

**Order of Calatrava** (Carlos de Ayala)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, pp. 199–201.

The oldest military religious order of Hispanic origin.

The order was founded in 1158 in the fortress of Calatrava in what is now the province of Ciudad Real (Spain) by Abbot Raymond and a group of Cistercian monks from the monastery of Fitero in Navarre, who included one Diego Velázquez, a former knight who had been brought up at the Castilian court. According to the chronicler Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, archbishop of Toledo, Calatrava had been abandoned by the Templars because they considered themselves incapable of defending it against a likely attack from the Almohads. Because of this, the Cistercians of Fitero were able to occupy the fortress after it had been handed over to them by the king of Castile, Sancho III. From this point the monks combined their spiritual vocation with the defense of the enclave, creating a religious militia, or military order, that received the name of the castle. From 1164 the Cistercian general chapter and the papacy both recognized the new institution as part of the Cistercian Order, even though placing the *freires* (knight brethren) and monks in the same category posed problems for a long time.

The *freires* were obliged to obey the Cistercian rule, and the Cistercian chapter regularly visited their central convent. From 1186, it was the abbot of Morimond who visited them, and Calatrava came to be considered as an affiliate of his monastery. The responsibility of this abbot was to lay down norms and disciplinary prescriptions, which all members of the Order of Calatrava were obliged to observe. As part of their religious profession, the members had to take solemn monastic vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity. Most of them were knights with military functions, and only a few were clerics, whose duty was to administer the sacraments to all of the members. After the death of the founder, Raymond of Fitero (c. 1162), the head of the order was termed a *maestre* (grand master), who was always a knight brother. The other members came under his authority, even though the clerics were directly responsible to the prior, or prelate. The prior belonged to the clerical branch of the militia and, being lower in rank than the grand master, was nominated by the abbot of Morimond. The *freires* lived in the central convent at Calatrava, or in other convents of the area; these were known as *prioratos* (priories) and *comendas* (commanderies), and were the territorial divisions into which the estates of the order were divided for administrative purposes. From the first decades of the thirteenth century the order admitted women, who entered as contemplative nuns in the few monasteries belonging to the militia: San Felices de Amaya (Burgos), San Salvador de Pinilla (Guadalajara), and Santa María de Jalimena (Jaén).

The territorial estates of the Order of Calatrava were mainly situated in Castile, particularly in a large part of the ancient kingdom of Toledo, the so-called Campo de Calatrava, in what is now the province of Ciudad Real. There the order received numerous donations from kings, nobles, and other individuals, and managed to control some of the most important communication routes that linked the center of the Iberian Peninsula with al-Andalus. These routes were flanked by numerous castles that also belonged to the order: Malagón, Benavente, Alarcos, Caracuel, and Piedrabuena, among others. The order also had a considerable presence in the kingdoms of León and Portugal, although from the beginning of the thirteenth century its branches in these kingdoms developed into autonomous orders under the names Alcántara and Avis; in the Cistercian terminology of the time, they were affiliates of Calatrava. In Aragon, the members of the Order of Calatrava established themselves in the strategic fortress of Alcañiz from 1179. They never actually constituted an independent order, but they did establish a major commandery, which was relatively autonomous in relation to the central convent. At the end of the Middle Ages, the estates of the order in Castile alone amounted to approximately 15,000 square kilometers (5,800 sq. mi.), with more than fifty commanderies and almost 100,000 vassals. The wealth accumulated from a patrimony of this size was quite considerable; livestock farming was particularly relevant in the depopulated area between the river Tagus and the Sierra Morena.

The members of the order participated in all the principal battles during the reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula from the Muslims. They suffered a severe defeat at Alarcos (1195) against the Almohads, which almost caused their disappearance as an institution. However, they contributed decisively to the Christian victory at Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), and formed a substantial part of the Christian army under Ferdinand III of Castile that, between 1230 and 1248, managed to incorporate the whole of northern Andalusia into Castile. They were also active in the major campaigns against the Marínids in the XIV century, in particular at the battle of Salado (1340), and in the conquest of Granada by the “Catholic Monarchs,” Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, toward the end of the fifteenth century.

Their presence outside the Iberian Peninsula was of minor importance, although we have knowledge of a convent of Calatrava in the 1230s situated in Tymau in Poland, on the left bank of the river Vistula. In any case, the efficiency of the *freires* on the battlefield did not depend as much on their number (which probably never amounted to more than 300 knights) as on their quality. They were skilled professionals in warfare, and embodied the purest spirit of the crusade; they were also capable of mobilizing numerous laypeople under their banners, who took advantage of the indulgences and spiritual privileges the papacy bestowed on crusaders. Some of these laypeople may even have been affiliated with the order, that is, linked to it by both spiritual and material ties.

Like the rest of the military orders, Calatrava underwent a fairly obvious transformation process. In its first century of existence, it was a militia with clear monastic connections that acted as a faithful collaborator of the Castilian monarchy in its military and colonizing plans. From the middle of the thirteenth century, an irreversible process of secularization began to occur as a consequence of two circumstances: on the one hand, the *freires* became increasingly tied to the noble lineages of the kingdom; on the other, the monarchy demonstrated a greater interest in intervening in the control of the institution. Both these factors contributed to a weakening of the original monastic character of the order and converted it into a mere institution of nobles, identified with the interests of the important aristocratic dynasties and, consequently, not always loyal to the king.

Given these developments, the control of the office of grand master became a matter of constant concern, for different reasons, both to the important noble families and to the monarchy. All this contributed to the outbreak of internal crises, which were especially intense throughout the fifteenth century, as was evident during the periods of office of the grand masters Enrique de Villena, Luis González de Guzmán, and Pedro Girón. These crises, combined with the intervention of the *freires* in civil conflicts, were used to justify the acquisition of the office of grand master by the Crown in 1489. At that time, the militia was showing signs of becoming decidedly secular, as demonstrated by the relaxation of the monastic vows of the *freires*, which was legitimized by the Cistercian general chapter and the papacy. The members of the Order of Calatrava (along with those of the other military orders) were transferred to the responsibility of the Council of Military Orders, a government department integrated into the political structure of the monarchy. Their resources were utilized by the monarchy, and the order finally became an honorific corporation, suppressed by the liberal governments of the nineteenth century. From that time a series of complex vicissitudes permitted the order's intermittent appearance on the social scene; today it belongs to a restored and honorific Council of Orders presided over by a member of the Spanish royal family.

**Order of Santiago** (Philippe Josserand)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, pp. 1070–1072.

The Order of Santiago (St. James) was the most powerful of the Iberian military religious orders, originating as a confraternity of knights founded by King Ferdinand II of León in Cáceres in August 1170 in order to protect the southern part of his kingdom against the Muslim Almohads.

Despite later medieval legends that dated the order as far back as the mythical battle of Clavijo won by King Ramiro I of Asturias (d. 850) against the Moors, the birth of this institution occurred within the context of the reconquest of Iberia from the Muslims in the second half of the twelfth century. The appearance of a confraternity under the leadership of its master Pedro Fernández followed the pattern of other militias such as the *hermandad* (confraternity) of Belchite, founded by King Alfonso I half a century before in Aragon, or the more recent *hermandad* of Ávila in Castile, which eventually merged with the Order of Santiago.

The members of the new confraternity were known as the Brethren of Cáceres until January 1171. In that year they came to an agreement with Pedro Gudesteiz, archbishop of Santiago de Compostela, who became a member of the community as an honorary brother and in return received the master and his knights into his cathedral chapter. Although this pact did not last long, the brethren chose St. James (Sp. *Santiago*) as their patron and protector, whose fame helped them obtain donations. In 1173 Master Pedro Fernández obtained a bull of protection from the papacy for the community. He probably presented Pope Alexander III with the first version of the rule of Santiago, which received papal approval two years later in July 1175.

According to this rule, the membership of the order consisted of knight brethren, who were dedicated to fighting against the Muslims, and clerics, who followed the Rule of St. Augustine and most probably came from the Galician monastery of Loyo. Both clerics and knights bore the insignia of a red cross in the shape of a sword. These two parallel communities were under the authority of a master, who was elected from among the knights and governed the whole order with the assent of the general chapter. This institutional structure was inspired by the orders of the Temple and the Hospital, but also by the Order of Calatrava, founded in Castile in 1158.

The founder of the order, Ferdinand II of León, wanted to use the new militia to protect the southern border of his realm, which was threatened by Almohad incursions. Master Pedro Fernández, by contrast, had quite different aims: with the encouragement of the papacy, he tried to give his order a dimension that would not be restricted to León. In 1171 King Alfonso VIII of Castile granted it the castles of Mora and Oreja, whose location to the south and east of Toledo gave them a key role in the defense of that city. From Afonso I Henriques, king of Portugal, the order received the castles of Monsanto (1171) and Abrantes (1173) and was thus brought into the defense of the line of the river Tagus (Sp. *Tajo*). The expansion of the order beyond León can be seen from a confirmation by Pope Lucius III (1184), which mentions possessions in León, Portugal, and Castile, as well as Aragon, France, and Italy. The order thus turned into an international organization, which, even though most of its activity was focused on the Iberian Peninsula, still extended as far as the Holy Land, where the brethren were repeatedly asked to settle.

The Iberian Peninsula, however, remained the main theater of operations for the Order of Santiago, whose brethren, during the first fifty years of its existence, were busy fighting the Almohads under the direction of the various Hispanic kings. Against these powerful enemies, they first had to defend the line of the Tagus from Palmela and Alcácer do Sal, in the west, to Uclés, where the order officially settled after being granted the city by Alfonso VIII of Castile in 1174. The task was far from easy, and, in such a difficult context of division between the Christian realms, the order had to give up certain places: Cáceres (1174), Alcácer (1191), and even Montánchez, Trujillo, and Santa Cruz (1196), during the great Almohad offensive that occurred after the Castilian defeat at Alarcos. Despite their difficult situation, the brethren succeeded in preserving most of their estates in La Mancha by resisting the Muslim attacks of 1197 against Alarcón and Uclés. From such bases, it was possible for them to continue fighting and progressively resume offensive action until the great victory of Las Navas de Tolosa (16 July 1212), which opened the south of the peninsula to the Christian kingdoms.

The determination of the brethren of Santiago was instrumental in enabling Iberian Christendom to take advantage of the Almohad collapse. The order fought on every front. In Portugal its members decisively contributed in 1217 to the seizure of Alcácer, where they

established their provincial seat, before participating in the integration of the Campo de Montiel and the towns of the Guadiana Valley into the kingdoms of Castile and León. They assisted in the conquest of the Taifa kingdom of Valencia, where King James I of Aragon was supported by Rodrigo Bueso, the commander of Montalbán. During the submission of the southern part of al-Andalus that took place during the reigns of Ferdinand III of Castile and Afonso III of Portugal, the Santiaguists relentlessly supported the monarchies until the mid-thirteenth century, as shown by the involvement of the master Pelayo Pérez Correa, who actively participated in the capture of Seville in 1248 and in the submission of the Algarve the next year.

Thanks to such military activity, the Order of Santiago underwent a great expansion from the second quarter of the thirteenth century. Numerous donations built up a near contiguous bloc of estates extending from the estuary of the river Tagus, south of Lisbon, to that of the Segura, in the region of Murcia. Within these possessions, the order organized a system of commanderies and, in some places, established male and female convents as well as charitable foundations intended to welcome pilgrims, take care of lepers, and even to ransom captives. These elements all contributed to the prestige as well as the wealth of the order, whose influence reached a peak under the long mastership of Pelayo Pérez Correa (1242–1275), who acquired a level of power unprecedented among of his predecessors.

The wealth of the order came to be coveted, at a time when it was also tending to interfere in the domestic policies of the Christian kingdoms. At the instigation of Pelayo Pérez Correa, in 1272 it secretly supported the rebellion of those members of the Castilian nobility who were reluctant to accept the plans of monarchical centralization contemplated by King Alfonso X. Ten years later, the brethren openly rose up in arms against the king, who, at the end of his reign, was at war against his son, the future Sancho IV. As a leading but sometimes unruly element in politics, from the late thirteenth century Santiago in turn became the object of growing interference on the part of the Castilian monarchy, which more than ever needed to be certain of its cooperation. King Alfonso XI was able to manipulate the order to a greater degree than any of his predecessors: he succeeded in having important trials concerning the military orders brought under the jurisdiction of the royal courts, and he forced the Santiaguists to accept his mistress's brother, Alonso Méndez de Guzmán, as master of the order in 1338, even granting the office to the young Fadrique, his own natural son, four years later.

Until the mid-fourteenth century, the brethren regularly joined the campaigns fought by Castile for control of the strait of Gibraltar in an attempt to wrest from the Narids of Granada and the Marinids of Morocco the domination of maritime traffic between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean: they not only took part in the fighting but also contributed to the costly maintenance of several strongholds on the border. Yet the order also played an increasingly important part in internal conflicts within Iberian Christendom, particularly in the civil war that rent Castile between 1366 and 1369, during which brethren of Santiago were found in both opposing factions.

By the fifteenth century, there was a constant competition between the Crown and the local aristocracy for control of the Order of Santiago's most important offices. On several occasions in Castile, during the reigns of John II and Henry IV, such competition within the order degenerated into armed confrontation. Yet while most kings had been content with installing men they trusted as heads of the institution, a far more radical solution was implemented in the time of the "Catholic Monarchs," Isabella I of Castile (d. 1504) and Ferdinand II of Aragon (d. 1516). On the death of Master Alonso de Cárdenas (1493), they obtained from Pope Alexander VI the right to rule the order until their deaths. This measure was renewed under their successors, and it paved the way for the subsequent integration of Santiago's estates into the patrimony of the Spanish monarchy. In Portugal, where a branch of the order had become independent from the Castilian center in the early fourteenth century, a similar privilege was granted by the papacy to King John III in 1551. At this time in both kingdoms, Santiago entered a new period of its history, and first became a purely honorary noble corporation largely distant from any form of military action, before it was dissolved in the

modern period, initially in 1874 by the first Spanish Republic, and definitively in 1931 after the abolition of the monarchy.

### **Order of Mountjoy** (Nikolas Jaspert)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, p. 857.

The military Order of Mountjoy (Sp. *Montegaudio*) was most probably established in 1173 by a Galician nobleman named Rodrigo Álvarez de Sarria and transferred to Aragon (Alfambra) shortly thereafter.

Rodrigo had professed in the Order of Santiago, but was allowed to found an order of stricter observance by the papal legate, Cardinal Hyacinth (later pope as Celestine III). From the 1170s the brethren followed a modified form of Cistercian observance, and the order, its possessions, and its denomination (after the site of Mons Gaudii close to Jerusalem) were confirmed by Pope Alexander III in May of 1180. The order was particularly fostered by King Alfonso II of Aragon, who hoped to gain assistance in securing recently conquered areas in southern Aragon. From 1177 the institution's spiritual center was considered to be in the Holy Land, where it received donations from King Baldwin IV of Jerusalem and other magnates. The order also acquired assets in Italy, but despite its title, its economic and administrative headquarters always remained on the Iberian Peninsula, particularly in Aragon. After its founder's death (probably in 1188), the order was amalgamated with the redemptionist Hospital of the Holy Redeemer of Teruel and henceforth committed itself to devoting a quarter of its revenues to the redemption of Christian captives. The brethren's Aragonese possessions were incorporated by the Templars in 1196, while a dissident group led by Rodrigo González established itself in the castle of Montfragüe (Monsfrag) on the river Tagus. It was known as the Order of Montfragüe, and was ultimately amalgamated with the Order of Calatrava in 1221.

### **Order of Avis** (Philippe Josserand)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, p. 121.

A Portuguese military religious order, originally known as the Order of Évora. The first definite information about the order dates from 1176; it did not adopt the name of Avis until 1215.

The claims of medieval chroniclers that date the foundation of the order to the mid-twelfth century are unfounded. The conclusions of Rui Pinto de Azevedo are now held to be the most authoritative: he demonstrated that the origins of the order should be situated in Évora, and should be placed between March 1175 and April 1176 [Azevedo, "As origens da ordem de Évora ou de Avis"]. At this time King Afonso I Henriques of Portugal, thanks to a truce with the Almohads, was attempting to elaborate a defensive strategy that would ensure the advanced positions of his kingdom against alAndalus in the Alto Alentejo region (mod. central Portugal). In 1211 the brethren of Évora were given the fortress of Avis, from which they took their new name a few years later. It is unclear why the brethren left their original Benedictine obedience in 1187 and sought association with the Castilian Order of Calatrava, which followed the Cistercian rule. This new dependence was evident in the prerogatives given to the master of Calatrava: he had rights of visitation over the Order of Avis and was also allowed to govern the institution whenever a vacancy in its mastership occurred, which he did until the mid-fourteenth century.

The Order of Avis was composed of knight brethren and clerics. They wore a scapular, which from 1404 bore a green cross on the left side. Under the aegis of its master, the institution gradually gained strength during the first part of the thirteenth century. Supported by the Portuguese monarchy, the brethren were active in the reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors, acquiring lands in the process. By the late thirteenth century these properties were organized in a network of no fewer than twenty-five commanderies: the

richest of these were concentrated on the left bank of the river Tagus (Port. Tejo) near Avis, and also further south in the newly conquered areas, where the brethren had settled in Évora, Alandroal, Juromenha, Noudar, and Albufeira.

Such extensive land-ownership alarmed the Portuguese monarchy, which felt threatened by the potential power of the order. In the reign of King Dinis (1279–1325), royal policy toward Avis changed radically: the king put an end to donations and began supporting urban oligarchies and Muslim minorities in jurisdictional disputes, even in the town of Avis itself, thus deliberately harming the order's interests. The masters of Avis were increasingly selected from among the king's followers, or even his relatives. This can be seen in the case of the Infante John (Port. João), a natural son of King Peter I who was made the master of the order in 1364 at the age of seven, twenty years before ascending the throne of Portugal.

John became king after a two-year civil war, an event that could only reinforce royal interference in the order. After defeating his Castilian rival in 1385 in the battle of Aljubarrota, John I tried to maintain control by appointing a faithful follower, Fernão Rodrigues de Sequeira, as master of Avis. When the latter died in 1433, John decided that a master of royal blood would be best able to control the order, and appointed his own son, the Infante Fernão (Ferdinand). This master had to relinquish his position just before his death (1443) after being captured in Tangier. His successor was Pedro, his own nephew and son of Infante Pedro, the regent of the kingdom. Despite a period of exile, Pedro succeeded in keeping his office until his death in 1466. The mastership was then given to the Infante John, the elder son of King Afonso V; he remained master after ascending the throne in 1481. Nine years later John II gave the mastership to his heir, the Infante Afonso, and then to the Infante Jorge, his own natural son. The latter paved the way for the eventual absorption of the order by the Portuguese Crown, which occurred in 1550.

### **Order of Alcántara** (Philippe Josserand)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, pp. 36–37.

A military religious order, originally founded in the kingdom of León in the later twelfth century. Alcántara undoubtedly remains the least well-known of all the military orders of the Iberian Peninsula. There are relatively few scholarly studies on the order, a fact traditionally attributed to the scarcity of original sources as a result of the disappearance of its major archives during Spain's struggle for independence in the Napoleonic Wars of the early nineteenth century. Nevertheless, recent efforts to assemble the documentary sources about the order have given rise to new historiographical interpretations; these have above all illuminated the origins of the institution, which had previously been both obscure and controversial.

It can now be stated that the Order of Alcántara originated as a confraternity of knights who had settled in the convent of San Julián del Pereiro, located near the banks of the river Coa, in the region of Beira Alta (in mod. Portugal). The first mention of the community dates from January 1176, when King Ferdinand II of León made a grant of the lands of Raigadas and confirmed the possession of El Pereiro to San Julián and its prior Gómez, who is described in the document as the founder of the house. In all likelihood the confraternity had been founded a little earlier (ten years before at most), but definitely not in 1156, as long claimed by Portuguese scholars who based their conclusions on a forgery that was published in the early seventeenth century by the Cistercian chronicler Bernardo de Brito.

The community gained papal approval from Alexander III in December 1176. However, it was slow to develop into a military order in the strict meaning of the term; it was only in 1183 that a bull of Pope Lucius III revealed a more complex and clearly militarized organization for the first time. After adopting the Cistercian rule, the new Leonese institution initially agreed to subordinate itself to the powerful Castilian Order of Calatrava (by 1187). However, this relationship soon gave rise to tensions, which were linked to the political rivalry between the kingdoms of Castile and León. These were settled in 1218, thanks to an agreement that

committed the brethren of San Julián to obey Calatrava, whose master was allowed regular rights of visitation. In exchange, they received the right to take part in the election of the master of Calatrava and also were given the possessions of the Castilian order in the kingdom of León. These included the fortress of Alcántara on the river Tagus, from which they took their name in 1218.

From this time the Order of Alcántara, consisting of knight brethren and clerics under the authority of a master elected by the former group, had a growing significance in the reconquest of Iberia from the Muslims, particularly after the union of the Crowns of Castile and León in 1230. After the seizures of Alange and Mérida by King Alfonso IX of León (1230), the order was constantly involved in fighting in the region of Extremadura. It remained closely associated with the campaigns of King Ferdinand III, who granted it various donations, not only in Extremadura, where most of its patrimony was situated, but also in Andalusia and even in the region of Murcia. In the course of its involvement in the reconquest, the order developed a policy of repopulation on the lands it was given, especially in Extremadura. This policy enabled it to grant numerous privileges (Sp. *fueros*) to its village communities, which came to be loosely organized in a system of commanderies.

The growing income of Alcántara meant that from the mid-thirteenth century it aroused the envy of competing seigniorial institutions, such as the dioceses of Coria and Badajoz or the Order of the Temple, with which tensions even degenerated into armed confrontation during the trials of the Templars (1307–1312). The monarchy of Castile attempted to manipulate and control Alcántara, as it also did in the cases of the other Iberian orders, encouraging the brethren to fight against Portugal or potential internal opponents. Alfonso XI was the first king to appoint one of his own officials to the head of the institution. Gonzalo Martínez de Oviedo, who had held the office of great dispenser for six years, was appointed master in 1337, but was executed the next year by order of the king. Yet the apparent failure of this policy was only superficial; the political stance of Alfonso XI was emulated by his successors, such as his son Peter I, who appointed trustworthy men like Gutier Gómez de Toledo in 1361, or Martín López de Córdoba three years later.

The Trastámara dynasty, who seized the Castilian throne in 1369, exploited the difficulties of the papacy during the Great Schism (1378–1417) to obtain from Pope Clement VII the right to nominate the masters of the Iberian military orders. In 1408 Fernando de Antequera, then acting as regent of Castile in the name of his nephew John II, even managed to have his twelve-year-old son Sancho elected as master of Alcántara. Such interference was not necessarily negative; indeed, Sancho became famous, thanks to an ambitious reform project that was inaugurated at the general chapter of Ayllón in 1411. However, this attempt to restore (at least partially) the original religious observance remained as fruitless as previous attempts during the fourteenth century. In fact, from the second quarter of the fifteenth century, the order was repeatedly involved in internal struggles that largely reflected contemporary conflicts between monarchy and higher nobility concerning the control of the apparatus of government.

The masters and brethren of Alcántara were much involved in these wars. Several dignitaries even fought for the highest office of the order, as did Juan and Gutierre de Sotomayor in the reign of John II, or Alonso de Monroy and Juan de Zúñiga in the 1470s. The latter prevailed in 1479, thanks to the support of the “Catholic Monarchs,” Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon, who were determined not to let the nobility control such an important source of income and power. In 1491, they obtained a bull from Pope Innocent VIII giving them the right to govern the Order of Alcántara whenever there was a vacancy in the mastership. From then on, they maintained pressure on Zúñiga who, in June 1494, agreed to renounce his office in exchange for the lifetime enjoyment of the richest lands of the order. When Zúñiga died in 1504, the Catholic Monarchs, who had meanwhile been recognized as governors of the order until their deaths, took possession of all of the resources of the institution.

Like its other Iberian counterparts, the Order of Alcántara was thus fundamentally altered. Even before 1523, when Pope Hadrian VI permanently united the estates of the military

orders to the Spanish Crown, these institutions had lost most of their independence and become little more than closed noble corporations. Shattered by the French invasion in the early nineteenth century and then further weakened by the abolition of the laws on mortmain property in 1834 by the government of Juan Álvarez Mendizábal (1790–1853), the Order of Alcántara was abolished in 1874 by the First Spanish Republic, along with the other Spanish orders. Reestablished after the restoration of the Spanish monarchy, it was suppressed again in 1931. It now survives as a noble society with a purely honorific character.

### **Order of St. George of Alfama** (Luis Garcia-Guijarro Ramos)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, p. 510.

Military religious order in the Crown of Aragon, founded in 1201 and incorporated into the Order of Montesa in 1400.

The conquest of the town of Tortosa from the Muslims in 1148 brought the lower Ebro Valley under the control of the Christians of Aragon, but the stretch of coast north of the Ebro delta remained uninhabited in the second half of the twelfth century and was an easy prey to Muslim naval raids. The area between the mountains and the sea was barren and so had not been affected by post-1148 resettlement of southern Catalonia. The existing military orders did not show any interest in the area. For those reasons King Peter II of Aragon decided to found there a new institution that would combine prayer, assistance to travelers, and defense against Muslim pirates. The royal privilege of 1201 granted to the new order, which received the symbolic name of St. George, the territory of Alfama, a coastal area between the Gulf of Sant Jordi on the northern side of the Ebro delta and the Cala Gestell facing the Coll de Balaguer about 20 kilometers (12½ mi.) to the north. A castle was built in the following years on the seaward side whose structure was unearthed in 1988.

The Order of St. George of Alfama did not go much further from these small beginnings. It never managed to control many territories beyond the coastal region. In the thirteenth century, only two commanderies were established to control distant areas. These were Bujaraloz in eastern Aragon, which in 1229 was sold to the Hospitaller monastery of Sigena to pay off pressing debts (an early sign of continuous economic problems), and Alcarrás near Lleida (Lérida). Several grants in the kingdom of Valencia and the church and castle of Riquer in eastern Catalonia were put under the rule of commanders in the fourteenth century. Some of the donations in Valencia, as well as minor ones in Mallorca, Menorca, and Sardinia, came as a result of military contributions of the order to campaigns of the kings of Aragon. The order's modest domains produced meagre rents, which held back the development of the institution, and its eager quest for alms showed the insufficient amounts of other types of rents; an alms collector was even sent to France and England in 1368. The limited number of landed properties showed the order's lack of appeal in the Aragonese territories, despite firm support from the Aragonese kings, and professed members were few: only six brethren in the 1370s.

The foundation did not grow firm institutional roots either. Papal confirmation was delayed until 1373, and a proper internal structure took time to develop. The office of master did not appear until 1355, and the king appointed its holders in the second half of the fourteenth century, a clear indication of the leading role of the Crown, but also of the feeble character of the order. Religious life followed the Rule of St. Augustine, but this set of regulations was only officially recognized as the code of the house by a papal bull of 1373. It did not last long; it was replaced by a new rule in 1385. The fact that this new rule was composed by Peter IV of Aragon showed the complete control of the institution by the Crown.

The extreme weakness of the Order of St. George of Alfama forced its last master, Francesc Ripollés, to approach the king of Aragon for a solution. King Martin the Humane realized that the community could not exist by itself and in 1399 decided to merge it with the much bigger Order of Montesa. Pope Benedict XIII gave his assent in 1400. St. George of Alfama

vanished as an independent institution, but the plain red cross of Alfama survived and became the distinctive sign of the joint order.

### **Order of Montesa** (Luis Garcia-Guijarro Ramos)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, p. 849.

A military religious order established in 1317 in the kingdom of Valencia by agreement of the pope and the Aragonese Crown.

The Order of Montesa was founded as a consequence of the dissolution of the Order of the Temple in 1312. It did not prove possible to transfer the Templars' domains in the Crown of Aragon to the Order of the Hospital of St. John, as had been desired by Pope Clement V: King James II of Aragon was opposed to the strengthening of the already considerable power of the Hospitallers in his realms. After lengthy negotiations, Pope John XXII largely complied with the king's wishes in 1317. The monarch had to abandon the idea of a great Aragonese order backed by Templar and Hospitaller properties in favor of a more limited project confined to the kingdom of Valencia. The Hospitallers were ready to contribute to this plan with their Valencian territories (except for the commanderies of Torrente and the houses of Valencia) in exchange for the Templar domains in Aragon and Catalonia. As the central headquarters of the future order, the king offered the village and castle of Montesa on the extreme southern border of the kingdom, facing possible Muslim attacks from Granada.

The new institution was modeled on the lines of the Order of Calatrava, and it was linked to the Morimond filiation of the Cistercian Order through the monastery of Santes Creus in Catalonia. The new foundation was not realized until July 1319, due to all sorts of difficulties with Calatravans and Hospitallers alike. The initial stages were difficult, but the firm support of the Crown was a decisive asset for success. The general chapter held at San Mateo in 1330 might be considered the end of the formation period. The number of brethren had risen to forty. A network of commanderies was given final form; the share of the master of the order was the bailiwick of Cervera, situated in the north of the kingdom near the king's court and not on the frontier. Although theoretically linked to the papacy, the Order of Montesa was a monarchical foundation, and as such it was an unrelenting supporter of the Aragonese Crown in internal conflicts and external projects of expansion. King Peter IV was able to rely on the members of the order against the rebels of the Unión (a noble fraternity whose aim was to defend aristocratic privileges) and in the wars against Castile. King John I found them at his side when the Doria and Arborea families rebelled in Sardinia. King Alfonso V received important help from the order in his Neapolitan campaigns. This tradition of support to the monarchy continued under the Habsburg dynasty, and the Crown always guaranteed the strength of the order. When in 1400 the small Order of St. George of Alfama became unfeasible as an independent institution, the king had it incorporated in Montesa. The plain red Greek cross of Alfama was added to the white clothing of the Montesan knights from that time onward.

Montesa was the only order in the Spanish kingdoms not to be absorbed by the Crown at the time of the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile. As an Aragonese institution, it posed more difficulties to incorporation than its Castilian counterparts. King Philip II of Spain managed to integrate Montesa into the institutions of the Crown in 1587. The order lingered on into the nineteenth century, when its status was reduced to that of an order of merit. Previously the central headquarters had been transferred to the city of Valencia after an earthquake had destroyed the castle of Montesa in 1748. Nature had forced a move at a time when it had long ceased to have any significance as a frontier stronghold against the Muslims.

#### Other orders

### **Canons of the Holy Sepulchre** (Klaus-Peter Kirstein)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, pp. 591–592.

The religious Order of Canons of the Holy Sepulchre (Lat. *Ordo Canoniorum regularium Sancti Sepulchri Hierosolymitani*) goes back to the cathedral chapter established after the First Crusade (1096–1099) by Godfrey of Bouillon at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

Under the direction of a prior, the chapter assisted the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem in the administration of his archdiocese and the performance of the liturgy. In 1114 the patriarch Arnulf of Chocques reformed the chapter, which initially was heavily involved in the disputes concerning the organization of the Latin Church of Jerusalem and the nature of its relationship to the monarchy of Palestine. From this time it followed the Rule of St. Augustine and constitutions modeled on French centers of reform and based its liturgy on usages that, though also corresponding to native Greek Orthodox customs, took local idiosyncrasies into consideration.

The spiritual life of the canons was characterized by their guardianship of Christendom's most holy sites and the incumbent liturgical duties. The popes gave them the specific duty of placing the Lord's Passion and the triumph of the Cross at the center of the liturgy and ecclesiastical life. In Jerusalem, the canons provided pastoral care for their parishioners in the city, saying Mass at the parish altar in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and administering the sacraments there. They are also known to have instructed Jews and Muslims who intended to convert to Christianity. The canons also carried out pastoral duties in their Palestinian and Syrian dependencies, in the episcopal churches of Tyre (mod. Soûr, Lebanon), Jaffa (mod. Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel), and Nablus, and in the churches and chapels on their estates, notably at Magna Mahomeria (mod. al-Bira, West Bank) and Parva Mahomeria (mod. al-Qubaiba, West Bank). The chapter also trained its own clergy. In its scriptorium, manuscripts of all kinds were produced, and theological texts like Ambrose's *Hexameron* and Augustine's *Tractates on the Gospel of John* were copied. It must also be assumed that the canons participated in the architectural modification of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, as well as the establishment of pictorial programs and inscriptions in it.

The chapter had additional responsibilities that were only rarely performed by Western spiritual institutions. These included dealing with non-Christians and Christians of other denominations, looking after a never-ending stream of pilgrims and crusaders, and participation in the country's defense. The canons were—more or less—capable of coordinating these functions. Even in the first years after the conquest of the Holy City, the canons, in conjunction with the patriarchs, employed knights to carry out the military service owed to the king by the chapter and patriarch, without, however, turning them into a military order comparable with the Templars or Hospitallers. As early as 1112, the chapter combined with other spiritual institutions to form communities in prayer, for example, in Italy, France, Poland, Germany, and Spain.

The status of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as the patriarch's titular church, the burial site of the kings of Jerusalem, the repository of important relics, and (from 1131 to 1186) the coronation venue, all helped the canons to attain a leading position within the church and kingdom of Jerusalem. This facilitated the order's acquisition of large estates and establishment of numerous branches in Outremer and Europe. The loss of Jerusalem in 1187 and the fall of Acre (mod. 'Akko, Israel) in 1291 led to restrictions concerning the original function of the chapter, which underwent a reorganization under Pope Urban IV.

From 1291, the prior (later known as archprior) and chapter resided in Perugia in Italy. Pope Innocent VIII's command to disband the order and transfer its property to the Order of St. John in 1489 was only partly successful. The establishment in Perugia and a number of houses in Italy, Spain, France, and parts of Germany were lost, but the congregations in Spain, Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, Savoy, and Germany continued to exist. The English houses, which had become independent in the late Middle Ages, and the houses in the north of Germany fell prey to the Reformation, but other houses of the order in Europe retained their autonomy, in spite of the attempt of the house at Miechów in Poland to become the headquarters of the order (Lat. *caput ordinis*) in the course of the nineteenth century.

Another development in the order went back to the middle of the fifteenth century, when Dutch branches of the cloister of Denkendorf in Württemberg started a profound process of *renovatio* (renewal). Their most important results of this were the female branches of the order, which still exist in Belgium, England, southwestern Germany, and the Netherlands, conserving the tradition of the cathedral chapter of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem from 1099.

#### **Order of the Holy Sepulchre** (Klaus-Peter Kirstein)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, p. 592.

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre (Lat. *Ordo Equestris Sancti Sepulcri*) is a lay association whose organization and objectives have often changed during the course of its history. It originated as a lay order or association of knights, and was thus quite different in character from religious knightly orders such as the Templars or Hospitallers.

The origins of the order go back to the fourteenth century, when it became customary for noble Western pilgrims to be knighted at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem or to ask for a renewal of an earlier ceremony of knighting. It was undoubtedly influenced by the revival of pilgrimage and the idea of recovery of the Holy Land after the fall of Acre (mod. 'Akko, Israel) to the Mamlūks in 1291. The first attested knighting ceremony dates from 1332/1336. In contrast to the forms of knighting (dubbing) common at this time in western Europe, the ceremony at the Holy Sepulchre distinguished itself through the special holiness of the place where it was carried out. As part of his obligations, the new knight also undertook to take the cross in the case of a future crusade.

In 1312, following the departure of the Franks and the end of the Latin patriarchate of Jerusalem, Pope Clement VI entrusted the Franciscans of Mount Zion with the mission of representing the papacy in the Holy Land. But this religious community was only officially recognized by the Turks in 1333, when the king of Naples got the Sultan to agree (upon payment of 32,000 gold ducats) that the Franciscans could remain in Palestine and continue to guard the holy places. The prerogative of dubbing knights before the tomb of Christ, in the past exercised by the canons, was thus transferred to the Franciscan custodian, who had the rank of bishop and who alone upheld the presence of the papacy in the Holy Land until 1847, often under adverse conditions. It was a great privilege to receive the spurs of a knight before the tomb of Christ, this being the reward for an exceptional act of piety.

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, many pilgrims travelled to Jerusalem to be dubbed knights of the Holy Sepulchre, including such important persons as Frederick, duke of Austria (the future Emperor Frederick III) in 1436. Chronicles from this time report that individual dubbing of knights before the Holy Sepulchre continued over the centuries. In 1806, the Vicomte de Châteaubriand described his own investiture at the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in his *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*. The knights, whose elevation was registered and recorded in a patent, were received into a community that demanded the fulfillment of the usual chivalric obligations plus compliance with religious rules as they are found in the statutes of those fraternities counseled by the mendicant orders. However, the order had no organizational ties; the knights did not assemble in chapters of the order and were not subject to any leadership. Attempts to unite and organize all knights of the Sepulchre, for which evidence can be found from the sixteenth century onward, were to no avail.

It was only in 1868 that a permanent association of all knights of the Holy Sepulchre was established at the instigation of the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem by Pope Pius IX, who gave the association the formal character of a papal order of knights. It was placed under the pope as supreme sovereign, with the Latin patriarch serving as the actual head, and organized in national bailiwicks. The order's organizational structure was reformed several times during the twentieth century. Its objectives are the promotion of its members' Christian way of life and the spiritual and material support of the activities and facilities of the Roman Catholic Church in Israel, the West Bank, Gaza, and Jordan. These include the construction and

operation of churches, schools, kindergartens, old people's homes, and hospital wards, and the provision of assistance for the old and infirm. The order is now represented in thirty countries and has about 20,000 members.

#### **Order of St. Lazarus** (Theresa M. Vann)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, pp. 720–721.

An international hospitaller order that assumed military responsibilities. Its origins are obscure, but the Order of St. Lazarus possibly began as a leper hospital outside the walls of Jerusalem, run by Armenian monks following the rule of St. Basil. The earliest charters referring to the order date to 1142, suggesting that it was founded in the 1130s. Like other hospitaller foundations in Outremer, it adopted the Rule of St. Augustine. The first reference to a master appeared in 1153, and for the next hundred years only lepers were eligible to become masters. The Lazarites remained in Jerusalem until Saladin captured the city in 1187, and thereafter the order moved to Acre (mod. 'Akko, Israel). After the fall of Acre (1291), the order's headquarters were transferred to Boigny in France.

Members of the order originally consisted of clerics, brethren to look after the sick, and the lepers themselves. Leprosy (also known as Hansen's disease) is a chronic infectious disease that primarily affects the skin, nerve endings, and mucous membranes. Medieval medical practitioners diagnosed several diseases as leprosy, so it is possible that not all of the invalid members of the order suffered from Hansen's disease. Leprosy, however, was endemic in Outremer and claimed noted victims, among them King Baldwin IV of Jerusalem. Perhaps for this reason, the order enjoyed widespread royal and nobiliary patronage throughout Outremer in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The order's cartulary, which survives in a fragment of forty documents, dating to between 1130 and 1248, shows that it owned hospitals in Jerusalem and Acre, with some small estates and rental properties in the southern part of the kingdom of Jerusalem. From the mid-twelfth century onward, the order received donations of lands in France, Italy, Spain, Hungary, Germany, England, and Scotland. The most noted gift was the donation by King Louis VII of France of the castle and fief of Boigny, near Orléans, which became the order's headquarters after 1291. The Lazarites' ties to the French monarchy were strengthened when Philip IV the Fair took the order under his protection in 1308.

Information about the order's transformation from a hospitaller into a military order is obscure. It possibly occurred through the admission of leprous knights from Frankish families in Outremer and from other military orders. Certainly there is evidence for an early association between the Order of St. Lazarus and the Order of the Temple: early Lazarite charters show the Order of the Temple acting as a kind of guarantor for some property transactions, while Templar statutes of 1260 permitted leprous knights to enter the Order of St. Lazarus. The late-twelfth-century law book *Livre au roi* stipulated that knights and sergeants who contracted leprosy should join the Order of St. Lazarus. It is conceivable that such men carried out military duties, but it also appears that nonleprous knights joined the order to serve in battle.

The evidence for the military responsibilities of the order is ambiguous for the twelfth century. Thirteenth-century chroniclers placed the Lazarites at major battles and reported high casualty rates for the knights of the order. Joinville describes only four survivors of the order's mounted sortie near Ramla in 1242. Robert of Nantes, Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, reported that all the leper knights of the house of St. Lazarus were killed at the battle of La Forbie in 1244. According to the chronicler Matthew Paris, the Lazarite knights participated in the Egyptian campaign of Louis IX of France in 1248–1250, and fought at the battle of Mansurah in 1248. The order's losses were so extensive in these campaigns that Pope Innocent IV issued a bull in 1253 opening the office of the master to nonlepers, because all the leper knights had been killed in battle.

Evidently the thirteenth-century papacy considered the Lazarites as a military religious order, but one that lacked the resources commanded by the Hospitallers, Templars, or Teutonic Knights. The order received papal privileges permitting its members to collect money and tithes in Europe. In a resurgence of their original mission, Clement IV tried to place all the lepers of western Christendom under the protection and governance of the Order of St. Lazarus.

The order fell into a decline with the end of the Frankish states in Outremer and the gradual diminution of leprosy in western Europe. In 1490 Pope Innocent VIII tried to combine the Lazarites with the Hospitallers. The French Lazarites refused, and maintained the order, based in Boigny. In 1572 an attempt was made to unite the Lazarites with the Order of St. Maurice. This, again, was resisted by the French knights of the order. Both the French and Italian branches were suppressed in the French Revolution, and the order's hospitals disappeared. The Order of St. Lazarus was revived in the nineteenth century as an honorific and charitable organization.

#### **Order of St. Maurice**, (Helen Nicholson)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, p. 808.

Originally an association of hermits, founded in 1434, refounded as a military-religious order in 1572 and assigned the property of the Order of St. Lazarus in Italy, forming the Order of SS Maurice and Lazarus.

Strictly speaking, the original order of St. Maurice was not a religious order. According to book 7 of the *Commentaries* of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (later pope as Pius II), when Amadeus VIII, duke of Savoy, retired to a hermitage in the woods near Lake Geneva, he was accompanied by six elderly nobles, all experienced knights. As they had changed their profession from war to religion, the group called themselves Knights of St. Maurice (Lat. *Sancti Mauricii Milites*), after the commander of the Theban Legion. According to tradition, during the Roman Empire the members of the legion had been martyred nearby for their Christian faith.

These hermits did not follow a religious rule or wear a formal religious habit, and their “order” was not formally acknowledged by the church authorities. They were an informal association, more of a religious confraternity than a religious order. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini recorded no more of this group, which presumably broke up after Amadeus VIII became pope as Felix V in 1439.

In 1572 Duke Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy set up his own Order of St. Maurice, deliberately named to echo his illustrious ancestor's order, with himself as its grand master. In the same year Pope Gregory XIII gave the new order the Italian commanderies of the Order of St. Lazarus. The new foundation was a military-religious order with the function of defending Christendom: it had to maintain two galleys to attack the Turkish and North African pirates that harassed Christian shipping around the Italian coast. Unlike the Order of St. Stephen of Tuscany, the Order of SS Maurice and Lazarus never achieved international notice for its naval activity and soon became effectively no more than a royal order of chivalry.

In 1868 King Victor Emmanuel II of Italy reformed the order to be an order of merit, and the “Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus” was bestowed as a mark of honor: for example, Guglielmo Marconi (d. 1937), the inventor of wireless telegraphy, was created a commander of the order. After Italy became a republic in 1946, the order was suppressed within Italy and its properties confiscated. The order still exists today outside Italy as a charitable order, with the current duke of Savoy as its grand master.

#### **Mercedarian Order** (Theresa M. Vann)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, p. 821.

The Mercedarian Order, known formally as the Order of Merced or Our Lady of Mercy, began as a redemptorist order in Catalonia following the rule of St. Augustine.

The Mercedarians institutionalized the ransom of captives on the Christian-Muslim frontier in Iberia. Previously, family and friends had redeemed captives on an individual basis, or a royal official called the *exeá* (from an Arabic word meaning “guide”) intervened on a captive's behalf. It is unclear whether the early Mercedarians collected alms on behalf of captives' families, or ransomed captives personally. By the late thirteenth century, the Mercedarians raised alms and traveled to Muslim depots to negotiate the redemption of groups of captives as well as specific individuals.

Despite claims by the order's early historians, the Mercedarians were not a military religious order, nor was the king of Aragon the founder. The earliest evidence for the order's existence dates from a bequest to Pere Nolasc, the founder of the order, of a sum of money to redeem captives in 1230. Nolasc and his associates received grants of property in Mallorca in 1232 and Gerona in 1234. Pope Gregory IX recognized the Order of Merced in 1235 and gave it the Rule of St. Augustine.

By 1245 the Mercedarians had acquired properties in Catalonia, Aragon, Valencia, Languedoc, and Mallorca. Eventually, the order had properties in Castile and as far south as Seville. These provided a stable income for the order and a base for its ransoming activities. James I, king of Aragon, gave the order its first *guidaticum* (safe-conduct) in 1251, which enabled members to travel safely and conduct business on the Christian-Muslim frontier. James II of Aragon became the order's patron in the early fourteenth century, while it was given an exclusive license to collect redemptive alms in the Crown of Aragon by Peter IV in 1366.

The statutes of the military orders of Santiago, the Hospital, and the Temple influenced the first statutes of the order (1272), which has caused the mistaken identification of the Mercedarians as a military order. The early order was a laic brotherhood, whose members administered properties, collected alms, preached, and, on occasion, traveled to ransom captives. It also admitted men and women as confraters (associate members). The master of the Mercedarians was a layman until 1317, when the order became clericalized. Clerics became more influential and gained control of most of the commanderies. A new constitution of 1327, modeled on that of the Dominicans, emphasized a stricter religious life. The master was the order's spiritual and temporal leader, and made decisions with the chapter about properties, revenues, and discipline. Commanders were responsible for local houses, and traveled to redeem captives. Captives ransomed as an act of Mercedarian charity also agreed to serve the order for a period of time, raising money to ransom other captives.

After the fall of Muslim Granada in 1492, the Order of Merced followed Spanish expansion to the New World, where it founded American provinces. The first female convents were established in the late sixteenth century. The order underwent a major reform in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and still exists today.

#### **Sword Brethren** (John Lind)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, pp. 1130–1134.

The first military order in the Baltic region, founded in Livonia in 1202 on the model of the Templars and absorbed into the Teutonic Order in 1237. The order's original Latin name was the *Fratres Milicie Christi de Livonia* (“Brethren of the Knighthood of Christ of Livonia”); the more usual modern name Sword Brethren or Sword Brothers (Ger. *Schwertbrüder*) corresponds to the Middle High German designation *Swertbrüdere*, which derives from the knights' insignia of a sword beneath a red cross, which they wore on their white mantles.

According to the chronicler Henry of Livonia, the initiative for the new order came from the Cistercian Theoderic, a veteran in the Livonian mission. However, its establishment is often attributed to the newly ordained bishop of Livonia, Albert von Buxhövdén (1199–1229),

under whose obedience the order was placed. The foundation has to be seen against the background of the disastrous lack of military resources that had cost the life of the previous bishop, Berthold of Locom (1197–1198). A permanent army in the region to supplement the unpredictable arrival of seasonal crusaders and garrison the castles must have been seen as necessary in order to control the newly converted and conquered territory. In 1204 both Bishop Albert and Pope Innocent III gave their approval of the order. The same year it began to establish itself in its first convent in Riga under its first master, Winno (1204–1209).

#### Organization

The Sword Brethren lived according to the Rule of the Templars. They consisted of three classes: knight brethren, priests, and service brethren. A general assembly of the knight brethren was in principle the highest decision-making body, but in practice the master, elected for life by the assembly, was in charge of the order, with an authority comparable to that of the abbot of a Cistercian monastery. Under him served a vice-master who also deputized for him in his absence. A marshal took care of the order's military affairs and led it in battle, while a treasurer was in charge of finances. Provincial masters were placed in charge of new castle convents, each of which included a priest and a number of knight brethren, service brethren, and mercenaries. Advocates served as local administrators on the order's estates and acted as its link to the local population. Also associated with the order were a number of secular vassals who were enfeoffed with lands on its territory. They were mainly recruited from immigrant German nobles, but also, at least in some cases, from among the native nobility.

Even in its heyday, that is from around 1227 to 1236, the order probably had only some 110 knight brethren and perhaps 1,200 service brethren; with approximately 400 knights and soldiers supplied by its secular vassals, the order could at best field an army of some 1,800 men, in addition to local Livonian auxiliaries [Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder*, pp. 223–224, 407–408]. During that time the order had a convent in Riga, convent castles in Ascheraden (mod. Aizkraukle, Latvia), Fellin (mod. Vijandi, Estonia), Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia), Segewold (mod. Sigula, Latvia), and Wenden (mod. Cēsis, Latvia), and also lesser strongholds in Adsel (mod. Gaujiena, Latvia), Wolmar (mod. Valmiera, Latvia), and Oberpahlen (mod. Põltsamaa, Estonia).

#### Early History: Establishment of the Order

The Sword Brethren had their first experience of local warfare in the winter of 1204–1205, when they joined the Semgallians in an ambush of a Lithuanian force returning from a raid into Estonia. In the following years the order soon proved its worth in battle, not least when it defeated a rebellion of the Livonians, centered on the fortress of Holm (1206).

Despite the obedience it owed to the bishop of Riga, the order was soon able to act on its own initiative, and throughout its short lifespan it continuously struggled to achieve independence from the church of Riga. It was important for the order to secure an independent territorial power base and financial resources, and it claimed part of the territory that was being conquered in conjunction with the forces of the bishop and the seasonal crusaders. This claim soon led to a conflict with Bishop Albert in respect of the division of the conquests and the terms on which the order held its territory, convents, and castles. In this struggle the balance of power constantly shifted, as seasonal crusaders left Livonia and Bishop Albert had to leave for Germany to recruit new crusaders, as occurred approximately every second year.

When Albert returned from Germany in 1207, the Sword Brethren demanded the right to retain a third of all future conquests. This initiative on the part of the order may well have resulted from a stay in Riga of the Danish archbishop of Lund in 1206–1207. The order may have seen a possibility of playing the Danish primate off against Bishop Albert by threatening to acknowledge the primacy of the archbishopric of Lund. Under pressure, Albert reluctantly agreed to assign new territory to the order, but in the case of the lands already conquered he tried to exclude the order from the core region along the river Dūna. This was probably not a wise move, since as a result the Sword Brethren now looked north toward Estonia. Soon the

order was able to establish its second convent and castle, Segewold, close to the Livish stronghold of Treiden (mod. Turaida, Latvia). A third convent was founded around the same time in Nussburg at Wenden deep in Lettish territory. These foundations enabled the order to push on into Estonian territory in 1208 independently of Bishop Albert. It suffered a momentary setback in 1209, when Master Winno was killed in an internal power struggle, but with the election of Volkwin (1209–1237) as its second master, the order quickly managed to reestablish stability in its leadership.

In the continued struggle for supremacy, both parties appealed to Pope Innocent III, who in October 1210 decreed that in the future the order was to retain one-third of conquered territory. In July 1212 the Sword Brethren received imperial confirmation of this privilege and were also promised free possession of the Estonian provinces of Ugaunia and Sakkala. This was undoubtedly a victory for the order and may be seen as the beginning of its state in Livonia. Bishop Albert received some compensation, when (probably in 1211) the pope authorized his ordination of new bishops in Livonia and soon after refused the order's request to have the same right in its own territory (1212). However, Innocent III compensated for this in 1213 by confirming the order's possession of Sakkala and Ugaunia and also authorizing Anders Sunesen, archbishop of Lund, to ordain bishops in these provinces. Albert of Buxhövdén's decision to ordain Theoderic as bishop of Estonia (1211) can only be seen as an attempt to curb the order's designs in Estonia. Yet the advantage gained was soon lost, when Innocent III in 1213 decreed that Theoderic henceforth was to be subject only to the pope or his legate to the region, who happened to be Anders Sunesen.

The final effort to subdue the pagan Estonians began in 1215, initially with the order as its driving force. Having defeated the Estonians at Fellin in 1217, the order now dominated both the northern part of Livonia and a large part of Estonia. The threat this posed to the position of Bishop Albert prompted him to appeal in person to King Valdemar II of Denmark for help in 1218. The king obliged by sending a large fleet to Estonia the following year. Despite initial difficulties, the Danes managed to conquer the remaining northern provinces of Estonia in the summer of 1219, with the exception of the island of Ösel (mod. Saaremaa, Estonia).

The Danish crusade may have come as a surprise to the order, and in 1220 a diplomatic crisis arose when the order raided Harria. The Danes declared that, according to an agreement with the Livonian church, all of Estonia belonged to them and asked the order to hand over the hostages it had taken. Master Volkwin complied and subsequently decided to enter into an agreement with the Danes, which formally divided Estonia between them: the Danes kept the northern provinces, including the still unconquered island of Ösel, while the order received the southern provinces. In this way the order presumably hoped to avoid handing two-thirds of its conquest over to the church in accordance with the ruling of 1210. There was, however, a certain division of opinion within the order as to the wisdom of this, and later in the year it did decide to allot the church its two-thirds. Yet faced with an alliance between the order and the Danes and a Danish blockade of crusader ships embarking from Lübeck, Bishop Albert in March 1221 found himself forced to recognize Danish overlordship not only in Estonia but also in Livonia. This opened new possibilities for the order to throw off its obedience to the bishop and replace it with a link to the distant Danish king and church.

#### Order Domination

The scene was now set for a complete Danish takeover in the Baltic region, although this domination was to prove short-lived. After the Danes had gained a foothold on Ösel and established a stone fortress there, Valdemar II left Estonia in 1222; according to Henry of Livonia, he gave up the royal rights in Sakkala and Ugaunia to the order and spiritual rights to Bishop Albert in return for their perpetual fealty. Soon afterward, however, an uprising broke out on Ösel, and the Christian forces were unable to hold the fortress. In the following winter, the Osilians joined mainland Estonians in defeating local Danish forces before unleashing a successful attack on Fellin in January 1223. The order was taken by complete surprise and suffered heavy losses as stronghold after stronghold fell, until only the castle in Reval remained in Christian hands.



To make matters worse, Valdemar II and his eldest son were kidnapped in May 1223 by one of his vassals. They remained prisoners for two years, while the Danish Empire collapsed. To survive in Estonia, the order now had to rely on help from the Livonian church. The situation began to stabilize with the recapture of Fellin by the combined forces of the order and Livonian bishops, and the return of Bishop Albert from one of his recruitment tours with a substantial crusader army. By the end of 1224 the insurgents had to surrender. For the order, however, the events of 1223–1224 meant that the balance of power had changed significantly in favor of Bishop Albert and the Livonian church. With the Danes neutralized, the order had to agree to a new division of Estonia with the bishops, so that the order retained little more than one-third of the territory.

Hoping to perpetuate his ascendancy over the order, Bishop Albert in 1224 asked Pope Honorius III to dispatch a legate to the region to settle the territorial organization of Livonia on the current basis. This, however, proved to be a miscalculation on Albert's part. When the legate, William of Modena, arrived in 1225 he had no intention of favoring the Livonian church. When Albert's brother, Bishop Hermann of Leal (mod. Lihula, Estonia), who was now also lord of Dorpat (mod. Tartu, Estonia), together with local vassals seized some of the Danish possessions, William ordered these and the remaining Danish possessions to be transferred to himself as the pope's representative.

Many of William's other initiatives were designed to strengthen both the city of Riga and the Sword Brethren, and it was Bishop Albert and his colleagues who were disadvantaged. Now the city was allowed to gather crusaders under its banner, and it was also entitled to one-third of future conquests so that the church, originally allocated two-thirds of conquests, was left with only one-third. At the same time the order received a number of privileges and exemptions for its church in Riga (the Church of St. George). This allowed the Sword Brethren to play a far greater role in the internal life of Riga, where they could now compete for the favors of visiting and established merchants. William also allowed the Sword Brethren to accept seasonal crusaders into their forces. This was important because many crusaders preferred to fight along with the order rather than the bishop.

These changes made the city of Riga the natural ally in the order's continued rivalry with the bishops, and in 1226 the order and city formalized their collaboration in an alliance of mutual assistance, whereby brethren became "true" citizens of Riga, while members of the upper strata of burgesses could join the order as *confratres* (lay associates).

When William of Modena left later in 1226, the territories he had held were transferred to his deputy and vice-legate, Master John. However, when the population of Vironia revolted again, John could only quell the uprising with the help of the Sword Brethren, who then went on to expel the remaining Danes from Reval. When John in turn left the region in 1227, he handed over all his territories to the order, so that it now controlled Revalia, Harria, Jerwia, and Vironia. To strengthen the legitimacy of its possession of the former Danish provinces, the order acquired a letter of protection from Henry (VII), king of Germany, in July 1228. Despite a devastating defeat in 1223 as a result of William of Modena's first legatine mission, the Sword Brethren had emerged as the leading power in Livonia.

#### Between Pope and Papal Legate

A new chapter in the order's history began when the Cistercian Baldwin of Aulne arrived in Livonia in 1230 as vice-legate charged with resolving the conflict that had arisen over the succession to the bishopric of Riga after the death of Bishop Albert in 1229. Soon, however, Baldwin began to involve himself in wider Livonian affairs. He came into conflict with the Sword Brethren over the former Danish provinces, which he claimed the order held illegally; with reference to William of Modena's earlier ruling, Baldwin demanded that they should be transferred to him. Faced with resistance from the local powers, Baldwin left for the Curia, where, in January 1232, he managed to have himself appointed as bishop of Semgallia (a title created for the occasion) and full legate with far-reaching authority. During the summer of 1233, Baldwin returned with a crusader army with which to bolster his demands. An army

was sent to Estonia, where the Sword Brethren were ordered to surrender their territories and castles.

The order was divided over how to react to Baldwin's demands. Master Volkwin was in favor of yielding to Baldwin, but was temporarily deposed and imprisoned. The interim leadership decided to fight the legatine army, which in the ensuing battle in September 1233 was annihilated on the Domberg in Reval. The order speedily dispatched a delegation to the Curia in order to defend its action against the pope's legate. It succeeded to the extent that in February 1234 Pope Gregory IX decided to recall Baldwin and replace him as legate by William of Modena, who soon persuaded the pope to annul all of Baldwin's initiatives. But at the Curia Baldwin persuaded the pope in November 1234 to summon all his adversaries to answer a formidable list of charges. The order was accused of having summoned heretic Russians and local pagans to fight against the bishop and church of Leal, a charge that could have made the order itself a target of crusades.

In a trial at Viterbo during the spring of 1236, the order was largely exonerated. However, the king of Denmark had also begun to lobby for the return of the former Danish provinces. On this point Gregory IX supported the Danes and ordered Revalia, Jerwia, Vironia, and Harria to be given back to the Danish king. To comply would seriously have reduced the power base of the Sword Brethren, and it is doubtful whether they were prepared to do so. In the event, the order did not survive long enough for this to become evident.

#### Defeat and Unification with the Teutonic Order

During the 1230s the Sword Brethren had begun to direct their attention toward Lithuania, now seen as the greatest threat to Christianity in the Baltic region. This was a sentiment shared by the Russians of Pskov, with whom the order now often allied itself. In the summer of 1236, a substantial number of crusaders had arrived in Riga eager for action. Perhaps against its better judgment, the order was persuaded to organize a raid into Lithuanian territory involving both local forces and Pskovians. At a place called Saule (perhaps mod. Siauliai, Lithuania), the Christian forces suffered a crushing defeat on 22 September 1236. Probably only a tenth of the Christian force survived, and among the casualties were Master Volkwin and at least 49 knight brethren. The existence of the order was not immediately threatened. It still held its castles and had a substantial number of vassals, particularly in the northern parts of Estonia. But it was hardly in a position to raise another army for separate actions, and in the south the order had to fear Lithuanian retaliations.

Consequently, the order had to speed up negotiations that were already in progress concerning a merger with the Teutonic Order. With its bargaining power now reduced by military defeat, the representatives of the order had no choice but to accept the terms of a separate agreement reached between Hermann von Salza, grand master of the Teutonic Order, and Gregory IX to restore the former Danish provinces to Denmark. In May 1237 Pope Gregory announced the incorporation of the Sword Brethren into the Teutonic Order in four letters to the relevant parties: the order, Hermann von Salza, William of Modena, and the bishops of Riga, Dorpat, and Ösel. Later in the summer the Teutonic Order in Marburg grudgingly accepted the unification, although this was only carried out in practical terms by the end of 1237, after the arrival of the first contingent of Teutonic Knights in Livonia.

#### Conclusions

Despite its short lifespan, it was the Order of the Sword Brethren that introduced the military religious order as an institution to the Baltic Crusades. Much more than the seasonal crusaders, it was able to fight and keep fighting according to a chosen strategy. Without its introduction, Christianity might not have survived in Livonia, and it was a sign of its initial success that it was taken as a model for the likewise short-lived Knights of Dobrin. Both orders, however, suffered from the lack of a European network of estates and houses outside their main region of activity that could provide them with financial resources and a secure basis of recruitment. In that sense it was logical that both were absorbed by the Teutonic Order.

**Order of the Sword** (Peter W. Edbury)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, p. 1135.

The Order of the Sword was an order of chivalry founded by King Peter I of Cyprus (1359–1369). With its motto, *C'est pour loiauté maintenir* (To maintain loyalty) it clearly imitated other fourteenth-century chivalric orders from western Europe.

According to the contemporary author Guillaume de Machaut, its foundation dated from before Peter's accession, but Machaut's story of its origins is open to doubt. There is no indication that membership of the order was conferred on Cypriot nobles, and in creating his order, Peter was evidently recognizing the need to appeal to Western knights and Western knightly values if he was to gain support in waging war on the Muslims. Not much is known about the function of the order, but by the fifteenth century it would seem that Cypriot kings were investing aristocratic visitors from the West with membership as a way of honoring them at little expense to themselves.

**Order of St. Thomas of Acre** (Paul Crawford)

Alan V. Murray, ed. *The Crusades*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006, p. 1182.

A small English military order founded during the Third Crusade (1189–1192) and named after the martyred Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century sources credit the order's foundation variously to one William, chaplain to Ralph of Diceto; to Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury; or to King Richard I of England; it is possible that all three men were involved. The Order of St. Thomas of Acre originally consisted of a chapel served by Augustinian canons. It performed charitable and devotional duties, including hospital and ransom work, before being militarized by Peter of Roches, bishop of Winchester, probably in 1228. In 1236 Pope Gregory IX instructed it to follow the Rule of the Teutonic Order, with which St. Thomas had been associated since at least 1192, and to carry out both military and hospitaller functions.

The order was never large or powerful enough to play a significant role in the affairs of Outremer; it is mentioned only occasionally by contemporary chroniclers. Despite this, the knights of St. Thomas seem to have acquitted themselves well enough in battle and at times became embroiled in the political squabbles of the Latin East. Although the order had possessions throughout western Europe, most of its holdings were concentrated in England and Ireland, and they were few in number compared to those of the other military orders. It fought a constant but losing battle for resources for much of its existence, partly because Englishmen who wished to join or support a military order usually turned to the Hospitallers or Templars.

After the fall of Acre (mod. 'Akko, Israel) to the Mamlūks in 1291 the Order of St. Thomas retreated to Cyprus and established its headquarters there. In the early fourteenth century tensions apparently arose between the military brethren in the East and the members of the order in England, for whom hospitaller activities were paramount. Ultimately the English chapter appears to have won out. The last mention of a militant officer of St. Thomas in Cyprus occurs in 1367; thereafter its military function seems to have been abandoned entirely, and the order concentrated on charitable and devotional activities in England for most of the next two centuries. The order became increasingly associated with the Mercers' Company of London, reverted to following the Rule of St. Augustine, and in the early sixteenth century even operated a grammar school in London. In October 1538 it was dissolved on the order of King Henry VIII of England. Its property was confiscated by the Crown, and the Mercers' Company purchased it for £969. Its archive was ultimately split into three parts, which are now in the Mercers' Company (London), the British Library, and the Public Record Office.