

The Fall of Acre as a Spiritual Crisis: The Letters of Riccoldo of Monte Croce

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The journey to the East of Riccoldo of Monte Croce was an ambitious undertaking. It consisted of a pilgrimage to the holy places, a far-reaching missionary campaign, an encounter with Islam and eastern Christian communities living under Muslim rule, and the collecting of information about foreign peoples and denominations. The composite nature of Riccoldo's journey found its expression in his numerous writings. After he settled back in Santa Maria Novella he wrote the works for which he is best known in modern scholarship: the *Liber Peregrinationis*⁽¹⁾, which describes his pilgrimage to the holy places; the treatise *Contra Legem Sarracenorum* (also known as the *Improbatio Alcorani* and *Confutatio Alcorani*)⁽²⁾; and the *Libellus ad Nationes Orientales*, a missionary manual heavily dependent on Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Contra Gentiles*⁽³⁾.

This article will discuss one of Riccoldo's works, the five Letters written after he heard the news of the fall of Crusader Acre to the Muslims in May 1291. They are the earliest of Riccoldo's surviving work, and they exist in a badly preserved, partly illegible, fifteenth-century manuscript in the Vatican Library⁽⁴⁾. The five Letters are remarkable within Riccoldo's

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(1) René KAPPLER, *Riccoldo de Monte Croce, Pérégrination en Terre Sainte et au Proche-Orient. Texte latin et traduction. Lettres sur la Chute de Saint Jean d'Acre. Traduction*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 1997.

(2) The work was translated into Greek ca. 1350 by Demetrius Cydones (1324-1398), a Byzantine scholar who worked at the court of Manuel Paleologos II ; see *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 154, cols. 1037-1070. It was also translated from Greek into Latin by Bartholomaeus Pincernus, and from Latin to German by Martin Luther in 1532. See Martin LUTHER, *Verlegung des Alcoran (1542)*. Latin-German edition, ed. Johannes EHMANN, Würzburg, Echter Verlag and Altenberge, Oros Verlag, 1999; English translation by Thomas C. PFOTENHAUER, *Riccoldo da Montecroce and Martin Luther; Islam in the Crucible: Can it Pass the Test ?*, New Haven, MO, Lutheran News, Inc., 2002. See also Moritz STEINSCHNEIDER, *Polemische und apologetische Literatur in arabischer Sprache*, Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1877 (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, 6, 3), p. 226.

(3) On Riccoldo's works, editions and chronology, see R. KAPPLER, *Pérégrination en Terre Sainte*, *op. cit.*, p. 10-12.

(4) Vat. Lat. 3717 ff 249r-267r. The Letters were edited by Reinhold RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Riccoldo de Monte-Croce sur la prise d'Acre (1291)", in *Archives de l'Orient latin*, vol. 2, 1884, p. 258-296. This edition was corrected in 1986 by Emilio PANELLA, "Presentatione", in *Fede e Controversia, nel '300 e '400, Memorie Domenicane*, n. s., vol. 17, 1986,

oeuvre and within the general written responses to the fall of the Crusader states. They are also of a rare kind in the travel literature of the time⁽⁵⁾. In what follows I will attempt to identify the unique place of the Letters in the contemporary literature, but nonetheless try to link the message they carry to a wider line of thought that can be traced in the written responses to the fall of Acre.

Possibly first written as a draft during his journey back from the East and finalized in Florence, the Letters describe Riccoldo's experiences and contemplations during his arduous journey home. Against the hostile background and threatening circumstances in which he made his way from Baghdad, he wrote a desperate appeal directed to God and to the group of saints he addressed as "the celestial curia" or the "triumphant church". The tone of the Letters is frequently bitter, aggressive and skeptical. These characteristics may have caused an uneasy reception of the text by its contemporary audience, as may be gathered from the fact that the Letters survive in only a single manuscript.

I will aim here to draw a nuanced portrait of Riccoldo of Monte Croce by examining his crisis of faith and attempt to place his crisis within a distinct phase of the transition experienced by religious intellectuals at the close of the thirteenth century, a shift that was enhanced by the defeats in the Holy Land and can be traced in other writings of the time. I suggest that the Letters make evident that Riccoldo's personal experiences during his years in the East put his religious convictions to the test, and that this is meaningful despite his having later regained his older certainties. Moreover, while the Letters are a rare expression of a personal mental state, they should also be seen as part of an emerging, more general, strain of thought that was conscious of the irreversibility of the loss of the Holy Land in 1291. Riccoldo and other writers of his time expressed their doubt in the divine favor of the crusading enterprise as a whole, and contemplated the futility of future attempts to regain the Holy Land, to which most Christians believed they were lawful heirs. This crisis of faith that Riccoldo expressed may be linked to his own loss of certainty, as well as to a greater weight placed on personal experience, shared by other contemporary writers⁽⁶⁾.

Modern scholarship, from the late nineteenth century onwards showed a continuous interest in Riccoldo's attitudes towards Islam and in the

p. v-XXXIX. See also the edition with a French translation by R. KAPPLER, *Pèrègrination en Terre Sainte*, op. cit. There exists also a fourteenth-century Italian translation (in Tuscan dialect) of the first letter, Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale (Magl. II.iv.53), which could have been made in Riccoldo's lifetime. The beginning of the second letter also appears, but the rest of the page is blank.

(5) Iris SHAGRIR, "At the End of the Journey: Riccoldo of Monte Croce's Letters from the East", in Iris SHAGRIR & Yitzhak HEN, eds., *Ut loca videant et contingant. Studies in Pilgrimage and Sacred Space in Honour of Ora Limor*, Raanana, The Open University of Israel, 2011, p. 187-200 (Hebrew).

(6) See Heiko A. OBERMAN, "Fourteenth-Century Religious Thought: A Premature Profile", in *Speculum*, vol. 53, 1978, p. 80-93. [Also in Heiko A. OBERMAN, *The Dawn of the Reformation. Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought*, Edinburgh, Eerdmans Publishing, 1986].

interpretation of the Letters in the context of his other works⁽⁷⁾. Many scholars of Riccoldo were learned members of the Order of Saint Dominic, as was Riccoldo. The first modern historian to write about him was Pierre Mandonnet, OP⁽⁸⁾, who in 1893, accorded Riccoldo a significant place in the preaching movement of the thirteenth century and in the “apostolic battle” against Islam, which, in Mandonnet’s view, replaced the military crusades that had by then died out: “This program [the apostolic crusade], one can say without exaggeration, was fully accomplished by Riccoldo of Monte Croce single-handedly”⁽⁹⁾. Subsequent studies in the middle of the 20th century revealed more information and some new manuscripts of Riccoldo’s works and established a clear chronology of his life and work⁽¹⁰⁾. In 1973, in the spirit of the *aggiornamento* and the call set forth by the Second Vatican Council for Christians and Muslims to engage in dialogue and promote inter-religious understanding, Riccoldo was revisited. In what seems a direct Dominican response to *Nostra Aetate*, Jean-Marie Merigoux, OP, writing in Mossul (Iraq), presented Riccoldo as an inspiring figure, not an “apostolic crusader” but rather a “forerunner of the Christian-Islamic dialogue”⁽¹¹⁾. However, in 1986, in a study dedicated mainly to Riccoldo’s *Contra legem Sarracenorum*, Merigoux remarked that nowadays the Catholic church has

(7) Most recently see Kurt Villads JENSEN, “*Riccoldi Florentini Libelli ad nationes orientales*. Editio princeps telina”, electronic edition at <http://kvj.sdu.dk/Riccoldo/index.html> (consultation date 12 July 2012); Dorothea WELTECKE, “Die Macht des Islam und die Niederlage der Kreuzfahrer. Zum Verständnis der Briefe an die himmlische Kurie des Riccoldo da Monte di Croce OP”, in *Saeculum*, vol. 58, 2007, p. 265-295; John TOLAN, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2002; 245ff; ID., “Looking East before 1453: The Saracen in Medieval European Imagination”, in Matthew BIRCHWOOD & Matthew DIMMOCK, eds., *Cultural Encounters between East and West, 1453-1699*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005, p. 13-28; Stephen MOSSMAN, “The Western Understanding of Islamic Theology in the Later Middle Ages. Mendicant Responses to Islam from Riccoldo da Monte di Croce to Marquard of Lindau”, in *Recherches de Théologie et de Philosophie Médiévales*, vol. 74, 2007, p. 169-224, at p. 205-212. A slightly earlier publication is Leonard Michael SPATH, “Riccoldo da Monte Croce. Medieval Pilgrim and Traveller to the Heart of Islam”, in *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies*, vol. 1, 1999, p. 65-104.

(8) Pierre MANDONNET, “Fra Riccoldo de Monte-Croce”, in *Revue Biblique*, vol. 2, 1893, p. 44-61 & 584-607. Mandonnet (1858-1936) was a Belgian historian and rector of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. See also Ugo MONNERET de VILLARD, “La Vita, le opere e i viaggi di frate Riccoldo da Montecroce OP”, in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, vol. 10, 1944, p. 224-274; Antoine DONDAINE, OP, “Notes sur les œuvres de Riccoldo da Montecroce”, in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, vol. 37, 1967, p. 119-179. Emilio Panella, OP, maintains and regularly updates a website dedicated to Riccoldo and the editions of his works: <http://www.e-theca.net/emiliopanella/riccoldo/index.htm> (consultation date 12 July 2012).

(9) P. MANDONNET, “Fra Riccoldo de Monte-Croce”, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

(10) Elisabeth I. M. BOYD, “Ricolodus. A Dominican Missionary to Moslems in the Thirteenth Century”, in *The Muslim World*, vol. 8, 1918, p. 45-51; U. MONNERET de VILLARD, “La Vita, le opere e i viaggi di frate Riccoldo da Montecroce”, *op. cit.*; ID., *Il libro delle peregrinazioni nelle parti d’Oriente di fr. Riccoldo da Montecroce*, Rome, Istituto storico domenicano, 1948; A. DONDAINE, “Notes sur les œuvres de Riccoldo da Montecroce”, *op. cit.*

(11) Jean-Marie MERIGOUX, OP, “Un précurseur du dialogue islamo-chrétien: Frère Riccoldo (1243-1320)”, in *Revue Thomiste*, vol. 19, 1973, p. 609-621. Merigoux lived in Iraq in 1969-1983.

moved away from the attitudes expressed in some of Riccoldo's writings, and that present-day Christians converse with their Muslim brothers in a spirit of dialogue and openness⁽¹²⁾. Merigoux then asked: "Should we read Riccoldo today?" He answered positively, but "only for the sake of historical knowledge"⁽¹³⁾. A few years later, Emilio Panella, OP, so far the last Dominican scholar to study Riccoldo extensively, remarked that to speak of Riccoldo as a forerunner of the Islamic-Christian dialogue is inaccurate, both historically and theologically⁽¹⁴⁾. Speaking specifically of the Letters, Panella observed that Riccoldo had experienced a true crisis of faith in the remote ends of the Christian world; while he could state the old Christian certainties, he was unable to make sense of the providential disorder around him. All this resulted, says Panella, in the unique literary product of a distinct mentality. But a short time after writing the Letters, Riccoldo composed his *Contra Legem Sarracenorum*, "a robust, lucid and systematic confutation of Islam"⁽¹⁵⁾. For Panella this later work proved that Riccoldo regained his confidence and "proper" certainties, that his crisis was but a momentary event in a personal process, a test of faith that made his convictions stronger. He was "a mature fruit, but irreproachable, of the audacity of the reasoning of the great scholasticism"⁽¹⁶⁾.

Riccoldo's date of birth is unknown but it is assumed he was born in 1243 in the Florentine *contado*. Before joining the Dominicans he spent several years, according to his testimony, away from Florence, where he engaged in "the secular studies known as liberal arts"⁽¹⁷⁾. Of this period in his life little is known; from his *Peregrinatio* it appears that he was acquainted with the city of Rome⁽¹⁸⁾. Clearly he dedicated his life to learning, both before and after becoming a Dominican friar, and that he most likely was a man of broad education, secular and religious.

He joined the Dominican Order in 1267, when he was about 24 years old, and was later followed by his two brothers⁽¹⁹⁾. Of the three brothers, he was the one destined to make a brilliant career as a preacher, teacher and writer. He spent five years in studies, then in 1272 was assigned by the provincial chapter of Florence to be a lector in Pisa⁽²⁰⁾. Later he was appointed a teacher

(12) Jean-Marie MERIGOUX, "L'ouvrage d'un frère prêcheur florentin en Orient à la fin du XIII^e siècle: le *Contra Legem Sarracenorum* de Riccoldo da Monte di Croce", in *Fede e Controversia*, *op. cit.*, p. 1-57, at p. 2.

(13) J.-M. MERIGOUX, "L'ouvrage d'un frère prêcheur", *op. cit.*, p. 3.

(14) "Parlare di Riccoldo da Monte Croce come precursore del dialogo islamocristiano e della dichiarazione *Nostra Aetate* del concilio Vaticano II equivale a barare in materia di storia e in materia di teologia", Emilio PANELLA, OP, "Preghiera e Protesta. La Prima Lettera di Riccoldo", in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, vol. 59, 1989, p. 17-88, at p. 21, n. 5.

(15) E. PANELLA, "Preghiera e Protesta", *op. cit.*, p. 20.

(16) E. PANELLA, "Presentazione", *op. cit.*, p. VI and ID., "Preghiera e Protesta", *op. cit.*, p. 20-21.

(17) *Seculares scientias quas artes liberales appellant, Liber Peregrinationis*, in Emilio PANELLA, "Ricerce su Riccoldo da Monte di Croce", in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, vol. 58, 1988, p. 5-85, at p. 7.

(18) R. KAPPLER, *Pérégrination en Terre Sainte*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

(19) They died in 1303 and 1305.

(20) This is at least one point when his life crossed with that of Thomas Aquinas; the same decree of this provincial chapter announced the *Studium Generale* of Thomas (the decree is quoted in E. PANELLA, "Ricerce su Riccoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 7). It is tempting to

in the Dominican center in Prato, and in 1288 he was sent to Santa Maria Novella in Florence. That was also the year he received permission from Pope Nicholas IV to preach in the East. He landed in the port of Acre at the end of 1288. After a tour of the Holy Land and pilgrimage to Jerusalem and other holy places, he embarked on his great missionary travel in the East, heading towards Baghdad.

In the East, Riccoldo came into contact with the leaders of the Christian communities and also encountered Muslim scholars and intellectuals. He heard about the fall of Acre in the second half of 1291, when he was in Baghdad, then occupied by the Mongols. Upon hearing the terrible news, he composed five urgent Letters to God and to the “celestial curia”, in which he complained bitterly about the triumphs of Islam, which neither the crusades nor the preaching of great preachers seemed able to counteract. He perceived it as a double failure – on both the military and the missionary fronts.

In 1295 he was forced to flee the Baghdad area, disguised as a Muslim camel driver, due to the persecution of Christians following the conversion of the Mongols. He then embarked on a dangerous journey back to Italy, where he arrived about 1300. He died twenty years later⁽²¹⁾. Back in Santa Maria Novella, then one of the major Dominican centers in Europe, he wrote his major works, the *Liber Peregrinationis*, the *Contra Legem Sarracenorum* (also known as the *Improbatio Alcorani* and *Confutatio Alcorani*), and the *Libellus ad Nationes Orientales*⁽²²⁾. He served as subprior and prior of Santa Maria Novella⁽²³⁾, and seems to have been a famous and esteemed preacher in early fourteenth-century Florence, where crowds gathered to hear him. As testimony to his fame and popularity, some of his sermons and exempla are preserved in an early fourteenth-century Franciscan manuscript collection of “notable *exempla*” in the Franciscan library of the monastery of Assisi, where he is described as *sollemnissimus predicator*⁽²⁴⁾.

think that Riccoldo could have met Thomas before he entered the Order, since Thomas was in Italy in 1261-1268 (Orvieto 1261-1265, Rome 1265-1268). It is known, however, that Riccoldo personally possessed several works of Thomas Aquinas, see J.-M. MERIGOUX, “L'ouvrage d'un frère prêcheur”, *op. cit.*, p. 32, note 155.

(21) Only from 1312 does he appear with the name “da Monte Croce”. It is hard to tell whether he adopted this name following his visit to Calvary, or whether it refers to a locality in Tuscany. E. PANELLA, “Ricerce su Riccoldo”, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

(22) Riccoldo also wrote a short commentary on Aristotle, probably an early work: Thomas KAEPPELI, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi*, vol. 3, Rome, S. Sabinae, 1980; on some manuscripts of Riccoldo in the Franciscan Monastery in Šibenik, see D. Krsto STOŠIĆ, “Rukopisni Kodeksi Samostana Sv. Franje u Šibeniku”, in *Croatia Sacra*, vol. 5, 1933, p. 18-61, at p. 30-31.

(23) Stefano ORLANDI, ed., *Necrologio di S. Maria Novella*, vol. 1, Florence, Olschki editore, 1955, p. 37.

(24) Cesare CENCI, ed., *Biblioteca Manuscripta ad Sacrum conventum Assisiensem*, vol. 1, Assisi, Casa Editrice Francescana, 1981, p. 227; Ferdinand M. DELORME, “Un recueil de Miracles ou Exempla, source de François Barthelemi”, in *Studi Francescani*, vol. 12, 1926, p. 366-404, at p. 371-372. The Franciscans have also cherished a unique piece of information reported by Riccoldo of the final days of Christian Acre. He told of Franciscan brothers who, before their death, found refuge in the Dominican convent, which was closer to the coast, “united [with the Dominicans] by their faith in Christ”, R. RÖHRICHT, “Lettres de Ricoldo”, *op. cit.*, p. 291. See Girolamo GOLUBOVICH, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente francescano*, 1st s., vol. 1, Quaracchi, presso Firenze, Collegio di S. Bonaventura, 1906-1927, p. 352-353.

The five Letters were not addressed to any particular living person. Rather, they are reflections or contemplations in the form of epistles. The preface to the Letters opens with a modified quotation from Ezekiel 1:1: *Et factum est cum essem in Baldacto in medio captivorum juxta fluvium Chobar, Tigris*⁽²⁵⁾, articulating the state of being distant from his homeland and his community. This sense of isolation sets the tone of the subsequent Letters, in which the themes of solitude and abandonment occur repeatedly. Each letter has a title: The first four titles name the Letters' addressees: "the true and living God", "Virgin Mary Queen of Heaven", "the triumphal church and the celestial curia", and "the Patriarch of Jerusalem and the brothers killed in Acre"; in the text are direct invocations of specific saints: Augustine, Gregory, Mary Magdalene, Francis, Dominic and others. The fifth letter is the divine response to Riccoldo's Letters, inspired by Pope Gregory I.

The text contains no indication of date or exact place of redaction. Letters 1-4 are signed *data in Oriente*, and the fifth is signed *scripta in Oriente*. They were initially conceived as an early reaction to the fall of Acre: *me urgeret ad tristitiam strages et captura populi Christiani... subito pre maxima tristitia in insolidam admirationem raptus cepi*⁽²⁶⁾. The choice of Ezekiel 1:1, while evidently a *topos*, would nonetheless suggest locating Riccoldo's writing, like Ezekiel's, in Babylon⁽²⁷⁾. It seems probable, as Röhricht has suggested, that as of his arrival in the East in 1288 until his return home, Riccoldo kept a journal of his travels and observations⁽²⁸⁾, which was finalized in Florence in the form of the *Liber Peregrinationis* and the Letters. Stylistically, Riccoldo uses rhetorical structures embedded with irony, which implies distance and ambivalence. For example, he wonders sarcastically whether Christ had deceived his followers when he said "Peace be with you" (Luke 24:37)⁽²⁹⁾. The use of irony is a sophisticated stylistic device that supports a content that is often defiant and skeptical: "If it pleases you that Mohammad reigns", he challenges Christ, "let us know, so that we may venerate [him]"⁽³⁰⁾.

When imploring the heavenly creatures to wake up, he urges them to act before their sloth (*sompnus*) turns into a deep sleep (*sopor*)⁽³¹⁾. It is indeed a curious situation when a preacher directs his moral criticism not towards the Christian people, but towards the Christian saints. It is interesting to note that allegations of a similar vein were recorded by the Inquisition in a trial of Waldensians held in Freiburg in 1399. According to the record, the heretics said: *Tertio tenent et dicunt, quod nulle orationes vel requeste fieri debeant beate Marie vel ceteris sanctis, concluendo, quod sancti, qui in celis sunt, in*

(25) R. RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Ricoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 264.

(26) R. RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Ricoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 264.

(27) For a discussion of the problem of distinguishing *topoi* from original or personal statements in medieval texts see: Peter DRONKE, *Poetic Individuality in the Middle Ages. New Departures in Poetry, 1000-1150*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1970, p. 11ff.

(28) R. RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Ricoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 263.

(29) *Ibid.*, p. 277.

(30) *Si tibi placet ut regnet Machometus, indica nobis, ut veneremur*; *ibid.*, p. 271.

(31) *Ibid.*, p. 278.

tanta letitia sunt, quod tanta bona habeant, quod orationes nostras exaudire nequeunt⁽³²⁾.

Expressing sentiments of despair, an acute sense of solitude, grief and even raw anger, the Letters manifest a forceful internalization of the external events and a rather direct exposition of the author's self. They also reflect Riccoldo's learning and fluency in Christian literature. The language is rich in biblical allusions and suggestive images. In both form and content the Letters reveal the diversity and richness of their author's personality⁽³³⁾.

The gist of the Letters is an unrestrained complaint and an explicit demand for an answer from God, Christ, Mary, or any of the other saints or martyrs⁽³⁴⁾. To Riccoldo, the celestial curia seems to represent an orderly universe, which stands in stark contrast to the terrestrial world whose order has been violated. The third letter, for example, opens with the words "This is the letter of a sad and bitter soul to the Heavens, and a cry for help against the blasphemous Muslims"⁽³⁵⁾. Riccoldo expresses fear of remaining the only Christian in the East: "What can I do, left all alone, miserable and weak in the depths of the Orient?"⁽³⁶⁾. "Here I am, defeated and abandoned in a remote area, with a feeble body, sad heart, and mind almost completely confused"⁽³⁷⁾; "soon there will be not one Christian left in the entire world"⁽³⁸⁾.

Riccoldo's sources of anxiety were many. Some of these anxieties were of a theological nature, concerning grace and divine justice: must God grant his grace to his people? Are humans in a position to make claims on God's justice? He was also concerned about his personal salvation, since faith is a primary requirement for salvation, and Riccoldo found himself exceptionally confused. Not least, he was in physical danger, and was even physically attacked. Thus, both his temporal and his eternal life seemed to be in danger and as a religious man and a committed preacher, his central values were being undermined⁽³⁹⁾. Riccoldo could not understand why God

(32) Kathrin UTZ-TREMP, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte der Waldenser von Freiburg im Üchland (1399-1439)*, Hannover, Hahn, 2000 (MGH. Quellen zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters, 18), p. 590-591; see also Gertrude BARNES FIERTZ, "An Unusual Trial under the Inquisition at Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1399", in *Speculum*, vol. 18, 1943, p. 340-357.

(33) More attention should perhaps be given to the nature and expression of emotions in Riccoldo's Letters, in light of the recent and growing literature about emotions and anger in medieval Latin texts. See for example Barbara H. ROSENWEIN, ed., *Anger's Past. The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, New York, Cornell University Press, 1998; EAD., "Worrying about Emotions in History", in *The American Historical Review*, vol. 107, 2002, p. 821-845; Mary GARRISON, "The Study of Emotions in Early Medieval History: Some Starting Points", in *Early Medieval Europe*, vol. 10, 2003, p. 243-250.

(34) R. RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Ricoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 276: *epistola afflicte anime de ecclesia militante ad totam ecclesiam triumphantem et celestem curiam contra blasphemiam Alchorani*.

(35) *Ibid.*, p. 276.

(36) *Ibid.*, p. 272.

(37) *Ibid.*, p. 272.

(38) *Ibid.*, p. 276.

(39) Riccoldo never mentions the crusaders or the Crusader Kingdom as a political entity; he has nothing to say about the actual drama of the collapse of the Kingdom or the lay fighting forces. For him the war has ended, with defeat, and he expresses no hope for any future crusade and reconquest, and no awareness of the renewed crusading zeal following the fall of the Latin kingdom.

offered no response to the Muslim victories, why no answer was given to the dual challenge of Islam, which was winning ever more ground and souls. At one point, he relates in anguish, that he had laid the Quran on Christ's altar and implored Christ and Mary: "Read, please read what Mohammad says". "But it seems to me", he retorts, "that you do not want to"⁽⁴⁰⁾. The scene is undoubtedly based on Augustine's famous *tolle, lege*, but presented as an inverted image of the dramatic moment of Augustine's conversion. It may also refer, in a similarly ironic manner, to Angel Gabriel's urging of Muhammad in Arabic, *iqra !*, "read !"⁽⁴¹⁾.

Though Riccoldo sounds highly emotional, and therefore personal⁽⁴²⁾, what he says apparently reflects a desperate mood shared by many Christians in the East. It was specifically the fall of Acre that drove Riccoldo to question divine providence. He recognized the end of the Latin Kingdom to be not merely a military defeat but a meaningful theological event, which made him rethink and even doubt the whole providential scheme. His observation in the first letter, that now it is publicly proclaimed in the East that God is incapable (*impotens*) of helping the Christians⁽⁴³⁾, is reminiscent of Abu'l Faraj - Bar Hebraeus' earlier statement that all the Christians in these countries feel the "unspeakable calamity" of being abandoned by God, while their enemies deride them, asking "Where is your God and why does he not help you?"⁽⁴⁴⁾. This notion is amplified in Riccoldo's words: "Now it is not only the Muslims who mock us, but also the Jews and the Mongols, who cite the Christians who ask 'Where is our God ?'"⁽⁴⁵⁾.

In a poignant passage, Riccoldo describes his encounter with captives from Acre, sold into slavery and worse. On that occasion he found liturgical books and vessels taken from the Latin churches of Acre, and blood-stained monastic habits, which drive him to cry out: "O blessed Dominic, I am looking for my brothers !"⁽⁴⁶⁾. The biblical subtext is of course Joseph looking for his brothers, in Genesis 37:14-16, to which Riccoldo himself

(40) *Legatis, legatis quod dicit Machometus*, in R. RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Ricoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 286. That Riccoldo could read Arabic is indicated in the *Necrologium* of S. Maria Novella, p. 37 (see n. 23). However, he preached to Arabic speakers via a translator, *per turchimannum*. See R. KAPPLER, *Pérégrination en Terre Sainte*, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

(41) Sura 96:1-5. I thank Kurt Villads Jensen for this suggestion.

(42) It should be noted that whereas his other works, notably the *Contra Legem Sarracenorum* and the *Libellus ad Nationes Orientales*, and to some extent the *Liber Peregrinationis*, are heavily dependent on previous works, the Letters seem to be genuinely original.

(43) R. RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Ricoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 265: *modo dicunt publice in populis orientalibus, quod tu es impotens adiuuare nos.... Dicunt etiam quod Dominus Iesus Christus nos adiuuare non potest contra Machometum* (p. 266).

(44) Quoted by Reinhold RÖHRICHT, *Geschichte des Königreichs Jerusalem (1100-1291)*, Innsbruck, Wagner, 1898, p. 1028, n. 3: "Alle Christen dieser Länder fühlen das unsägliche Unglück ihrer Verlassenheit von Gott". This question may refer to Psalm 115, 2 : *nequando dicant gentes: Ubi est Deus eorum?* For earlier (1250s) examples of the Christian sense that Muslims hold them in contempt, see Peter JACKSON, transl., *The Seventh Crusade, 1244-1254. Sources and Documents*, Farnham & Burlington, Ashgate, 2009, p. 167, 169, 173.

(45) R. RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Ricoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 266: *Sed dicunt nunc [Christiani]: ubi est Deus noster ?*

(46) *Ibid.*, p. 278, 289.

refers in the text. Among the sacred objects, habits and books, dispersed in Iraq with the miserable Christian captives from Acre, Riccoldo found and bought Saint Gregory's *Moralia in Job*, a book in which Gregory postulates that since the Scripture is like a mirror of the soul, it can provide all that is necessary to attain virtue and the way by which a Christian can gain an accurate knowledge of his own righteousness⁽⁴⁷⁾. Thus the fifth and last letter of Riccoldo is dedicated to a sort of resolution of the crisis, based on reading the *Moralia*, which he reads as the divine response (*divina responsio*) to his questions. Once again Riccoldo recalls Augustine's "take and read" – and reads the *Moralia in Job*. Reading it offers him some consolation, but alas, just a minor one. In a clear voice he proclaims that the divine answer does not satisfy his inquiry; he thanks God for this theoretical answer, but says he is waiting passionately for a *practical* response to come⁽⁴⁸⁾. In other words, for him this answer is unsatisfactory.

The Letters attest that Riccoldo understands Islam in a way that differs from the way it had been presented in apocalyptic, prophetic or polemical literature of the thirteenth century, where the impending collapse of Islam had been repeatedly foretold, and disillusionment with missionary activity had led to increased support for crusading. None of this is found in Riccoldo's Letters. The final Christian victory over Islam predicted by Joachim of Fiore and Joachimite thinkers was a pervasive line of thought throughout the thirteenth century, and as late as 1271 William of Tripoli, writing in the Dominican house in Acre, asserted in his *Notitia de Machometo* that the Saracens themselves believe that they will be defeated and destroyed by the Christians⁽⁴⁹⁾. Riccoldo realized that, on the contrary, Islam was not showing signs of retreat, and he confronts God, as already quoted above: "If it pleases you that Mohammad reigns, let us know, so that we may venerate [him]"⁽⁵⁰⁾. He realized also that the Mongol conquests were not the good news that the Christians in the Holy Land and elsewhere had expected them to be. He mentions the Mongols in the Letters only four times, and very briefly. All he says is that he had come to the East to preach Christianity to them, but they have become Muslims, who now revere the Quran just as firmly as the Christians revere their Gospels⁽⁵¹⁾. It is significant that at the same time, some of his contemporaries were still caught up with the out-of-date dream of the conversion of the Mongols to Christianity and the reconquest of the Holy

(47) (Introduction to the second book) *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 75, *Moralia in Job*, II, 1: *Scriptura sacra mentis oculis quasi quoddam speculum opponitur, ut interna nostra facies in ipsa videatur*.

(48) R. RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Ricoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 296: *pro responsione denique theoricam, gratias ago, practicam vero nihilominus affectuose atque indesinentar expeto*.

(49) See Robert BURNS, "Christian-Islamic Confrontation in the West. The Thirteenth-Century Dream of Conversion", in *American Historical Review*, vol. 76, 1971, p. 1386-1434; J. TOLAN, *Saracens*, *op. cit.*, chap. 3, esp. p. 203-204; Peter ENGELS, ed., *Notitia de Machometo. De statu Sarracenorum*, Würzburg, Echter, 1992 (Corpus Islamo-Christianum).

(50) R. RÖHRICHT, "Lettres de Ricoldo", *op. cit.*, p. 271.

(51) *Ibid.*, Letter 1, p. 270, Letter 3, p. 276, 281, 285. The rare reference to the Mongols follows from their being parceled with the Muslims, since unlike the discussion in the *Peregrinatio*, the focus in the Letters is not ethnic but religious.

Land. As late as 1298, a Latin narrative tells of certain pseudo-preachers who make up “many lies” about the reoccupation of the Holy Land⁽⁵²⁾.

Riccoldo personally witnessed the dangerous allure of Islam to Christians. The Letters assert what other Christian writers had sensed somewhat earlier, that Christians converted to Islam not only by coercion or necessity, but because they yielded to temptation. He speaks about the Christians who die not by the sword but by denying Christ; of those who abandon their faith because their spiritual strength of former years has now ebbed⁽⁵³⁾. Similarly, Fidenzio of Padua noted earlier that “there is another exceedingly great evil, that many Christians from Latin lands who go across the sea to the Saracens and, enticed by riches and carnal pleasure, become Saracens and leave off Christian worship”⁽⁵⁴⁾. Fidenzio also bemoaned the many Christians who fought as “good and energetic” soldiers in the Muslim armies⁽⁵⁵⁾.

The notion that the Muslims stood at the brink of conversion, a product of the earlier “eschatological euphoria”, dimmed as time passed, writes Robert Burns regarding the Christian-Islamic confrontation in the West; these words that ring true for the East as well⁽⁵⁶⁾. Optimistic expectations were gradually receding, replaced by a darker outlook, and Riccoldo’s words straightforwardly express this rupture⁽⁵⁷⁾.

Comparable desperate expressions abound in *Ystoria de desolatione et conculcatione civitatis Acconensis*, written by Thadeus of Napoli within just

(52) *Huius tempore quidam pseudo-praedicatores per ecclesias discurrentes, de recuperatione Terrae Sanctae multa mendacia fingeant: unde populus decipiebant, ab eo oblationes offerendo*, in Ludwig WEILAND, ed., *Continuation of the chronicle of Martin of Troppau (Continuatio Brabantina)*, Hannover, Hahn, 1879 (MGH. Scriptores, 24), p. 261 (an. 1298-1300). See R. RÖHRICHT, “Étude du dernier temps”, in *Archives de l’Orient latin*, vol. 1, 1881, p. 648, n. 71. See also Peter JACKSON, “Hülegü Khan and the Christians. The Making of a Myth”, in Peter EDBURY & Jonathan PHILLIPS, eds., *The Experience of Crusading*, vol. 2: *Defining the Crusader Kingdom*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 196-213; Reuven AMITAI, “Edward of England and Abagha Ilkhan. A Reexamination of a Failed Attempt at Mongol-Frankish Cooperation”, in Michael GERVERS & James M. POWELL, eds., *Tolerance and Intolerance. Social Conflict in the Age of the Crusades*, Syracuse, New York, Syracuse University Press, 2001, p. 75-82 [also in Reuven AMITAI, *The Mongols in the Islamic Lands. Studies in the History of the Ilkhanate*, Adershot, Ashgate, 2007 (Variorum Collected Studies Series, 873)].

(53) R. RÖHRICHT, “Lettres de Riccoldo”, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

(54) FIDENZIO OF PADUA, *Liber recuperationis Terre Sancte*, in G. GOLUBOVICH, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell’Oriente francescano*, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 13. English translation of this passage in Lee MANION, “The Loss of the Holy Land and Sir Isumbras. Literary Contributions to Fourteenth-Century Crusade Discourse”, in *Speculum*, vol. 85, 2010, p. 65-90, at p. 88.

(55) *Sciendum est quod pars magna militie Soldani Babilonie est Christianorum. Nam Soldanus accepit pueros et iuvenes de Antiochia et de Armenis minori et de aliis partibus Christianorum, et fecit eos Sarracenos, qui facti sunt boni et strenui milites. Et manifeste dicitur et creditur quod si Latini darent eis stipendia, liberenter redirent ad Christianos; Liber recuperationis Terre Sancte*, in G. GOLUBOVICH, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica*, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, cap. 94, p. 60.

(56) R. BURNS, “Christian-Islamic Confrontation”, *op. cit.*, p. 1434.

(57) Thomas Burman suggests an interesting analogy between the reaction of Latin intellectuals to the fall of Acre and the fall of Constantinople in 1453: both dramatic events inspired remarkable rhetoric by Christian writers. See Thomas E. BURMAN, “Juan de Segovia and Qur’an Reading in Latin Christendom, 1140-1560”, in *Reading the Qur’an in Latin Christendom*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007, p. 178.

a few months after the fall of Acre⁽⁵⁸⁾. Thadeus, writing in a heavily rhetorical and at times sardonic style, depicts the Muslim enemy in crude and simplistic terms, as arrogant, insane, perverse, diabolic, fierce and bloodthirsty. He portrays their storming of Acre as an apocalyptic event: a heavy rain of arrows strikes like lightning from the sky, towers collapse, the heavens shake, pregnant women abort their babies, and crazed young men roam in the streets where they used to play as children⁽⁵⁹⁾. Yet, according to Thadeus, the Holy Land itself expelled its Christian citizens and will probably turn its back on those who may rush to rescue it in the future. He claims metaphorically that the Holy Land has ceased to be a “mother” for the Christians (*cum iam mater esse desieris*)⁽⁶⁰⁾, and is itself being cast away as an adulterous wife by her husband, God⁽⁶¹⁾. For Thadeus the fate of Acre and its people seemed a justified divine sentence and a punishment well deserved for their sins; he therefore called upon the Christians to correct their ways⁽⁶²⁾. But his depiction of God turning against his own people, like a merciless enemy who made their day of destruction a joyful feast for the Muslims, is uncommonly bitter.

In a somewhat earlier text, written by the Templar Ricaut Bonomel after the fall of the coastal town of Arsuf in 1265, similar expressions of despair and pessimism appear: “Neither the cross nor the Christian faith help me or protect me from the wicked Turks whom God curses. It thus seems, as anyone can see, that God wishes to support them to our detriment”⁽⁶³⁾. According to Bonomel, the Holy Land will never be recovered, since God, who used to watch over the Christians, now slept while Mohammed’s power brought victory to the Saracens; and since Christ does nothing to combat his enemies, it would be foolish for Christians to do so. And now that Christ no longer opposes them, the Muslims’ campaign will not end before the obliteration of every Christian from the East. Another troubadour, Austorc d’Aurillac, writing around 1270, evokes in his *sirventes* themes very similar to Riccoldo’s: “I see Christendom completely shamed. It has never suffered such a loss. This is the reason why men disbelieve in God and why we worship Muhammad”⁽⁶⁴⁾.

While the troubadours’ tone is characteristically darker and more caustic, the expression of the same line of thinking by a Dominican friar such as

(58) MAGISTER THADEUS CIVIS NEAPOLITANUS, *Ystoria de desolatione et conculcatione civitatis Acconensis et tocius Terre sancte*, ed. Robert B. C. HUYGENS, with contributions by Alan FOREY & David C. NICOLLE, Turnhout, Brepols, 2004 (Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis, 202).

(59) *Ystoria de desolatione, op. cit.*, p. 101-102.

(60) *Ibid.*, p. 157.

(61) *Ibid.*, p. 156.

(62) *Ibid.*, p. 153.

(63) Jaye PUCKETT, “Reconnenciez novele estoire. The Troubadours and the Rhetoric of the Later Crusades”, in *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 116, 2001, p. 844-889, at p. 878-879; Palmer A. THROOP, “Criticism of Papal Crusade Policy in Old French and Provençal”, in *Speculum*, vol. 13, 1938, p. 379-412, at p. 406.

(64) P. JACKSON, transl., *The Seventh Crusade, op. cit.*, p. 176-177. See also J. PUCKETT, “Reconnenciez novele estoire”, *op. cit.*, p. 878. It is worth noting that the notion of a celestial curia may be found as well in troubadour poetry. Guilhem d’Autpol (or Daspol) wrote around 1270 a complaint on the death of Louis IX, where he describes a dream in which he is present at a session of the celestial parliament. See Mary MORTON WOOD, *The Spirit of Protest in Old French Literature*, New York, AMS Press, 1966 [New York, Columbia University Press, 1917], p. 143-146.

Riccoldo or a learned man such as Thadeus of Napoli may reveal that the rhetorical shift has found its way into the minds of religious intellectuals of the late thirteenth century. Jaye Puckett who studied the songs of the troubadours noted that “hope has been replaced with fear, pride with shame, and confidence with anger”⁽⁶⁵⁾; this account is valid for Riccoldo’s Letters as well. Interestingly, the idea that it was not just another Christian defeat but part of a more encompassing vision of Christian disengagement from the Holy Land is also found in Muslim writing in response to the fall of Acre. Ibn Al Furat (d. 1405) wrote in a verse directed at the sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Khalil: “Because of you no town is left in which unbelief can repair, no hope for the Christian religion !”⁽⁶⁶⁾.

One may also note in this context Riccoldo’s ambivalence towards Islam. In his *Peregrinatio*, which like the Letters is very much his own work, the Muslims are dealt with in a sophisticated manner. There he praises many aspects of the Muslims’ learning, writing and ritual: “Who will not be astounded”, he asks, “if he carefully considers how great is the concern of these very Muslims for study, their devotion in prayer, their pity for the poor, their reverence for the name of God and the prophets and the holy places, their sobriety in manners, their hospitality to strangers, their harmony and love for each other ?”⁽⁶⁷⁾. To be sure, the image of the Muslims in the *Peregrinatio* is not entirely positive, but it is nuanced, and reflects Riccoldo’s personal experience and accumulated learning about Islam and Islamic culture. In the Letters, while the Muslims are portrayed as base and beastly, and Mohammed as a diabolic pervert, their image is nonetheless a complex one, due to their success in diminishing the Christian faith. On the other hand, Riccoldo’s major works on faith, namely the *Contra Legem Sarracenorum* and the *Libellus ad Nationes Orientales*, are on the whole unoriginal and rely heavily on authorities, as if he wanted to be entirely sure not to be accused of un-orthodox ideas ⁽⁶⁸⁾.

What kind of audience could be envisaged for Riccoldo’s Letters ? The Letters should first be read for what they primarily are: the literary product of a distinctive personality in a distinctive state of mind. Being isolated in Iraq, with no hope for Christian success, engendered in Riccoldo fear and doubt of his old certainties; having believed it possible for Christianity to overcome the threat of Islam – a goal to which he dedicated his life – the triumphs of Islam must have seemed an enormous setback. He was apparently unable to understand the workings of God’s will. Perhaps his former scholastic education made his struggle for comprehension more acute : on the one hand he begs in vain for a divine revelation, on the other he asks pointed questions and deems the answer he receives insufficient.

(65) J. PUCKETT, “*Recommenciez novele estoire*”, *op. cit.*, p. 864.

(66) Carole HILLENBRAND, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, New York, Routledge, 2000, p. 240.

(67) See R. KAPPLER, *Pérégrination en Terre Sainte*, *op. cit.*, p. 158. English translation by Norman DANIEL, *Islam and the West. The Making of an Image*, Oxford, Oneworld Publications, 2000, p. 221.

(68) I thank Kurt Villads Jensen for his discussion on this point. See also Benjamin Z. KEDAR, *Crusade and Mission. European Approaches Toward the Muslims*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 200.

Thus his despair evolved from his inability to harmonize the teachings of Christian Revelation with his personal experience and the historical events he witnessed; it took the fall of Acre to unsettle his worldview. František Graus described the “crisis of the Middle Ages” as a time when values hitherto held in high esteem were menaced or disintegrating, where an immediate consolation was sought in the form of the old solutions, and where those most aware of the loss of certainties were usually the intellectuals⁽⁶⁹⁾. Against this backdrop we may examine Riccoldo’s moment of doubt, and the fact that he expressed himself in a way that was more positive towards non-Christians than was the official attitude. Moreover, according to the *Necrologium* of Santa Maria Novella, Riccoldo was called back to the Papal Curia to report about certain dubious opinions in matters of faith (*quibusdam dubiis articulis*). The nature of these dubious matters cannot be verified. It could refer to heretic beliefs he knew of, or because of the way he had expressed his doubts⁽⁷⁰⁾. Thus, I argue, the Letters show that Riccoldo was capable of doubt and non-belief; it was easy for him to believe firmly in the strength of Christianity in the secure comfort of Santa Maria Novella, but it was a struggle to believe when faced with the double challenge of the defeat of Christianity and the triumph of Islam – a religion that Riccoldo knew well, having read the Quran and perhaps the Hadith, and having spoken with its proponents. His preface to the Letters presents the notion of the conflict between the lived reality and the received tradition: “When I was in Baghdad... I began more carefully than usual to reflect upon the judgments of God about the government of the world, and especially about Muslims and Christians...”⁽⁷¹⁾.

Riccoldo’s response to the fall of Acre and his complaints to heaven give substance to the relatively abstract ideas as “crisis” and “change of mentality”. It is extremely rare to be able to link such concepts to specific individuals⁽⁷²⁾, since very few writers have left a written record that offers such a clear glimpse into a moment within the greater transition. Losing his confidence and certainty in the providential plan, Riccoldo of Monte Croce was not a lone voice, he may be seen as part of an emerging strain of thought, conscious of the hopelessness of Christian victory in the East.

SUMMARY

Iris SHAGRIR, *The Fall of Acre as a Spiritual Crisis. The Letters of Riccoldo of Monte Croce*

This article discusses the five letters penned by Riccoldo of Monte Croce in response to the fall of crusader Acre in 1291. These letters, while evidencing an individual

(69) František GRAUS, “The Crisis of the Middle Ages and the Hussites”, in Steven OZMENT, ed., *The Reformation in Medieval Perspective*, Chicago, Quadrangle Books, 1971, p. 76-103, at p. 78.

(70) St. ORLANDI, ed., *Necrologio di S. Maria Novella*, *op. cit.*, p. 37-38.

(71) R. RÖHRICHT, “Lettres de Ricoldo”, *op. cit.*, p. 264. English translation in N. DANIEL, *Islam and the West*, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

(72) Kurt Villads JENSEN, “*Libellus ad Nationes Orientales*”, electronic édition, *op. cit.*, “Introduction”.

religious crisis, are discussed within a wider context. They reveal a complex attitude towards Islam, which is based on a close personal knowledge of the Muslim world. They should also be seen as part of an emerging awareness of the irreversibility of the loss of the Holy Land in 1291 and the futility of Christian battle against Islam in the East. It is argued that the acknowledgement of failure on the missionary and military fronts plays a part in a meaningful shift towards a more restless and critical religious attitude.

Riccardo of Monte Croce – Acre – Crusades – Islam – Christianity – skepticism – Crusader Kingdom – Dominicans – mission – Thadeus Neopolitanus.

RÉSUMÉ

Iris SHAGRIR, *La chute d'Acre comme crise spirituelle. Les Lettres de Riccardo de Monte-Croce*

L'article décrit les cinq lettres écrites par Riccardo de Monte-Croce en réponse à la chute de Saint-Jean d'Acre en 1291. Ces lettres, qui attestent d'une crise religieuse individuelle, sont discutées dans un contexte plus large. Elles révèlent une attitude complexe envers l'islam, basée sur une connaissance intime du monde islamique. Elles témoignent également de la conscience émergente de l'irréversibilité de la perte de la Terre Sainte et de l'inutilité des guerres chrétiennes contre l'Islam en Orient. Cet article suggère que la reconnaissance de l'échec sur les fronts missionnaires et militaires joue un rôle dans une évolution significative vers une attitude religieuse plus agitée et plus critique.

Riccardo de Monte-Croce – Acre – croisades – Islam – christianisme – scepticisme – royaume des Croisés – Dominicains – mission – Thadeus Neopolitanus.

SAMMENVATTING

Iris SHAGRIR, *De val van Akko als een spirituele crisis. De brieven van Riccardo van Monte Croce*

Dit artikel bespreekt de vijf brieven die geschreven werden door Riccardo van Monte Croce naar aanleiding van de val van Akko in 1291. De brieven, die uiting geven aan een individuele religieuze crisis, worden in een bredere context geplaatst. Ze onthullen een complexe houding ten opzichte van de islam, die gebaseerd is op een persoonlijke kennis van de islamitische wereld. Ze getuigen ook van het groeiende bewustzijn dat het verlies van het Heilige Land in 1291 onomkeerbaar is en dat de christelijke strijd tegen de islam in het Oosten nutteloos is. Voorliggend artikel verdedigt de stelling dat de bewustwording van de mislukking op de missionaire en militaire fronten, heeft bijgedragen tot de opkomst van een meer "onrustige" en kritische religieuze houding.

Riccardo van Monte Croce – Akko (Acre) – kruistochten – Islam – christendom – scepticisme – kruisvaarderkoninkrijk – Dominicanen – missie – Thadeus Neopolitanus.