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*DOMINUS JHESUS NOVUM GENUS MILITIE  
CONSTITUIT ET ELEGIT:*

“THE LORD JESUS HAS SET UP AND CHOSEN A NEW SORT  
OF KNIGHTHOOD”.

THE MILITARY ORDERS’ RELATIONS WITH WOMEN  
FROM THE TWELFTH TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY  
– A SURVEY

KEYWORDS

*history; the Middle Ages; military orders; women spirituality; warfare; hospital care; captives*

ABSTRACT

The normative texts of the Military Religious Orders generally sought to limit or even prevent all interaction between the professed Brothers and women, and the primitive rule of the Order of the Temple indicated that women should no longer be admitted to the Order. The reason for this restriction was to prevent the Brothers being distracted from their spiritual vocation through the physical presence of women. In practice, however, the evidence of charters, estate inventories, and narrative accounts reveal that all the Military Religious Orders admitted women in some capacity – as *sorores*, *donatae*, *consoroeres* and *corrodians* – and interacted with women on a daily basis. Fully

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professed sisters of the Military Orders followed a lifestyle like that of nuns, focused on prayer rather than action. However, lay women appear in the primary sources as patrons, tenants, and employees of the Military Orders and even occasionally took up arms to support their military activities. The Military Orders also patronised female saints, both saints in heaven (such as the Blessed Virgin Mary) and holy women on Earth (such as Dorothea of Montau). This article sets out to survey the various ways in which the Military Orders interacted with women and involved them in their work.

In September 1395, five leading officials of the Teutonic Order wrote to Pope Boniface IX.<sup>1</sup> Beginning with a quotation from the Old Testament Song of Songs, they declared that holy women – *coniugatas, viduas et virgines* (wives, widows, and virgins) – were a *novus genus milicie*, a new sort of knighthood, ordained by the Lord Jesus. When male warriors were exhausted and defeated, these holy women, strengthened by the *stigmata* in imitation of Christ’s death, formed a *castrorum acies* (a line of fortresses) against *carnem, sanguinem ac tenebrarum principes* (flesh, blood, and the princes of shadows) – that is, demonic powers. Defended by her shield of suffering, stained by the blood of Christ, their *gloriosam et venerabilem* (glorious and venerable) lady Dorothea [of Montau], who had died in the previous year, was the Order’s own elite strenuous knight in this body of fellow-knights (*nostram de predictis commilitonibus militem strennuam preelectam*).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This article was originally written as a keynote paper for the conference ‘The Military Orders and Women: Donators – Affiliates – Sisters – Saints’, at Toruń, 23–25 September 2021. I am very grateful to the organisers, Krzysztof Kwiatkowski and Jürgen Sarnowsky, for inviting me to speak at the conference. General surveys of women’s roles within the military orders include Alan Forey, “Women and the military orders in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,” *Studia Monastica* 29 (1987): 63–92, republished with some additional bibliography in *Hospitaller Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Anthony Luttrell and Helen J. Nicholson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 43–69; Francesco Tommasi, “Uomini e donne negli ordini militari di Terrasanta: Per il problema delle case doppie e miste negli ordini giovanita, templare e teutonico (secc. XII–XIV),” in *Doppelkloster und andere Formen der symbiose männlicher und weiblicher Religiösen in Mittelalter*, ed. Kaspar Elm and Michel Parisse, *Berliner historische Studien* 18 (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 1992), 177–202; Jürgen Sarnowsky, “Gender-Aspekte in der Geschichte der geistlichen Ritterorden,” in *Lebendige Sozialgeschichte. Gedenkschrift für Peter Borowsky*, ed. R. Hering and R. Nicolaysen (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2003), 168–188, reprinted in *On the Military Orders in Medieval Europe: Structures and Perceptions*, ed. Jürgen Sarnowsky (Farnham: Ashgate/Variorum, 2011), article XXI; Carlos Barquero Goñi, “Entre la contemplación y la guerra: las freiras de las órdenes militares,” in *Mujeres en silencio: El monacato femenino en la España medieval*, ed. José Ángel García de Cortázar and Ramón Teja (Aguilar de Campoo: Fundación Santa María la Real, 2017), 255–279.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Akten des Kanonisationsprozesses Dorotheas von Montau von 1394 bis 1521*, ed. Richard Stachnik with Anneliese Triller, and Hans Westpfahl, *Forschungen und Quellen Zur Kirchen- und Kulturgeschichte Ostdeutschlands* 15 (Cologne: Böhlau, 1978), 517.

It would not have been lost on the pope that a “new sort of knighthood” had been the description used by St Bernard of Clairvaux in the 1130s for the original military-religious order, the Templars.<sup>3</sup> In these times of crisis, God had called forth a new army of spiritual warriors to fight alongside the brothers.

These officials of the Teutonic Order regarded women as valuable collaborators in the Order’s work. This was not the view that had been set out in the Order’s normative texts, which indicated that the brothers should avoid women. However, in actuality women played a wide range of roles within the Military Orders and in supporting their work from outside. This article sets out to survey these various contributions, both physical and spiritual, towards the work of the Military Orders, which explain and justify the statement that women could also form a new sort of knighthood.

## NORMATIVE TEXTS

If we consider only the normative texts of the military religious orders, starting with the earliest version of their rules, we would believe that with the exception of the Order of Santiago, which accepted male and female members and married couples, the military religious orders were generally unenthusiastic about accepting women as members. For example, the earliest regulations of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, attributed to Master Raymond du Puy (1120–1160), do not mention women as members of the Order, referring only to *fratres* (brothers). *Fratres* of the Order were instructed to guard their modesty when in women’s proximity, *femine invicem*, and women should not wash brothers’ heads or feet or make their beds.<sup>4</sup>

The Templars’ primitive rule suggests that women were admitted at the start, but when the Order was given papal approval at the Church Council of Troyes

<sup>3</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, “Liber ad milites Templi de laude novae militiae,” in *S. Bernardi Opera*, vol. 3 *Tractatus et opuscula*, ed. Jean Leclercq and Henri Rohais (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1963), 205–239, translated as Bernard of Clairvaux, *In Praise of the New Knighthood: A Treatise on the Knights Templar and the Holy Places of Jerusalem*, trans. M. Conrad Greenia, Cistercian Fathers Series 19B (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> *Cartulaire général de l’ordre des Hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem (1100–1310)*, vol. 1, ed. Joseph Delaville le Roulx (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1894), 29–30, 62–68 (nos 30, 70, at section 4); “Regula Raymundi du Puy” (as issued by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300) in *The Hospitallers’ Rule (Miracula et Regula Hospitalis Sancti Johannis Jerosolimitani)*, ed. Keith Val Sinclair, Anglo-Norman Text Society 42 (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1984), 70–74, clause 4.

in 1129 women were no longer permitted (*amplius non liceat*) to be admitted. The reason given was that through association with women (*femineo consortio*) the *antiquus hostis* (the ancient enemy, that is, the devil) had pushed many off the path to paradise.<sup>5</sup> It was dangerous for a brother to even look at a woman; a brother should not kiss even his mother or sister in greeting.<sup>6</sup> Nor could a member of the order act as a godfather or godmother any longer (*nullus ... amplius*), again, implying that until that point women had been admitted and had fulfilled this role.<sup>7</sup> Married men were permitted to join the brotherhood, but the regulators did not think they should live in the same house as the chaste brothers or wear the knights' white mantle, as if they were spiritually unclean.<sup>8</sup>

The Teutonic Order's rule did not allow women to be admitted as full sisters because their presence could make the male mind "go soft" (*wirt erweichet*), but women could be employed to look after the sick or care for animals.<sup>9</sup> In contrast, the order of Santiago included married men and women as well as single brothers and sisters, and made provision for the care of their children. However, married couples had to practise chastity on the major feast days or during Lent.<sup>10</sup>

It has been suggested that "military orders based on the Augustinian rule were more open to having female associates than those based on the Benedictine rule."<sup>11</sup> However, this assertion assumes that there was a clear distinction between the different orders' practices. Both the Templars and the Hospitallers followed a canonical liturgy rather than a monastic one (their services comprising nine lessons in contrast to the monastic Benedictine office with twelve lessons).<sup>12</sup> It is true that thirty of the seventy-two clauses of the Templars' primitive rule included word-

<sup>5</sup> *Il Corpus normativo templare*, ed. Giovanni Amatuccion (Galatina: Congedo, 2009), 414, clause 54; *La Règle du Temple*, ed. Henri de Curzon (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1886), 69, section [56].

<sup>6</sup> *Il Corpus normativo templare*, ed. Amatuccion, 417, clause 70; *La Règle du Temple*, ed. Curzon, 69–70, clause 71.

<sup>7</sup> *Il Corpus normativo templare*, ed. Amatuccion, 417, clause 71; *La Règle du Temple*, ed. Curzon, 70, clause 72.

<sup>8</sup> *La Règle du Temple*, ed. Curzon, 68, section [55]; *Il Corpus normativo templare*, ed. Amatuccion, 414, clause 53.

<sup>9</sup> *Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens nach den ältesten Handschriften*, ed. Max Perlbach (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1890), 52 (clause 31).

<sup>10</sup> *The Rule of the Spanish Military Order of St James 1170–1493*, ed. Enrique Gallego Blanco (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 82–85, 98–103 (clauses 12–16), 108–109 (clause 25), 130–131 (clause 53).

<sup>11</sup> Myra Miranda Bom, *Women in the Military Orders of the Crusades* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 3.

<sup>12</sup> Cristina Dondi, *The Liturgy of the Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. A Study and a Catalogue of the Manuscript Sources*, Bibliotheca Victorina 16 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 24, 32, 39, 40–42, 103.

for-word extracts from the Rule of Saint Benedict.<sup>13</sup> But the predominant tone of the Templars' Rule is that of the so-called Rule of Saint Augustine. It follows the same themes as the Rule of Saint Augustine: with all property held in common, members praying together, having plain clothing and simple food, avoiding close contact with members of the opposite sex, and avoiding quarrels.<sup>14</sup> Overall the Templars' so-called primitive rule was very like the Hospitallers' Rule of Raymond du Puy, and both told the brothers to avoid women's company.

But while the normative texts set out an ideal standard, in practice the Military Orders had to adapt themselves to local needs and the demands of their patrons. If we look more widely at the evidence from charters and estate records we find that women could become members or associates of all these institutions. Women were widely spread within these orders, although in some locations there is only one documented reference to women's presence; possibly just one woman lived in a house for her lifetime, and no others followed.<sup>15</sup> These women did not fight with physical weapons: like priest brothers, they provided a support role of prayer.

## MEMBERS

Despite the rule warning them that women could make the brothers "go soft," by the second half of the thirteenth century the Teutonic Order had communities of sisters where the sisters recited the divine office each day and hospitals where women helped to care for the sick and elderly, as well as isolated women living

<sup>13</sup> *The Rule of St Benedict in Latin and English*, ed. and trans. Justin McCann OSB (London: Burns Oates, 1952); discussion in *The Rule of the Templars. The French Text of the Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar*, ed. Judith Mary Upton-Ward (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), 11, citing Gustav Schnürer, *Die ursprüngliche Templerregel* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche, 1908), 57 note 3: "Es find dies folgende Kapitel: 1, 2, 7, 8, (9, 10), 12, (13), 16, 17, 19, 20, (30), 33, (37), 42, 43, 44, 45, 50, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, (62), 65, 66, 68, 69." The text of the Templars' rule is on pages 130–153 of his edition.

<sup>14</sup> "The Rule of Augustine, masculine version," in *The Rule of Saint Augustine with introduction and commentary*, introduction and commentary by Tarsicus J. van Bavel OSA, translated by Raymond Canning OSA (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1984), 11–24.

<sup>15</sup> "Houses of the Military Orders where women lived," in Helen J. Nicholson, "The role of women in the Military Orders," *Militiae Christi: Handelingen van de Vereniging voor de Studie over de Tempeliers en de Hospitaalridders* 1 (2010): 202–219, at 219.

within male communities, and other female associates.<sup>16</sup> In addition, despite the warning in the Rule of Raymond du Puy that the brothers of the Hospital should keep guard over themselves in the presence of women, in 1177 King Alfonso II of Aragon gave the castle of Grisén to the Hospitallers in Aragon, to form a house of Hospitaller sisters.<sup>17</sup> In 1180 a Hospitaller house for women was set up at Manetin near Prague.<sup>18</sup> In around 1185 King Henry II of England set up a religious house for eight Hospitaller sisters at Buckland in Somerset, south west England, who up until that time had been living in six different houses of men.<sup>19</sup> A neighbouring house of Hospitaller brothers took care of the women's spiritual guidance. In 1187–1188 Queen Sancha of Aragon, wife of Alfonso II, founded a religious house of women at Sigena. This house had its own rule which gave the prioress authority over both sisters and priests; the priests lived outside the enclosed cloister, separately from the women.<sup>20</sup>

These powerful donors had made the Hospitallers offers that they could not refuse. If the Hospitallers declined to accept these sisters they would also lose these patrons' valuable favour, influence, and donations. The Spanish and French Hospitaller women's houses became such prestigious institutions that there was sometimes a waiting list for admittance.<sup>21</sup>

In the same way, despite the warning in the Templars' rule against admitting women, the Templars of Germany did not refuse a direct instruction from a bishop. In 1272 Bishop Eberhard of Worms gave the order of the Temple ownership and responsibility for the administration of the nunnery of Mühlen, and the duty of supporting the women there.<sup>22</sup> After the abolition of the order of the Temple

<sup>16</sup> Udo Arnold, "Die Frau im Deutschen Orden," in *Stationen einer Hochschullaufbahn: Festschrift für Annette Kuhn zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Udo Arnold, Peter Meyers, and Uta C. Schmidt (Dortmund: Ebersbach, 1999), 261–276, at 254–255.

<sup>17</sup> Luis García-Guijarro Ramos, "The Aragonese Hospitaller Monastery of Sigena: its Early Stages, 1188–c. 1210," in *Hospitaller Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Anthony Luttrell and Helen J. Nicholson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 113–151, at 115–116.

<sup>18</sup> Anthony Luttrell and Helen Nicholson, "Introduction," in *Hospitaller Women*, ed. Luttrell and Nicholson, 1–42, at 13.

<sup>19</sup> Myra Struckmeyer, "The Sisters of the Order of Saint John at Mynchin Buckland," in *Hospitaller Women*, ed. Luttrell and Nicholson, 89–112, at 92.

<sup>20</sup> García-Guijarro Ramos, "The Aragonese Hospitaller Monastery of Sigena," 119–121, 126.

<sup>21</sup> Luttrell and Nicholson, "Introduction," 28–29. On the French houses of Hospitaller sisters see also Anthony Luttrell, "Les Femmes hospitalières en France méridionale," in *Cahiers de Fanjeaux 41: Les ordres militaires dans le Midi (XIIe–XIVe siècle)* (Toulouse: Privat, 2006), 101–113.

<sup>22</sup> Charter printed by Michael Schüpferling, *Der Tempelherren-Orden in Deutschland. Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde* (Bamberg: Dr J. Kirsch, 1915), 33–34, note 4.

the nuns of Mühlen *quondam ordinis Templi*, “formerly of the order of the Temple,” were transferred to the Hospital of St John, a move that the sisters apparently resented.<sup>23</sup>

These were self-governing houses where the sisters lived largely independently of men. In addition, women lived within men’s houses. When the Templars in France were arrested in October 1307, there was a single Templar sister living at the Templar commandery at Payns in Champagne, with a female servant. Her name was never mentioned: the records call her simply *la suer*, “the sister” (her servant was named Herssant), and she went on living at the house until 1309, when the royal administrator sent her away with a payment of ten *sous*.<sup>24</sup> A later survey of former Templar houses in neighbouring Picardy noted seven former Templar sisters and a former female Templar donat living with the Hospitallers who now owned these houses, as well as three former Templar brothers.<sup>25</sup> In 1338 the Hospitaller commandery of Beaulieu in the Priory of Saint-Gilles was supporting two sisters (*duarum sororum*) who – like the Templar sister at Payns – were not otherwise named.<sup>26</sup>

At the time of the Templars’ arrests in 1307–1308 Sister Adelheide of Wellheim was attached to the Templar house of Mosbrunnen (now Moritzbrunn in Adelschlag) in the diocese of Eichstätt, but lived in a separate house. She was the former wife of Templar Rudiger of Wellheim, and had chosen “continual habitation” in the house of the Temple of Moritzbrunn for the rest of her life in order to serve God better.<sup>27</sup> Her example brings us to another category of women’s involvement in the military orders.

<sup>23</sup> Tommasi, “Uomini e donne,” 195 note 76, citing *Lettres communes des papes d’Avignon analysées d’après les registres dits d’Avignon et du Vatican, Jean XXII (1316–1334): Lettres communes d’après des registres dits d’Avignon et du Vatican*, ed. Guillaume Mollat, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d’Athènes et de Rome, 3rd series, vol. 1 bis (Paris: Université Catholique, 1904), no. 18845; see also Luttrell and Nicholson, “Introduction,” 26.

<sup>24</sup> “Comptes de régie de la commanderie de Payns, 1307–1308,” ed. Auguste Pétel, *Mémoires de la Société d’Agriculture, Sciences et Arts du département de l’Aube* (1907): 283–372, at 292, 333, 338, 359, 360, 362 and note 4, 367, 369, 370.

<sup>25</sup> Alain Demurger, *Les templiers: une chevalerie chrétienne au moyen âge* (Paris: Seuil, 2005), 477.

<sup>26</sup> *Visites générales des commanderies de l’ordre des Hospitaliers dépendantes du grand prieuré de Saint-Gilles (1338)* (*Archives départementales des Bouches-du-Rhône 56 H 123*), ed. Benoit Beaucage (Aix: Université de Provence, 1982), 537, 540, 544. The sisters’ names are not listed with those of the brothers of the house at the beginning of the report: 526.

<sup>27</sup> Schüpferling, *Der Tempelherren-orden*, 61–62.

## ASSOCIATED WOMEN

Many women were involved with the military orders without taking the three monastic vows to become full members. There were different types of association, and different terms were used to describe them, but it is not always clear whether these terms were being used precisely or as a label to cover a variety of different levels of connection; and they changed with time.<sup>28</sup> I use the word “associate” here as a blanket term to cover them all.

The military religious orders had an organised support group, the confraternity (known as the “frary” in Britain), whose members were exempted from a seventh of their penance in return for annual donations and at their death would receive Church burial provided that they were not personally excommunicated.<sup>29</sup> Members did not join a house but made an annual payment, and might give other gifts. They would have been included in the daily prayers for all their Order’s benefactors, male and female, alive and dead.<sup>30</sup> Women as well as men joined the confraternity, sometimes with their husbands or their families, sometimes as individuals.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Damien Carraz, “Présences et dévotions féminines autour des commanderies du Bas-Rhône (XIIe–XIIIe siècle),” in *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 41 (2006): 71–99, at 81–83; Damien Carraz, *L’Ordre du Temple dans la basse vallée du Rhône (1124–1312). Ordres militaires, croisades et sociétés méridionales* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 2005), 332–337; Jochen Schenk, *Templar Families: Landowning Families and the Order of the Temple in France, c. 1120–1307* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 45–46.

<sup>29</sup> Rory MacLellan, “Hospitaller Confraternity Scripts, Crusading and the English Reformation, c. 1440–1537,” *Historical Research* 92, no. 256 (2019): 445–457, especially 450; Schenk, *Templar Families*, 46–58; David Marcombe, *Leper Knights: The Order of St Lazarus of Jerusalem in England, c. 1150–1544* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 186–194.

<sup>30</sup> Schenk, *Templar Families*, 53–55; Marcombe, *Leper Knights*, 189.

<sup>31</sup> Alan Forey, *The Templars in the Corona de Aragón* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 110–111, 225; Schenk, *Templar Families*, 46–48; Paula Stiles, *Templar Convivencia: Templars and their Associates in 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Century Iberia* (No place: Amazon Kindle, 2012), at notes 313–322; *Records of the Templars in England in the Twelfth Century: The Inquest of 1185 with Illustrative Charters and Documents*, ed. Beatrice A. Lees (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), 4 (Witham in Essex), 38–40 (Cardington in Shropshire, Enchmarsh, Chatwall, Cardington), 61 (Portishead in Somerset) 250 (William de Assheby); and see lxi–lxii for discussion; *The Knights Hospitallers in England: Being the Report of Prior Philip de Thame to the Grand Master Elyan de Villanova for A.D. 1338*, ed. Lambert B. Larking with introduction by John Mitchell Kemble, Camden Society 1st ser. 65 (London: Camden Society, 1857), 7, 10, 13, 15, 17, 21, 24, 26, 28, 30, 34, 35, 38, 41, 43, 45, 47, 50, 52, 54, 57, 63, 66, 68, 70, 74, 75, 81, 84, 87, 89, 91, 93, 94; MacLellan, “Hospitaller Confraternity Scripts,” 450; Marcombe, *Leper Knights*, 189, 193.

Another term used for associates of religious orders was “donat,” from the Latin *donare*, to give, as they had given themselves to that Order. Scholars generally use the term “donat” to refer to those who had taken a vow of obedience to an Order and/or had undertaken to join an Order in the future; they might make a donation of property now, or retain their property for their lifetimes and give it to the Order on their death or when they joined the Order. They might live in a religious house and wear a form of the habit, although not all donats went so far. The distinction between the donat and other forms of confraternity was, in the words of Jochen Schenk, “the emphasis on spiritual surrender.” Donats had a “strong spiritual commitment” to their Order.<sup>32</sup>

As the military orders did not all have a period of probation for new members (the novitiate), becoming a donat could be a form of probation for would-be members.<sup>33</sup> Some female donats were young women who intended to enter an order in future as a full sister, others were widows. Açalaidais who became a donat of the Templars at Rousillon in July 1133 was presumably a widow, as she gave herself to the Order with the approval of her three sons but her donation charter does not mention her husband.<sup>34</sup> In 1288 Geoffrey de Vichier, visitor of the Order of the Temple in France, England and Germany, noted that Adelisa, widow of Henry Morsels, *consororis nostrae* (our associate sister) was *manentis in domo nostro in Gandavo* (living in the Order’s house at Ghent) and had paid for the construction of a second chapel in the house.<sup>35</sup> Gerburg Schonweder, who was received with her children Peter and Matilde into the Teutonic Order’s house at Koblenz in 1276, was a widow: the three promised to observe chastity and would wear an amended form of the habit for associates.<sup>36</sup>

Some donats were married women who became donats with their husbands or with their husband’s permission. In December 1196 Gombau d’Oluja lord of Vallfogona and his wife Ermengarda gave their property in the area of Taragona and themselves to the Templar house at Barberà and entered the house as residents. Gombau apparently died shortly after, but Ermengarda appears in a charter of

<sup>32</sup> Schenk, *Templar Families*, 58–65; quotations 63.

<sup>33</sup> Luttrell and Nicholson, “Introduction,” 11; Schenk, *Templar Families*, 68–70.

<sup>34</sup> *Cartulaire général de l’ordre du Temple, 1119?–1150*, ed. le Marquis d’Albon (Paris: Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion, 1913), 51–52, no. 68; Schenk, *Templar Families*, 60.

<sup>35</sup> Charter printed in “Documents relatifs aux croisades,” in *Le Chevalier au Cygne et Godefroid de Bouillon, poëme historique publié pour la première fois avec de nouvelles recherches sur les légendes qui ont rapport à la Belgique, un travail et des documents sur les croisades*, ed. Le Baron F. A. F. T. de Reiffenberg, vol. 1 (Brussels: M. Hayez, 1846), 429, no. 9.

<sup>36</sup> Tommasi, “Uomini e donne,” 187–188.

11 August 1198, as *preceptrix* or female commander of the house of the Temple of Rourel, a daughter-house of Barberà, receiving a donation in the name of the order.<sup>37</sup> In this case a wife who had entered with her husband not only became a full sister but was even promoted to significant office within the order. Beatrix Ponceta, the single *donatrix* at the Hospitaller house of Echelles in 1338, was listed after *Petrus Ponceti*, a *non nobilis* (not noble) donat who – to judge from the similarity in their cognomens – was presumably her male relative, probably her husband. It is likely that they had joined the order together.<sup>38</sup>

It can be difficult to differentiate between donats and full sisters. Sister Adelheide of Wellheim at Moritzbrunn, widow of a former Templar brother, may have been a donat or a full sister.<sup>39</sup> In England sometime between 1185 and 1195 one Joanna of Chalfield applied to join the Templars. Her husband Richard was still alive, but the Templars agreed to accept her because “she is so much affected by old age that no sinister suspicion will be able to come about her. She has promised in the presence of our officials to preserve her chastity and that she will submit herself to the Rule of the Temple at the end” [of her life]. This description would fit either a donat or a full sister.<sup>40</sup> The two women *donatae* at the Hospitaller house or commandery of Le Poët-Laval in 1338, who were named simply as Argentina and Agnes without any family name, were living in the house with twenty brothers and twenty male donats with their food and clothing provided; although (unlike the two *sorores* or sisters at Beaulieu in 1338, mentioned above) their names were recorded, in other respects their situation appeared to be identical to those two fully-professed sisters.<sup>41</sup> The same could be said of Beatrix, *donata* at the commandery of Rue in 1338, living alongside fifteen Hospitaller brothers and nine noble male donats, and Nadina, *donata* at the commandery of Avignon in that year, living alongside the twelve brothers and eight male donats in the house.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Domine Ermengardi de Uluya, sorore Milicie Templi et in illo tempore preceptrix domus Rourel et fratri Raimundo de Solsona, et fratri Iohanni, et fratri Guillelmo Escansset, Titbors, et aliis fratribus et sororibus presentibus et in antea futuris.* The donation charter is published by Tommasi, “Uomini e donne,” 201–202 (quotation from 201), with commentary on 200–201, and see 184, 187 for other examples of husband and wife couples who joined the Templars and Hospitallers as associates on the basis that when one of the couple died the other would make a full profession.

<sup>38</sup> *Visites générales*, ed. Beaucage, 100–101.

<sup>39</sup> Schüpferling, *Der Tempelherren-orden*, 61–62.

<sup>40</sup> *Records of the Templars in England*, ed. Lees, 210 (Wilts. Charters, no. 5); my translation.

<sup>41</sup> *Visites générales*, ed. Beaucage, 33, 35–36, 39–40.

<sup>42</sup> *Visites générales*, ed. Beaucage, 264, 274, 275, 426, 438, 448.

The Orders also had male and female corrodians, who made a donation to the Order and in return received a corrody or regular allowance of food, clothing, and sometimes cash, in a religious house.<sup>43</sup> Occasionally a corrody was granted as an act of charity, as in the fourteenth century the Hospitallers of Kilmainham, near Dublin, granted a daily gift of bread, beer and a meal to Alice la Reve and her daughter, Mathilda *caritatis intuitu et diuini amoris contemplatione* (for the sake of charity and in consideration of divine love). The grant did not state that Alice was living within the house, but the corrody would have provided her and her daughter with support at their time of need.<sup>44</sup> It is possible that Dominica of Sieste, to whom in 1248 the Templars at Zaragoza granted maintenance and assigned a house *in qua sedeatis circa ecclesiam nostram* (in which you may be installed in the vicinity of our church), was a corrodian of the Order.<sup>45</sup>

Corrodies could be purchased for one's heirs as well as for the donor. In England at the time of the Templars' arrest in 1308 Alice the daughter of Robert of Swinesthorp held a corrody at Temple Bruer in Lincolnshire which brought her every Saturday seven loaves of white bread, three loaves of squires' bread, five gallons of ale and seven suitable dishes of meat and fish, plus additional dishes at six feasts of the year (Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, St John's day, the Assumption of the Blessed Mary and All Saints), and each year she received a robe and three stones of cheese: one at Easter, one on St John's day and one at All Saints. Alice's father had given twenty marks to Bruer to gain this corrody, and when Alice died the house would receive half her property.<sup>46</sup>

Some corrodies were granted in respect of service performed. At the New Temple in London, corrodians Roger Blome and his wife Gaillarda received each day three white loaves and one small "squires' loaf" (*panem scutiferorum*), two gallons of the better ale and one of the second quality. They also received food from the kitchen each day for two meals, *ad prandium et ad cenam*: whatever two brothers and a servant would have been served, two hundred faggots at All Saints (1 November), a suitable piece of bacon at Michaelmas (29 September) and sev-

<sup>43</sup> Schenk, *Templar Families*, 65–67.

<sup>44</sup> Eithne Massey, *Prior Roger Outlaw of Kilmainham, 1314–1341*, Maynooth Studies in Local Irish History 30 (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2000), 17, 57.

<sup>45</sup> Forey, "Women and the military orders," in *Hospitaller Women*, ed. Luttrell and Nicholson, 45.

<sup>46</sup> Kew, The National Archives of the UK (henceforth as TNA), E 358/18 rotulae 19 (1–2), 16 (2); "Corrodia petita de domibus Templariorum – annis I° & II° Edwardi II," in *Documents illustrative of English history in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, selected from the Records of the Department of the Queen's Remembrancer of the Exchequer*, ed. Henry Cole (London: George E. Eyre and Andrew Spottiswoode, 1844), 139–230, at 148–149.

enteen marks sterling each year at Easter. Roger also received forty shillings a year and two robes at Easter. These payments would continue for the lifetime of both of them; when one died, the other would continue to receive the food, and would receive a “place” within the precincts of the New Temple in which they could build a house and small courtyard for their needs. If Roger predeceased Gaillarda she would continue to receive nine marks a year if she was in England and six marks a year if she was overseas; if Gaillarda predeceased Roger, he would receive fourteen marks a year. This corrody was granted in return for the “laudable service” which Roger had done the Order, a gift of 100 marks sterling and the promise of half their goods on their death.<sup>47</sup> In years to come Gaillarda could have been living as a widow in her own house within the Templars’ enclosure in London.

The 1338 survey of the Hospitallers’ properties in England shows that women were also among the eighty or so recipients of annual cash *pensiones* (payments) from the Order’s treasury: these could have been corrodies paid in return for a donation or payments to former employees of the Order who were now too old to work, but regrettably the record does not explain how each payment arose. Margareta Florentyn had been granted a pension of six marks a year at the time that Brother Leonard de Tibertis was Prior of England (1331–1335), John de Oxenford and his daughter Johanna received thirty marks a year, while Alicia Combemartyn, John’s wife, and Rosa the daughter of John and Alicia also received thirty marks a year. Walter Neel and his wife Alicia received 30 marks a year, while Margeria de Betoynne received seven and a half marks per year; John, Edmund and Benedict de Betoynne, whose relationship to Margeria was not stated, each received five marks. Margareta de Bachesworth received six marks each year; John de Charteneye and his wife Margareta received nine marks, while Agnes Tyeis received 52 shillings.<sup>48</sup>

## HOSPITAL CARE

Scholars sometimes assume that the major function of women in the military orders was to care for the sick.<sup>49</sup> It is clear that the Hospital of St John involved women in caring for the sick, but these women were not necessarily professed sisters.

<sup>47</sup> “Corrodia,” ed. Cole, 164–165.

<sup>48</sup> *The Knights Hospitallers in England*, ed. Larking and Kemble, 206–209.

<sup>49</sup> For example: John Blair, “Saint Leonard’s Chapel, Clanfield,” *Oxoniensia* 50 (1985): 209–214; the problem was also discussed by Sally Thompson, *Women Religious: The Founding of English Nunneries after the Norman Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 50–52.

Pilgrims who visited Jerusalem in the 1160s and 1170s recorded that the Hospital of St John cared for both men and women in separate wards, and that there were women called *sorores domus*, sisters of the house, who were responsible for the oversight of babies who were entrusted to the house, and presumably cared for these babies' mothers and for sick women pilgrims. The Hospital of St John also employed wet nurses to look after these babies.<sup>50</sup> However, the Hospital's regulations had nothing to say about these women.

After the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin in 1187, which did not involve any of these Hospitaller sisters fighting him – at least, no contemporaries said that they did fight – the Hospitallers were without a headquarters until 1191, when the Third Crusade recaptured the port city of Acre from Saladin and the military religious orders of the Temple and Hospital set up their central houses there. There were presumably Hospitaller sisters living in their house at Acre, because by 1219 there was a new house at Acre specifically for Hospitaller sisters.<sup>51</sup> The primary sources do not mention these women caring for the sick. A fourteenth-century version of the *chanson de geste Renaut de Montauban* does depict the religious sisters in an *ostel Dieu* (hospice for the poor) or *ospitail* (hospital) at Acre which could be intended as the Hospital of St John, caring for a sick French knight; but this epic was set far in the past, during the reign of the Emperor Charlemagne (800–814), and described an imaginary past rather than events that had actually happened. The episode indicates that at the time of writing religious sisters did care for the sick, but not necessarily that Hospitaller sisters did.<sup>52</sup>

Toscana, a married woman from Zevio near Verona, helped to care for the sick in the Hospital in Verona and later became a donat there; but she was not a fully-professed sister of the Order.<sup>53</sup> A charter of 1361 recorded a *magistra seu procuratrix hospitalis infirmorum*, a mistress or manager of the hospital of the sick, at the hospital in the large commandery at Würzburg alongside a master of the commandery hospital, and a further charter of 1364 mentioned a deceased mistress of the hospital there, named Lucke; but neither charter states that she was

<sup>50</sup> Benjamin Kedar, "A Twelfth-Century Description of the Jerusalem Hospital," in *The Military Orders*, vol. 2, *Welfare and Warfare*, ed. Helen J. Nicholson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 3–26, at 4–8, 20, 23–25.

<sup>51</sup> Luttrell and Nicholson, "Introduction," 8.

<sup>52</sup> *Renaut de Montalban: édition critique du ms de Paris, BN fr. 764(R)*, ed. Philippe Verelst (Ghent: Rijksuniversiteit te Gent, 1988), lines 9437–9469, 9800, 22643–22644; discussed by Helen J. Nicholson, *Love, War and the Grail: Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights in Medieval Epic and Romance, 1150–1500*, History of Warfare 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 66.

<sup>53</sup> Luttrell and Nicholson, "Introduction," 18.

a *soror*, a fully-professed sister.<sup>54</sup> The accounts of the Hospitaller's commandery at Manosque for the fourth Sunday of August 1288 record that three *solidi* (shillings) were paid to *cuidam mulieri*, a certain woman, for serving the infirm of the house, while the accounts for the fifth Sunday of October 1289 record that eighteen *denarii* (pence) were paid to a certain woman who served a certain sick donat of the house: indicating that these Hospitaller brothers employed a woman to care for their sick rather than bringing in a Hospitaller sister to perform that task.<sup>55</sup> In 1338 the Hospitaller commandery of Montélimar employed a maid (*ancilla*) to serve in the *hospitale pauperum*, the hospital or hospice of the poor which cared for the poor and sick, while at Châtillon-en-Diois a maid was employed to serve in the hospice or hospital to cook, wash cloths, make bread and do the other things necessary in the hospice.<sup>56</sup> In the early fifteenth century a Hungarian slave woman named Helena was working in the Hospitallers' infirmary on Rhodes.<sup>57</sup> It appears, then, that the Hospitallers employed women to care for the sick but that, outside their original hospital in Jerusalem, Hospitaller sisters were not necessarily expected to take on this role.

## EMPLOYEES AND TENANTS

As landowners, the military orders could not avoid interacting with women, who might be their tenants or their employees.<sup>58</sup> Although the rules of the Templars and the Hospitallers instructed them to avoid women and not to employ women

<sup>54</sup> Würzburg Staatsarchiv, Würzburger Urkunden, 5082, 5088, cited in Luttrell and Nicholson, "Introduction," 25–26, note 89; additional information generously provided by Karl Borchardt.

<sup>55</sup> *Comptes de la commanderie de l'Hôpital de Manosque pour les années 1283 à 1290*, ed. Karl Borchardt, Damien Carraz, and Alain Venturini, Documents, Études et Répertoires publiés par l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes 86 (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2015), 107, 132.

<sup>56</sup> *Visites générales*, ed. Beaucage, 68, 144.

<sup>57</sup> Nicholas Coureas, "The manumissions of Hospitaller slaves on fifteenth-century Rhodes and Cyprus," in *The Military Orders*, vol. 6.1, *Culture and Conflict in the Mediterranean World*, ed. Jochen Schenk and Mike Carr (London: Routledge, 2017), 106–114, at 108.

<sup>58</sup> For example: the 1373 surveys of Hospitaller property in southern Italy list several women among those renting property from the Hospitallers: *L'Inchiesta Pontificia del 1373 sugli Ospedali di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia*, ed. Mariarosaria Salerno and Kristjan Toomaspoeg with preface by Cosimo Damiano Fonseca and general introduction by Anthony Luttrell (Bari: Mario Adda, 2008), 165, 210–212, 215; a surviving record of rents due to the Hospitallers in south Wales and the Welsh border in 1505 includes female as well as male tenants: Hereford, Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre, A63/III/23/1 *Rentale de Dyn-*

to carry out personal tasks such as washing their hair, they had no regulations against employing a woman to do the milking or the cooking, or to carry out temporary unskilled seasonal work such as helping with the harvest. The weekly accounts of the Hospitaller's commandery at Manosque that survive from 1283–1290 show women being paid to gather produce such as chick peas, grapes, nuts, and olives, wash wool, clean and mash beans, hoe around the growing crops, carry wine, carry water to the wine press, put the wine in barrels and store it, carry raisins for preserving, collect hay, sew up pillows, and make white candles.<sup>59</sup> The 1338 survey of the Hospitallers' houses in the Priory of Saint-Gilles show the Hospitallers employing women in similar tasks.<sup>60</sup> Again, the accounts of the Templars' estates after the Templars' arrests in 1307–1308 show women employed to milk ewes and to help with the harvest.<sup>61</sup> At the Templars' estate of Rockley in Wiltshire in 1185 each tenant had to employ a woman to wash the sheep – to clean the wool and to protect the animals from parasites.<sup>62</sup> The brothers also bought in specialised female labour in the form of laundresses: in 1338 ten Hospitaller men's houses in England were employing laundresses, as were two Hospitaller houses in the Priory of Saint-Gilles.<sup>63</sup>

Women were also employed within the Templars' and Hospitallers' houses. At Baugy in Normandy the Templars' employees included three *baasses* (maids or servant women) working in the dairy, as well as a married couple who were long-time corrodians of the house, apparently living within the precinct of the house.

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more et Garwey cum membris [1505], fols 19r, 20r, 20v, 21r, 22r, 22v, 23v, 24r (at Hereford), 34r (at Pembrey).

<sup>59</sup> *Comptes de la commanderie de l'Hôpital de Manosque*, ed. Borchartt, Carraz, and Venturini, 5, 7–10, 12, 15–17, 19, 25–26, 28–33, 37, 39, 43–44, 46–50, 56, 58, 65–69, 87–90, 96–97, 99, 105–106, 110–112, 119–120, 125–126, 128–130, 132, 134, 142.

<sup>60</sup> *Visites générales*, ed. Beaucage, 20, 48, 51, 60, 70–71, 89, 91–92, 196–197, 210, 228–229, 239–240, 242, 246, 249, 254–255, 258, 277–280, 298–302, 304, 323, 356–358, 362, 365, 371–372, 374–376, 378, 397, 401–402, 405, 407–408, 423, 440–447, 467–468, 472–473, 475, 477, 483–484, 497, 505, 518–519, 521, 545–546, 548–549, 551–555, 557, 560, 568, 582, 606–611, 627–629.

<sup>61</sup> “Comptes de régie,” ed. Pétel, 292, 296, 332–333, 366 (Payns in Champagne); TNA, E 358/18 rot 19 (1–2) (Temple Bruer, Lincolnshire); TNA, E 358/20, mem. 40 recto (Faxfleet, East Yorkshire); TNA, E 358/18 rot. 5 (Guiting, Gloucestershire); TNA, E 358/18 rot. 2 (Garway, Herefordshire); TNA, E 358/18 rot. 24 (Swanton, Bedfordshire); TNA, E 358/19, mem. 40(1) recto (Balsall, Warwickshire); TNA, E 358/18 rot. 6 dorset (Bulstrode, Buckinghamshire).

<sup>62</sup> *Records of the Templars in England*, ed. Lees, cxxxi, 56–57.

<sup>63</sup> *The Knights Hospitallers in England*, ed. Larking and Kemble, 27, 29, 33, 46, 48, 53, 59, 67, 71, 83; Forey, “Women and the military orders,” 49; *Visites générales*, ed. Beaucage, 351 (a male *lavanderus* or launderer), 352 (a *bugaderie seu lavanderie*, a laundrette or laundress, both at Manosque), 599, 600 (a laundress at Trinquetaille).

At the Templar house at Corval in Normandy there were “two women of the *ostel*,” perhaps looking after the hostel where the farm workers lived.<sup>64</sup> In January 1308 eleven different Templar houses across England employed a maid (*ancilla*) to make the farmworkers’ food.<sup>65</sup> The wages paid remained the same whether a woman or a man was working as cook, so that the *garcio* or lad employed at Holt Prene in Shropshire to make potage for the farm workers earned the same as the maid at Stanton Long in the same county.<sup>66</sup> There was also a maid or a house maid employed at the Templars’ house at Gislingham on the Norfolk/Suffolk border.<sup>67</sup>

The survey of Hospitallers’ houses in the Priory of Saint-Gilles in 1338 recorded that the brothers employed a maid (*ancilla*) at the house of Beaulieu-sur-Orange. As there were no sisters or female donats at the house – which housed four brothers (the commander, two chaplain-brothers and a serving-brother) and a male donat – she was presumably the house maid.<sup>68</sup> Likewise, in 1338 the Hospitallers employed a maid at Châteauneuf-de-Mazenc, a “member” or branch of the commandery of Le Poët-Laval with no resident brothers, and at the commandery of Manas, where there were seven brothers and two male donats; while at the commandery of Montélimar (where there were seven brothers and six male donats) there were three maids, one of whom worked in the hospital of the poor.<sup>69</sup> A laundress-cook was employed at the all-male Hospitallers’ house at Nice in the Priory of Saint-Gilles in 1338; she was provided with her food and clothing and described as *morantis in dicta domo*, living in the said house.<sup>70</sup> The 1373 papal survey of Hospitaller houses in the priory of France recorded that many houses employed one

<sup>64</sup> “Inventaire du mobilier des Templiers du baillage de Caen,” ed. Léopold Delisle, in Léopold Delisle, *Études sur la condition de la classe agricole et l’état de l’agriculture en Normandie en moyen-âge* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1903), no. xvi, 721–728, at 723, 727.

<sup>65</sup> TNA, E 358/18 rot. 6 dorse (Bulstrode); TNA, E 358/19 rot. 52 and 52 dorse (Chelsing in Hertfordshire, and Cressing, Witham, Roydon and Chingford in Essex); TNA, E 199/46/21 and E 359/19 rot. 47 dorse (Hillcrombe and Broughton, Worcestershire); TNA, E 358/20 rot. 5 dorse (Lydney, Shropshire); TNA, E 358/18 rots 6 dorse and 52 dorse (Thornton, Northumberland). See also the published account in John Crawford Hodgson, “Temple Thornton farm accounts 1308,” *Archaeologia Aeliana* 17 (1895): 40–53. My thanks are due to Craig Young for drawing this edition to my attention.

<sup>66</sup> TNA, E 358/20 rot. 5d, E 358/18 rot. 4.

<sup>67</sup> Gislingham: TNA, E 358/18 rot. 3; Stanton Long: TNA, E 358/18 rot 4.

<sup>68</sup> *Visites générales*, ed. Beaucage, 13, 15, 19.

<sup>69</sup> *Visites générales*, ed. Beaucage, 46, 53, 58–59, 68, 70, for further examples of maids working within the Hospitallers’ houses in the Priory of Saint-Gilles in 1338 see 134, 141, 226.

<sup>70</sup> *Visites générales*, ed. Beaucage, 214, 222, 225.

or more *ancillae* (maids) or *pedissecæ* (waiting-women or chambermaids) as well as male house servants.<sup>71</sup>

The records sometimes specifically refer to accommodation for women within the house: according to the inventory of the Templar house at Sours in central France, there was a *domus feminarum* and a *camera mulierum* (a house and a chamber of the women).<sup>72</sup> An inventory drawn up for the Hospitaller house of Bajoles in Roussillon in 1376 mentioned a *cambra on jau la dona* (a chamber where the lady sleeps): as the *dona* was not mentioned elsewhere as a sister or donat she was presumably an employee.<sup>73</sup>

The military orders also held slaves and bondspeople. The bondspeople or serfs comprised men and women who were bound to an Order's land or had been personally donated to an Order.<sup>74</sup> Slaves could have been captured in battle or purchased. An inventory of Templar commanderies in the Crown of Aragon in 1289 showed that the majority of these houses possessed "captives" (*catii* or *chatii*), indicating that they had been captured in war, and virtually all were men. Only one female "captive" (*catiua*) was recorded: she was at Monzón, where there were also 48 male "captives."<sup>75</sup> In contrast, the Hospitallers' manumissions of slaves on Rhodes and Cyprus in the fifteenth century suggest that women represented around a quarter of the slave force on the islands (not counting the men used at sea as galley slaves), and had been bought by the Order (for example, to work in the infirmary)

<sup>71</sup> *L'Enquête pontificale de 1373 sur l'ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem*, ed. Jean Glénisson, vol. 1, *L'Enquête dans le prieuré de France*, ed. Anne-Marie Legras and Robert Favreau, general introduction Anthony Luttrell (Paris: CNRS, 1987), 185, 187, 190, 192, 199, 203, 207, 209, 212, 213, 216, 220, 222, 223, 232–237, 266, 277, 286, 290, 291, 293, 303, 305, 308, 312, 316, 323, 371. For additional examples of Hospitallers' female personal and household servants see Luttrell and Nicholson, "Introduction," 11–12.

<sup>72</sup> Jochen Burgdorf, "The Trial Inventories of the Templars' Houses in France: Select Aspects," in *The Debate on the Trial of the Templars (1307–1314)*, ed. Jochen Burgdorf, Paul F. Crawford, and Helen J. Nicholson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 195–115, at 111, citing *Collection d'Albon* 46, fol. 83.

<sup>73</sup> Luttrell and Nicholson, "Introduction," 12; citing *Les Cases de Templiers y Hospitalers en Catalunya: aplech de noves y documents històrics*, ed. Joaquim Miret y Sans (Barcelona: Casa Provincial de Caritat, 1910), 561.

<sup>74</sup> For example: *Histoire et cartulaire des Templiers de Provins*, ed. Victor Carrière (Paris: Librairie Champion, 1919), 49, 90–91 (nos 11, 64).

<sup>75</sup> Forey, *Templars in the Corona de Aragón*, 285; "Inventaris de les cases del Temple de la Corona d'Aragó en 1289," ed. Joachim Miret y Sans, *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona* 11/42 (1911): 61–75, at 63, 70.

or by individual brothers rather than captured.<sup>76</sup> The Hospitallers of Rhodes legislated on the sale of male and female slaves.<sup>77</sup> The Hospitallers of Malta also gave male and female slaves as gifts to eminent Latin Christian figures to gain or ensure their friendship and support for the order. For instance, in 1557 the Hospitallers' Grand Prior of France captured two young Turkish women and their brother who were en route to Mecca on pilgrimage. He presented the young women to Queen Catherine de' Medici of France and her sister-in-law Margaret of Valois, soon to be duchess of Savoy. Their new owners baptised the elder, Fati, as Catherine and the younger as Margaret, and the two new converts married Frenchmen. Meanwhile in Istanbul their mother petitioned Sultan Suleiman to get them released, stating that they had been forced to convert to Christianity, and she enlisted the sultan's daughter and granddaughter in her support. The sultan accordingly refused to release any French prisoners until the two Turkish girls were freed, but the French refused to send them back to Turkey on the basis that they were now Christians and happily married in France. The younger woman, Margaret, had become lady of the bedchamber to Catherine de' Medici. Their captors would not give up such high-profile Christian converts, royal protégées whose conversion bolstered French royal prestige.<sup>78</sup>

## WARFARE

Although they regarded women's involvement in crusading as undesirable because as non-combatants women would consume resources that were needed by the fighters and their presence might undermine the moral fibre of the army, medieval

<sup>76</sup> Coureas, "The manumissions of Hospitaller slaves," 110; Jürgen Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschaft im Johanniterorden des 15. Jahrhunderts. Verfassung und Verwaltung der Johanniter auf Rhodos (1421–1522)*, Vita Regularis 14 (Münster: Lit, 2001), 372; Nicholas McDermott, "The Knight Hospitaller Slave System and its Variety of Enslaved Groups on Cyprus, Rhodes and Malta," in *Legacies of the Crusades. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, Odense, 27 June–1 July 2016*, vol. 1, ed. Torben Kjersgaard Nielsen and Kurt Villads Jensen, *Outremer 11* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 189–210, at 200, 207.

<sup>77</sup> Alan Forey, "The Military Orders and the Ransoming of Captives from Islam (twelfth to early fourteenth centuries)," *Studia Monastica* 33 (1991): 259–279, at 274–276, reprinted in *Military Orders and Crusades*, ed. Alan Forey (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), article VI; Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschaft*, 371; McDermott, "The Knight Hospitaller Slave System," 198.

<sup>78</sup> Kenneth Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204–1571)*, vol. 4, *The Sixteenth Century from Julius III to Pius V* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1984), 835–841.

canon lawyers did not oppose women's involvement in warfare. They assumed that women would usually redeem their crusade vows by payment rather than going in person, but they could validly join a crusade if they could afford to raise and lead a military force themselves.<sup>79</sup> However, contemporary commentators writing about the crusades viewed women's participation through a distorting lens of literary and cultural tradition which could lead them to omit, understate, exaggerate or distort women's actions. Writers on all sides of the conflict depicted women in traditional gendered roles – pious virgins, faithful wives and carers, or impious whores, weak-willed frail creatures easily led astray by their lusts and powerful temptresses, or innocent victims and suffering martyrs, or spoils of war, the just reward of the victor – and they adjusted what they wrote about women to fit into these models. Modern scholars' attempts to read between the lines and against the grain can clarify some aspects of women's involvement, but it is impossible now to gain a full picture because of the lack of information in the narrative sources.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that women did take part in crusades to the Holy Land, although not, apparently, to Prussia or Livonia.<sup>81</sup> There is no evidence that the sisters of the Military Orders fought in physical battles, but it is clear that sometimes the Orders' female tenants, employees and other associates did.

Women commonly played a labouring role in war, helping to construct make-shift fortifications.<sup>82</sup> Guillaume Caoursin, vice-chancellor of the Knights Hospi-

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<sup>79</sup> James A. Brundage, "The Votive Obligations of Crusaders: The Development of a Canonistic Doctrine," *Traditio* 24 (1968): 77–118, at 106, 112–114; Maureen Purcell, "Women Crusaders: a Temporary Canonical Aberration?" in *Principalities, Powers and Estates. Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Government and Society*, ed. L. O. Frappell (Adelaide: Adelaide University Union Press, 1979), 57–64.

<sup>80</sup> See the discussion of the sources in Helen Nicholson, "Women on the Third Crusade," *Journal of Medieval History* 23, no. 4 (1997): 335–349; Natasha R. Hodgson, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007); *Gendering the Crusades*, ed. Susan B. Edgington and Sarah Lambert (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001).

<sup>81</sup> Sabine Geldsetzer, *Frauen auf Kreuzzügen, 1096–1291* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003); Alan V. Murray, "Contrasting Masculinities in the Baltic Crusades: Teutonic Knights and Secular Crusaders at War and Peace in Late Medieval Prussia," in *Crusading and Masculinities*, ed. Natasha R. Hodgson, Katherine J. Lewis, and Matthew M. Mesley, *Crusades Subsidia* 13 (London: Routledge, 2019), 113–128, at 115. Women's different contributions to crusading will be discussed in my forthcoming book, Helen J. Nicholson, *Women and the Crusades* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023).

<sup>82</sup> See, for example, James E. Gilbert, "A Medieval 'Rosie the Riveter'? Women in France and Southern England during the Hundred Years War," in *The Hundred Years War: A Wider Focus*, ed. L. J. Andrew Villalon and Donald J. Kagay, *History of Warfare* 25 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 333–363.

taller, described the women of the city of Rhodes assisting in the preparations to defend the city against Ottoman attack in 1480: the Grand Master of the Order and the high officials, knights, citizens, merchants, married women, newly-married and maidens all worked to strengthen the walls and ditches, carrying stone, soil and lime.<sup>83</sup> Again, Francesco Balbi di Correggio described soldiers, women and children and beasts of burden bringing earth into the fortified town of Birgu on Malta in May 1565 in preparation for assault by the forces of Ottoman sultan Suleiman the Magnificent.<sup>84</sup>

Contemporary commentators accepted that women might have to take up arms in emergency situations.<sup>85</sup> Peter von Dusburg recorded that when the Teutonic Order's city of Elbing (Elblag in Poland) came under attack from the Christian Duke Swantopolk or Swietopelk II of Pomerania during the absence of the Brothers and the men of the city on campaign, the women of the city laid aside women's adornment and put on the mind of men, buckled on swords and defended the city manfully (*viriliter*).<sup>86</sup> Peter von Dusburg also described how on a later occasion when the army of the Teutonic Order arrived to rescue some Christian women captured by the Lithuanians, the women turned on their Lithuanian captors and *quo poterant, occiderunt* (killed them in whatever manner they could). In contrast, in Brother Nicolaus von Jeroschin's translation of this episode the women did not fight the Lithuanians themselves but fell weeping at the brothers' feet when they were freed.<sup>87</sup> While Peter gave the rescued women some agency, Nicolaus preferred to give the Brothers all the credit for destroying the enemy.

<sup>83</sup> Guillaume Caoursin, "Descriptio obsidionis Rhodiae," in Theresa M. Vann and Donald J. Kagay, *Hospitaller Piety and Crusader Propaganda: Guillaume Caoursin's Description of the Ottoman Siege of Rhodes, 1480* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 86–147, at 110–111.

<sup>84</sup> Francesco Balbi di Correggio, *The Siege of Malta 1565*, trans. Henry Alexander Balbi (Copenhagen: Dr. h. c. Ole Rostock, 1961), 53.

<sup>85</sup> Nicholson, "Women on the Third Crusade," 343–347, 349.

<sup>86</sup> Rasa Mazeika, "'Nowhere was the Fragility of their Sex Apparent': Women Warriors in the Baltic Crusade Chronicles," in *From Clermont to Jerusalem: The Crusades and Crusader Societies 1095–1500. Selected Proceedings of the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 10–13 July 1995*, ed. Alan V. Murray, International Medieval Research 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 229–248, at 229–230 and note 1; Peter von Dusburg, *Chronicon Terre Prussie*, ed. Max Toeppen, in *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1861), 78; Brother Nicolaus von Jeroschin's German translation of Brother Peter's Latin, produced between 1331 and 1341, also recounts this story: *The Chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von Jeroschin: A History of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia, 1190–1331*, trans. Mary Fischer, Crusade Texts in Translation 20 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 106.

<sup>87</sup> Mazeika, "'Nowhere was the Fragility of their Sex Apparent,'" 237–238 and note 20; Peter von Dusburg, *Chronicon Terre Prussie*, 176–177; *The Chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von Jeroschin*, 259.

A Greek woman who was reported to have died as a martyr fighting at Rhodes against the Turks during the siege of 1522 was reportedly the mistress of a Hospitaller officer who had been killed during the siege. Not wishing to survive him (the report stated), she kissed and blessed their two little boys, killed them with a knife, and threw their bodies on the fire, *ne hostis ... vilissimus vivis aut mortuis gemina nobilitate corporibus potiretur* (so that the most vile enemy could not possess the twin nobility of their bodies alive or dead). Then she donned the dead officer's clothes, still soaked in his blood, took his sabre, and rushed upon the Turks. She died *more virorum fortiter bellando* (fighting strongly in the manner of men). Such stories proclaimed the power of even weak Christian women over their Muslim enemies, and demonstrated their dedication to Christian martyrdom.<sup>88</sup>

## DONORS

Although the Rule of Raymond du Puy warned the Brothers to guard their modesty when women were present, the Hospitallers and the other military religious orders did not turn down donations from women. Women initiated or encouraged donations to a military order, encouraging their male relatives to give to a military order or to join one as well as giving their own property where they controlled their property themselves.<sup>89</sup> Such donations demonstrated their family's dedication to the defence of Christendom and the Christian faith.

The queens of the Iberian Peninsula were among the earliest donors to the military orders. In the 1120s Queens Urraca of Castile and Teresa of Portugal endowed the Hospitallers and Templars respectively. On 11 November 1122 Urraca gave the town of Fresno el Viejo, on the border with Portugal, to the Hospital, while in March 1128 Teresa gave the fortress of Soure near Coimbra to the Templars, "for the remedy of my soul and the remission of my sins."<sup>90</sup> In 1229 Urraca's descendent Berenguela of Castile donated her castle and town of Bolaños to the Order of Ca-

<sup>88</sup> L'Abbé René Aubert de Vertot, *Histoire des Chevaliers Hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jerusalem, appelez depuis Chevaliers de Rhodes, et aujourd'hui Chevaliers de Malthe*, vol. 3 (Paris: Rollin, Quil-lau and Desaint, 1726), 342–343 (Book 8): quotations from 342, note.

<sup>89</sup> Carraz, "Présences et dévotions," 73–76, 87.

<sup>90</sup> Bernard F. Reilly, *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under Queen Urraca, 1109–1126* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), 111–112, 169; *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des Hospitaliers*, vol. 1, ed. Delaville le Roulx, 50 (no. 61); *Cartulaire général du l'ordre du Temple*, ed. le Marquis d'Albon, 7–8 (nos 10–11).

latrava.<sup>91</sup> As already mentioned, in 1187–1188 Queen Sancha of Aragon founded a house of Hospitaller sisters and brothers at Sigena; she joined the house as a *con-soror* or associate sister, and chose it for her burial. The house became a royal mausoleum, with Sancha and her son Pedro (or Pere) II buried there. The foundation demonstrated the commitment of the ruling family of Aragon to holy war against the Muslims in Spain and their interest in Jerusalem. Other noble girls also joined the house or were educated there.<sup>92</sup>

The Templars' first substantial properties in England were given to them by a woman, Countess Matilda of Boulogne, wife of King Stephen of England and niece of the first two Latin rulers of Jerusalem, Godfrey de Bouillon and King Baldwin I. As a member of the ruling family of Jerusalem it was entirely appropriate that Matilda gave this Jerusalem-based order lands at Cressing in Essex and Cowley in Oxfordshire.<sup>93</sup> In 1156 Margaret, countess of Warwick, endowed them with Llanmadoc in the Gower in Wales.<sup>94</sup> In 1434 Brother John Stillingflete of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England drew up a list of the Hospitallers' and Templars' donors in England, Scotland and Wales, which included Countess Matilda and many other women donors, such as Sibil former wife of Richard *Medicus* who gave lands in Kersingdon; Agnes de Sibford, who gave the chapel of Sibford; Matilda de Cauz, who gave the village of Roustone to Temple Bruer, and Matilda Engaine, who gave the church of Gedynes to Temple Bruer.<sup>95</sup>

Women also donated to the Orders that gave charitable support to captives and former captives and negotiated ransoms for those captured by the other side. In May 1212 Count Ferrand and Countess Jeanne of Flanders and Hainaut prom-

<sup>91</sup> Miriam Shadis, *Berenguela of Castile (1180–1246) and Political Women in the High Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 142.

<sup>92</sup> García-Guijarro Ramos, "The Aragonese Hospitaller Monastery of Sigena," 113–151; Bernat Desclot, *Chronicle of the reign of King Pedro III of Aragon, AD 1276–1285*, trans. Frank Linbley Critchlow (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1928), 190 (chapter 132).

<sup>93</sup> *Records of the Templars in England*, ed. Lees, 145–146, 176–178; *The Cartulary of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem in England. Secunda Camera, Essex*, ed. Michael Gervers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 1–2 (nos 1 and 2).

<sup>94</sup> *Monasticon anglicanum: a history of the abbies and other monasteries, hospitals, frieries, and cathedral and collegiate churches, with their dependencies, in England and Wales*, vol. 6.2, ed. William Dugdale and Roger Dodsworth; revised by John Caley, Henry Ellis, and Bulkeley Bandinel (London: Harding, Harding and Lepard, 1830), 841 no. 32.

<sup>95</sup> London, College of Arms, MS L 17, fols 146r, 146v, 150r; John Stillingflete, "Liber Johannis Stillingflete de nominibus fundatorum Hosp. S. Johannis Jerusalem in Anglia," in *Monastici Anglicani volumen secundum*, ed. Roger Dodsworth and William Dugdale (London: A.W. Prostant, 1673), 541–553, at 545a (lines 27–29, 34–38), 547b (lines 25–29, 57–58).

ised the Hospitallers 700 *livres* of Valencinnes if Gerard de Mons, currently a captive “of the pagans” (presumably the Muslims, in the Holy Land) was freed by next Christmas. In February 1214 Blanche of Navarre, countess of Champagne, in her own name as Countess Palatine of Troyes but with the approval of her son Count Thibaud IV, confirmed an agreement that her “dear and faithful woman” Rosceline of La Ferté had made with the Hospitallers: if they could free her son Guiard, who was currently held captive by the Muslims, and bring him to the city of Acre, she would give the Hospital rents worth ten *livres* a year from land she held from the countess.<sup>96</sup> In May 1201 in the kingdom of Jerusalem Christine, daughter of the late Roger of Haifa, giving a *casal* (a village) the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, noted as a motivation for her gift the fact that the Hospital gave immense benefits and alms to the sick, poor and captives, and also that she would be made a *consoror* or associate sister of the Order in return.<sup>97</sup>

Women also contributed to crusade indulgences which were issued to raise money for crusade-related projects which did not require additional personnel but did need money. Between 1409 and 1411 the Hospitallers issued indulgences to raise money to build a new fortress at Bodrum on the south-west coast of what is now Turkey, and some of these were purchased by women with their husbands and families.<sup>98</sup> The Hospitallers issued printed indulgences to help finance the defence of Rhodes in 1480 and to rebuild the city after the siege. Before the end of March 1480 Simon Mountfort and his wife Emma bought a printed indulgence to help finance the defence of Rhodes; on 18 April 1481 John and Katherine Frisden bought indulgences at Oxford to help relieve the Hospitallers after their successful defence of Rhodes in the previous year.<sup>99</sup> Women could also assist the Orders

<sup>96</sup> Yvonne Friedman, *Encounter Between Enemies: Captivity and Ransom in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 204; *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des Hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem (1100–1310)*, vol. 2, ed. Joseph Delaville le Roulx (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1897), 142, 171 (nos 1385, 1434); Forey, “The Military Orders and the ransoming of captives,” 277.

<sup>97</sup> Forey, “The Military Orders,” 276; Friedman, *Encounter Between Enemies*, 200; *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des Hospitaliers*, vol. 2, ed. Delaville le Roulx, 8 (no. 1146).

<sup>98</sup> Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095–1588* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 313–314; Anthony Luttrell, “English contributions to the Hospitaller castle at Bodrum in Turkey: 1407–1437,” in *The Military Orders*, vol. 2, ed. Nicholson, 163–172, at 165, 167; William Lunt, *Financial Relations of the Papacy with England*, vol. 2, 1327–1534 (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1939), 558–559.

<sup>99</sup> Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 316; citing Edward Gordon Duff, *Fifteenth century English books: a bibliography of books and documents printed in England and of books for the English market printed abroad* (Oxford: Bibliographical Society, 1917), 54–55 (nos 204, 208); Lunt, *Financial Relations*, vol. 2, 586–587, 589; Robert Norman Swanson, “Crusade Administration

in other ways: the author of the Livonian Rhymed Chronicle, which recounted the history of the Swordbrothers and the early years of the Teutonic Order in Livonia, recorded that Martha, wife of King Mindaugas of Lithuania, argued against her husband when (in 1261) he decided to renounce Christianity (although he declined to take her advice) and persuaded her husband to allow a Brother of the Teutonic Order to return safely from Lithuania to Riga.<sup>100</sup> The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle also included a story of an Estonian woman who with her husband's connivance secretly fed two Brothers of the Teutonic Order who had been taken captive by her fellow pagans during the Estonian rebellion against the Order. She disguised her deed by pretending that she was throwing stones at them.<sup>101</sup>

## SAINTS

Even in the Hospitallers' first rule, which told the Brothers to avoid women, one female figure appeared as a leader and inspiration of the Brothers: the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>102</sup> Mary was also the leading patron of the Teutonic Order and a patron of the Templars, alongside Christ Himself.<sup>103</sup> Eric Christiansen appropriately

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in Fifteenth-Century England: Regulations for the Distribution of Indulgences in 1489," *Historical Research* 84, no. 223 (2011): 183–188, at 186; Karl Borchardt, "Late Medieval Indulgences for the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Order," in *Ablasskampagnen des Spätmittelalters: Luthers Thesen von 1517 im Kontext*, ed. Andreas Rehberg, Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom 132 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 195–218, at 210–211, 214–215.

<sup>100</sup> *Livländische Reimchronik*, ed. Franz Pfeiffer, Bibliothek des literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart 7 (Stuttgart: Literarischen Vereins, 1844), 174–175, 176–179 (lines 6439–6463, 6525–6585); Gregory Leighton, "Written and visual expressions of authority of female monastic institutions in medieval Livonia: 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries," *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana* 1 (2021): 15–35, at 18.

<sup>101</sup> Mazeika, "'Nowhere was the Fragility of their Sex Apparent,'" 240–241 and note 26; see *Livländische Reimchronik*, ed. Pfeiffer, 22 (lines 779–796).

<sup>102</sup> *Cartulaire general de l'ordre des Hospitaliers*, vol. 1, ed. Delaville le Roulx, 67 (no. 70 section 15); *Hospitallers' Riule*, 72 (section 15).

<sup>103</sup> Sister Mary Ellen Goenner, *Mary-Verse of the Teutonic Knights: A Dissertation* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1943); Philippe Josserand, "Le temple et le culte marial au long du chemin de Saint-Jacques: la commanderie de Villalcàzar de Sirga," in *Religion et Société urbaine au moyen âge. Études offertes à Jean-Louis Biget par ses anciens élèves*, ed. Patrick Boucheron and Jacques Chiffolleau (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2000), 313–331; Jochen Schenk, "Documentary Evidence for Templar Religion," in *The Templars and their Sources*, ed. Karl Borchardt, Karoline Döring, Philippe Josserand, and Helen J. Nicholson, *Crusades Subsidia* 10 (London: Routledge, 2017), 199–211, at 206–7, 210;

described Mary as a “warrior goddess” in her role as the patron of the Teutonic Order in its military campaigns in the Baltic.<sup>104</sup> Peter von Dusburg reported that Prussians taken prisoner in battle by the Teutonic Order in around 1260 told their captors that they had seen a vision of a beautiful maiden in the air leading the brothers’ banner; Rasa Mazeika suggested that this image of a warrior sky-maiden fitted the Prussians’ own religious beliefs but that Dusburg repeated it because he interpreted the image as the Blessed Virgin, and later chroniclers then repeated similar stories, developing the theme.<sup>105</sup> The Order attributed its victories at Strawe in 1348 and at Rudau in 1370 to Mary’s personal intervention.<sup>106</sup> She also reportedly appeared to support the Teutonic Order at a decisive moment in the battle of Konitz in September 1454 at the beginning of the Thirteen-Year War, ensuring the Brothers’ victory over the Prussian Confederation and Poland-Lithuania.<sup>107</sup> Accounts of the Ottoman Turks’ siege of Hospitaller Rhodes in 1480 carried on this theme, with a story that the Turks received a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St John the Baptist coming to the Hospitallers’ assistance.<sup>108</sup> Again, in Livonia in 1502 after Wolter von Plettenberg, the Livonian master of the Teutonic Order, and his brothers defeated the Muscovites at Lake Smolina it was claimed that von Plettenberg had had a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary and promised her that he would make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in return for victory.<sup>109</sup> Although the accounts of Mary and other saints assisting the Orders played down the Brothers’ achievement by ascribing their triumph partly to the aid of their saintly patrons, such stories also reinforced the Orders’ image as holy orders which fought God’s

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Helen J. Nicholson, *The Everyday Life of the Templars: The Knights Templar at Home* (Stroud: Fonthill, 2017), 71.

<sup>104</sup> Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier 1100–1525* (London: Penguin, 1997, 2nd edition), 222.

<sup>105</sup> Mazeika, “‘Nowhere was the Fragility of their Sex Apparent,’” 243–246.

<sup>106</sup> Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, 222.

<sup>107</sup> “Ältere Hochmeisterchronik. Erste Fortsetzung,” ed. Max Toeppen, in *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft*, ed. Theodor Hirsch, Max Töppen, and Ernst Strehlke, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1866), 679–680, cited by Sarnowsky, “Gender-Aspekte,” 177. I am very grateful to Professor Sarnowsky for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>108</sup> Theresa M. Vann and Donald J. Kagay, *Hospitaller Piety and Crusader Propaganda: Guillaume Caoursin’s Description of the Ottoman Siege of Rhodes, 1480* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 140–141, 203, 276–277; told rather differently at 308–309.

<sup>109</sup> Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, 257.

wars, for the Virgin would not have helped them if their cause was not just and holy.<sup>110</sup>

The Military Orders also venerated other female saints such as Katherine of Alexandria, Ursula and the 11,000 virgins, Barbara, and St Euphemia of Chalcedon.<sup>111</sup> In particular, literature produced for or by the Teutonic knights included works about female saints.<sup>112</sup> Scholars have generally assumed that in religious orders, where all men were celibate, devotion to female saints gave the Brothers an outlet for their natural sexual drive. But the Military Orders may have particularly encouraged veneration of female saints because their virtues of chastity, patience, long-suffering, modesty and humility benefited the Brothers' community and discipline and helped to transform them into an effective, unified force of dedicated religious men.<sup>113</sup>

The military religious Orders also promoted the cults of contemporary women, including their own members. Elizabeth of Hungary (d. 1231), wife of Ludwig IV (d. 1227), Landgrave of Thuringia, bequeathed the hospital that she had founded for the poor sick at Marburg to the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem. However, her brother in law Conrad (d. 1240), who succeeded Ludwig as Landgrave, had the hospital at Marburg transferred to the Teutonic Order, which he patronised and later joined. Conrad and the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Hermann von Salza, campaigned for Elizabeth's canonisation and the Teutonic Order venerated her as one of its patron saints.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>110</sup> The concept that God rewards the righteous and punishes the unrighteous is fundamental to Judeo-Christian belief: see, for example, the story of Noah in Genesis 6–7, in which God saves Noah and his family from the worldwide flood because of Noah's righteousness. For some recent scholarship on this topic see, for example, Scott Moynihan, "Miracles, Divine Agency, and Christian-Muslim Diplomacy during the Crusades," in *Miracles, Political Authority and Violence in Medieval and Early Modern History*, ed. Matthew Rowley and Natasha Hodgson (London: Routledge, 2021), 92–108, at 95.

<sup>111</sup> Helen J. Nicholson, "The Military Orders," in *A Companion to Chivalry*, ed. Robert W. Jones and Peter Coss (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2019), 69–84, at 79; Helen Nicholson, "Saints venerated in the Military Orders," in *Selbstbild und Selbstverständnis der geistlichen Ritterorden*, ed. Roman Czaja and Jürgen Sarnowsky, *Ordines Militares: Colloquia Torunensia Historica XIII* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2005), 91–113.

<sup>112</sup> Karl Helm and Walther Ziesemer, *Die Literatur des Deutschen Ritterordens* (Giessen: W. Schmitz, 1951), 42–47, 71–74; Hugo von Langenstein, *Martina*, ed. Adelbert von Keller, *Bibliothek des litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart 38* (Stuttgart: Litterarischer Verein, 1856).

<sup>113</sup> Nicholson, "The Military Orders," 79.

<sup>114</sup> *The Life and Afterlife of St. Elizabeth of Hungary: Testimony from her Canonization Hearings*, trans. Kenneth Baxter Wolf (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 11–12, 20, 72 note 149, 177; *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des Hospitaliers*, vol. 2, ed. Delaville le Roulx, 432 (no. 2008).

Returning to the example at the beginning of this paper, the Teutonic Order also promoted the cult of Dorothea of Montau (d. 1394), recluse and mystic in the Teutonic Order's Prussian lands, although eventually the Brothers failed to secure her canonisation. Dorothea came from a middle-class family living in Montau in Prussia (now Mątowy Wielkie in Poland). Her father was an engineer from Holland in the Netherlands, and had probably emigrated to Prussia in response to the generous conditions of settlement offered by the Teutonic Order.<sup>115</sup> The seventh-born child of a large family, Dorothea was married at the age of 16 or 17 to a much older man, Adalbrecht of Gdansk (d. 1390), a skilled swordsmith. According to Brother Johannes von Marienwerder's biography – which set out to emphasise Dorothea's devotion to Christ and play down her worldly interests – Dorothea spent more time in church than caring for her husband or children. Reading between the lines of the biography, it is clear that Dorothea's husband tried to support his wife in her devotions, but was often exasperated by her apparent lack of care. On one occasion the family home, with four of her children in it, nearly burned down in her absence; only through a miracle (according to Johannes) did Dorothea return in time to put out the fire.<sup>116</sup> After her husband's death she dedicated herself to a life of prayer in the parish church of Gdansk, where – according to testimonies taken during the canonisation process after her death – her pious devotion attracted some hostile comment from two priests who interpreted Dorothea's spiritual experiences and visions as a sign of heresy.<sup>117</sup> Dorothea was investigated for heresy but cleared, and in 1391 she moved to the church at Marienwerder (now Kwidzyn), where with the support of a priest of the Teutonic Order, Johannes of Marienwerder, she was able to have a cell built where she lived as a hermit.

Dorothea deployed her prophetic utterances to criticise eminent figures. She was very critical of Grand Master Conrad von Wallenrot, who had tried to have her removed from the church at Marienwerder. Dorothea foretold his death and stated after his death that she had seen his soul being tortured in hell.<sup>118</sup> On the other hand, she also gave her support to the Teutonic Order's campaigns against

<sup>115</sup> Johannes von Marienwerder, *The Life of Dorothea von Montau, a fourteenth-century Recluse*, trans. Ute Stargardt, *Studies in Women and Religion* 39 (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1997), 6–7, 12, 22, 113.

<sup>116</sup> Johannes von Marienwerder, *The Life of Dorothea von Montau*, 66, 69 (Book 1 chapters 28, 30).

<sup>117</sup> *Die Akten des Kanonisationsprozesses Dorotheas von Montau*, ed. Stachnik, Triller, and Westpfahl, 108–109 (quotation at 108).

<sup>118</sup> *Die Akten des Kanonisationsprozesses Dorotheas von Montau*, ed. Stachnik, Triller, and Westpfahl, 212, 266, 413.

the Lithuanians, as Brother Conrad von Lichtenstein, Grand Commander of the Teutonic Order, explained to the canonisation enquiry in June 1404 that she had foretold the success of a campaign by Grand Master Conrad von Jungingen, and he believed that the Grand Master had escaped the perils of the campaign through her intercession.<sup>119</sup> Dorothea's prophecy boosted the morale of the Grand Master and his troops and so would have assisted them on their journey, even though to judge from Brother Conrad von Lichtenstein's testimony at least one of the perils was mainly of their own making.

Initially the Hospitallers did not promote the sanctity of their own members beyond local devotions. But in the sixteenth century after the Council of Trent the Central Convent on Malta began to develop the cults of their holy brothers and sisters. In 1622 Giacomo Bosio, an official historian of the Order of St John, published a short book of devotional images and lives of the Orders' saints including some female saints – St Ubaldesca of Pisa, St Toscana of Verona, and St Fleur of Beaulieu – who had previously been venerated only in their own localities.<sup>120</sup>

## CONCLUSION

As in other religious orders, the majority of the full members of the Military Orders were men. The normative texts of the Hospitallers, the Teutonic Order and the Templars told the Brothers that associating with women could have an adverse effect on their spiritual vocation. However, this was a warning to the Brothers that they must take care of their own spiritual lives, rather than a condemnation of all women. The Orders welcomed donations from women and accepted individual pi-

<sup>119</sup> *Die Akten des Kanonisationsprozesses Dorotheas von Montau*, ed. Stachnik, Triller, and Westpfahl, 66. Note that by the time of these campaigns Lithuania had officially converted to Christianity.

<sup>120</sup> Giacomo Bosio, *Le Imagini de' beati e santi della sacra religione & illustrissima militia di S. Gio. Gerosolimitano con un brevissimo compendio della vita e de' miracoli loro* (Rome: Guglielmo Facciotti, 1622), 32–52, 105–111; Emanuel Buttigieg, *Nobility, Faith and Masculinity: The Hospitaller Knights of Malta, c. 1580–c. 1700* (London: Continuum, 2011), 104; Helen J. Nicholson, "Memory and the Military Orders: an Overview," in *Entre Deus e o Rei: O Mundo das Ordens Militares*, ed. Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, vol. 1 (Palmela: Município de Palmela – GEsOS, 2018), 17–28, at 26; Richard J. Wolff, *Holy Men and Women of the Order of Malta. The canonized and beatified from the 12th to 21st century* (Gastonia, NC: TAN Books, 2021), 31–38, 85–99; and see Kristjan Toomaspoeg's article in this volume on the women's houses of the Order of St John in medieval Italy, on pp. 117–135.

ous women into their ranks. They employed women on their lands and even within their houses. Arguably women could contribute most in those regions of Europe where local law and custom allowed them to have control of their own property (such as Spain), but even in England (for example) women joined the Hospitallers as sisters. Outside the Military Orders, women supported them, taking part in the confraternity and purchasing indulgences. The Military Orders valued women's prayer and their economic contribution, and promoted the cults of female saints. Women's contribution was significant to the Military Orders' achievements: they were, as the leading officials of the Teutonic Order wrote in 1395, fellow-soldiers with the Brothers in their spiritual battles.

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