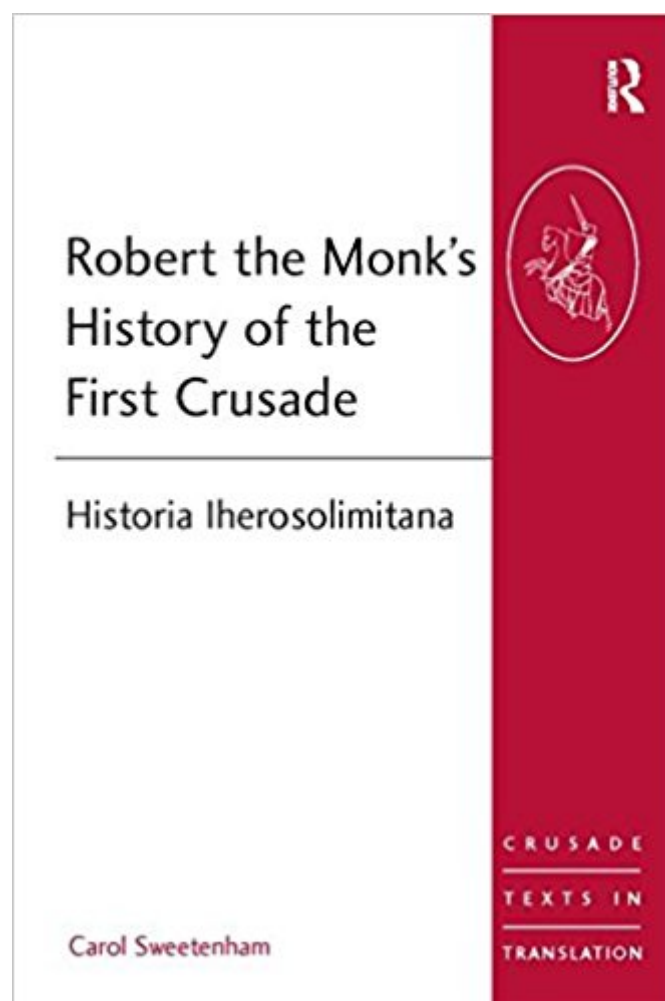




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Robert The Monk's History Of The First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana (Crusade Texts In Translation)



Synopsis

This is the first English translation of Robert the Monk's *Historia Iherosolimitana*, a Latin prose chronicle describing the First Crusade. In addition to providing new and unique information on the Crusade (Robert claims to have been an eyewitness of the Council of Clermont in 1095), its particular interest lies in the great popularity it enjoyed in the Middle Ages. The text has close links with the vernacular literary tradition and is written in a racy style which would not disgrace a modern tabloid journalist. Its reflection of contemporary legends and anecdotes gives us insights into perceptions of the Crusade at that time and opens up interesting perspectives onto the relationship of history and fiction in the twelfth century. The introduction discusses what we know about Robert, his importance as a historical source and his place in the literary tradition of the First Crusade.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'... [Carol Sweetenham's] research is clearly meticulous and, despite being aimed at a scholarly readership, her text is easily accessible and pleasant to read... a valuable tool for crusade scholars and a very welcome addition to crusade historiography.' *The Medieval Review* 'Sweetenham has made Robert's *Historia* accessible to a wider readership. Hers is a lively translation with a useful commentary.' *Crusades* '... this volume in Ashgate's Crusade Texts in Translation series performs an indispensable function for anyone who wants to understand European crusaders' motivations and self-promotion. ... Sweetenham has provided a highly usable volume suitable for teaching and research.' *MESA*

Dr Carol Sweetenham is an associate fellow in the Department of French Studies, University of Warwick, UK. Her previous book, written with Linda Patterson, was *The Canso d'Antiocha: An Occitan Epic Chronicle of the First Crusade* (Ashgate 2003), and together with Susan Edgington she is working on a translation of the *Chanson d'Antioche* for the Ashgate Crusade Texts in Translation series.

The First Crusade spawned over a dozen well-known narrative histories, but Robert's was the first to place the Crusade in an explicitly religious context. The monk begins his account by stating that, unlike other chroniclers, he intends to start "at the beginning," with Urban II's address at the Council of Clermont. There are other accounts of the council (see for instance Guibert of Nogent's *Dei Gesta per Francos*), but Robert's account of the Cluniac pope's speech is perhaps one of the most extensive. For a dedicated churchman's perspective of the Crusade (as revealed to him through "eyewitness" accounts), this is a great source. It is useful perhaps to compare Robert's approach to the phenomenon to Guibert of Nogent's, among others. Sweetenham introduces and edits the text well. For background on more First Crusade narratives, see Marcus Bull's chapter in "Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History," volume 3, for the years 1050-1200 (edited by Davis Thomas and Alex Mallet, 2011).

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