

ON LIVONIA AND LATIN ROMANIA IN THE FIRST DECADES OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY. A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: The author examines the crusading movements in Livonia and Latin Romania during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, highlighting the role of papal policy and local initiatives in shaping military, religious, and political developments. The study explores the eastward expansion of German-speaking populations into the Baltic region and the establishment of the independent Order of the Sword-Brothers in Livonia, alongside the Latin Empire and its associated principalities in Southeastern Europe following the Fourth Crusade. By analyzing papal correspondence, indulgences, and crusading regulations, the article demonstrates how the papacy sought to mobilize resources, enforce religious and political objectives, and coordinate military campaigns in geographically distant regions. Comparative analysis reveals parallels in the organization, timing, and ideological justification of crusades in Livonia and Latin Romania, despite differences in the nature of the opponents – pagan tribes in the Baltic and Orthodox Christian states in the Balkans. The paper also considers the long-term consequences of these crusading efforts, including demographic, economic, and political transformations, the decline of Byzantine authority, and the eventual rise of the Ottoman Empire as a new regional power. By situating Livonia and Latin Romania within broader patterns of crusading activity, the article underscores how early thirteenth-century crusades contributed to enduring shifts in European geopolitical and commercial landscapes.

Keywords: Livonia; Latin Romania; Crusades; medieval Papacy

At the beginning of the eighth century, a colonization movement began to the east. It was carried out mainly by German-speaking populations, including peasants, nobles, merchants, and clerics who settled territories stretching from present-day Romania in the south to Estonia in the north. This movement was motivated by a spirit of adventure, a desire for land and wealth,

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a quest for freedom, and religious sentiments, and it succeeded in overcoming the resistance of the local pagan population across vast territories in the east. One of these regions was located along the shores of the Baltic Sea and became known in the thirteenth century as *Livonia*. When German merchants first left the Baltic Sea and entered the Daugava River in the mid-twelfth century, they encountered a harsh and hostile land. The local pagans were organized in tribal groups that often fought among themselves and frequently fell under the influence of Scandinavians and Rus'. These lands attracted German merchants primarily due to their geographical position and the water and land routes leading to Novgorod the Great, which functioned as the northern commercial gateway to the East. Large rivers such as the Daugava and the Gauja served as major arteries connecting the Baltic Sea with the larger cities to the east and south. The rapidly developing German commercial towns in the north soon recognized the need to secure these trade routes, while ambitious and far-sighted bishops utilized the crusading concept so as to organize military campaigns directed at the Christianization of the local population.

In historiography, there is no unified term used to designate the Baltic region¹. Since the nineteenth century, English-language scholarship has employed the broader term *Baltic*². Scandinavian and German historiographies utilize the concept of *Ostsee* (Eastern Sea) and accordingly *Ostsiedlung* to denote the process of settlement and expansion into the eastern Baltic region, as well as the concept of *Baltikum*, which additionally includes the historical regions of East and West Prussia and Memelland³. The present article examines the early history of Livonia, with particular emphasis on the period of the independent existence of the Order of the Sword-Brothers (late twelfth century to the first three decades of the thirteenth century).

Another important aspect of this study is connected with warfare in Southeastern Europe during the period under consideration, where the designation *Romania* is frequently used in reference to the territories of the

¹ Focusing on Livonia from a geographical perspective, it may be noted that today the region is commonly referred to by terms such as *the Baltic region* or *the Baltic States*. The term *Baltic* derives from the Latin designation *Mare Balticum* (probably from the Baltic-Slavic root *balt-*). During the Middle Ages, the sea was also known by several other names, including the *Varangian Sea*, the *Venedic Sea*, and others. The designation *Baltic Sea* became widely adopted in European languages during the sixteenth century and, in the eighteenth century, also among the population of the then Russian Empire. For a discussion of the etymological origin of the name *Baltic Sea*, see Foreword to the Past: A Cultural History of the Baltic People by Endre Bojtár (Budapest, 1999), 6–14. For early references to the Prussians and their land, see Vladimir Pashuto, *The Formation of the Lithuanian State* (Moscow, 1959), 82–87.

² Kurt Villads Jensen, "Introduction," in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150 – 1500*, ed. Allan Murray (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), XVII – XXV.

³ Erik Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier 1100 – 1525* (London, 1980), 6 – 8.

Byzantine Empire on the eve of and immediately after the *Fourth Crusade* and the establishment of the *Latin Empire* in *Constantinople*, the *Kingdom of Thessalonica*, the *Principality of Achaia*, and the *Duchy of Athens*⁴. In the thirteenth century, John of Vitry wrote the following: “For this purpose, the brothers of the military order were ordained to defend the Church of Christ with the sword, particularly against those outside it – that is, against the Saracens in Syria, the Moors in Spain, and the pagans in Prussia, Livonia, and Comania – and, moreover, by the command of their superior, against the schismatics in Greece and the heretics dispersed throughout the universal Church.”⁵ This statement clearly demonstrates the perception of Livonia and Romania as territories of confrontation between the Roman Church and pagans, schismatics, and heretics, and it may be cited in support of the argument that deliberate efforts were made to impose papal policy in northeastern and southeastern Europe at the end of the twelfth century and in the first decades of the thirteenth century.

The designation Romania is frequently encountered as the name of the Latin Empire (1204–1261), used by its contemporaries in Catholic Europe as well as by the bordering powers of Byzantium⁶. This toponym has a more

⁴ Robert Lee Wolff, “Romania: The Latin Empire of Constantinople,” *Speculum*, vol. 23, no. 1 (January 1948): 1 – 34; Сергей Карпов, *Латинская Романия* (Санкт-Петербург, 2000), 5–35.

⁵ Quoted in: Allan Forey, “The Military Orders and Holy War against Christians in the Thirteenth Century” *The English Historical Review*, vol. 104, no. 410 (January 1989), 1–24. The original Latin states: “Ad hoc igitur fratres ordinis militaris ordinati sunt, ut Christi ecclesiam gladio materiali defendant, maxime contra eos qui extra sunt, id est contra Sarracenos in Syria, contra Mauros in Hispania, contra paganos in Prutia, Livonia et Comania, et nihilominus de mandato superioris contra schismaticos in Graecia, et contra haereticos ubique dispersos in universali ecclesia.”

⁶ For the use of the designation *Romania*, see Jean Longnon, *Les Français d’Outre-Mer* (Paris, 1929); Henry to Innocent III. – Migne, PL, CCVX, col. 1522. Emperor Henry styled himself as “Dei Gratia fidelissimus in Christo imperator, a Deo coronatus, Romaniae moderator et semper augustus”; Paul Riant, *Exuviae Sacrae Constantinopolitanae* (Geneva, 1878, II), 74, 81; Georges Recoura, *Les Assizes de Romanie* (Paris, 1930), 44–45.; Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Istoria del Regno di Romania*, ed. C. Hopf, *Chroniques Gréco-Romanes* (Berlin, 1873), 99; Filip Van Tricht, *The Latin Renovatio of Byzantium: The Empire of Constantinople (1204–1228)* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 41–59. (*The Constitutional Treaties of 1204–1205: The Latin Restructuring of Byzantium*). Also noteworthy is the Tarnovo inscription of Tsar Ivan II Asen from 1230, in which the designation *Romania* is likewise attested. See also: Vasil Zlatarski, *History of the Bulgarian State in the Middle Ages*, vol. III, *The Second Bulgarian Empire*. (Sofia: Zahari Stoyanov, 2007), 587–596.; “Tarnovo Inscription of Tsar Ivan II Asen” in *Bulgarian Literature and Writing in the 13th Century. Hagiography. Hymnography. Historical-Chronicle Works. Fiction. Apocrypha from the 13th-Century Collections. Letters. Charters. Additions. Inscriptions*, ed. Ivan Bozhilov and Stefan Kozhuharov (Sofia, 1987), 200.

distant origin, since emperors often used it as part of their titles on seals and in their correspondence⁷. The same designation was frequently employed by the Venetian *podestà* and by the Venetian *doge* in official documents and letters⁸. It should also be noted that this toponym appears frequently in the correspondence of Pope Innocent III, who used *Romania* as a synonym for *Imperium Constantinopolitanum*. It is also important to note that the term *Romania* was employed by the chronicler Geoffrey of Villehardouin, while the 1204 treaty regulating the division of the Byzantine Empire's lands among Venetians, French, and Italians bears the title *Partitio Romaniae*⁹. Research indicates that the term *Romania* first appeared in the so-called *Chronicle Consularis Constantinopolitana*, edited around 330, and in a series of other Greek and Latin texts from the fourth and fifth centuries. During this period, the term was used to designate the *orbis Romanus* or the *imperium Romanum*. It was essentially a popular rather than a literary expression, probably formed by analogy with names such as Gaul, Greece, and Britain. During the Carolingian period in the West, the term *Romania* was revived as a designation of the Western Empire,

⁷ The designation *Romania* has a long history and, similar to other geographical and political terms such as Burgundy, Italy, and Calabria, has carried different meanings at different times.

⁸ Robert Lee Wolff, "Romania: The Latin Empire of Constantinople," *Speculum*, vol. 23, no. 1 (January 1948), 1, 32–33. The author notes that the name *Romania* was applied to the Latin Empire (1204–1261) by its contemporaries. The designation *Romania* was frequently used by the Latin emperors as part of their titles on seals and in their correspondence. Initially, the Venetian *podestà* in Constantinople, and later the Venetian *doge*, employed the designation *Romania* in official documents and letters. According to R. L. Wolff, by 1204 *Romania* had acquired two distinct meanings and two different traditions in the West. With the end of the Western Roman Empire, it lost its significance as *Orbis Romanus* and, in most cases, came simply to signify *Romania*. The leaders of the *Fourth Crusade* in 1204 followed the first tradition, giving the newly established *Latin Empire* the name *Romania*. Count Baldwin of Flanders, elected emperor in 1204 and thus the successor of Constantine, Justinian, and the Komnenoi, wore purple boots and a mantle decorated with jeweled eagles at his coronation, and his successors bore the titles *Porphyrogennetos*, *semper Augustus*, and *Imperator Romaniae*.

⁹ The provisions and resolutions of the *Partitio Romaniae* were not fully implemented, as a large portion of Byzantium remained outside Latin authority, leading to the establishment of the Despotate of Epirus, the Empire of Nicaea, and the Empire of Trebizond. These new political entities maintained political and cultural continuity with the Byzantine Empire. The young Latin Empire, encompassing territories around Constantinople, in Thrace, and along the coast of the Sea of Marmara, soon entered into a serious military conflict with the powerful Second Bulgarian Empire. Latin rule was most firmly and durably established in southern Greece—the Principality of Achaea and the Duchy of Athens—as well as on the islands of the Aegean Sea, many of which fell under Venetian control. The significant role of Venice and its political influence in the lands of *Romania* is also reflected in the title used by Doge Pietro Ziani, Dandolo's successor: *Dominator quartae et dimidiaie partis totius Romaniae* ("Lord of a quarter and a half of a quarter of all of Romania").

but its scope was later narrowed to include the region corresponding to the former Exarchate of Ravenna.

The designation *Romania* also appeared in Byzantine sources soon after the end of the Western Roman Empire in 476, and numerous examples of its use exist up to the period of the Komnenian dynasty. Despite this constant presence in written historical sources, however, the term was not used by the emperors themselves in official documents until the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118). Beginning in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, the designation was increasingly applied by Byzantine emperors, who referred to their empire in official documents as *Romania*¹⁰. As for the Latin usage of the term in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, it sometimes incorporated the western parts of the Byzantine Empire, sometimes the eastern regions – Asia Minor and Northern Syria – and sometimes the entire territory of the empire. For this reason, following established traditions, the leaders of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 gave the newly established Latin Empire the name *Romania*, which was directly connected with the ideology of the new–old empire. In this case, the designation *Romania* demonstrated not only claims over all territories of the former Byzantine Empire but also continuity in authority, symbols, and terminology¹¹.

Regarding the territorial scope of Romania, it is important to make several clarifications. As noted above, following the division of the lands of the Byzantine Empire through the *Partitio terrarum imperii Romaniae*, three-eighths of the empire (including Crete and other islands) passed into Venetian possession, while the newly established Latin Empire laid claim to the remaining part. This included the Kingdom of Thessalonica, which existed until 1224, the Duchy of Philippopolis in Thrace, the Principality of Achaia encompassing the peninsula of Morea and the Peloponnese, the Duchy of Athens – which survived until 1458 and included Attica, Boeotia, and parts of southern Thessaly – the Duchy of Naxos, comprising most of the Cycladic islands, and several other lordships in the southwestern and southern parts of the Balkans. As already noted, three-

¹⁰ Anthony Kaldellis, *Romanland: Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019), 84. From the Greek *Ρωμανία*, i.e., the land of the Romans (Romioi).

¹¹ As noted above, at his coronation Emperor Baldwin wore purple boots, and his mantle was decorated with the Byzantine imperial eagles. Moreover, Emperor Baldwin employed the titles *Porphyrogennetos*, *semper Augustus*, and *Imperator Romaniae* – a title reflecting the Western conception of the position of an Eastern emperor. The treaty for the division of the empire was entitled *Partitio regni Romaniae*, and in official documents the Latin Empire was referred to as *Romania*. For the ideology of the Latin emperors, see also: Nikolay Kanev, “Reflections of the Imperial Ideology on the Seals of the Latin Emperor Baldwin II of Courtenay,” *Studia Academica Šumenensia*, vol. 5: *Contribution to Byzantine Sigillography*, (eds.) I. Jordanov and I. Topalilov. (Shumen: Shumen University Press, 2018), 53–67.

eighths of the territory of the former Byzantine Empire and parts of Constantinople came under Venetian control, which guaranteed strong Venetian influence in the affairs of the young Latin Empire. At the same time, large parts of the former Byzantine Empire, such as the Despotate of Epirus, the Empire of Nicaea, and the Empire of Trebizond, remained outside Latin control, in the hands of rival Byzantine Greek aristocrats. The situation described above marked the beginning of a long period known as the *Frankokratia* (Gr. Φραγκοκρατία), also known as the Latin occupation (Gr. Λατινοκρατία), and, in the case of the Venetian possessions, as the *Venetian occupation*.

In the context of this complex political and territorial landscape, the Duchy of Philippopolis, the Kingdom of Thessalonica, Achaea (Morea), and Nicaea during the opening decades of the thirteenth century are of particular importance for the present research. The upper chronological limit is marked by events such as the end of the fierce Bulgarian–Latin wars in 1214, the peace between the Latins and the Nicaeans in the same year, the unsuccessful attempt to stabilize the Latin Empire by Peter of Courtenay in 1217–1219, as well as the involvement of the Cumans in the conflict with the Teutonic Order in Burzenland during the period 1212–1222.

Why and to what extent are the two regions comparable during the period in question? Similar attempts have been made mainly with regard to papal policy toward the Crusades in these two regions, although, up to this point, a comparative study of Livonia and Latin Romania for this historical period has not yet been undertaken¹². To address this question, I will focus on papal policy toward the crusading movement as it unfolded in Frankish Greece and on other fronts of confrontation between Christians and pagans, adherents of other faiths, and heretics. A crusade may be identified through a series of characteristics which, during the thirteenth century, assumed a fixed and clearly recognizable form. These included, first and foremost, a papal proclamation; the preaching of the crusade in various provinces; the granting of remission of sins (indulgences) and other privileges such as legal immunity and protection of property; the taking of the cross and the making of a vow; and the raising of funds through specific mechanisms such as the crusading tithe (taxation of ecclesiastical revenues), as well as through donations from the faithful or the redemption of crusading vows. Alongside these practical aspects, the argumentation and rhetoric used to legitimize these expeditions and to portray

¹² Nikolaos Chrissis, “New Frontiers: Frankish Greece and the Development of Crusading in the Early Thirteenth Century,” in *Contact and Conflict in Frankish Greece and the Aegean, 1204 – 1453. Crusade, Religion and Trade between Latins, Greeks and Turks*, (ed.) N.G. Chrissis (Athens: University of Athens Press, Rome: Ashgate, 2014), 17 – 41. The reign of the Latin Emperor Robert I (1221–1228) also marked the end of the final attempts to consolidate the young Latin Empire and its frontiers.

war as a sanctified act, a form of penance, and a service to God, the Church, and the Christian world also varied. Among the characteristics of crusading, indulgences were particularly important. The crusade was viewed as a penitential activity, a path toward the redemption of sin. It remains debatable whether, from a theological and canonical perspective, the indulgence attached to crusading initially referred to the forgiveness of sin itself or to the remission of the penance imposed by the Church. As in many other aspects, both the practice and the formulas were standardized only at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. It nevertheless appears that popular perception embraced a broader interpretation, equating indulgence with complete purification from sin. In several instances, participants were granted indulgences equivalent to those associated with pilgrimage, or indulgences conferred only in the event of death.

In Frankish Greece, Pope Innocent III granted a full indulgence to those who came to support the Latin Empire as early as 1205. In May of that year, only one year after the capture of Constantinople, the pope issued instructions to the French clergy calling upon the faithful to go and assist in stabilizing the conquest. This was rather unusual given Innocent III's otherwise notable caution in granting full crusading indulgences on other fronts. He never, for example, granted full indulgences for campaigns against the pagans in the Baltic region. The latter received only partial indulgences¹³. Initially, in 1198, Innocent III granted only an indulgence equivalent to a pilgrimage to Rome or to Santiago de Compostela to anyone who assisted papal legates in the struggle against the Albigensian heresy in southern France. In 1204 and 1205, the pope authorized remission of sins for those who went overseas to assist the Holy Land, but this was not the usual crusading indulgence. Later, in 1207 and 1208, Pope Innocent III authorized a crusade with indulgences equivalent to those for the Holy Land for all participants. Such an indulgence was also promised to those who set out for Constantinople in 1205. It seems that Innocent adopted this more radical approach in Frankish Greece because the situation there was closely linked to that in the Holy Land.

The status of Frankish Greece, or Romania, as an independent crusading front was established under Pope Honorius III. This was particularly evident in the granting of indulgences and in the substitution of crusading vows (that is, the transfer from one crusading front to another of the obligations and rewards deriving from the vow). In 1217, a partial indulgence *in remissionem peccaminum* was granted, and in 1223-1224, a full indulgence equivalent to that for the Holy Land was proclaimed. In 1224-1225, a papal bull was issued stipulating that crusaders could commute their vow by serving in Romania and, in return, receive a full indulgence. In addition, in 1217, an indulgence was

¹³ Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147–1254* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007), 94–98. Full indulgences for the Baltic region had been granted by earlier popes, such as Eugenius III and Celestine III.

granted to those who took the cross against Theodore Komnenos. Pope Honorius III also explicitly forbade those already enrolled for the forthcoming campaign to the Holy Land (the Fifth Crusade) from altering their course and going to Greece. Later, during the preparations for the expedition of William of Montferrat to Thessalonica in 1223 and 1224, crusaders destined for the Holy Land were permitted to join William's army, but only those who died in Romania could receive an indulgence, while the others were required to fulfil their vow in the Holy Land within two years. The changing regulations regarding indulgences and restrictions on participation illustrate the dilemma faced by Pope Honorius III – namely, his desire to secure assistance for the Franks in Greece while simultaneously avoiding any harm to the cause of the Holy Land.

The Fifth Crusade, which occupied the final years of Innocent's pontificate and the early years of that of Honorius, was an absolute priority for the papacy. In 1213, the Crusades in Spain and southern France were suspended due to the need to direct resources toward a major expedition to the Holy Land. This situation also affected Latin Romania. The capture of Emperor Peter of Courtenay and Cardinal Giovanni Colonna in 1217 coincided with the beginning of the Fifth Crusade. From the correspondence of Pope Honorius, it is evident that the proclamation of a crusade against Theodore Komnenos was intended to threaten him into releasing the noble prisoners, yet the pope did not, in fact, wish to divert resources away from the Holy Land. Ultimately, Honorius attempted to mobilize substantial resources for Frankish Greece in the 1220s, ordering that the crusade for Thessalonica be widely preached in northern Italy and southern France. At the beginning of 1223, the pope called for a full-scale crusade against the Greeks. Only after the defeats of the Latins and crusaders by the forces of the Nicaeans and the Epirots in 1224 did the pope allow a limited commutation of crusading vows from the Holy Land to Romania. When the pope was completing preparations for the crusade, Thessalonica had in fact already fallen into Epirote hands¹⁴. A key question that emerges from this context is whether the actions of Pope Honorius III can be interpreted solely in the context of the situation in *Romania*?

To answer this question, it is useful to compare the Crusades in Latin Romania with those directed against the pagans in the Baltic region¹⁵. In Greece and southern France, Crusades began at the beginning of the thirteenth century, whereas in the Baltic region, crusading activity had begun as early as 1147, though on a larger scale during the thirteenth century. Beyond this superficial

¹⁴ Jean Longnon, *L'Empire Latin de Constantinople et la Principauté de Morée* (Paris: Payot, 1949), 161 – 163.

¹⁵ The Baltic Crusades have been the subject of extensive study. See: William Urban, *The Baltic Crusade* (Chicago, 1991); Erik Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525* (London, 1980).

similarity, however, the crusading movements in these regions also exhibited significant differences. The enemies in the Baltic region were pagan tribes, whereas in Romania, crusading warfare was conducted against organized Orthodox Christian states. Yet both the conflicts in Livonia and those in Romania were fought on the periphery of Europe and during the first half of the thirteenth century.

The conflicts in these regions also arose in different contexts. In the Baltic region, they represented a combination of sustained territorial and commercial expansion alongside the conversion of the local population, whereas in Romania they were, to some extent, the outcome of an accidental and opportunistic conquest. Furthermore, different forces were involved in these campaigns: Scandinavian kings, German knights, merchants, bishops, and missionaries in the Baltic region; and western feudal lords, the Italian maritime republics, and the Kingdom of Hungary in the case of Romania. Thus, at first glance, there do not appear to be many close similarities between the crusading movements in these distant regions. Yet closer analysis reveals striking parallels.

In 1217, Pope Honorius III introduced a full indulgence for participants in the Baltic crusades, whereas his predecessor had granted only limited, partial indulgences to crusaders in the region. In Frankish Greece, as well as for the participants in the crusade for Thessalonica, the same indulgence as that for the Holy Land was also granted, instead of the earlier vague reference to *remissionem peccatorum* made in the call for the release of Emperor Peter of Courtenay and Cardinal John. Pope Honorius, who had demonstrated remarkable competence in financial administration during his earlier service as papal treasurer, took particular care to ensure the financing of these crusades. In November 1224, he imposed a crusading tithe on the clergy intended to finance campaigns for Frankish Greece, while the papal treasury provided William of Montferrat with 15,000 silver marks from funds originally allocated for the Holy Land. Pope Honorius III advanced beyond his predecessors in ensuring funding for the Baltic Crusades, through both the granting of indulgences to donors and the authorization of regular financial collections in the northern ecclesiastical provinces in 1218 and 1224¹⁶.

The similarities between the two regions of crusading activity in the early and mid-thirteenth century do not end there. In July 1222, Pope Honorius authorized the brothers of the Order of the Hospital of St. Samson in Constantinople to use arms and horses for the defence of the Latin Empire. This is the first and only surviving reference to a military role for this order, which had been established after the Latin conquest of 1204. At approximately the same time (between 1216 and 1222), the Order of the Knights of Dobrzyń was founded in the Baltic region with the aim of protecting the missionary

¹⁶ Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes...*, 139, 149.

activity of Bishop Christian in Prussia. This order itself followed the example of the Order of the Sword-Brothers in Livonia, founded several years earlier in 1202¹⁷. None of these local initiatives survived in the long term, as the Knights of Dobrin were absorbed by the Teutonic Order. A similar fate befell the Order of the Hospital of St. Samson, whose property was taken over by the Hospitallers in the following century. In both cases, however, we encounter an identical approach¹⁸.

Further parallels may also be observed in the timing and scale of expeditions on these fronts in relation to events in the Holy Land, which clearly remained the priority. It is also indicative that the crusading movement in the Baltic region was temporarily suspended in 1220, as efforts were redirected toward the endangered army of the Fifth Crusade¹⁹. On the other hand, more substantial resources were mobilized for crusading on these fronts between the collapse of the Fifth Crusade in September 1221 and the planned departure of Emperor Frederick II for a new campaign to the Holy Land in June 1225. Preaching and recruitment for the expedition to Thessalonica were conducted between 1222 and 1225, precisely during the interval between crusades to the Holy Land²⁰. Eventually, the suspension of crusading activity toward Livonia was lifted, and full indulgences were once again issued in 1221 and 1222²¹.

These parallels show that, in both geographically distant regions, measures were adopted in light of similar circumstances. This suggests that at the beginning of the thirteenth century, the papacy responded to various challenges with crusades organized in a similar manner, regardless of the specific circumstances and regions involved. Pope Innocent III resorted to this repeatedly and on an unprecedented scale. He not only convened two major crusades to the Holy Land but also initiated crusading campaigns in Spain and in the Baltic region. Innocent III also convened the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, which became one of the most important events of his pontificate. By regulating several aspects of crusading with regard to indulgences, privileges for crusaders, and the conditions under which broader groups might participate in

¹⁷ Erik Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades...*, 79 – 81; Alan Forey, *The Military Orders: From the Twelfth to the Early Fourteenth Centuries* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1991), 32 – 33, 36 – 37.

¹⁸ Dionysios Stathakopoulos, "Discovering a Military Order of the Crusades: The Hospital of St. Sampson of Constantinople," *Viator* 37, (2006): 257–258, 262, 266; Timothy Miller, "The Sampson Hospital of Constantinople," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 15, (1990): 101–135. The history of the *Order of the Hospital of St. Sampson* can be traced back to 1208 and continues until the early 14th century, when it was incorporated into the *Order of the Hospitallers*.

¹⁹ Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes ...*, 144 – 149.

²⁰ Nikolaos Chrissis, *Crusading in Frankish Greece. A Study of Byzantine-Western Relations and Attitudes, 1204 – 1282* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 69 – 73, 80.

²¹ Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes...*, 142, 145.

or contribute to expeditions, the council's decrees created a template that could be more easily and effectively applied in various circumstances beyond the Holy Land²². Pope Honorius III not only continued the policies initiated by his predecessor but went further in mobilizing greater resources and in enhancing the status and role of other crusading expeditions in Latin Romania and Livonia.

It should also be noted, however, that the intensity of the crusading movement in the early thirteenth century was not due solely to the papal institution. Many people in the West shared this perspective and regarded crusades as an acceptable and even preferable means of dealing with external or internal enemies. In response, crusades were often proclaimed at the request of local secular and ecclesiastical authorities. Characteristic examples can be observed during the pontificate of Pope Honorius III in the crusading expeditions organized in the Baltic region at the request and through the petitions of Bishop Christian of Prussia, Bishop Albert of Livonia, or the local lords²³. In Latin Romania, comparable requests and appeals from local authorities, addressed to the papacy, can be observed regarding Emperor Baldwin I and his brother and successor Henry, who sought support for the young Latin Empire against its adversaries²⁴. Driven by piety, political opportunism, or a particular combination of ideological and practical considerations, these appeals proved effective. These examples also illustrate traditional attitudes and the accumulated experience of crusading over several generations. Some of the nobles participating in these crusading expeditions came from families with a background or were themselves veterans of the Crusades. Attention should also be drawn to the clergy who participated actively in the Crusades, escorting troops, recruiting crusaders, collecting funds, and serving as papal legates. William of Modena, for example, served repeatedly as a papal legate in the Baltic region, participated in a crusade to the Holy Land and the Latin Empire, and also took part in a crusade against heretics in Germany²⁵. In this way, experience, approaches, and ideas were naturally shared between different regions.

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In conclusion, I would summarize that Livonia and Latin Romania provide vivid examples of crusading warfare under papal aegis during the period under study. The discussion above demonstrates both the existence and the evolution of a purposeful papal policy aimed at promoting the crusading movement in Livonia and in Romania. This provides a basis for drawing some

²² Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 35.

²³ Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes...*, 136, 142, 146 – 147.

²⁴ Nikolaos Chrissis, *Crusading in Frankish Greece. A Study of Byzantine-Western Relations and Attitudes, 1204 – 1282* (Brepols, 2013), 2 – 12, 23 – 27, 35 – 42.

²⁵ Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes ...*, 170 – 176.

parallels between Livonia and Romania at the end of the twelfth century and during the first decades of the thirteenth century. These parallels reveal not only the presence of deliberate policy and coordinated actions in both regions as frontier territories confronting pagans and Orthodox Christians, but also typological similarities and differences arising from analogous or specific local conditions. I would like to emphasize that the crusades in both regions altered the course of historical development and laid the foundations for new trends and processes with profound and long-lasting economic, social, and political dimensions. These changes gave rise to intense clashes over commercial and political interests between the Hanseatic League and the German-speaking merchant elite, on the one hand, and Russian traders, on the other. The ramifications of this deep-seated conflict can be traced through the course of the Livonian War (1558–1583), the Great Northern War (1699–1721), the First and Second World Wars of the twentieth century, and even the present-day confrontation between Russia and the European Union, in which the eastern Baltic remains a potential zone of direct military conflict.

Events in the Balkans, in the lands of Latin Romania after 1204, also marked decisive changes with lasting consequences for the region. Although relatively short-lived (lasting approximately half a century until 1261), the Latin demographic, economic, political, and military presence increased manifold, while Byzantine supremacy remained largely in abeyance. The profound decline of Byzantium, exacerbated by the *Frankokratia* and the loss of territories, markets, and revenues after 1204, significantly facilitated the rapid successes of the Ottoman conquests in the fourteenth century and the dramatic end of Byzantium itself. In this context, the emergence of a new superpower in the form of the Ottoman state, as an indirect result of the crusaders' blow against Byzantium in the early thirteenth century, dramatically altered the course of history for the peoples of the lands and borders of medieval Romania.

For these reasons, studies on Livonia and Latin Romania at the end of the twelfth century and during the first three decades of the thirteenth century can illuminate the foundations and mechanisms of the subsequent historical transformations in these two geographically distant regions.