’s warrior class took part in the First Crusade, leaving the vast majority of knights to continue to define themselves according to the secular standards of the time.\textsuperscript{106} Moreover, of the small number of knights who took crusading vows and participated in the First Crusade, we know from clerical sources considered in this chapter that many failed to abide by the new standards as set by the clergy and sometimes continued to act according to masculine standards associated with secular knights.\textsuperscript{107} Nevertheless, as considered in this chapter, both clerical and lay sources associated with the crusading movement show that some important and influential knights did indeed embrace the new crusader ideal as proposed by the clergy. The unanticipated success of the First Crusade gave such a model legitimacy as an effective alternative to traditional models of warrior masculinity, thus setting a standard that would be promoted and institutionalized by the Church in later crusades and adopted by and adhered to by influential kings like the Louis IX in the thirteenth century.


\textsuperscript{107} See, for example, this chapter’s consideration of texts by Raymond of Aguilers, Albert of Aix, and Bartolf of Nangis, or consider how both clerical and lay sources commented on the sexually immoral behavior of crusaders during the siege of Antioch and the military problems they believed it caused.
Conclusion

This chapter has considered how the emergence of the crusading movement offered an unprecedented way in which knights could employ their deadly skills as the means of their salvation. Yet to do so, such warriors were required, by means of their crusading vows, to embrace an ideal of the holy warrior that was understood as essential for success on the crusading battlefield and constructed by the clergy in a way that combined the ascetic traits of the chaste clergy with the most important martial traits of knights. In doing so, not only did the crusader represent an alternative type of Christian warrior, but also a variant masculine ideal for warriors, one that was strikingly at odds with the masculine ideals embraced by secular knights.

While beholden to their crusading vows, which were essentially pilgrimage vows modeled on those taken by the recently reformed secular clergy, knights were required to abandon many of the traditional markers of aristocratic warrior masculinity and instead embrace the markers of reformed clerical masculinity that had emerged during the Gregorian Reform. By voluntarily taking their vows, thousands of European knights initially agreed, in formal and public ceremonies, to abide by the new standards that required their chastity and humility. Those who did so, and maintained their vows, did so ultimately seeing greater value in the benefits of becoming warriors for Christ. These perceived advantages ranged from increased prowess and courage on the battlefield to the forgiveness of their sins, and were thus more attractive than what they might receive for abiding by the traditional behavior associated with their class. Yet their formal commitment to the new warrior idea was a temporary one, lasting only as long as it took to complete their crusading vows. Thus, the alternative masculine ideal that accompanied their roles as holy warriors, was also temporary. Indeed, once knights had
completed their vows, they were under no continuing obligation to abide by monastic standards of behavior. Yet, as we will see in Chapter 6, soon after the First Crusade, the clerical standard for Christian warriors popularized during the successful venture evolved into a permanently monasticized warrior ideal with the emergence of the Knights Templar.
CHAPTER 6
WARRIOR MASCULINITY AND THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

As suggested in Chapter 5, the clerical ideal of the crusader represented a hybrid warrior who was supposed to embrace some key traditional virtues of warrior masculinity, such as extreme bravery and prowess on the battlefield, and combine them with Gregorian-era, monastically inspired ideals of clerical masculinity, including humility and chastity. While only a very small percentage of Europe’s knights ever took crusading vows, the crusader model, heavily promoted by the ecclesiastical authorities of the era, won legitimacy as a valid expression of warrior identity in the wake of the successful First Crusade.¹ With the establishment of such a model, the ground was laid for the emergence of a more permanent form of the crusader ideal through the birth of the Knights Templar.

While crusaders had been under temporary vows reflective of their technical status as pilgrims, and thus historians have viewed them as “temporary ecclesiastics,” the knights of the crusading orders represented a permanent institutionalization of the hybrid ecclesiastical warrior ideal, progressing from the rank of temporary pilgrim-crusaders to permanent warrior-monks.² In this sense, just as monks had superseded clerics by their greater commitment to personal holiness, the Templars had superseded the crusaders through their more formal commitment to the new warrior ideal.

At the same time it is important to keep in mind that even among the small

¹ Only about 6000 western knights, for example, representing a very small percentage of Europe’s knights, participated in the First Crusade. Yet this number is not insignificant, as many of them were among the most influential members of the nobility. See John France, The Crusades and the Expansion of Catholic Christendom, 1000-1714 (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 56.

percentage of European knights who participated in the First Crusade, many of them had trouble abiding by the new standards of behavior imposed on them through their vows during the course of the crusade, much less demonstrate the ability to continue to abide by such standards once the crusade was over. As a result, clerical support and promotion of the Templars also may have represented an acknowledgement that the majority of knights would never embrace the clerical ideal of warrior masculinity. Thus enthusiastic clerical support for the new order was a concession that originally larger clerical ambitions to reform the knightly class, which began with the Peace-Truce of God movements and carried over to the First Crusade, could not be achieved on both a broad and permanent scale. Thus, through the formation of the Templars, at least one small group of dedicated knights could fulfill the clerical ideal even if ecclesiastical reformers could not win over the majority. According to this framework, just as only a small percentage of Christians would ever embrace the monastic ideal by becoming monks, who ecclesiastical authorities ranked at the top of the Christian masculine hierarchy, only a small percentage of Christian knights would embrace the Templar monastic ideal, elevating them above secular knights in the clerically conceived hierarchy of warrior masculinity.

The Templar model also represented, as had the crusader model that predated it, a significant behavioral change from the norms associated with secular knights as the chaste and humble Templar represented the ultimate fulfillment of the recent clerically constructed masculine warrior ideal. Indeed, while the origins of the Templars have been considered extensively elsewhere, historians have not carefully measured the
impact of the founding of the order on conceptions of medieval warrior masculinity.\(^3\) In embracing the Templar model of knighthood, ecclesiastical authorities were, by extension, following in the model of earlier clerical preachers of the crusades in promoting an alternative warrior masculinity considerably at odds with the traditional secular model of warrior masculinity.

**The Origins of the Templars**

As considered in Chapter 5, clerical advocacy of the necessity of personal holiness for success in Christian warfare deeply influenced many formerly sinful knights as they sought to align their behavior with the new ideal. The problem, from the perspective of some clerics, was that such vows were only temporary. Indeed, once a formerly sinful knight had successfully completed his crusading vows, he was then released from his vows and usually returned to Europe. Once back in the company of his old associates, the former crusader then often returned the same type of “sinful” behavior typically associated with Europe's knightly class. Bernard of Clairvaux, for example, perhaps the most influential Christian voice of twelfth-century Europe,\(^4\) complained about two former crusaders, Henry, the son of the Count of Champagne, and Robert de Dreux, the brother of the French king, and their intention to hold a knightly tournament. Indeed, their actions caused Bernard to question the sincerity of

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\(^3\) See, for example, Barber's, *The New Knighthood*, as well as Helen Nicholson, *The Knights Templar: A New History* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Pub, 2001), and Jonathan Riley-Smith, *Templars and Hospitallers As Professed Religious in the Holy Land* (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

\(^4\) Richard W. Barber, *The Reign of Chivalry* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 106. Indeed, in addition to being described as one of the most influential Christian voices of the twelfth century, Bernard has also been described by one historian as the “greatest twelfth-century commentator on what makes a Christian warrior.” See Matthew Bennett, “Military Masculinity in England and Northern France c. 1050-c. 1225,” in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. D.M. Hadley (London and New York: Longman, 1999), 80.
their earlier commitment to the principles demanded of them during the crusade if they could so easily revert to such base activities when their crusade was over.\(^5\)

Bernard’s concerns over the two knights were reflective of a major problem with the clerical attempt to use crusading as a vehicle for the reform of knights. In this case, Henry and Robert may well have served as ideal crusaders, dedicated to their crusading vows during the course of the crusade, but one thing is certain; at the completion of the crusade they seem not to have been concerned about returning to behaviors at odds with crusading ideals. Yet the model of holy warrior promoted by ecclesiastical leaders during the era of the First Crusade nevertheless seems to have made an impression on the minds or hearts of at least some knights who saw it as representative of a new holy warrior ideal in the wake of the First Crusade. This is perhaps best reflected in the actions of those knights who took it upon themselves to found the Templar order in 1119 under the leadership of the French nobleman Hugues de Payens.\(^6\) Indeed, while the formation of the Templars was partly driven by necessity, as there was a significant lack of resources in the East to maintain order and defend Latin Christian interests, it was also partly driven by “a desire to embody the zeal of the First Crusade in a more permanent form.”\(^7\) The success and popularity of the First Crusade as a new model of warfare, and by extension, the crusader as a new warrior


\(^6\) William of Tyre, A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea, transl. by Emily Atwater Babcock and A.C. Krey, vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), 525. William notes, “The main duty of this order- that which was enjoined upon them by the patriarch and the other bishops for the remission of sins- was “that, as far as their strength permitted, they should keep the roads and highways safe from the menace of robbers and highwaymen, with especial regard for the protection of pilgrims.”

\(^7\) Barber, The Reign of Chivalry, 106.
model, thus made it possible for pious knights to embrace such a model on a permanent basis through the formation of the Templars without compromising their reputations as fighting men.

The Earliest Templars

Unlike secular knights who usually acted only for their own benefit and defined themselves as men according to standards the Church often found objectionable, the earliest Templars bound themselves together through mutual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, in pursuit of what historian Malcolm Barber has called the “…self imposed charitable task” of defending unarmed Christian pilgrims traveling in the Holy Land. The apparent sincerity and commitment of those early knights who became Templars is suggested by the wealth and status they gave up to join the poorly equipped and funded order, as well as in their prior dedication to Christian causes in the Holy Land.

Consider the example of Hugues de Payens, who was a knight from a noble family in Champagne and the first Grand Master of the order. Rather than living a life of relative ease as a member of the French aristocracy, and according to the brash standards of knights in his day, Hugues instead committed himself to an alternative model of warrior identity; the dangerous and impoverished life of a Templar, owning nothing, and defending pilgrims in the Holy Land. While our information on Hugues’ early life is limited, we can glean some important insights into his religious convictions and the experiences that may have ultimately inspired him to play a leading role in the founding of the Templars. We know, for example, that Hugues had already committed

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himself to many years of often-arduous service in the East prior to the founding of the order in 1119. It is believed that Hugues de Payens would have traveled to the Holy Land on pilgrimage with his lord, Hugh of Troyes, the Count of Champagne from 1104 to 1108 and again in 1114.9

Hugues’s early years as a Templar were apparently lean ones, as the Templars, in accord with the monastic virtues they professed, became known for their extreme poverty during this period. Consider the example of Hugues’ friend and co-founder, Godfrey de Saint-Omer. Like Hugues de Payen, Godfrey was also a member of a powerful noble family in northern France who had abandoned his wealth and status to dedicate himself to the hardships and poverty of early Templar life. Indeed, according to Templar legend the early Templars were so poor that initially Godfrey and Hugues had only one horse to share between them, which gave rise to the famous image on the Templar seal of two men riding one horse.10

Hugues’ ideal of defending pilgrims was not unheard of among westerners the time. To the contrary, as a French knight, Hugues would almost certainly have been aware of (and apparently influenced by) a tradition dating back to the tenth-century Peace of God movement in which clerics argued Christian knights had an obligation to protect pilgrims (among others).11 Thus, it is not unusual that Hugues saw a

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11 From the Synod of Charroux (c. 989) onwards, ecclesiastical authorities had sought to exempt certain groups, including pilgrims, from knightly violence. In 1059 a Roman council of Pope Nicholas II
commitment to the defense of pilgrims as a worthy goal. What was more unusual, or even unprecedented, was Hugues' effort to fuse knightly and monastic virtues in the formation of a permanent monastic order; the Templars.\footnote{12}

Hugues' assumption that such an order would be acceptable to (at least some) other knights, and even the Church, was a reflection of the new thinking of the age. The theological underpinnings that justified the First Crusade, which allowed for the blending of pilgrimage with warfare, giving war-making knights the status of temporary ecclesiastics by virtue of their temporary vows, provided a foundation on which the conceptual framework of the Templars, as permanent monk-warriors committed to monastic virtues, was laid.\footnote{13} Indeed, the connection between the virtues of monasticism and the ideals of crusading was so clear-cut that Jonathan Riley-Smith has argued that contemporaries regarded the armies of the First Crusade as a type of monastery on the march.\footnote{14} Thus, the founding of the Templars as warrior-monks represented a natural progression by which “…the crusading ideal was transferred on to a different plane.”\footnote{15}

\footnote{12} Riley-Smith, \textit{The First Crusaders}, 160. As considered earlier in this dissertation, Christian clergy had long been suspicious of the warrior classes because they shed blood (in addition to other behaviors the clergy generally deemed immoral), which was, of course, traditionally forbidden to the clergy and monks. Monks and clerics may have previously viewed themselves as warriors, but as spiritual warriors on a spiritual battlefield. Now Hugues was proposing that monks take up physical arms on the physical battlefield, as an expression of their love of God, which was unprecedented.


\footnote{14} Riley-Smith, \textit{The First Crusaders}, 147-152. See also Hamilton, "Ideals of Holiness," 693-694.

\footnote{15} Riley-Smith, \textit{The First Crusaders}, 160.
A prominent example of a secular knight embracing the new warrior ideal represented by the Templars, and by extension the new masculine identity that came with such a change, is that of Hugh, the powerful and influential Count of Champagne. Before Hugh joined the Templars in 1124/25, he had already taken two pilgrimages to the Holy Land from 1104 to 1108 and again in 1114.\textsuperscript{16} Bernard of Clairvaux had viewed Hugh as an exemplar of Christian knighthood, particularly praising his generous support of the Cistercians.\textsuperscript{17} Indeed, Hugh had long donated to monastic causes, most prominently in a land grant in 1115 to the Cistercians that was instrumental in the establishment of the Clairvaux Abbey.\textsuperscript{18} For such reasons, Hugh represented an ideal candidate to embrace the new Templar model of warrior identity. When Hugh joined the Templars and took his vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, he correspondingly abandoned his wife, whom he believed had committed adultery, and transferred his titles to his nephew, Theobald IV.\textsuperscript{19} Perhaps most interestingly, in joining the Templars, Hugh also humbly submitted himself to the authority of a lesser man, Hugues de Payens, who was Hugh’s former vassal and had served under him during his pilgrimages in the Holy Land decades earlier.\textsuperscript{20} Through these actions, Hugh and other early Templars openly rejected the normal means by which secular knights had traditionally defined themselves as men.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{16} Riley-Smith, \textit{The First Crusaders}, 160.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Jean Truax, “Miles Christi: Count Theobald IV of Blois and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux,” \textit{Cistercian Studies Quarterly} 44:3 (2009), 302.
\item \textsuperscript{18} See Barber and Bate, “Historical Introduction,” 3 and Richard Salter Storrs, \textit{Bernard of Clairvaux: The Times, The Man, and His Work} (New York: Scribners, 1893), 222-23.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Truax, “Miles Christi,” 302-3, 307. See also Helen J. Nicholson, \textit{A Brief History of the Knights Templar} (London: Robinson, 2010), 23-24.
\item \textsuperscript{20} On Hugues of Payen’s vassalage to Hugh of Champagne, see Read, \textit{The Templars}, 91.
\end{itemize}
The Council of Troyes and the Primitive Rule of the Templars

The significance of the formation of the Templars was not lost on clerics of the era. Indeed, as knights living under permanent vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, the Templars were celebrated and promoted by many twelfth-century ecclesiastical authorities. The cleric and historian William of Tyre, for example, noted how the founding Templars had rejected the worldly model of secular knighthood and wrote that they were made up of, “…pious and God fearing nobles of knightly rank, devoted to the Lord, [who] professed the wish to live perpetually in poverty, chastity, and obedience…”21 Yet while many contemporary clergymen praised the Templars, none of them did so with as much zeal, or impact, as Bernard of Clairvaux. In his De Laude Novae Militiae, Bernard wrote a fierce defense of the order in which he approvingly defined the Templars as a “new knighthood” ["nova militia"] dedicated to only the highest Christian ideals, which, as this chapter will consider, were significantly at odds with the norms of secular knighthood.22

While many influential clerics celebrated the Templars, the most significant moment of ecclesiastic approval for the order came in 1129 at the Council of Troyes.23 The official endorsement of the Templars at Troyes was set in motion in 1126, when

21 William of Tyre, History, 525.


Hugues de Payens traveled back to Europe in hopes of winning a formal constitution for the order approved by the Pope. In this, he enlisted the support of Bernard of Clairvaux, who then helped Hugues draft a formal rule for the Templars that was approved at the Council of Troyes, signifying the official acceptance of the order by the Church.\footnote{The Rule is found in La Règle du Temple, ed. H. de Curzon (Paris: Renouard, 1886) 11-74. In translation see “The Primitive Rule,” in J.M. Upton-Ward, ed. The Rule of the Templars: The French Text of the Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 1992), 19-38. On Bernard’s aid in drafting the rule, see Barber, The Reign of Chivalry, 106 and J.M. Upton-Ward, “Introduction,” in J.M. Upton-Ward, ed. The Rule of the Templars: The French Text of the Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 1992), 4.}

The *Primitive Rule* approved at Troyes had 72 clauses regulating the behavior of Templars and, reflecting Bernard’s influence, was modeled on the *Cistercian Rule*.\footnote{Upton-Ward, “Introduction,” 3-4.} Like any other monastic rule, the *Rule* of the Templars implied a radical behavioral change for former knights who had not previously served as crusaders. They were expected to embrace the monastic ideals of chastity and poverty, for example, which were not typically in accord with the lives of the aristocratic knightly class.\footnote{See Chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation.} Yet, by the early twelfth century when the *Templar Rule* was drafted, the idea of knights committing themselves to such principles was not without precedent, as knights during the First Crusade had already committed themselves to such principles on a temporary basis.\footnote{See Chapter 5 of this dissertation. Although crusaders did not formally commit themselves to poverty in their crusading vows, they were nonetheless expected to act as pilgrims during the crusade, which forbade them from traveling and living in luxury during the time they were under their vows.}

The *Primitive Rule* of the Templars begins by drawing a clear distinction between the Templars and secular knights. The prologue opens by admonishing secular knights for having embraced lives “for human favour only” without dedication to the will of
Moreover, the Rule calls for those secular knights who “secretly despise their own will” to follow those whom “God has chosen from the mass of perdition” to defend the Church. Indeed, the Rule explains that the Templars have been called to defend the Church exactly because secular knights have failed in their responsibilities as Christian warriors. The Rule notes, for example, that rather than committing themselves to the service of God, secular knights have instead “despised the love of justice” as they failed to “defend the poor, widows, orphans, and churches,” preferring instead only to “plunder, despoil and kill.” In contrast to secular knights, the Rule notes that whoever would be a “knight of Christ,” according to the Templar model, will deserve to “keep company with the martyrs who gave their souls for Jesus Christ.”

Among the chief distinctions the Rule highlights between how Templars and secular knights defined themselves as men is the chastity of the Templars. In a section instructing how the brothers of the order should dress, the Rule notes that the Templars are to wear white cloaks and habits as an outward sign of their “purity and complete chastity.” Indeed, according to the Rule, the maintenance of the Templar’s chastity is necessary because it represents “certitude of heart and healthiness of body,” and because the unchaste “cannot come to eternal rest nor see God.” Thus, the Templar model, just like the crusader model before it, offered obedient knights of all classes an opportunity to continue in their status as warriors in a way that, unlike the secular model of knighthood, would not offend God and harm the potential for their salvation.

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On this issue one might contrast the contemporary examples of the previously mentioned Count Hugh of Champagne, who was one of the founding members of the Templars, with the behavior of the powerful Duke William IX of Aquitaine (d. 1126). Hugh had actively participated in pilgrimage movements to the Holy Land as early as 1104 while William had even participated in the Crusade of 1101. Yet the impact of their experiences in the Holy Land seems to have affected these powerful and influential men quite differently.

As considered in Chapters 4 and 5, secular knights, often sought to build their manly reputations through openly boasting of their sexual interactions with women. Contemporary clerical authors often cite the actions of William IX as a prime example of such behavior. They argued that the reason for William’s failure during the Crusade of 1101 was due to his sexual misdeeds with women. With a reputation for such behavior during the course of a crusade, when he was under a temporary vow of chastity no less, it is not surprising that William would continue to embrace such behavior once the crusade ended and he returned home to the aristocratic culture of his native Aquitaine. According to William of Malmesbury, for example, William IX is reported to have brazenly placed the image of his mistress on his shield, for all to see, and openly


32 Guibert of Nogent, for example, reports how after having taken the cross, William then made a hypocrisy of his crusading vow by scandalously recruiting “swarms of girls” to accompany his forces to the Holy Land. Geoffrey, the prior of Vigeois in the Limousin, explicitly argued that William’s womanizing was the cause of his military ineffectiveness. For consideration of these examples and others, see Martindale, “Cavalaria et Orgueil,” 88-89. Blaming William’s military failures on sexual immorality was well in keeping with how clerical authors of the First Crusade had typically ascribed military defeat to sexual immorality, as considered more extensively in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.
boasted that he would “bear her in battle just as she bore him in bed.” Moreover, as a reflection of the acceptability of such behavior in the aristocratic culture of Aquitaine, William’s manly boasts about his mistress were apparently well received by those who served with him, as his audience is reported to have responded with great laughter. In contrast to William, Hugh of Champagne, who as previously mentioned had long had a reputation for pious acts, took a vow of chastity in 1124 to join the Templars, publically renouncing his wife to do so. Thus, the two men, both high ranking and powerful knights, embraced two very different models of warrior masculinity with William’s model partly based on openly boasting of his sexual prowess while Hugh’s model was partly based on his vow of chastity.

A major precedent of knights taking vows of chastity is, of course, found in the First Crusade, when perhaps 6000 of Europe’s knights voluntarily took crusading vows that committed them to chastity. Yet as previously noted in this dissertation, such vows were only temporary and, as seen in the example of William, some knights clearly found it difficult to abide by such a standard even for a short period. The Templars, however, offered knights a new means by which those willing to commit themselves permanently to chastity and other ideals of Christian holiness might find greater success in maintaining such vows- participation in a monastic community- geared toward reducing, or even eliminating, the temptations that otherwise might lead to failure.


To this end, a number of regulations regarding the Templars’ interaction with women were established in the Rule in an effort to safeguard the chastity of their members. For example, Templars were forbidden to “look too much upon the face of [a] woman,” warning, “the company of women is a dangerous thing, for by it the old devil has led many from the straight path to Paradise.” As a result, women were strictly forbidden from being admitted as sisters into the order, so that “the flower of chastity is always maintained.” Moreover, all Templars were to avoid “at all costs” the embraces of women “by which men have perished many times, so that they may remain eternally before the face of God with a pure conscience.” Similarly, the Templars were forbidden to kiss a woman, any woman, under any circumstances, to include even their mothers.

The Rule also emphasizes many other differences between the Templars and secular knights. For example, the Rule highlights the order’s dedication to poverty, noting how as former members of the nobility, the Templars have “abandoned the pleasant riches of this world” and “willingly subjected [themselves] to poverty.” Also unlike secular knights, for whom boasting was a key means by which they established their reputations, the Rule emphasized that the Templars were to live all aspects of their lives in humility, avoiding demonstrations of pride. Indeed, even when eating, Templars are instructed to ask for what they need at the dinner table “with all humility

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39 When Templars pray, for example, they are to do so “in all humility and pure devotion.” See “The Primitive Rule,” 25. On knightly boasting, see Chapter 4 of this dissertation.
The Templar Rule was, after all, one for monks, and so it drew from a monastic Benedictine tradition, particularly as expressed in the recently emergent Cistercian framework (due to Bernard’s influence at Troyes), that had long emphasized the necessity of personal humility for monks.

Correspondingly, the Rule condemns those things in which secular knights were known to have taken the most pride— including boasting of one’s deeds on the battlefield or one’s sexual exploits. In doing so, the Templars were following in a long tradition of condemning such boasts by secular knights as considered in Chapters 4 and 5 or even in the more specific case of William IX of Aquitaine’s boasts of his sexual exploits with his mistress. The Rule explicitly notes, for example, “We prohibit and firmly forbid any brother to recount to another brother nor to anyone else the brave deeds he has done in secular life… and the pleasures of the flesh that he has had with immoral women.”

This text demonstrates not only how the founding Templars were well aware of the common practice of secular knights boasting of their sexual and martial prowess as a means of promoting their manhood, but more importantly it highlights the radical behavior changes expected of knights who joined the order. Here, knights, in an effort to maintain the ideals of monastic humility, are expressly forbidden from “recounting” (or boasting of) their military and sexual exploits “done in secular life” before they joined the Templars. Such a prohibition represented a direct challenge to one of the primary means by which secular knights established their many reputations among other knights.

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40 “The Primitive Rule,” 27.

as, upon becoming Templars, they embraced a new expression of warrior masculinity that would not allow for the self-promotion of their manhood by such means.

The Background to Bernard of Clairvaux’s *De Laude Novae Militiae*

Although Bernard of Clairvaux played a central role in promoting the Templars at the Council of Troyes and in the composition of their *Primitive Rule*, the primary vehicle by which Bernard promoted the Templars was through his previously mentioned *De Laude Novae Militiae*, commonly translated as *In Praise of the New Knighthood*. The inspiration for Bernard’s *De Laude* was a request by Hugues de Payens, made sometime around the Council of Troyes in 1129. Hugues had asked Bernard to provide a letter justifying the existence of the new order, to which Bernard then responded with *De Laude* sometime between the Council of Troyes and no later than the year 1136.42

While composing *De Laude*, Bernard appears to have drawn heavily from not only the Templar Rule (which in turn was influenced by his own order’s rule—the *Cistercian Rule*), but also an earlier letter (c. 1128) by Hugues addressed to his fellow Templars that sought to justify their existence in response to their critics.43 In fact, French scholar Jean Leclercq, who in 1957 was the first to edit the letter and attribute it to Hugues de Payens, has argued that St. Bernard probably had Hugues’ letter and the *Rule* in front of him as he wrote *De Laude*. Indeed, the letter was found in a manuscript at the municipal library at Nîmes sandwiched between a copy of the *Rule* and *De Laude*.44 Moreover, Bernard dealt with many key themes considered in both the *Rule* and *De Laude*.


44 The text of the letter is provided in Leclercq, “Un document,” 86-89. An English translation of the letter is found in “Letter of Hugh ‘Peccator’ to the Templars in the East (c. 1128),” in *The Templars:*
and, in particular, Hugues’ letter, of which the most important of those themes are focused on justifying the concept of the warrior-monk and his superiority to sinful secular knights. Finally, Bernard himself noted in *De Laude* that he was writing directly in response to Hugues’ request for such an endorsement.

The Templars hardly could have asked for a more effective advocate of their cause, as Bernard, the son of a knight who had grown up in an aristocratic family, was particularly well suited to appeal to members of the nobility. Like many other monks from similar backgrounds, Bernard had even trained for the knighthood in his youth, so he understood the institution well and could communicate the legitimacy of the Templars as warriors to other knights in terms they understood and accepted. But the Templars were not only knights, but monks as well, so in undertaking to write *De Laude*, Bernard had the double task of justifying the legitimacy of the Templars as a hybrid of the knight and monk.

Bernard’s initial goal, first and foremost, was to provide an apology and rationale for the very existence of the order for those who were wary about the purpose and status of the new order. In the opening lines of *De Laude*, Bernard makes this purpose clear in noting how Hugues had requested that he direct his pen against critics of the

Selected Sources, eds. and trans. Malcolm Barber and Keith Bate (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 54-58. See also Upton Ward, *The Templar Rule*, 5. Upton-Ward notes, “It has been argued [referring to Leclercq, “Un document,” 91] that St. Bernard probably had Hugues’ letter and the Rule in front of him as he wrote and, indeed, the manuscript of Hugues’ letter was found between a copy of the *Rule* and the *De Laude*.” See also Ramos, “Ecclesiastical Reform,” 77.

45 See also Upton-Ward’s consideration of this issue in Upton-Ward, *The Templar Rule*, 5.


order as a form or moral support for the fledgling order.\footnote{Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 127. To this, Bernard then highlights the great importance of such a task, which should not be taken “lightly” or done “hastily,” and then declares that in providing his response, he has given it his best effort (see pages 127-128). See also Leclercq, “Un document,” 98, who interprets this part of the text as a clear indication that Bernard’s goal is to write a defense of the order.} Defending the order from its very early critics seems to have preoccupied Hugues prior to his request for Bernard’s help. In Hugues’ previously mentioned letter to his fellow Templars, for example, from which Bernard drew inspiration in composing \textit{De Laude}, he mentions how some in his order had been troubled by accusations that their vocation was sinful, illicit, and an obstacle to spiritual advancement.\footnote{“Letter of Hugh ‘Peccator’,” 55-56.}

While the particular early critics Hugues was responding to remain unknown, the fact that they would apparently pronounce so authoritatively on the legitimacy or illegitimacy of monastic orders suggests strongly that they were monks themselves. Indeed, what early critics of the new order that we are aware of seem to have been primarily other monks rather than the laity who, as seen in their enthusiasm to support the new order, as well as in the masculine language they used to describe the Templars, generally seem to have approved of them as both members of a valid religious order and as representing a legitimate expression of warrior masculinity. Around 1134, for example, one Laureta from the village of Douzens in the south of France gave all she possessed to the Templars for “following the gospel by \textit{manfully} waging daily war against…the Saracens…who try to destroy God’s law and the faithful servants of God.”\footnote{Cartulaires des Templiers de Douzens, ed. Pierre Gérard and Elisabeth Magnou (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1965), A no. 40, p.51. Translation taken from Helen Nicholson, “Knights of Christ? Templars, Hospitallers, and other Military Orders in the Eyes of their Contemporaries, 1128-1298,” The ORB: Online Reference Book for Medieval Studies, www.the-orb.net/encyclo/religion/monastic/knights.html (accessed December 24, 2012).} Thus, Laureta seems to have ranked the Templars at least as high
as, if not higher than, secular knights on the battlefield, both in terms of their willingness to fight on behalf of Christians and in the manly way in which they performed their martial duties. In a similar way, Roger, Vizcount of BÈziers, donated a village to the Templars and in his charter he celebrated the efforts of the Templars to guard and defend both Jerusalem and broader Christianity. Numerous other lay charters survive which show that lay donors believed the Templars were considered just as virtuous as any other monastic order. In fact, as historian Helen Nicholson has pointed out, “it could be suggested that as knights the brothers seemed to the laity more trustworthy and accessible than the monks and many of the higher clergy.”

Moreover, while some early monks may have had their misgivings about the Templars, such critics appear to have been a minority even among their fellow monks. Bernard and the Cistercians’ support for the Templars, for example, in light of the goals of the early Templars, is not really surprising. Unlike their secular counterparts, Templars, who took the triple vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity, sought to sanctify the institution of knighthood, which, as this dissertation has already considered, was a goal that many ecclesiastical advocates of knightly reform seem to have found admirable. This seems to have particularly been the case after Bernard publicized his considerable support in De Laude and the Church gave its official sanction to the order at the Council of Troyes. De Laude, for example, appears to have been widely circulated and influenced how many other ecclesiastical writers came to understand the Templars. The English monk Orderic Vitalis (d. 1141), for example, while living in

52 Cartulaires des Templiers de Douzens, A no. 115 [114], p. 107.
53 See Nicholson, “Knights of Christ?” (Online).
54 As considered in Chapters four and five of this dissertation.
Normandy, referred to the Templars as “admirable knights” (“venerandì milites”) who “face martyrdom daily.” In other examples, the Bishop Otto of Freising, writing in the mid-1140s, as well as Bishop Anselm of Havelberg writing in 1150, and the Cluniac monk Richard of Poitou, writing in 1153, all referred positively to the Templars in language that seems to have been inspired by *De Laude*.

As for the support of the broader Church at Troyes, it can be seen as the culmination of a progression of medieval institutional ecclesiastical responses to bring about the reform of the knightly class. Such efforts began with the Peace and Truce of God movements, which met with only very limited success, followed by the ecclesiastical effort to graft a pilgrimage framework onto warfare as seen during the First Crusade, which only provided a temporary model of reform, to the promotion of the Templars as the latest (and perhaps boldest) ecclesiastical effort to promote the reform of the knightly class through the establishment of a permanent alternative model of warrior masculinity, based on earlier ideals established for crusaders, as a competitor to the secular model. To this end, as one historian has noted, the Templars and their model of knighthood emerged clearly as “a channel for transmitting the Church’s ideology to lay aristocratic society.”

The primary framework by which Bernard composed his defense of the order was by drawing a stark contrast between the Templars and secular knights through the well-placed use of many biblical references that accentuated his broader arguments; a

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literary model with which he had considerable experience. In 1125 Bernard had written a well-known apology that contrasted the Cluniac and Cistercian models of monasticism. As would be the case with De Laude, Bernard’s Apologia for the Cistercians was also written at the request of their leader, abbot William of St. Thierry. In doing so, Bernard promoted the virtues of the Cistercian model while criticizing the moral laxity of the Cluniacs. This had proven to be an effective literary model that Bernard would repeat in De Laude, as he praised the virtues and conduct of the Templars while heaping scorn on the immorality and conduct of secular knights. Such an approach in De Laude seems to have worked well with the role that Bernard appears to have believed the Templars could play in ecclesiastical efforts to reform the knightly class.

Equally important was Bernard’s theological approach to composing De Laude. According to Bernard, God had allowed the Holy Land to be attacked so that it might result in the salvation of brave men who were willing to embrace personal holiness and use the tools of their deadly profession in a righteous cause as a means of their salvation rather than their damnation. This type of thinking worked well with the reform spirit of the age, channeling the ideological and theological underpinnings of the First Crusade to emphasize the clerical masculine warrior ideal as the only type of warrior that could take advantage of such an opportunity. Thus, in promoting the Templar

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58 See, for example, Natalie Van Kirk’s extensive study of Bernard’s literary and rhetorical approach in Natalie Van Kirk, “Finding one’s way through the maze of language: rhetorical usages that add meaning in Saint Bernard’s style(s),” Cistercian Studies Quarterly 42:1 (2007), 11-35.


model of knighthood over the profession of the secular knight, Bernard presented the latter group with an alternative behavioral model based on monastic masculine ideals to follow as a means of expressing contrition for their sins.  

Bernard of Clairvaux’s Criticism of Secular Knights

One of Bernard’s more significant criticisms of secular knights had to do with the sinfulness of knightly combat. Indeed, Bernard condemned knights who fought only to satisfy their “…thirst for empty glory.” Bernard then condemned how such knights had “dared to undertake such a dangerous business on such slight and frivolous grounds.” Yet while Bernard condemned the “empty glory” that knights sought as “slight and frivolous,” the reality is that a reputation for military prowess was essential to a secular knight’s masculine identity. As considered earlier in this dissertation, knights depended on their reputations for martial prowess to establish themselves men among other knights. Thus winning “glory” through their military exploits was no trivial thing from their perspective.

Bernard’s condemnation of the “slight and frivolous” basis on which knights conducted themselves in pursuit of military glory undoubtedly had much to do with his desire for an orderly Christian society. Indeed, in numerous works, Bernard advocated an orderly world in which everyone accepted the position in life that God had granted for them. Such thinking had important implications for Bernard’s broader view of the

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62 Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 133.
63 Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 133.
64 See, for example, Truax, “Miles Christi,” 300. Truax examines a number of Bernard’s works to develop the idea that establishing a worldly order, based on acceptance of one’s divinely inspired vocation- whether it be monk, warrior, or anything else, which in turn deeply influenced his thinking about the proper role of the Christian warrior.
proper role of knights in Christian society, whom he expected to employ the deadly tools of their profession only under the moral guidance of the Church and only against the enemies of Christians. Knights who used their God-given martial skills against each other to win worldly glory for themselves were using their skills for something that Bernard viewed as unimportant and unintended by God.\textsuperscript{65} Especially since Bernard could now present such knights with an alternative model of masculine warrior identity, in the form of the Templars, by which knights could please God and win their salvation while still maintaining their status as manly warriors through demonstrations of martial prowess. Indeed, Bernard argued that the type of frivolous combat secular knights typically engaged in, whether victorious or otherwise, endangered their souls. Win or lose on the physical battlefield, Bernard argued, knights who engaged in such combat always lost spiritually. On the one hand, if they killed their opponents, under such circumstances, then they became murderers. Then, on the other hand, if they themselves were killed, they died as murderers.\textsuperscript{66} Either way, it was a losing proposition that prompted Bernard to ask, “What, then is the end of fruit of this worldly knighthood, or rather knavery, as I should call it? What if not the mortal sin of the victor and the eternal death of the vanquished?”\textsuperscript{67} In contrast, Bernard praised the Templars, who he argued did not have to fear death on account of their holiness.\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{65} Truax, “Miles Christi,” 300-301.

\textsuperscript{66} Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 131. “If you happen to be killed while you are seeking only to kill another, you die a murderer. Now it will not do to be a murderer, living or dead, victorious or vanquished. What an unhappy victory- to have conquered a man while yielding to vice, and to indulge in an empty glory at his fall when wrath and pride have gotten the better of you!”

\textsuperscript{67} Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 132.

\textsuperscript{68} Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 132, 134. The Rule of the Templars also explicitly confirmed such a view, attributing their founding to divine providence, and declared that, “…this armed company of
Bernard was also well known for his more general condemnations of the excesses and arrogance of knightly society, which he saw, in the words of one historian, as a “synthesis of worldly vices.” In *De Laude*, in a similar way to how Bernard had attacked clothing excesses among Cluniac monks in his earlier *Apology* to Abbot William, Bernard attacked the worldly and ostentatious clothing and hair fashions of secular warriors, arguing not only were they a reflection of their sinful lives, a clerical concern, but also unpractical for combat, a concern for any knight. As a monk, Bernard’s condemnation of the hair and dress of secular knights followed in a long tradition of clerical concerns over such things. As already considered in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, for example, Christian tradition dating back to the era of the New Testament had condemned long hair for men, equating it with femininity. In a similar way, historic Christian authorities had often promoted an ascetic model as the Christian ideal of manhood, which was typically associated with monks. Monks, dating back to

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69 Such is the conclusion of scholar Aldo Scaglione, who cites and considers Bernard’s earlier works addressed to monks in drawing his conclusions. He notes, “St. Bernard of Clairvaux sternly reminded his monks of Ecclesiastes 7.5: ‘Cor stultorum, ubi laetitia,’ ‘gaity dwells in the heart of the fool,’ even associating *laetitia* with the most heinous sin, pride: ‘Proprium est superborum, laeta semper appetere et tristia devitare.’ This was part of his general condemnation of the world of chivalry as a synthesis of all worldly vices: ‘they spout abominable mimes, magic and fabulous tales, obscene songs, and idle spectacles, like vanities and lying insanities.’ We shall see how within the rigoristic monastic circles this distrust of courtly ways accompanied an underlying suspicion of chivalry that had a powerful political motivation: that is, the strong alliance that tied some leading monasteries and cathedrals to centralizing, antifeudal monarchic policies.” Aldo Scaglione, *Knights at Court: Courtliness, Chivalry, & Courtesy From Ottonian Germany To The Italian Renaissance* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), 39.

70 Specifically, the arguments in *De Laude* that ostentatious outward clothing is both impractical and a sign of inward spiritual problems were both made earlier in Bernard’s attack on the moral laxity of the Cluniacs in his *Apologia*. See Bernard of Clairvaux, “An Apologia to Abbot William,” 59-62.

71 1 Corinthians 11:14. See also Chapter 2 of this dissertation.
late antiquity, had always condemned fine clothing, arguing that it reflected a lack of humility and a distraction from the service of God.\textsuperscript{72}

In \textit{De Laude}, Bernard scornfully asked, “Do you think the swords of your foes will be turned back by your gold, spare your jewels or be unable to pierce your silks?” To the contrary, Bernard argued that such clothing was impractical for combat and impeded the effectiveness of knights. According to Bernard, the successful warrior needed to be able to do three things- “he must guard his person with strength, shrewdness and care; he must be free in his movements, and he must be \ldots[able] to draw his sword [quickly].” After providing such a context, Bernard then took an unmistakable swipe at such knights’ manhood when he asked, “Then why do you blind yourselves with effeminate locks and trip yourselves up with long and full tunics, burying your tender, delicate hands in big cumbersome sleeves?”\textsuperscript{73} Indeed, for Bernard, the inner motives of “bad knights,” those who did not fight for Christ, could be discerned from their outward appearance.\textsuperscript{74} They grew “effeminate locks,” wore silks, plumed their armor with colorful clothes, painted their shields and saddles, and adorned their bits and spurs with gold, silver, and precious stones, only to rush off to their ruin in battle so adorned. Bernard then asked, in a clear indictment of the manliness of such knights, “Are these the trappings of a warrior or are they not rather the trinkets of a woman?”\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{72} See Chapter 2 of this dissertation and additional consideration of this issue in later eras in Chapters 3-5.

\textsuperscript{73} Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 132-133.

\textsuperscript{74} Barber, “Social Context,” 33-34.

\textsuperscript{75} Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 132-133. Bernard’s attack on the manhood of such knights aside, it is also possible that, in an era witnessing the emerging use of heraldic devices, he may have simply misunderstood the reason for which knights painted their shields, helmets, and horse gear (e.g. to distinguish between foe and friend during a pitched battle). Yet this seems unlikely as Bernard had grown up in a noble house and trained for the knighthood as a youth (See Bouchard, \textit{Strong of Body}, 170.)
Bernard of Clairvaux’s Advocacy of the Templar Model of Knightly Masculinity

In contrasting secular knights with the Templars, Bernard explicitly presented the Templars as an alternative “model” of knighthood that was superior to the model typically embraced by secular knights. Bernard contrasts the humility of the Templars with the extravagance of worldly knights and praises the Templars for their discipline and obedience to their superiors and the Church while also depicting worldly knights who rebel against spiritual authority as being idolaters. Moreover, he praises the Templars for their behavioral restraint, noting, “No inappropriate word, idle deed, unrestrained laugh, not even the slightest whisper or murmur is left uncorrected once it has been detected.”

Yet it is particularly on the issue of appearance that Bernard draws his sharpest distinction between worldly knights and Templars. While we have already considered how Bernard rebuked the extravagant and effeminate appearance of worldly knights, Bernard noted that the Templars, in contrast, “shun every excess in clothing…” and “on

Instead, it seems more likely that Bernard associated the use of such devices with the worldly trappings of knighthood, as pitched battles were increasingly rare in the twelfth-century and heraldic symbols were increasingly used only to identify knights and their teams in tournaments. Thus, Bernard likely connected such devices with the immoral practice and unseemly frivolity of tournament participation, which was broadly condemned by monks and clerics in this era. Canon 14 of the Second Lateran Council in 1139, for example, condemned knighthly tournaments and refused a Christian burial to those who died as a result of their participation in them. The decrees and canons of the council are available in H. J. Schroeder, Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937), 195-213. See also Barber, “The Social Context,” 35.

76 See Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 138. Bernard notes, “And now as a model, or at least for the shame of those knights of ours who are fighting for the devil rather than God, we will briefly set for the life and virtues of these cavaliers of Christ. Let us see how they conduct themselves at home as well as in battle, how they appear in public, and in what way the knight of God differs from the knight of the world.” See also Barber, “The Social Context,” 37.


78 Matthew Bennett also considered Bernard’s view of Templar clothing and appearance in Bennett, Military Masculinity, 80.
the rare occasions when they are not on duty” spend their time “repairing their worn armor and torn clothing.” Unlike the long hair of worldly knights, Bernard notes, Templars wear their hair short, “in conformity with the Apostle’s saying [1 Cor. 11:14], that it is shameful for a man to cultivate flowing locks.” Moreover, unlike refined worldly knights who dress in silks, the rugged Templars “seldom wash and never set their hair-content to appear tousled and dusty, bearing the marks of the sun and their armor.” Thus the Templars, unlike worldly knights, “seek to be formidable rather than flamboyant.”

Indeed, the Templars would have little reason to embrace worldly fashions for the purpose of impressing women, as they had committed themselves to personal holiness through chastity. Bernard points out that the Templars, by living as brothers under chaste vows, have avoided the worldly distractions of women and children “so that their evangelical perfection will lack nothing.” Thus, in contrast to secular knights, who in part based their masculine identity on their ability to woo women and produce heirs, both the Templar Rule and De Laude promoted the rejection of sex and marriage as a defining virtue of the Templars.

Bernard argued that such markedly different behavioral ideals gave the Templars considerable advantages over secular knights. Not only were they more focused on military tasks than secular knights, by avoiding the distractions of fashion, women, and family life, but they could also be assured of two important things; greater courage and


ability on the battlefield, and a martyr’s death should they be killed while serving as Templars.

Bernard emphasized, for example, how members of the crusading orders should be exceptionally brave in light of the spiritual and physical protections accorded them. While all knights, secular or religious, were expected to be brave, the Templars were supposed to be extraordinary in this regard on account of their special relationship with God. Bernard noted that the Templars, “No matter how outnumbered they are,” have little respect for their enemies in combat because they trust in the Lord to grant them the victory.81 Their bravery was inspired, Bernard noted, directly by God, who claimed “bravery is a gift of heaven” and that victory depended on God alone, rather than big armies.82 Bernard’s emphasis on the enhanced bravery of the Templars would have been an important selling point in promoting the new order to secular knights. The Templar model already asked secular knights to abandon important means by which they had traditionally established themselves as men in their class, including their sexual prowess with women and the arrogant boasting that was a vehicle by which they promoted their manly reputations. Yet here, as had been the case with clerical promoters of the First Crusade as considered in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, Bernard was proposing that God granted Templars greater courage than secular knights, something that could improve their martial prowess, the most desired of manly traits for secular knights.

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81 Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 140.
82 Bernard of Clairvaux, “In Praise,” 140. Bernard also claimed that on several occasions just one Templar had pursued a thousand of the enemy and two Templars had “put ten thousand to flight.”
The Templars seem to have enthusiastically embraced Bernard’s reasoning on this point. One of the better examples to illustrate this point comes from a Templar account of a clash between Christians and Muslims in the Holy Land just prior to the Third Crusade. In May 1187 a couple of hundred Templar and Hospitaller knights boldly attacked a Muslim force of seven thousand. Although the Christian forces were expectedly defeated, one knight, Jakelin de Mailly, reportedly won tremendous respect from his Muslim opponents for his courage on the battlefield. De Mailly was described as a “Glorious Champion of God’s law” who stood courageously as literally “thousands” rushed in on him. His Muslim opponents are described as having been so astonished with his exceptional courage in battle that they implored him to surrender because such a brave man deserved to live. What was the source of De Mailly’s courage? In the tradition of examples considered previously in this dissertation, including the early Christian martyrs in Chapter 2 or the example of the crusader Bohemund in Chapter 5, the clerical author claimed De Mailly, as a faithful and holy Templar, was favored by God who infused him with a special courage so that he was “not afraid to die for Christ.” Although he was eventually slain, he was not defeated, as “his soul fled triumphant bearing the palm of martyrdom.” Secular knights, on the other hand, as reflected in Bernard of Clairvaux’s account, did not have such assurances and could only look forward to damnation. So while courage was expected of both Templars and secular

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84 Indeed, after de Mailly had been slain, one of his Muslim opponents cut off his genitals and kept them in hopes of producing an heir “with courage as great as his.” *Itinerarium Peregrinorum*, ed. Nicholson, 25-6. The story is also examined in Matthew Bennett, “Virile Latins, Effeminate Greeks and Strong Women: Gender Definitions on Crusade,” in *Gendering the Crusades*, eds. Susan B. Edgington and Sarah Lambert (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 16-17.
knights, the Templar’s courage was expected to be much greater than that of the secular knight because not only was it granted by God on account of his personal holiness, but he was also assured of a much greater reward (Paradise) for his sacrifice.

The Broader Acceptance of the Templar Model in Medieval Christian Society

While through the formal creation of the Templars, ecclesiastical authorities succeeded in creating an alternative model of masculine warrior identity, it is important to stress once again that only a small percentage of Christendom’s knights ever formally took vows to join the Templars. In that sense, one could argue the impact of the Templar model was very limited. Yet it is important to keep in mind that although small in numbers, the Templars nevertheless garnered considerable respect from both the Church and secular knightly society and appear to have had a significant impact on at least some aspects of knightly culture. To begin with, while there is no evidence to suggest that most knights, unlike the clergy, viewed the Templars as representing the highest knightly ideal, there is considerable evidence to suggest that, nevertheless, many secular knights did respect the Templars and viewed them as a legitimate expression of Christian warrior masculine identity.  

This is perhaps best demonstrated from the significant numbers of knights that formed or joined knightly orders organized along the same (or similar) principles as the Templars that emerged throughout Europe and in the Holy Land in the decades and centuries to follow. Indeed, although the Templars themselves may have been forcibly dissolved in the early 14th century (nearly two centuries after their founding), the Templar model lived on in the various crusading

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85 Nicholson, *Love, War and Grail*, 6. Nicholson notes, “Certainly the warrior classes approved of the Military Orders, endowed them with patronage and even entered the Orders themselves, but they do not appear to have viewed them as the apex of chivalry.”
orders that they inspired who continued to play an active and leading roll in the military affairs of Europe well into the early modern era.

Consider the example of the Knights Hospitallers, an established monastic order that predated the Templars and was dedicated solely to the care of pilgrims in the Holy Land. Yet by the 1130s, the Hospitallers began to embrace the Templar model by incorporating armed knights into their membership and the order’s military function became predominant by the 1160s.86 As the Christian orders were expelled from the Holy Land during the 13th century, the Hospitallers would go on to be celebrated and win considerable fame as able defenders of Christian interests in the eastern Mediterranean until the 18th century.87 The Templar model also inspired the various well-known orders in Spain and Portugal that took part in the so-called Reconquista lasting well into the 15th century,88 as well as better known orders like the Teutonic Knights, who later played an active and influential roll in the Christianization of pagan


87 The Hospitallers eventually established themselves in Rhodes in the early 14th century where they withstood attacks from Ottoman Turks and Egyptian Arabs during the mid/later 14th and 15th centuries before finally being forced to abandon Rhodes to the Ottoman Turks in 1522. Following the Hospitaller’s defeat at Rhodes, they relocated briefly to Sicily before more permanently establishing themselves at Malta. Once in Malta, the Hospitallers once again resumed their roles as celebrated defenders against the encroaching Ottoman Empire during the 16th and 17th centuries where they would remain until only Napoleon finally defeated them in 1798. On the Hospitallers in the Levant, see Jonathan Riley-Smith, The Knights Hospitallers in the Levant, c. 1070-1309 (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012). For an excellent brief history covering the later years of the Hospitallers to 1798, see Helen Nicholson, The Knights Hospitallers (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001).

northern Europe into the 16th century. All of these military orders, and others like them, embraced the precedent setting Templar model and ethos in their initial founding.

Perhaps more significantly, the influence of the Templar model even on those who chose to remain secular knights during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries demonstrates a significant degree of social and cultural acceptance of the order as a legitimate expression of masculine warrior identity. We know, for example, many later knights who, although they did not join religious orders, nevertheless came to believe and argue that they could also (like the Templars) serve God through their profession. Raoul de Hodenc’s *Roman des Eles*, for example, written around 1215 as the earliest theoretical work on knighthood authored by a knight (rather than a cleric), showed how knighthood had evolved by then to the point that Raoul could argue (or perhaps felt the necessity to argue) that it was possible for knights to serve the Church without formally belonging to a military order. Similar thinking was also reflected in the well-known fictional examples of chaste and God fearing knights like Galahad or Gawain, who often featured prominently in the popular literature of the era. If fictional Templar characters are not directly depicted in such literature, then fictional secular knights are often

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depicted in ways that would have made Bernard of Clairvaux proud by virtue of their
chastity and devotion to God or various holy causes.\textsuperscript{92}

\textbf{Conclusions}

By rejecting the traditional behavioral traits associated with knighthood in the late
tenth and eleventh century, including arrogant boasting, extravagant appearances,
sexual relations with women, and the establishment of family lines, all of which were
considered essential components of a secular knight’s manly identity, the Templars
offered an alternative model with limited but intense appeal for those who willingly
exchanged the benefits and privileges of aristocratic knightly society to join them.
Indeed, the Templar knight won the respect of other men, particularly warriors, and his
manhood was never questioned. Thus the Templar model firmly established itself
among the various masculine identities already established in Christendom in their time
and was ranked at, or at least near, the top of the masculine hierarchy.

The acceptance and the promotion of the Templars also represented an
acknowledgement that most knights would never embrace the clerical ideal of
masculinity they had presented during the First Crusade and thus it might also be seen
as a concession that originally larger ambitions could not be achieved. In this sense, the
Templars served a purpose similar to that of monks in general. Monks represented a
high ideal of devotion that most laymen could never hope or desire to aspire to, but they

\textsuperscript{92} See Helen Nicholson’s excellent consideration of both the influence of the Templars and their
representation in medieval literature in \textit{Love, War and Grail}. See especially Chapters 1, 4, and 5. See
also Gregory J. Wilkin, “The Dissolution of the Templar ideal in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,” \textit{English
Studies}, 63 (1982), 111. “The Order of the Knights Templars (i.e. of the Temple of Solomon), founded in
1128 and fostered by the Cistercians, especially Bernard of Clairvaux, was the historical foundation upon
which the Grail knighthood of the Cistercian \textit{Questa} was based. In addition, the Templar ideal figures
largely, albeit differently, in Wolfram von Eschenbach’s \textit{Parzival}, whose \textit{Gralritterschaft} is composed of
\textit{Templeisen}. The \textit{regula} of the Templars, then, the basis of Grail knighthood, is overdue some attention.”
nevertheless existed as a representation of the ecclesiastical masculine ideal. In a similar and more narrow way, Templars and other members of military orders served as an example of what ecclesiastical authorities envisioned as the highest ideal of specifically warrior identity, but like common monks to the broader laity the Templars set a standard that most knights could never achieve.
Medieval literature scholar Thelma Fenster tells a curious story about how, during the process of setting up a conference on masculinity, she often heard the question “Men’s history? Men’s culture? Isn’t that what we have been studying for centuries under the guise of human history?” History, after all, as some protested, was written “by men, about men.”¹ Fenster’s critics are correct that the lives and deeds of men were essentially the focus of historical studies until the 1970s, yet the notion of what it meant to be a man in such studies was usually assumed, rather than discussed critically. Consequently, it would be wrong to assume that conventional political and military history, which generally focused on only the political and military aspirations and achievements of a small percentage of male elites, can be equated with gender studies or provide a proper understanding of the broad spectrum of masculine identities that existed concurrently in the past.

Although considerable research has since been done on medieval gender, much of the focus has sought to compensate, understandably, for the lack of focus by traditional historians on women. Consequently, gender studies have primarily considered issues of femininity rather than masculinity. Even less research on gender has been done in the context of the crusades, and that which exists is mostly devoted to issues of femininity.² As a result, this dissertation has addressed the existing gap


² On the broader topic of medieval masculinity (or masculinities) there exists only one single authored volume by a historian that exclusively focuses on the topic- See Ruth Mazzo Karras in From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003. On gender and the crusades there exists only one edited volume that focuses
between studies of medieval masculinity and femininity during the crusades, one of the
most important and defining movements of the Middle Ages. This is not to suggest that
scholars of medieval gender have not done significant work on the topic of medieval
masculinity (in general), but only to point out that the considerable work in a number of
areas remains to be done.

As has been considered in the preceding chapters, medieval gender scholars
have identified and catalogued a number of masculine identities that existed
concurrently in the Middle Ages. Yet, up to this point, they have failed to recognize the
crusader as representative of a hybrid masculine identity combining what many
ecclesiastical authors viewed as the previously disparate traits of a knight and monk, an
ideal that was then further developed in the formation of the Templar. The main
argument in this dissertation has been that competing medieval constructions of
masculinity were in the end adaptable and could even be combined to produce hybrid
variations (e.g. the crusader or the Templar) on the established norms.³

The Relationship of Clerical Reform and Medieval Warrior Masculinity

The background against which such adaptation and hybridization was made
possible is represented by the efforts of the ecclesiastical authorities of the Middle Ages
to reform first the clergy and then the laity with an emphasis on masculine performance
independent of sexuality. In other words, as some have already argued, male sexual

³ See, especially, Chapters 5 and 6.
virility was not necessarily a default component of medieval manliness. Moreover, a chief concern of Christian leaders since the New Testament era had been the behavioral reform of lay societies toward a chaste ideal. Nonetheless, the same lay male behaviors that ecclesiastical reformers sought to change, including the sexual domination of women, were often essential to how laymen defined themselves as men. Thus, it is not surprising that most lay members of the nobility, for whom manly reputations were often essential to maintaining their elevated status in medieval European society, resisted the proscribed behavior changes advocated by ecclesiastical reformers.

The Church, therefore, faced serious challenges in its efforts to align lay masculinity with long developed monastic ideals. While the First Crusade provided the opportunity for the reform of those knights who participated, as they were required to take crusading vows, only a relatively small percentage of Europe’s knights responded and, moreover, many of them did not always abide by their vows. Similarly, while the

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5 See Chapter 2.

6 On clerical reports/complaints of crusaders having a hard time adhering to their vows during the course of the crusade, see Chapter 5 (particularly consideration of the events at Antioch). On the number of knights who took part in the First Crusade, see John France, *The Crusades and the Expansion of Catholic Christendom, 1000-1714* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 56. While France notes that perhaps only around 6000 knights participated in the First Crusade, representing only a small percentage Europe’s total knights, I should also point out that several thousand additional knights seem to have found some appeal in the model of the First Crusade as, soon after the First Crusade had ended, they took vows to join independent crusading expeditions such as the crusade of 1101, Bohemond’s crusade of
formation of the Templars allowed for the establishment of a more long term manifestation of the crusader vow, wherein knights took monastic vows for the remainder of their days, only a minority of Europe’s knights became members of the order of the Temple of Jerusalem or the other military orders created during the twelfth century in the Holy Land, Spain, and the Baltic region.

Because reform minded clerical and monastic authorities so enthusiastically embraced a monastic framework for the Templars, even with their very limited appeal in terms of total membership, it may be argued that in doing so they recognized the clerically conceived ideal of the masculine warrior would never be embraced by all knights of Europe, at least not in the near future. Indeed, the Templars and other military orders were in part based on ready-made monastic models that had always implied a limited selection process and the careful monitoring of membership criteria. Nevertheless, the Templars, although small in total numbers, provided a new sense of how both warriors and men could be defined and became a standard against which the Church could measure the transformation of the institution of knighthood in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

**Crusading and Medieval Masculinity: Where do we go from here?**

This dissertation has also highlighted the utility of gender as an analytical tool for the study of the Crusades. Indeed, in a broader sense, the issue of why men fight, from simple physical conflicts between two individuals over perceived slights to one’s honor or their willingness to participate in large-scale wars in defense of their values and homelands, is connected to how they understand their duties and reputations as men.

1107, or “private pilgrimages,” such as that of Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony. Yet even when including those numbers the total still only represents a small percentage of Europe’s total knights.
Thus, medieval masculinity should be a topic of interest not only to gender historians, but also to traditional crusades or military historians whose research would only benefit from such an approach.

Following this line of thinking, a fundamental conclusion of this dissertation is that when taking crusading vows, crusaders also adopted a model of behavior that may have been foreign to their upbringing as knights, but not to their understanding of values they typically associated with monks. The adoption of this new model of behavior, and only this, may help us understand why crusaders seem to have largely abandoned, for example, the troubling but otherwise traditional practice of raping captured enemy women during the First Crusade, a novelty for medieval warfare, which did not escape the attention of contemporary authors.7 Indeed, since at least the time of the Roman Empire through the Middle Ages, rape had been a common (or even accepted) practice for victorious armies,8 but according to the sources of the First Crusade, the crusaders, who now operated under a new set of masculine performance rules imposed on them

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7 For a fuller consideration of this issue, see chapter five, which considers both Latin Christian and Hebrew sources that explicitly highlight instances where the crusaders avoided raping captured women to the surprise of the authors. As for Islamic sources, Ibn al-Khayyat (who died around 1120), a poet in the service of the rulers of Tripoli before the First Crusade, who then moved to Damascus, writes of the Muslim women’s “inviability (salib)” being “plundered,” and young (Muslim) girls “wasting away with fear and dying of grief and agitation.” Yet these are metaphors for the potential threat the Crusades in general represented to that most sacred pillar of Islamic society, the sanctity of their womenfolk. Although the Muslim stereotype about crusaders was that they were savages, rape is not explicitly mentioned in relation to them either in Ibn al-Khayyat’s poetry or in the historical accounts of twelfth-century. See Carole Hillenbrand, The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives (New York: Routledge, 2000), 298.

by the clergy, appear to have resisted the practice in an effort to preserve their personal holiness, which the clergy argued was essential to their success on the battlefield.⁹

Moreover, the consideration of medieval masculinity contributes to a better understanding of the extraordinary response to Pope Urban II’s call to crusade at the council of Clermont in 1095. Historians have pointed out that the pope’s speech highlighted reports of the extraordinary abuse of Christians in the East that were meant to stir emotions in knights “steeped in a culture of militant Christianity.”¹⁰ Thus, understanding the basis for the “culture of militant Christianity” that existed among knights is essential to understanding their response. In this, and many other instances, historians are forced to consider issues related to those knights’ masculine identities if they are to approach a fuller understanding of the initial appeal of the pope’s message to his listeners at Clermont.

Because this dissertation focuses primarily only on ecclesiastical efforts to use the First Crusade and the Templar order as vehicles for trying to effect desired changes in the behavior, and thereby masculine performance, of the lay warrior elite, there also remains considerable room for more detailed research on the response of knights to such efforts. While this dissertation has considered some lay sources written by knights during the First Crusade (e.g. the *Gesta Francorum* and various letters), first-hand accounts of the crusade by the knights who participated are few and overwhelmed by

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⁹ The events at Antioch in 1098, as considered in chapter five, provide a clear illustration of that drastic changes expected by the clergy in the accepted behavior of warriors. It was at Antioch that a precedent for associating military defeat with the personal sinfulness (particularly sexual sins- in this case) of those who participated in the crusade was established and would dominate how clerical authors of the era explained military failures in ventures that they had previously argued were divinely inspired or desired.

the sheer number of clerical sources. Partly for this reason, clerical theories of warrior masculinity (and the effort to implement such theories during the era of the First Crusade) have been the emphasis of this dissertation. Indeed, because clerical sources on the topic are abundant and easily accessible whereas the number of sources by knights shy in comparison, this dissertation has, therefore, focused primarily on the clerical perspective of knightly masculinity during the era of the First Crusade, and on its historical and theological foundations.

The use of charters written on behalf of lay participants in the First Crusade have long been recognized as a rich source for understanding the reasons behind lay initiatives linked to the crusade. I have followed that direction of study and emphasized, primarily in Chapters 4 and 5, how at least some knights appear to have embraced the calling of the First Crusade as a form of repentance for their sins. In doing so, my goal has been to demonstrate that some crusaders were ready to embrace the idea of a radical change of behavior, which stood as a challenge to lay notions of manhood. A different problem altogether is to examine lay aristocratic sources written from the mid-twelfth century to the late thirteenth century, looking for the reasons so many knights did not embrace the clerical/monastic model of warrior masculinity that claimed to offer them an opportunity for salvation.

Future studies might consider, for example, how knights responded to the new clerical ideal of warrior masculinity in the aftermath of the Second Crusade. At the assemblies in Laon and Chartres, on May 7, 1150, the French bishops were faced with disgruntled barons, who refused to sign up for another crusade. According to historian Jean Richard, having been harshly criticized, the barons "declared that they would leave
the conduct of the campaign to the clergy.”\textsuperscript{11} Richard does not elaborate on the specific criticism directed at the barons, but he does allude to Bernard of Clairvaux’s \textit{De consideratione}, in which Bernard tried to deflect the accusations directed at him after the failure of the Second Crusade in part to the sinful conduct of the crusaders.\textsuperscript{12} Such reported sinful conduct, presumably, would not have been in accord with the new warrior masculine ideal advocated by the clergy and analysis of these events may bring greater understanding of why the barons lost their enthusiasm for the crusading model as had been established by the clergy. Even without that analysis, it is clear that justifying a rejection of that model implied recognition of its initial appeal among a considerable number of people who had earlier decided to embrace it. Such an analysis might better reveal both the initial appeal and reasons for the ultimate rejection of the new warrior model.

Also in relation to the Second Crusade, future studies might consider how the promoters of the crusade modeled their efforts on the precedents set by the First Crusade, suggesting they understood the model as an effective one. Pope Eugenius II, for example, in the second version of his \textit{Quantum praedecessores} bull issued in December of 1145, explicitly forbade those who would participate in the crusade from wearing luxurious clothing, suggesting how this ideal had become part of the official framework by which crusading was to be carried out. This was, of course, after the Church had recognized the Templars and the publication of Benard of Clairvaux’s


\textsuperscript{12} Richard, \textit{The Crusades}, 167. For a selection from Bernard’s text in which he condemns the sinful behavior of the participants of the Second Crusade, see Bernard of Clairvaux, “Bernard of Clairvaux’s \textit{Apologia} for the Second Crusade,” in \textit{Competing Voices from the Crusades}, eds. Andrew Holt and James Muldoon (Oxford: Greenwood, 2008), 84-86.
influential De Laude, which had promoted a similar standard. Indeed, because Quantum praedecessores became the standard for all subsequent crusading bulls, it presents a rich opportunity for scholars to consider the evolution and institution of crusading ideal in the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the degree to which the laity accepted it.

A final avenue of exploration might be to consider the demise of the Templars in the early fourteenth century in the context of gender. Indeed, although not considered here, the dramatic rise and fall of the Templars as an institutional and cultural force in medieval Europe and the Near East has long been a subject of fascination for scholars. Yet an analysis that contextually considers the Templars as representative of a unique type of masculine model for medieval knights might provide insights into why primarily secular lords sought to bring about their destruction.13 Such insights may well go beyond the normal assumption that the Templars’ demise was inspired simply by the greed of their detractors, who sought the wealth and landholdings of the then affluent order through its dissolution. It is possible that such a study might find that the growing wealth and influence of the Templars represented a type of cultural threat to the otherwise dominant secular model of knighthood that existed in the early fourteenth century.

Additionally, a study of the demise of the Templars might also consider how well known accusations of fornication and sodomy against the Templars (whether they were

13 The most commonly accepted narrative is that French King Philip IV, deeply in debt to the Templars due to his wars with the English, had seized on what were widely considered spurious and fantastic charges (made by an ousted Templar) of immorality and idolatry in the order as a means of freeing himself from his obligation to repay his debts. Philip led a campaign to disenfranchise and discredit the order, calling for their arrest and the seizure of their assets, eventually convincing Pope Clement V to support his efforts. See Malcolm Barber, The Trial of the Templars (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 40.
true or not) were used to justify the destruction of the order.\textsuperscript{14} It was, after all, the chastity and poverty of the Templar order that was the means by which they defined a new model of warrior masculine identity that served as the cause of their initial popularity in the twelfth century. Yet by the early fourteenth century the order was criticized for its wealth and attacked for the sexual impurity of its members. The charges of sodomy made against the Templars are of particular interest in a consideration of warrior masculinity; as to be sodomized (or passive) was to be non-male, which had long been the view of ancient or medieval writers.\textsuperscript{15} Thus such accusations may well have cast doubt on the means by which the order traditionally justified its existence as a new model of warrior masculinity and its broad initial appeal to both the clergy and the laity of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Indeed, the initial basis for Templar popularity was the new chaste and humble model of warrior manhood they represented. Accusations that the Templars no longer adhered to that model may have been an effective means by which their critics eliminated the order’s raison d’être in the minds of their supporters, thus making the dissolution of the order more acceptable.

Beyond these suggestions, there are, of course, several additional ways in which the study of masculinity as it related to the crusading movement might be carried forward in future studies. One could also study, for example, the various crusading orders that emerged after the Templars to see how they compared and to what degree they defined themselves differently as men. Or one might make a long term study of sources written exclusively by members of the Templar order covering the nearly two

\textsuperscript{14} For a consideration of these charges, see Anne Gilmour-Bryson, “Sodomy and the Knights Templar,” \textit{Journal of the History of Sexuality}, 7:2 (1996): 151-183.

\textsuperscript{15} Gilmour-Bryson, “Sodomy and the Knights Templar,” 164.
centuries of their existence to see to how they understood themselves as men in relation to secular knights and how such views may have evolved over the course of their existence. Finally, one might also consider the impact of the Protestant Reformation during the 16th century, with its rejection of monastic virtues like celibacy, on orders like the Teutonic Knights of which some of their leading members were apparently deeply influenced by the movement. Whatever the case, all of these proposed studies could certainly expand our historical knowledge of why deeply committed Christian men, or at least those willing to commit themselves formally to poverty, chastity, and obedience to the Church, initially felt that such a model, which first emerged in the era of the First Crusade, was the most appealing means by which they could express not only their Christian faith, but also their manhood.
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Although originally from Pittsburgh, Pa., Andrew Holt grew up in St. Augustine, Florida where he went to St. Augustine High School. Soon after graduating from high school, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, where he spent significant time on active duty and earned the rank of Sergeant. He then returned to school earning his Associate of Arts degree from Florida Community College at Jacksonville in 2000, his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from the University of North Florida in 2003 and 2005, and his Ph.D from the University of Florida in the spring of 2013. As a Teaching Assistant, Teaching Associate, or Adjunct Professor, Andrew has taught history at the numerous colleges or universities including Florida Community College at Jacksonville, the University of North Florida, Santa Fe College, and the University of Florida. In 2010 Andrew was hired as Assistant Professor of History at Florida State College at Jacksonville and was recently promoted to Associate Professor in 2012. He is married to Michele Holt and has three wonderful children, Isabella, Claire, and Jack.