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## Did Savary of Mauléon participate in Alfonso IX's failed siege of Cáceres in 1218?

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**Abstract:** This paper assesses the evidence on whether Savary of Mauléon could have been present in the attempted conquest of Cáceres by King Alfonso IX of Leon around the autumn of 1218. This paper also explains the possible reasons that might have encouraged the participation of this Poitevin nobleman in Iberian wars against the Almohads. It also attempts to contextualise Savary's alleged involvement in Iberia in relation to his political and military career before and after the events of the Fifth Crusade.

**Key words:** Savary of Mauléon; Fifth Crusade; Cáceres; Damietta; indulgences.

### [es] ¿Participó Savary de Mauléon en el fracasado asedio de Alfonso IX a Cáceres en 1218?

**Resumen:** Este trabajo evalúa la evidencia existente acerca de la posibilidad de que Savary de Mauléon hubiese estado presente en el intento de conquista de la ciudad de Cáceres por el rey Alfonso IX de León en el otoño de 1218. Este trabajo también explica cuáles son las posibles razones que llevaron a este noble poitevino a participar en las guerras ibéricas contra los Almohades. También intenta contextualizar la supuesta participación de Savary en la Península Ibérica en relación con su carrera política y militar, antes y después de su participación en la Quinta Cruzada.

**Palabras Claves:** Savary de Mauléon; Quinta Cruzada; Cáceres; Damietta; indulgencias.

**Content:** 1. Historiography of the Career of Savary of Mauléon. 2. The Context of the Crusade. 3. King John and the Iberian Connection. 4. Savary's Albigensian Entanglements. 5. Savary in France and England. 6. Savary as a Crusader. 7. Preparations to Go on Crusade. 8. Reasons for Joining the Crusade in Iberia. 9. Why Cáceres? 10. Connection with Egypt. 11. Conclusion. 12. Primary Sources and Bibliography.

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Savary of Mauléon was a Poitevin nobleman who played a significant role in some of the most important political and military events in England, France, and Egypt in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. He is also remembered for his prolific career as a troubadour. Because of his eventful life, he has received a fair amount of attention in the historiography. However, Savary of Mauléon's participation in

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the Iberian wars against the Almohads is an episode of his life, which has not been fully researched. The involvement of Savary in the failed attempt to conquer Cáceres by Alfonso IX of Leon with the aid of the Iberian military orders in November 1218 is only described in one medieval source, the *Anales toledanos*:

*Ficieron cruzada los freyres de España con las gientes del rey de castiella, del rey de Leon, e de los otros regnos quantos quisieron venir y, e Savaric de Mallen con muchas gientes de Gascoña, e fueron cercar Candes, e lidiaronla, e non la prisieron, que facia tan grandes aguas que non pudieron y durar. Esto fue media do novembere, duro hasta cerca de Navidad, e tomarons ende, Era MCCLV<sup>2</sup>.*

Most recent medieval Iberian scholars have accepted the *Anales*' reference without question<sup>3</sup>. Yet, Savary's contribution if it really occurred would have been significant in relation to this nobleman's campaigns on the side of King John of England or the side of the Count of Toulouse during the Albigensian Crusade. Among the Anglophone scholarship, Henry John Chaytor who wrote Savary's biography and was well acquainted with Iberian history seems to have been unaware of the Iberian connection<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, in French scholarship Patrice Le Roux and Geraldine Damon in their more recent works on Savary's career have equally ignored his Iberian entanglements<sup>5</sup>. The purpose of this paper is to survey the historiography on this famous character and then to assess the extensive evidence that survives on whether he could have been present in the campaigns of Alfonso IX of Leon around the autumn of 1218. Also, it explores what the historical circumstances were that would have encouraged his involvement in the campaign led by the king of Leon. Additionally, it also attempts to contextualise his participation in Iberia in relation to his later contribution in the siege of Damietta during the Fifth Crusade.

## 1. Historiography of the Career of Savary of Mauléon

As mentioned Savary of Mauléon, thanks to his prolific career as a warrior for hire, crusader and troubadour, has received plenty of attention in the historiography since his death. From contemporary or near contemporary chroniclers such as William of Tudela, Roger of Wendover, Jacques de Vitry, Oliver of Paderborn, and Matthew Paris to modern historians such as Patrice le Roux, Geraldine Damon, Marie-Pierre Baudry, Adolph Diudonne, Bélisaire Ledain and Chaytor his life and

<sup>2</sup> "The brothers of Spain made crusade with peoples of the king of Castile, the king of Leon and from other kingdoms who desired to come and Savary of Mauléon with may peoples from Gascony. They went to Cáceres to besiege it, but they were unable to capture it because the great amount of water that fell. Therefore, they were unable to stay. This happened from the middle of November and lasted until close to Christmas in the year of the [Spanish] era 1256 (1218 AD)." Translated by the author. Julio Porres Martín Cleto (ed.) *Anales toledanos I y II*, Toledo: Instituto provincial de investigaciones y estudios toledanos, 1993, p. 189. Furthermore, as noted by Ayala, it is noteworthy that this passage is the first known in the Iberian narratives to use the noun 'Crusade' to refer to the wars against the Muslims. Carlos de Ayala Martínez, 2013, "El término «cruzada» en la documentación castellana de los siglos XII y principios del XIII", *Intus-legere historia*, n° 7:2. Viña del Mar, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, p. 79-80.

<sup>3</sup> Julio González González, 1944, *Alfonso IX*, Vol. II, Madrid, CSIC, p. 190; Lomax, Derek W., 1978, *The Reconquest of Spain*, London: Longman, p. 132; Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, Philadelphia, Penn, 2003, p. 82; Francisco García-Fitz y Feliciano Novoa Portela, 2013, *Cruzados en la Reconquista*, Madrid, Marcial Pons, 2014, 138; Ayala Martínez, p. 79; José-Luis Martín Rodríguez, 1994, "Alfonso IX y sus relaciones con Castilla", *Espacio, tiempo y forma: Historia medieval*, n° 7, Madrid, UNED, p. 16-21.

<sup>4</sup> Henry John Chaytor, 1939, *Savaric de Mauléon: Baron and Troubadour*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 40-41.

<sup>5</sup> Patrice Le Roux, 2002, *Savary de Mauléon : sénéchal du Poitou : un prince poète au XIIIème siècle*, Nantes, Terres de brasse, p. 2-118; Géraldine Damon, 2009, "Jeux seigneuriaux en Poitou au temps des Plantagenêts. L'exemple des vicomtes de Thouars, des Lusignan, des Parthenay - L'archevêque et des Mauléon", en Aurell, Martin (ed.), *Les seigneuries dans l'espace Plantagenet (c. 1150-1250)*, Pessac, Ausonius, p. 298-299.

deeds have attracted ample interest<sup>6</sup>. In the last century, there have been a few works that have made several references to his career as a troubadour that rarely alluded to his involvement in Spain. For example, Camille Chabaneau's translation of Jehan de Nostredame's work provides some insight into the lives of troubadours from the thirteenth century and contains the only one non-Iberian reference to Savary of Mauléon departing for Spain in the company of another troubadour named Gausbert<sup>7</sup>. However, she has noted that Jehan de Nostredame is less than a reliable source for historical events<sup>8</sup>. Although most of his works seem to have been based on fantasy there are certain details that are grounded on historical occurrences. Therefore, his early modern mention of Savary's visit to Spain, though not dated, is the earliest non-Iberian confirmation that he was present there at some point in his life.

One of the earliest modern scholars to write specifically on Savary were Béliaire Ledain and Adolphe Dieudonné. Ledain wrote one of the earlier bibliographical works on Savary with a focus on his career in Poitou.<sup>9</sup> In his article, Dieudonné discusses a 1215 letter from King John to Savary of where the king granted him the right to mint coins in Poitou<sup>10</sup>. The article to show the level of importance and power that Savary managed to acquire by being in the service of King John of England<sup>11</sup>. However, this article does not mention Savary's contribution in Spain at all, perhaps due to his focus on this particular document<sup>12</sup>.

The first modern biography dedicated to Savary was the one written by Chaytor and published by Cambridge in 1939. This text, which suffers from excessive flattery of his subject, only covers his crusading enterprise briefly and, like the earlier work of Ledain, seems more preoccupied with Savary's career in England and France<sup>13</sup>. Chaytor was particularly interested in Savary's dealings with King John and his prolific career as a soldier for hire in one of the most turbulent periods of English history<sup>14</sup>. The next work to make extensive reference to Savary's career was written by Jean Boutière and Alexander Schutz. They composed a collection of troubadour biographies, in which they mentioned Savary as one of the preeminent Poitevin nobles with an impressive career as a warrior. Their monograph expanded on Chaytor's work by completing a list of the castellanies that Savary acquired during his lifetime<sup>15</sup>. They also noted that Savary as well as being a troubadour was a patron of the arts and gave patronage to Hugh de Saint-

<sup>6</sup> Guillerme de Tudela, 1875, *La chanson de la croisade contra les albigeois*, Paul Meyer (ed.), Paris, Librairie Reynouard, 66, 89-90, 95, 118; Rogeri de Wendover, 1841, *Flores historiarum*, Vol. III, Henry Cox (ed.) London, Sumptibus societatis, p. 331, 335, 347, 358; Anonymous, 1865, *Annales Monastici: Annales de Waverleia*, Vol. II, Henry Richard Luard (ed.) London, Longman, p. 28; Jacques de Vitry, 1825, *Histoire des croisades*, M. Guizot (ed.), Paris, J.-L.-J. Brière, p. 368; Oliverius Paderbornensi, 1894, "Historia Damiatina" en *Die Schriften des Kölner Domscholasters, Späteren Bischofs von Paderborn und Kardinal-Bischofs von S. Sabina Oliveros*, *Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart*, vol. CCII, Hermann Hoogeweg (ed.), Tübingen, Literat, p. 219; Matthew Paris, 1876, *Chronica majora*, Vol. III, Henry Richard Luard (ed.), London, Longman, p. 50; Le Roux 2002, 2-118; Damon 2009, 298-299; Martine Cao Carmichael de Baiglie, 1999, "Savary de Mauléon (ca 1180-1233), chevalier-troubadour poitevin : traïrise et société aristocratique", *Le moyen age*, n° 105. Liège, Université de Liège, p. 275, 301; Béliaire Ledain, 1892, *Savary de Mauléon et le Poitou à son époque*, Saint-Maixent-l'École, Imprimerie Ch. Reversé, p. 58; Adolphe Dieudonné, 1938, "La concession du droit de monnaie à Savary de Mauléon par le roi d'Angleterre, duc d'Aquitaine, et les rapports du Poitevin avec le Tournois", en *Transactions of the International Numismatic Congress*, Allan H. Mattingly, y E. S. G. Robinson, (eds.), London, B. Quaritch Ltd., p. 295; Chaytor 1939, 40-41.

<sup>7</sup> Jehan de Notre-Dame, 1913, *Les vies des plus célèbres et anciens poètes provençaux*, Camille Chabaneau (ed.), Paris Librairie Ancienne, p. 49.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>9</sup> Ledain 1892, 58 p.

<sup>10</sup> Dieudonné 1938, 295.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Chaytor 1939, 38-41.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 15-37, 63-80; Ledain 1892, 27-28.

<sup>15</sup> Jean Boutière y Alexander H. Schutz, 1964, *Biographies des troubadours: Textes provençaux des XIIIe et XIV siècles*, Paris, A.-G. Nizet, p. 221.

Cyr and Gausbert de Puycibot. They translated a series of poems attributed to Savary himself. Interestingly, unlike Nostredame who states that Savary accompanied Gausbert to Spain, their work suggests that he simply encouraged Gausbert to go to Spain as a way to impress a particular lady that they were courting<sup>16</sup>.

In the 1970's Robert Hajdu wrote an article about the Poitevin nobility in which he exposed the controversial idea that they were in a constant state of anarchy as a result of being between the Angevin and the Capetian spheres<sup>17</sup>. Although he mentioned Savary only once, Hajdu noted that the Poitevin nobles such as Savary were able to benefit from the weaknesses of both overlords in order to gain better vassalage arrangements. He also illustrated that Savary's appointment as seneschal of Poitou transformed the relation of the local nobility with their Angevine overlords<sup>18</sup>. In 1975, Martín Riquer i Morera produced an abbreviated biography of Savary based on previous works by other historians. He made a brief mention of Savary's visit to the courts Aragon and Castile in the company of Uc of Saint-Circ, basing it on earlier works by Boutière-Schulz-Cluzel, Milà and Menéndez Pidal.<sup>19</sup> In 1990, David Carpenter's book on the minority of Henry III also made some allusions to Savary in the years presiding his likely departure for Spain that helps to contextualise his decision<sup>20</sup>. Interestingly, Carpenter has noted that Honorius III's letter which commuted King John's followers' crusading vows for fighting in England to defend the English monarch against his enemies was intended solely to delay their departure<sup>21</sup>.

In Gerard Sivéry's biography of Louis VIII, Savary of Mauléon is only briefly mentioned. Nonetheless, Sivéry gives some basic details of Savary's life in the aftermath of King John's death, such as his appointment to the "council of thirteen"<sup>22</sup>. Sivéry does mention Savary's involvement in the Fifth Crusade. Savary does not reappear in this work until 1224, when he abandoned the towns of Niorts and La Rochelle to Louis VIII, after the siege by the French monarch. Sivéry is more willing to entertain the contemporary notion that Savary surrendered the positions without significant effort, although he does note that the English monarch did not reinforce the garrison<sup>23</sup>. The last mention of Savary is to inform us that he was present in Louis VIII's crusading army of 1226<sup>24</sup>.

Martine Cao Carmichael de Baiglie's article is one of the most recent works devoted exclusively to the career of Savary of Mauléon, building upon Chaytor's work. The main focus of this article is to address Savary's reputation as a "traitor" who constantly switched sides. She has argued that he was simply following the usual practices of the Poitevin nobility in this period of conflict between the Capetians and Angevin dynasties over the control of the area.<sup>25</sup> She charts Savary's career, fighting for Philip II of France, John of England, Louis VIII of France and finally Henry III of England, noting that this is representative of his position as a politically skilful and talented fighter. She has noted furthermore how Savary extended his Poitevin holdings as a result of his hereditary rights through his uncle's fiefs and increased his personal patronage in the service of successive Angevin monarchs<sup>26</sup>. With regards to Savary's crusading career, de Baiglie constructs a timeline, logging a number of donations that Savary granted to Poitevin religious houses in 1218. She provides evidence that he departed for Egypt with the Genoese fleet in July 1219<sup>27</sup>. She re-evaluates Savary's crusading

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 232.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Hajdu, 1978, "Castles, Castellans and the Structure of Politics in Poitou, 1152-1271", *Journal of Medieval History*, n° 4. London, Taylor & Francis, p. 35-37.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Martín de Riquer i Morera, 1975, *Los Trovadores: Historia literaria y textos*, Vol. 2, Barcelona, Editorial Planeta, p. 942.

<sup>20</sup> David Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, London, Methuen London, 1990, p. 28.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Gerard Sivéry, *Louis VIII le Lion*, Paris, Fayard, 1995, p. 165.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 248-249, 252.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 375.

<sup>25</sup> Baiglie 1999, 275, 301.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 286.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 291.

reputation as a way to create a more nuanced understanding of his later career as seneschal of Poitou and as a troubadour. According to de Baiglie, he decided to embark on the Fifth Crusade, partly due to contemporary factors such as the rise of lay piety, his own “thirst for adventure”, and his need for financial rewards (a probable factor for his involvement in Cáceres). Finally, de Baiglie notes the possibility that he departed on crusade at the same time as financial exactions against the English church were increasing. She therefore argues that he sought in this way to display his displeasure with these measures<sup>28</sup>.

Le Roux’s 2002 book is the most recent historical monograph on Savary of Mauléon’s career. However, he has reached a similar conclusion to that of de Baiglie, arguing essentially that Savary was emblematic of his period<sup>29</sup>. With regards to his crusading reputation, le Roux indicates that Pope Honorius III granted to both Savary and Hugh de Lusignan a twentieth of the revenues of the diocese of Poitiers in order to finance their crusade. Le Roux also reports that Savary borrowed significant sums of money from merchants in Sienne<sup>30</sup>. Perhaps his most significant contribution is his inclusion of a map in which he traces Savary’s likely route to the siege of Damietta. He believes that Savary took the sea route from Poitou to Genoa around the Iberian Peninsula, something that will be discussed later. Although he depicts this as the more plausible route, he does not supply sufficient evidence nor mentions Savary’s probable involvement in Iberia as noted<sup>31</sup>.

## 2. The Context of the Crusade

In 1213 Pope Innocent III decided to launch a new crusading scheme to recuperate the Holy City of Jerusalem that had been lost to Saladin in 1187 after the disastrous battle of Hattin.<sup>32</sup> The Third and Fourth Crusades had failed to rectify the situation and Innocent was getting old. He felt the necessity to supersede his previous attempts by attacking Egypt, the wealthiest realm in the area<sup>33</sup>. Perhaps encouraged by the crusading success of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, he called on the clergy of Christendom to a great council of the church that would be held in Rome to discuss among other matters the planned expedition to the east.<sup>34</sup> In his letter *Quia maior*, he explicitly forbade crusaders on their way to the Holy Land from participating in any attempt to aid the Iberian rulers against their Muslim neighbours<sup>35</sup>. He argued that the necessity for their help there had ceased in a direct reference to the aforementioned battle. However, he was not prepared to repeal the crusading

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 292.

<sup>29</sup> le Roux 2002, 36.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid; Thomas W. Smith, 2013, “Pope Honorius III and the Holy Land Crusades, 1216-1227: A Study in Responsive Papal Government”, Unpub. PhD Thesis, London, Royal Holloway, p. 283; Petrus Pressutti (ed.), 1895, *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, Vol. I, Roma, Ex typographia vaticana, doc. 213, 215.

<sup>31</sup> le Roux 2002, 36.

<sup>32</sup> Migne, *Patrologia latina*, Vol. CCXVI, col. 817; “11. Innocent III, Quia maior, 1213”, en Jessalynn Bird, Edward Peters, y James M. Powell (eds.), 2013, *Crusade and Christendom Annotated Documents in Translation from Innocent III to the Fall of Acre, 1187-1291*, Philadelphia, Penn, p. 110.

<sup>33</sup> James A. Powell, 1986, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221*, Philadelphia: Penn, p. 123-127; Jonathan Phillips, 2010, *Holy Warriors: A Modern History of the Crusades*, London, Vintage, p. 166-220; Alan Murray, 2017, “The Place of Egypt in the Military Strategy of the Crusades”, en *The Fifth Crusade in Context*, Elizabeth J. Maylod, Guy Perry, Thomas W. Smith y Jan Vandeburie (eds.), London, Routledge, p. 133-134.

<sup>34</sup> Carlos de Ayala Martínez, 2013, “Alfonso VIII, cruzada y cristiandad”, *Espacio, tiempo y forma*, n° 29. Madrid, UNED, p. 95.

<sup>35</sup> “*Et propter eandem causam remissiones et indulgentias hactenus a nobis concessas procedentibus in Hispaniam contra mauros vel contra haereticos in Provinciam revocamus, maxime cum illis concessae fuerint ad tempus quod jam ex toto praeteriit, etistis ob causam quae iam ex majori parte cessavit*”, “Quia maior” en Jacques Paul Migne (ed.), 1891, *Patrologia latina*, Vol. CCXVI, Paris, col. 820; “And for the same reason, we revoke the remission of sins and indulgences we granted up to this time for those setting out against the Moors in Spain or against the heretics in Provence, especially since they were granted for reasons that are now entirely in the past, and for a particular reason that has for the most part ceased”. English Translation in: “11. Innocent III, Quia maior, 1213”, p. 110.

indulgences for the Iberians themselves, conceivably fearful as his papal predecessors of an exodus of Iberian crusaders towards the Holy Land. This would have weakened their position in Iberia allowing the Almohads to regain some territory.<sup>36</sup> As the Fourth Lateran Council met in 1215, the prohibition for trans-Pyrenean crusaders' involvement in Iberia was not heavily emphasized despite the admonishment against the Bishop of Lisbon in his attempt to get dispensation for a crusade against the Alantejan city of Alcácer do Sal that is mentioned in *De itinere frisonum*<sup>37</sup>. However, as crusading preparations were being carried out across western Europe in July 1216, Innocent was succeeded by Honorius III<sup>38</sup>. The new pope, unlike his predecessor, was keener to permit crusaders to stop over in Iberia on their way to the Holy Land, as long as they reached their final destination in Egypt. This view is clear from both the letters sent by him to the crusaders who had taken Alcácer in the autumn of 1217; and his congratulatory behaviour towards the Frisians who had sacked the Andalusi cities of Faro, Rota and Cadiz on their way to the Holy Land<sup>39</sup>.

### 3. King John and the Iberian Connection

King John's reign is remembered for his loss of most of his continental possessions and his disputes with the Pope and his barons that resulted in his acceptance of Magna Carta in 1215. Despite John's duplicitous reputation and his inability to maintain the loyalty of his subjects on both sides of the English Channel, he was not without diplomatic skill. For example, after his loss of Normandy in 1204, his brother-in-law the King of Castile, Alfonso VIII invaded John's territory of Gascony under the pretext that it had been promised to him as dowry by Henry II, when he married Eleanor Plantagenet in 1170<sup>40</sup>. Although this invasion did not succeed, this forced John to realise the necessity of creating an alliance with Alfonso VIII's rivals in the peninsula in order to counter the threat. From this perhaps came an alliance that he forged with King Alfonso IX of Leon and his own other brother-in-law Sancho VII of Navarre<sup>41</sup>. Alfonso IX, in particular, similarly to John had a troublesome relation with Rome and had as a result suffered

<sup>36</sup> Damian J. Smith, 2016, "La Guerra contra los musulmanes en España 'en palabras' del Papa Inocencio III," *Orígenes y desarrollo de la guerra santa en la península ibérica*, Carlos de Ayala Martínez, Patrick Henriet y José Santiago Palacios Ontalva (eds.), Madrid, Casa de Velásquez, p. 217-18.

<sup>37</sup> "Quia maior" en Migne, *Patrologia latina*, Vol. CCXVI, col. 817; "11. Innocent III, Quia maior, 1213", p. 110; Anonymous, 1991, *Kroniek van het klooster Bloemhof te Wittewierum*, Hubertus P. H. Jansen, and Antheunis Janse (eds.), Hilversum, Verloren, p. 68-69; Ferreiro Alemparte, p. 166; Jaap J. van Moolenbroek, 2016, *Nederlandse kruisvaarders naar Damiate aan de Nijl: Acht eeuwen geschiedenis en fantasie in woord en beeld*, Hilversum, Verloren, p. 52-88; Lucas Villegas-Aristizabal, 2019, "Was the Portuguese Led Military Campaign Against Alcácer do Sal in the Autumn of 1217 Part of the Fifth Crusade?", *Al-Masāq: Journal of the Medieval Mediterranean*, n° 31:1. London, Routledge, Forthcoming.

<sup>39</sup> Smith, 2013, p. 21, José Manuel Rodríguez García, 2014, *La ideología cruzada en el siglo XIII*, Madrid, Editorial Universidad de Sevilla-Secretariado de Publicaciones, p. 147.

<sup>39</sup> Demetrio Mansilla, 1965, *La documentación pontificia de Honorio III*, Roma, Instituto español de historia eclesiástica, doc. 96; Ferreiro 1999, 222; Moolenbroek 2016, 65-73; Villegas 2019, Forthcoming.

<sup>40</sup> José Manuel Cerda, 2011, "La dot gasconne d'Aliénor d'Angleterre Entre royaume de Castille, royaume de France et royaume d'Angleterre", *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, n° 54. Poitiers, l'Université de Poitiers, p. 236; José Manuel Cerda, 2013, "The Marriage of Alfonso VIII of Castile and Leonor Plantagenet: The First Bond Between Spain and England in the Middle Ages", en Martin Aurell (ed.), 2013, *Les stratégies matrimoniales (IXe-XIIIe siècle)*, Brussels, Brepols, p. 143-153; Kyle Lincoln, 2013, "Una cum uxore mea: Alfonso VIII, Leonor Plantagenet, and Marriage Alliances at the Court of Castile", *Revista chilena de estudios medievales*, n° 4. Santiago de Chile, Universidad Gabriela Mistral, p. 11-32; Anna Katarzyna Dulaska, 2014, "Sancho el Fuerte y el Islam. Las relaciones navarro-almohades a la luz de las fuentes cronísticas y documentales (s.XIII): mensaje ideológico y su lectura política", en *La península ibérica en tiempos de las Navas de Tolosa*, Carlos Estepa Díez y María Antonia Carmona Ruiz (eds.), Madrid, Sociedad española de estudios medievales, p. 425-442.

<sup>41</sup> Ilan Shoval, 2016, *King John's Delegation to the Almohad Court*, Turnhout, Brepols, p. 15-16; Alvira 2012, 419-428.

invasions to his territory by the Kings of Portugal and Castile<sup>42</sup>. This alliance was confirmed in a letter dated 7 August 1207 sent by Alfonso IX to John<sup>43</sup>. There is no indication that Savary, while defending John's remnant territories of Poitou, was involved in the negotiations with Alfonso IX of Leon. However, it is likely at least that he was aware of the existence of the close ties. The connection is tenuous but at least it would have allowed Savary to be acquainted indirectly with Alfonso IX. Savary continued to play a vital role as seneschal of Poitou for John in the continent as he is mentioned in multiple documents from 1205 to 1211<sup>44</sup>. His position in Poitou would have given him access to the physical communication lines between England and Leon both by sea and land.

#### 4. Savary's Albigensian Entanglements

Savary's first crusading undertaking took place in 1211 when he participated in the Albigensian Crusade.<sup>45</sup> However, in this particular venture he came to the aid of Raymond VI, count of Toulouse who was King John's ally<sup>46</sup>. Therefore, his intervention was on the side of the Provençal lords against the crusade of Simon of Montfort. His involvement in Toulouse is recorded in *The Song of the Cathar Wars* of William of Tudela.<sup>47</sup> Also, Riquer noted that Savary wrote a poem (c. 1211) dedicated to Eleonor of Aragon, sister of Peter II of Aragon, and wife of Raymond VI, in which he promised help against the forces of Simon de Montfort.<sup>48</sup> This perhaps is an early indication, though not very strong of another Iberian connection. His contribution as a soldier for hire seems to have upset some more than others in the crusading endeavour as it can be noted by the accusative and vindictive language that Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay used in his chronicle to describe Savary's arrival to the aid of the count of Toulouse:

With our enemies came that most depraved apostate, that iniquitous transgressor, son of the Devil, servant of the Antichrist, Savary de Mauléon; more evil than any heretic, worse than any infidel, assailant of the Church, the enemy of Christ most corrupt of mortals - or should I say himself a mortal infection - I speak of Savary, who, villain unredeemed, shameless and senseless, rushed against God with neck down and dared to assault the Holy Church of God! Prime mover of heresy, architect of cruelty, agent of perversity, comrade of sinners, accomplice of the perverted, a disgrace to mankind, a man unacquainted with manly virtues, devilish – himself the devil incarnate!<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Laura García Durán, 2016, "La intervención de Inocencio III en la política matrimonial de Felipe Augusto de Francia y Alfonso IX de León", *Vergentis*, nº 3. Murcia, Universidad Católica de Murcia, p. 241-242.

<sup>43</sup> Thomas Rymer, 1745, *Foedera*, Vol. I, Par. I, London: Records Commission, p. 45.

<sup>44</sup> Margaret Rickaby, 2011, "Girard d'Athée and the Men from the Touraine their Roles under King John", Unpub. PhD Thesis, Durham, Durham University, p. 28; Thomas D. Hardy (ed.), 1835, *Rotuli litterarum patentium in turri Londinensi asservati*, London, Record Commission, col. 49b, p. 58; Stephen Church, 2015, *King John: England, Magna Carta and the Making of a Tyrant*, London, Macmillan, p. 139.

<sup>45</sup> Martin Alvira Cabrer, 2009, "La Cruzada contra los Albigenses: historia, historiografía y memoria", *Clio & Crimen*, nº 6, 2009, Durango, Centro de historia del crimen, p. 110-141.

<sup>46</sup> Elaine Graham-Leigh, 2005, *The Southern French Nobility and the Albigensian Crusade*, Boydell, Woodbridge, p. xxii; Wilfred L. Warren, 1978, *King John*, Berkeley, University of California Press, p. 69.

<sup>47</sup> Guillerme de Tudela 1875, 66, 89-90, 95, 118.

<sup>48</sup> Riquer 1975, 942.

<sup>49</sup> Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, 1990, *The history of the Albigensian Crusade*, W. Silby y M. Silby (trans.), Woodbridge, Boydell, p. 130; "Veniebat etiam cum adversariis ille pessimus apostata, ille prevaricator iniquus, filius Diaboli, minister Antichristi, Savericus videlicet de Malleone, omnem excedens hereticum, omni deterior infideli impugator ecclesie, Christi hostis. O virum, immo virus, pessimum, Savaricum dico, qui, scelestus et perditus, inpudens et imprudens, currens adversus Deum erecto collo, impugnare ausus est ecclesiam sanctam Dei! O hominem apostasie principem, crudelitatis artificem, perversitatis actorem, o hominem malignorum participem, o perversorum consortem, o hominem obprobrium hominum, o virum virtutis ignarum, o hominem diabolicum, immo totum Diabolum!" Petri Vallium Sarnaii Monachi, 1926, *Hystoria albigensis*, Vol. 1. Pascal Guébin y Ernest Lyon (eds.), Paris, Librairie de la société de l'histoire de France, p. 253-254.

It is obvious by the language that for Peter the fact that Savary was a soldier for hire who did not seem to care about the religious conflict at hand and was just interested in acquiring wealth was worse than any of his enemies. To the religious author, this made him even more evil in his eyes than the Cathars<sup>50</sup>. However, this alone cannot be the only reason for such abuse in his writing, as Savary was not alone in the profession or in aiding indirectly the Cathars through his employment under Count Raymond out of self-interest. It is probable that there might have been an alter motive that escapes the surviving evidence which would explain this particular writer's fastidious aversion towards Savary. Furthermore, according to William of Tudela, Savary's participation as a warrior for hire meant that when the count failed to pay him the accorded sum Savary took Raymond's son hostage to Bordeaux where he waited for the ransom to be paid<sup>51</sup>.

## 5. Savary in France and England

After his misadventure in the south of France, Savary returned to his domains in Poitou but seems to have lost the favour of King John, since on May 1212 he is not mentioned as seneschal of Poitou anymore. Chaytor claimed that this was because John was dissatisfied with Savary's behaviour mainly with regard to his kidnapping of Raymond's son. However, his claims are only speculative as there is no contemporary source for this opinion, especially since John was not particularly partial towards his relatives. Moreover, by July 1212, Savary swore loyalty to Philip August II of France. The French king promised him in return possession of La Rochelle if he managed to conquer it from the English<sup>52</sup>. Likewise, until August 1213, there is no news of his movements, but he appears to keep his loyalty to Philip August II. He was given charge of the French fleet in an attempt to conquer Bruges, but he seems to have used it to attack ships and land of both friend and foe according to William le Breton during 1213, upsetting the French monarch<sup>53</sup>. Savary seems to have been building a reputation as a warrior with great skill and fluid loyalty.

By August, King John, perhaps impressed by Savary's deeds, offered to employ him again, if he wished to return to his service<sup>54</sup>. Savary as a routier but also as a lord in Poitou, seems to have been careful to maintain his good relations with the beleaguered but solvent Angevine monarch. In May of that same year fearful of rebellion at home and an invasion by Prince Louis, son of the king of France, John had accepted papal over-lordship of England (a tactic well used by Iberian kings in moments of crisis).<sup>55</sup> John's distrust of his own nobles pushed him to trust foreign paid fighter better than his own vassals. Therefore, Savary's reputation as an efficient and ruthless sword for hire made him very appealing to the Angevin monarch in his anguish. On the other hand, Savary perhaps fearing a change in the balance of power in his region of Poitou where the French monarch had had the upper hand for the previous year or so decided to take John's offer. As le Roux and Damon have argued, Savary kept switching sides in order to maintain his own political independence in the region<sup>56</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Guillerme de Tudela 1875, 118.

<sup>52</sup> Léopold Delisle, 1856, *Catalogue des actes de Philippe-Auguste*, Paris, Auguste Duran, p. 315.

<sup>53</sup> "jurat Savaricus id ipsum, Ad tempus varians, Pictonum more, favorem." Rigord et Guillaume Le Breton, 1885, *Œuvres : historiens de Philippe*, Vol. II, H. François Delaborde (ed.), Paris, Librairie de la société de histoire de France, p. 256.

<sup>54</sup> Thomas Rymer, 1745, *Foedera*, Vol. I, Par. I, London, Records Commission, p. 57.

<sup>55</sup> Carlos Laliena Corbera, 2007, "Guerra santa y conquista feudal en el noroeste de la península a mediados del siglo XI: Barbastro, 1064", en *Cristianos y musulmanes en la península ibérica: la guerra, la frontera y la convivencia: XI congreso de estudios medievales*, Ávila: Fundación Sánchez Albornoz, p. 394–398; Ana Isabel Lapeña Paúl, 2004. *Sancho Ramírez: rey de Aragón (¿1064-?-1094) y rey de Navarra (1076–1094)*, Guijón, Ediciones Trea, p. 18–19; Lucas Villegas-Aristizábal, 2018, "Gregory VII and Eblous II of Roucy: Proto-Crusade in Iberia", *Medieval History Journal*, n° 21:1. London, Sage, p. 129.

<sup>56</sup> le Roux 2002, 48-51; Damon 2009, 298-299.



So in August 1214, during John's attempted invasion of France through Poitou, Savary was reconciled with John and was given permission to visit England.<sup>57</sup> Although he seems to have been involved in the planning of the expedition through France, he did not seem to have played a role in the disastrous Battle of Bouvines. According to Chaytor, he might have returned to southern France to aid the count of Toulouse<sup>58</sup>. In any case by the end of the year John was back in England and Savary would soon follow him there to help him fight against his barons.

According to the records, Savary arrived in Ireland by the end of January with an army of warriors from the continent<sup>59</sup>. It is possible that the reason for was because of difficulty in the crossing from the continent as it seems that expected Savary and his company to arrive in southern England instead. From Ireland Savary went into England and was implicated in the refortification of Winchester. In March 1215, King John took the vow of crusade as a way to get additional protection from his rebellious barons. It is unknown whether Savary the same at the time. It would seem likely that Savary might have taken the opportunity under the circumstances. By June 15, King John had been by the archbishop of Canterbury to accept the conditions of Magna Carta. He used this document as a delaying tactic in order to wait for further forces from the continent<sup>60</sup>. In October 1216, King John with his reinforcements of continental fighters (led in part by Savary) marched from Dover to Rochester where some of the rebellious English barons put up a valiant fight in the castle. According to Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris, Savary convinced King John not to execute the leaders when the castle was finally taken. Accordingly, Savary had dissuaded the king by suggesting that the army might revolt if it was forced to fight in a war without quarter<sup>61</sup>. It is notable especially in comparison to Peter of Vaux-Cernay that these near contemporary clerical authors had such a sympathetic view of Savary.

On December Savary captured Geoffrey of Mandeville's Pleshey Castle, Essex.<sup>62</sup> Later in April 1216, he was granted the castle by King John perhaps as a partial recompense for his services.<sup>63</sup> By June of the same year under John's orders, Savary had set fire to the town and castle of Winchester to stop it falling into the hands of Prince Louis of France and his forces. However, on 24 June, he negotiated the castle's surrender to Louis on John's orders<sup>64</sup>. From there he seems to have taken advantage of the situation of anarchy created by the strife between the forces loyal to John and those supporting the French invasion and decided to pillage the Isle of Ely and its churches with Fawkes de Breaute<sup>65</sup>. Savary seems to have used John's war with his barons as an opportunity to enlarge his domains by capturing and pillaging the lands and castles of the king's enemies<sup>66</sup>. This situation might have made him very unpopular with a large group of the English nobility and the local church.

<sup>57</sup> Church 2015, 203.

<sup>58</sup> Chaytor 1939, 27.

<sup>59</sup> *Rotuli litterarum patentium*, 1835, p. 185, 187b; Nicholas Vincent, 1996, *Peter des Roches: An Alien in English Politics, 1205-1238*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 115; Sidney Painter, 1949, *The Reign of King John*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, p. 299-300; Warren 1978, 233.

<sup>60</sup> Rickaby 2011, 218.

<sup>61</sup> Roger of Wendover, *Flowers of History*, Vol. II, p. 336, 339; Matthew Paris, 1874, *Chronica majora*, Vol. II, Laud, Henry R. (ed.), London, Longman, p. 626.

<sup>62</sup> Ralph of Coggeshall, 1875, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, Stevenson, Joseph (ed.), London: Longman, p. 177; Martin Allan Hall, 2017, "The Historical, Biographical and Intellectual Context of John of Garland's 'De triumphis Ecclesie', a New Critical Edition", Unpublished PhD Thesis, Royal Holloway, p. 20.

<sup>63</sup> Hardy, *Rotuli litterarum clausarum*. Vol. I, p. 251; Francisque Michel (ed.), 1840, *Histoire des ducs des Normandie et des rois d'Angleterre*, Paris, Chez Jules Reynouard et c., p. 163, 165; Painter 1949, 372.

<sup>64</sup> Vincent 1996, 127; *Annales de Waverleia*. Vol. II, 82-83; *Histoire des ducs des Normandie*, 173.

<sup>65</sup> Roger of Wendover, *Flowers of history*. Vol. II, 356-357.

<sup>66</sup> Matthew Paris, *Chronica majora*, Vol. II, 645, 667.

## 6. Savary as a Crusader

While the conflict in England raged between King John and his barons as mentioned, Pope Innocent III in the last days of his eventful life launched a crusading venture in an attempt to capture Egypt after the success of the Fourth Lateran Council.<sup>67</sup> On 21 September 1216, Honorius III, Innocent's successor, being well informed about the situation in England, sent a letter to Savary in which he called him *Crucesignato*<sup>68</sup>. The letter indicates that at least from this point onward Savary saw himself as a crusader, although it is likely that he had taken the cross earlier as noted above. Why his change of heart occurred, it is difficult to tell but it is possible to speculate that after many years of fighting fellow Christians the message of redemption might have seemed appealing. Perhaps, John's declining health and the reverses of the king's armies in relation to the arrival of Prince Louis persuaded him that the best way to protect himself against retribution after the king's death was to place himself under papal protection as a crusader. As it was clarified in the Fourth Lateran Council, all the crusaders' property came under church protection<sup>69</sup>. Apart from this, crusaders received a number of privileges, which would allow Savary to avoid an unpleasant end, if the new regime in England wanted to resort to retribution for his past transgressions. On the other hand, Savary as a follower of King John's cause might have been given crusading privileges for his protection of England which after all was now a papal fiefdom. Savary's close association with King John is noted in the king's will, in which he appears as one of his guarantors<sup>70</sup>.

On 19 October 1216 John died at Newark Castle and Savary might have been with the king in his last days or arrived soon after his passing as Stephen Church has suggested<sup>71</sup>. As a sign of his continuing loyalty, Savary accompanied the body of the deceased monarch to his final resting place at Gloucester Cathedral. On October 28, Savary as a guarantor of John's will attended the coronation of Henry III<sup>72</sup>. His position in the council of government can be noted by his appearance as signatory of Magna Carta at Bristol Castle<sup>73</sup>. Despite his exalted position on parchment, he seems to have been in a hurry to return home to Poitou and in November 1216, he asked the king's permission for his departure<sup>74</sup>. Perhaps as suggested earlier, his relations with the English nobility were less than cordial and now that his employer was dead, there was little reason for him to stay in England, surrounded by enemies. His crusading status could not protect him forever, especially now that the situation in England had changed. Despite this, by December 1216, Pope Honorius III, hopeful of maintaining his over-lordship of England and to counter the French incursion, told Savary among others to remain true in their allegiance to Henry III<sup>75</sup>. However, by the time this letter arrived in England it is likely that Savary had been back in Poitou preparing himself for the new crusading venture.

<sup>67</sup> James A. Powell, 1986, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221*, Philadelphia, Penn, p. 123-127.

<sup>68</sup> *Regesta Honorii III*, Vol. III, 8.

<sup>69</sup> Leandro Duarte Rust, 2010, "A medida da Terra Santa: a bula *ad liberandam* (1215) e a institucionalização das cruzadas", *Mirabilia*, n° 10. Barcelona, Universitat Autònoma, p. 85-105.

<sup>70</sup> Carpenter 1990, 14, n. 6.

<sup>71</sup> Stephen Church, 2010, "King John's Testament and the Last Days of His Reign", *English Historical Review*, n° 125:514. Oxford, Oxford University Press, p. 522.

<sup>72</sup> *Annales de Waverleia*, Vol. II, 286.

<sup>73</sup> Church 2015, p. 242; *Accounts of the Constables of Bristol Castle*, Vol. XXXIV, p. 80; Thomas D. Hardy (ed.), 1833, *Rotuli litterarum clausarum in turri Londinensi asservati*, Vol. I, London, George Eyre and Andrew Spottiswoode, p. 294; Church 2010, 525.

<sup>74</sup> Anonymous, 1891, *L'histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, Paul Meyer, (ed.), Paris, Librairie Renouard, lines 15537-15561.

<sup>75</sup> *Regesta Honorii III*, Vol. I, 27, no. 143.

## 7. Preparations to Go on Crusade

In a charter, which is dated only as 1216, but it is probably from December of that year, Savary for the first time on record grants some land for the salvation of his own soul and that of his grandfather to the Abbey of Thelemond. The charter, though formulaic in its wording, does suggest his desire for absolution. Possibly his career as a sword for hire with fluid loyalty had left him under some anguish especially after the passing of King John. Although he does not refer to himself as a *crusignato*, he does explain his desire to go to the Holy Land to fight against the enemies of the faith<sup>76</sup>. Furthermore, when on February 1217 Honorius III grants a dispensation “to those who have taken the cross, who are faithful to the king, to return until the kingdom is settled”<sup>77</sup>, Savary does not return to England and instead seems to be more concerned with the fulfilment of his crusading vow staying put in Poitou. Furthermore, by September the Treaty of Lambeth/Kingston had been agreed between the rebellious English barons led by Prince Louis and those loyal to Henry III. Among the agreed resolutions was the restitution of lands that had been captured from the rebels during the baronial conflict. This situation, therefore, hampered Savary’s ability to maintain his newly acquired domains in England<sup>78</sup>. Perhaps, knowing that his position in England was so weak under the new arrangement, he chose to stay put in Poitou and continued with his plans to join the crusade to the Levant or Iberia, although the sources do not mention this second destination.

## 8. Reasons for Joining the Crusade in Iberia

On the summer of 1217, a fleet of crusaders from Germany, Flanders and Friesland passed via the coast of Poitou on their way to Jerusalem as part of the Fifth Crusade and Savary as a major landlord in the area would have been aware of their passage.<sup>79</sup> By the end of the summer, part of the fleet had been invited by the bishop of Lisbon to participate in a siege and conquest of the Muslim city of Alcácer do Sal<sup>80</sup>. The leader of this expedition was Count William of Holland, who had been an ally of King John during his 1214 campaign that had culminated in his defeat at Bouvines<sup>81</sup>. It is, therefore, likely that Savary was at least acquainted with the excommunicated count and might have been aware of his voyage to the Holy

<sup>76</sup> “*Sciant omnes ad quos presens carta pervenerit quod ego Savaricus de Maleone, propter remedium anime mee et parentum meorum, iter arripiens ad subsidium Terre Sancte contra inimicos crucis Christi*”. La Boutetière, Louis (ed.), 1873, *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Talmont*, Poitiers, Typographie de A. Dupré, doc. 443.

<sup>77</sup> William H. Bliss (ed.), 1893, *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. I: 1198-1304, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Regesta 9, 16 Kal. Feb. 1217 (f. 40d.).

<sup>78</sup> Jenkyn Beverly Smith, 1979, “The Treaty of Lambeth, 1217”, *English Historical Review*, n° 94:372. Oxford, Oxford University Press, p. 567.

<sup>79</sup> Anonymous, 1879, “*Gesta crucigerorum Rhenanorum*”, *Quinti belli sacri scriptores minores*, Reinhold Röhrich (ed.) Geneve, Typis, p 27-29; Stephen Lay, 2009, *The Reconquest Kings of Portugal: Political and Cultural Reorientation*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 224-225; Carlos Filipe Afonso, 2014, “Técnicas e táticas de assédio e defesa dos castelos em Portugal no contexto da reconquista – O caso de Alcácer, 1217”, em *Fortificações e território na península ibérica e no Magreb (seculos VI al XVI)*, Isabel C. F. Fernandes (ed.), Vol. II, Lisbon, Edições Colibri, p. 517-539; António Rafael Carvalho, 2010, “A catividade marítima de Qasr al-Fath/Alcácer do Sal no Alentejo litoral (1191-1217): Pirataria ou Yhiad marítima contra o reino de Portugal”, em *Actas do 2º Encontro de história do Alentejo litoral*, Sines, Centro Cultural Emerico Nunes, p. 80-98; Herminia Vasconcelos Vilar, 2014, “D. Afonso II e as Navas de Tolosa: a construção de um rei”, em *La península ibérica en tiempos de las Navas de Tolosa*, Carlos Estepa Díez and María A. Carmona Ruiz (eds.), Madrid, SEEM, p. 481-2, 487-8; Anonymous, 2019, *Two Texts from Alcobaca: “De Expugnatione Scalabis” and “Gosuini de Expugnatione Salaciæ Carmen”*, Jonathan Wilson (eds), Leuven, Peeters Publishers, Forthcoming.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155-156.

<sup>81</sup> Georges Duby, 1973, *Le dimanche de Bouvines : 27 juillet 1214*, Paris, Gallimard, p. 129 ; Ana Rodríguez, 2012, “Forging Collective Memory: Las Navas and Bouvines”, *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, n° 4:1. London, Routledge, p. 15-19.

Land<sup>82</sup>. William by the end of 1217 having captured the city wrote to Pope Honorius III to inform him of the news and to ask for further instructions<sup>83</sup>. In the letter which survives, he told the Pope that the kings of Navarre and Leon were preparing to go to war the following year and that he was willing to take part<sup>84</sup>. The king of Leon was of course Alfonso IX, who having failed to participate in Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, was eager to expand his domains in competition with his son the king of Castile, Fernando III<sup>85</sup>. The king of Navarre was Sancho VII, who having taken part in the famous battle of Las Navas and having helped his Portuguese ally in the conquest of Alcácer do Sal (1217), was preparing to continue to take advantage of the weakness of the disintegrating Almohad Empire<sup>86</sup>.

Although it is unlikely that Savary was familiar with the content of the letter, it is probable that at least he might have heard of the news of the crusading fleet's success in Iberia that year. How the letter travelled, it is difficult to tell but Honorius on 6 January 1218 had replied to the Dutch count and his followers<sup>87</sup>. It seems very likely that the messenger in charge of the delivery of the reply would have been Rodrigo Jimenez de Rada, archbishop of Toledo who was returning from Rome by land and made a stopover in Bordeaux visiting the local prelate<sup>88</sup>. Although it is not certain whether while on his visit to Bordeaux the Iberian prelate coincided with Savary, it is not implausible as the archbishop of the Gascon city had had close connections with the Poitevin in the past<sup>89</sup>.

In all the sources of his crusading ventures both in Iberia and in the Holy Land Savary is always mentioned to have had a company of Gascons with him. Perhaps as Hugh M. Thomas suggested, his continued service under King John had left him with important connections with the English controlled French region. Therefore, it is possible that during his preparations for crusade he would have visited the archiepiscopal city. Furthermore, Archbishop Guillaume Amanieu of Bordeaux had been involved in recruiting crusaders for Las Navas just a half a decade earlier and even if Rodrigo never met Savary, it is plausible that the local French prelate might have told Savary of the crusading opportunities in Iberia<sup>90</sup>. The fact that Honorius III, unlike his predecessor, had been happy to allow some of the crusaders who had taken part in the conquest of Alcácer do Sal to commute their vows, would not have escaped notice by Savary<sup>91</sup>. Additionally, the geographical proximity of the Iberian Peninsula and its cultural links with his region might have made Savary

<sup>82</sup> Thomas W. Smith, 2013, "Pope Honorius III and the Holy Land Crusades, 1216-1227: A Study in Responsive Papal Government", Unpublished PhD Thesis, London, Royal Holloway, p. 281-283.

<sup>83</sup> Mansilla 1965, doc. 96; William of Holland had been excommunicated in 1216 for kidnaping the wife of his rival Louis of Loos. Smith 2013, 281-283.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Julio González González, 1983, *Reinado y diplomas de Fernando III*, Córdoba, Monte de Piedad y Caja de Ahorros de Córdoba, p. 279-281; Francisco García Fitz, 2012, *Las Navas de Tolosa*, Barcelona, Editorial Planeta, p. 147-148; Martín Alvira Cabrer, 2012, *Las Navas de Tolosa 1212: Idea, liturgia y memoria de la batalla*, Madrid, Silex Ediciones, p. 383-387.

<sup>86</sup> Hugh Kennedy, 1996, *Muslim Spain and Portugal: A political history of al-Andalus*, London, Routledge, p. 256-266; Richard Fletcher, 2001, *Moorish Spain*, London, Phoenix Press, p. 124-126; O'Callaghan 2003, 82; Mansilla 1965, doc. 96; Martín Alvira Cabrer, 2016 "Expresiones de la guerra santa en las fuentes del reinado de Pedro el católico, rey de Aragón y conde de Barcelona (1196-1213)", en *Orígenes y desarrollo de la guerra santa en la península ibérica*, Madrid, Rústica, p. 130; Francisco García Fitz, 2014, "Las Navas de Tolosa y el paradigma bélico medieval", en *La península ibérica en tiempos de las Navas de Tolosa*, Carlos Estepa Díez y María Antonia Carmona Ruiz (eds.), Madrid, Sociedad española de estudios medievales, p. 23.

<sup>87</sup> Mansilla 1965, doc. 143; Villegas 2019, Forthcoming.

<sup>88</sup> Javier Gorostarratu, 1925, *Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, gran escritor, estadista y prelado*, Pamplona: Diócesis, p. 182; Alvira 2012, 135.

<sup>89</sup> Chaytor 1939, 25-26; Mario Crespo López, 2015, *Estudio Crítico: Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada*, Madrid, Fundación Ignacio Larramendi, p. 20-21

<sup>90</sup> Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, 1987, *Historia de rebus Hispanie sive historia gothica*, Juan Fernández Valverde (ed.), Turnhout, Brepols, p. 260; Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, 1989, *Historia de los hechos de España*, Juan Fernández Valverde (trans.), Madrid, Alianza, p. 308-309; Claverie, Pierre-Vincent, 2013, *Honorius III et l'Orient (1216-1227)*, Amsterdam, Brill, p. 52; Alvira 2012, 135.

<sup>91</sup> Mansilla 1965, doc. 134.

enthusiastic about fighting in that theatre. The Gascon nobility had been well acquainted with the wars against the Muslims from at least the middle of the eleventh century and although Savary was not from Gascony, as mentioned he did have political and cultural links with the region<sup>92</sup>. This is especially noticeable since both the Iberian and Levantine crusading narratives indicate that he arrived with his force of Gascons to Cáceres and Damietta<sup>93</sup>. This could refer to an overgeneralisation by the author that included Poitou as part of Gascony, but it is more likely that he did possess a retinue of followers from the region since there is an agreement between all these sources from different geographies.

Perhaps with his preparation for crusading in mind during the months of June to July 1218, Savary donated further land and properties to various religious houses, as it was customary for crusaders to do before embarking on their venture. In the texts of these donations, he is mentioned as having taken the cross to help fight the enemies of the faith in the Holy Land<sup>94</sup>. So, by July he was not convinced to go to Spain, but was still focused on the Levant. The venture in Iberia could have been a way for him to raise resources for the more expensive journey to the Levant, as it was habitual for crusaders to do especially those involved in the sea journey<sup>95</sup>.

Although according to William of Holland's letter to Pope Honorius III, Alfonso IX was preparing for war with the Muslims from the previous year, the Leonese monarch seems to have been more preoccupied with his traditional conflict with Castile, the kingdom of his son and rival.<sup>96</sup> However, on 26 August 1218, after some papal pressure the two monarchs managed to agree to a peace treaty, which liberated Alfonso to continue with his plans to expand towards the Andalusí city of Cáceres with the aid of his subjects and those of other kingdoms including Castile<sup>97</sup>.

From September to December 1218, the documentary evidence about Savary's movements in France and England dries out. So, it is plausible that he visited Iberia and helped Alfonso on his ill-fated siege of Cáceres<sup>98</sup>. Also, apart from the *Anales Toledanos*, Jehan de Nostredame's work, as mentioned, has a reference to Savary of Mauléon departing for Spain with another troubadour named Gausbert<sup>99</sup>. As noted earlier, Jehan is not a reliable source for historical events. However, it is unlikely that he would have known the *Anales Toledanos* and therefore he probably relied on a lost French source for his comment. If this is so, it could confirm his apparent journey to Iberia.

## 9. Why Cáceres?

The location of Cáceres in the interior of the Iberian Peninsula and far from the coast was an uncommon target for opportunistic crusaders on their way to the Holy Land.<sup>100</sup> Of course, there is the example of the crusade that culminated in the battle

<sup>92</sup> Marcelin Defourneaux, 1949, *Les Français en Espagne aux XIe-XIIIe siècles*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, p. 125-164.

<sup>93</sup> *Anales Toledanos I y II*, p. 189; Rogeri de Wendover, *Flores of historiarum*, Vol. IV, p. 55; Anonymus, 1925, "Chronica Albrici Monachi Trium Fontium", en George Henry Pertz (ed.), 1925, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptorum*, vol. XXIII, Leipzig, Verlag Karl Hiersmann, p. 908; Jacques de Vitry, 1825, *Histoire des croisades*, M. Guizot (ed.), Paris, J.-L.-J. Brière, p. 368; Oliverius Paderbornensi 1894, p. 219.

<sup>94</sup> Paul Marchegay, 1877, *Cartulaires du Bas-Poitou (département de la Vendée)*, Vol. LXXVIII. Les Roches-Baritaud, S.N., p. 254, y Vol. LXXVIII, p. 112; René Blanchard, 1899, "Cartulaire des Sires de Rays (suite)", *Archives historiques du Poitou*, n° 3:2. Poitou, Imprimerie de Henri Oudin, doc. 166.

<sup>95</sup> Mansilla 1965, doc. 134.

<sup>96</sup> Martín 1994, 16-21.

<sup>97</sup> González 1944, Vol. II, p. 458-459, 479, n. 350, 366.

<sup>98</sup> *Los Anales toledanos I y II*, p. 189.

<sup>99</sup> Jehan de Notre-Dame, 1913, *Les vies des plus célèbres et anciens poètes provençaux*, Camille Chabaneau (trans.), Paris, Librairie Ancienne, p. 232.

<sup>100</sup> Crusading fleets on their way to the Holy Land from Northern Europe after the capture of Jerusalem in 1099, started a tradition of attacking Muslim controlled cities on the Andalusí coast since soon after the First Crusade. Bruno Meyer, 2000, "El papel de los cruzados alemanes en la reconquista de la península ibérica", *En la España medieval*, n° 23, Madrid, Universidad Complutense, p. 56-66; García y Novoa 2014, 101-130; Lucas Villegas-Aristizábal, 2015, "Norman and Anglo-Norman Interventions in the Iberian Wars of

of Las Navas de Tolosa just six years earlier. However, that case was a major venture with a large papal backing and there is plenty of evidence that survives about its planning which included direct appeals to the trans-Pyrenean crusaders<sup>101</sup>. Unfortunately for Alfonso's autumn venture, it ended because of excessive rain which according to *Anales toledanos* impeded the works of the besiegers<sup>102</sup>. There is little to inform us about the planning and how Savary ended up there for November and December of 1218.

On the other hand, Savary's reputation as a troubadour might give us a clue about his chosen destination. According to later sources, Uc de Saint-Circ went with Savary to Spain to fight at Caceres and afterwards left his patronage and toured the royal courts of area<sup>103</sup>. The early thirteenth century saw a period of revival of poetry and music in the kingdoms of Leon and Galicia with many troubadours from Provence visiting the Iberian courts and writing romances<sup>104</sup>. It is possible that as well as his crusading endeavours Savary was attracted to the court of Alfonso IX because of his interest in music making. His venture, therefore, would have a dual purpose of crusading and artistic exchange.

Furthermore, it is probable that as many who departed to the Holy Land by sea, sea, he stopped at the very popular and highly regarded shrine of Santiago de Compostela. There he was convinced by agents of the king about the impending military operation against the city of Caceres in the autumn 1218 and the potential potential for indulgences and plunder<sup>105</sup>. This would explain his destination in Iberia since Santiago was in the kingdom of Leon. However, this would have been the only time that a crusader on his sea voyage to the Holy Land would have ventured so far inland in the Iberian Peninsula after stopping at a coastal location. It is perhaps more plausible that he took the trail of Santiago on horseback with his Gascon followers from Bordeaux in the late summer 1218 and joined the Iberian forces in November after visiting the shrine. The siege against Caceres in November was atypical since military actions usually took place from late March

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Reconquest Before and After the First Crusade", en *Crusading and Pilgrimage in the Norman World*, eds. Paul Oldfield and Kathryn Hurlock, Woodbridge, Boydell, p. 103-121; Lucas Villegas-Aristizábal, 2013, "Revisiting the Anglo-Norman Crusaders' Failed Attempt to Conquer Lisbon c. 1142", *Portuguese Studies*, n° 29:1. London, Maney Publishing, p. 7-20; Lucas Villegas-Aristizábal, 2009, "Revisión de las crónicas de Ralph de Diceto y la Gesta regis Ricardi sobre la participación de la flota angevina durante la tercera cruzada en Portugal", *Studia histórica: Historia medieval*, n° 27, Salamanca, Universidad de Salamanca, p. 153-70; Miguel Gomes Martins, 2011, *De Ourique a Aljubarrota da Guerra na idade media* Lisbon, Esfera dos Livros, p. 127-145,

<sup>101</sup> Martín Alvira Cabrer, 2003, "Guerra e ideología en la España medieval: cultura y actitudes históricas ente el giro de principios del siglo XIII: Batallas de las Navas de Tolosa (1212) y Muret (1213)", Unpublished PhD Thesis, Madrid, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 521; Miguel Dolan Gómez, 2011, "The Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa: The Culture and Practice of Crusading in Medieval Iberia", Unpublished PhD Thesis, Knoxville, University of Tennessee, p. 146-152; Francisco García Fitz, 2014, "Las Navas de Tolosa y el paradigma bélico medieval", en *La península ibérica en tiempos de las Navas de Tolosa*, Carlos Estepa Díez y María Antonia Carmona Ruiz (eds.), Madrid, Sociedad española de estudios medievales, p. 17-54; García 2012, 152. Alvira 2012, 135, 231.

<sup>102</sup> *Anales Toledanos I y II*, p. 189.

<sup>103</sup> Manuel Milà y Fontanals, 1861, *De los trovadores en España: Estudio de lengua y poesía provenzal*, Barcelona, Librería de Joaquín Verdager, p. 138; Riquer 1975, 942; José Carlos Miranda, 2004, *Aurs mesclatz ab argen. Sobre a primeira geração de trovadores galego-portugueses*, Porto, Guarecer, p. 66-67.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 66-67.

<sup>105</sup> Crusading sea journeys to the Levant had maintained a tradition of stopping at the Galician port of A Coruña from which they could walk to the venerated site of the Shrine of the Apostle at Santiago of Compostella as it is described in multiple itinerary journeys from the Second to the Fifth Crusade. *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, 64-65; Charles W. David, 1939, "Narratio de itinere navali peregrinorum Hierosolymam tendentium et Silviam capientium, A. D. 1189", *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, n° 81:5. Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, pp. 591-676; Anonymous, 2010, "An Account of the Seaborne Journey of the Pilgrims", en Graham A Laud, 2010, *The Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa: The History of the Expedition of the Emperor Frederick and Related Texts*, Aldershot, Ashgate, p. 195; Anonymous, 1867, *Gesta regis Henrici secundi Benedicti abbatis*, Vol. II, William Stubbs, (ed.), London: Longman, p. 120; Ferreiro Alemparte, 1999, 137-138; García y Novoa 2014, 107.

to early October.<sup>106</sup> This situation might explain why there is no French record of Savary's plans to go to Spain. This further suggests that it was an *ad hoc* decision while he visited the area in the Autumn of 1218.

## 10. Connection with Egypt

By taking the trail to the famous shine, he could have encountered the Leonese monarch in Leon or Palencia on his journey and thus ended up fighting for Alfonso either as partial fulfilment of his crusading vow or out of promises of easy plunder for his upcoming planned expedition to Egypt. This would explain why there is a documentary reference to his visit to Poitiers on 6 July 1219 in which Savary was awarded a twentieth of the revenues to help pay his crusading costs, as he owed 1200 silver marks to Sienese merchants<sup>107</sup>. Also, in 21 July 1219, the bishop of Poitou was ordered to pay a twentieth to Savary who was called a crusader in the text. As Le Roux noted, this indicates that Honorius III had given both Savary and Hugh de Lusignan a twentieth of the revenues for the diocese of Poitiers in order to finance their venture to the east. This further shows that Savary was eager to raise as much as possible to fund his crusade<sup>108</sup>. Perhaps the failure of the siege of Caceres made it imperative to return home to increase his revenue options before his future journey to Egypt.

While he was in Poitou he did not resume his position as seneschal or attempted to deal with his domains in England<sup>109</sup>. Instead he travelled south via Toulouse where he encountered the expedition of Prince Louis against the city, according to the epic poem of the English grammarian John of Garland (recently edited by Martin Allan Hall). Hence, Savary offered to take the city for a fee, which the French prince maybe refused as a result of his earlier encounter with Savary in England or the high price requested<sup>110</sup>. This would confirm his further desire for currency in his planned venture to the east. From there he must have travelled by land to Genoa where he embarked for the Levant. According to Oliver of Paderborn, Savary arrived in Egypt with either ten or fifteen galleys of Gascons and helped to win a three-day long battle against the Ayyubids<sup>111</sup>. Also, Matthew Paris informs us that Pope Honorius III commended Savary personally for his military prowess in the siege of Damietta<sup>112</sup>. Savary's involvement in Egypt seems to have helped him repair his image among his contemporaries especially after his association with the Albigensian crusade and as part of the much-maligned King John of England. Furthermore, his connexion with Iberia in the wars against the Muslims might have allowed him to show his contemporaries including Pope Honorius III his good intentions in relation to his crusading aims particularly after his earlier reputation as a greedy warlord without loyalty.

## 11. Conclusion

Although it is impossible to affirm without doubt that Savary participated in the siege of Caceres during the late autumn of 1218, his reputation and the evidence that exist seem to suggest that at least it is plausible. Additionally, the reference in the *Anales toledanos* is so precise and it fits so well with the lack of documentary

<sup>106</sup> Francisco García Fitz, 2009, "El viaje de la guerra", en *Viajar en la edad media*, José Ignacio de la Iglesia Duarte (ed.), Logroño, Instituto de estudios riojanos, p. 136-138.

<sup>107</sup> Smith 2013, 283.

<sup>108</sup> Le Roux 2002, 36.

<sup>109</sup> Sharp declares that it was definitely on Savary's instructions that Hugh surrendered the castle to the king on 19 September 1219. Margaret Sharp (ed.), 1982, *Accounts of the Constables of Bristol Castle in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries*, Bristol, Bristol Record Society, p. 80; Carpenter, 1990, p. 229; Kate Norgate, 1912, *The Minority of Henry the Third*, London, Macmillan, p. 282-283; *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, Vol. I, p. 203.

<sup>110</sup> John of Garland, *De triumphis Ecclesiae*, en Martin Hall, "John of Garland's *De triumphis Ecclesiae*", p. 487-494, note 125.

<sup>111</sup> Rogeri de Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, Vol. IV, p. 55; "*Chronica Albrici*", p. 908; Jacques de Vitry, *Histoire des croisades*, p. 368; Oliverius Pederbornensi 1894, 219.

<sup>112</sup> [Pierre Daunou](#) (ed.), 1895, *Histoire littéraire de le France*. Vol. XVIII, Paris, Librairie Universitaire, p. 675.

sources for this period that it would be unlikely for it to be erroneous. Besides, the fact that the *Anales* mentions Savary by name and does not explain who he was suggests that to the readers of the source he needed no introduction<sup>113</sup>. This in turn implies that they knew him well which would also confirm that he was probably present in the failed siege. Also, as has been shown his movements can be traced with great detail for the preceding months before his probable journey to Spain. Furthermore, his career as a routier, troubadour and crusader does suggest that at least he would have been interested in the possibility of getting involved in the Iberian struggle against the Almohads. It is very likely that he was present there with his force of Gascons that might have included some of the veterans of Las Navas. However, the fact that there are no documents in France or England that mention his intention to go to Iberia implies that his visit to the region could have been an *ad hoc* decision on his journey to the Levant, not unlike many of the previous crusaders who in their way to the Holy Land diverted their attention towards the Iberian theatre as a way to both finance their venture and gain further indulgences.

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<sup>113</sup> *Anales toledanos I y II*, p. 11-19.



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