

## Summary of a doctoral dissertation

### *Patterns of the Recruitment for the Crusades and the Crusaders' Social Networks, among the Flemish Crusaders (1096-1201) – a Prosopographical Study.*

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The subject of this study are the Flemish nobles, who joined one of the crusades in the years 1096-1201, i.e., beginning from the First Crusade, to the eve of the Fourth Crusade, including also some minor expeditions during this timespan. The research area covers the “Flemish space”, understood as the County of Flanders, plus the neighbouring and dependent territories (County of Hainaut, County of Boulogne, etc.). The main aim of this study is to present and discuss the factors related to the process of the recruitment for the crusades among the Flemish nobility (recruitment is understood here as the elements stimulating and encouraging to make a decision to join the crusade, as well as to choose the particular contingent departing for the Levant). The main research method applied, is an analysis of the social networks of the Flemish crusaders – the key point of that is to determine the particular patterns occurring both in the social networks, and in the recruitment process. Presentation of the various elements of the socio-political life of the Flemish crusaders, allows us to show how many and how complex factors might have played an important role in the decision-making process of joining the crusade. Furthermore, observation of those elements over the years, shows the changing character of the discussed phenomena.

The present study consists of introduction, four main chapters, the general conclusions and three annexes (two concordance tables and one prosopographical catalogue) followed by a bibliography. In the introduction, comments are given on the subject and aims of the study, the current state of knowledge, sources, and methodology. Chapter I provides a general statistical survey of the research group, while Chapters II, III, and IV correspond with the three fields of the analysis of the research group: geographical distribution, families, and social networks. Main text is abundantly supplemented with the additional material, i.e., maps, tables and data visualisation (social networks graphs). Each chapter is summarised by some brief conclusions on the matters discussed therein. The general conclusions offer a summary of all the chapters, as well as they juxtaposition of the particular elements of the analysis – in search for additional patterns and comments on them. In the general conclusions, there are also some remarks on the possible motivations of the Flemish crusaders and further

research postulates. In the study, many references were made to the online databases, mainly the *Database of the Crusaders to the Holy Land, 1095-1149* (providing some general information on the crusaders and references to the primary sources and secondary works) and the *Diplomata Belgica* (which is a repository of the charters concerning the medieval Low Countries – a tool essential for the current study). Because of that, the two annexes offer concordance tables which link the data available online (given in the references) with the printed editions of the primary sources and secondary works.

Research was made mainly using the diplomatic evidence, available mostly in the *Diplomata Belgica*. Its analysis was done in search for the mutual appearances of the various figures in their charters (in the different roles). Thanks to that, the author's own database consisting of over 3,000 records has been created. It has been built on over 1,600 charters concerning 130 Flemish crusaders (difference between 1,600 charters and 3,000 records comes from the fact that several charters cover more than one crusader, and each record is based on the crusader-charter relation). On such a basis, a qualitative-quantitative analysis has been made, to determine and present the patterns occurring among the research group. The narrative part of the study is a historical commentary on the collected data.