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Types, structure, actors, and institutions of deliberation in the Crusades during the Middle Ages

This paper aims to explore the type, structure, actors, and institutions of deliberation in the Crusades during the Middle Ages. Deliberation is commonly considered as a feature of ancient democracy. Yet, a number of studies have highlighted that a sort of deliberation was also present in the non-democratic Middle Ages, at various forms and levels, and for various purposes. A deeper consideration of political authority structures and institutions of that time reveals highly complex structures of political authority which are usually broadly perceived as absolutist monarchies. Such structures provided space for deliberation at an impactful level in political developments, such as decision making, among others. The Crusade is a case where deliberation was used by the actors to make major political decisions and in motivation as well. The paper aims to closely examine the deliberation process in relation to the fourth Crusade, the actors involved, the methods of deliberation, and the content and strategies of communication used, among other aspects. It is also important to look for any linkages with later motivational deliberations with reference to religiously-driven political actions, such as wars. Taking into account the time and space limitations, the study will be based on the available resources, mostly secondary, and also primary if available and accessible.