

Lecture 21: *The Medieval State: Political Culture in the 13th Century – The Example of Capetian France*

1. *The Boundaries of the Kingdom of France*

- A. Capetian Kings and the Ile-de-France
- B. Southern France and the Cathars
- C. The Albigensian Crusade and Royal Expansion

2. *State Power and Royal Crusades to the East*

- A. Administering the Kingdom
- B. The Challenge of the Crusades

3. *Louis IX and Royal Ideology*

- A. *Rex Christissimus*
- B. Persecution of Jewish Populations
- C. A Sainted King

Capetian Kingship and the Royal Domain

Hugh Capet (seized power in 987) = founder of the Capetian line

Rex Francorum = King of the Franks

Ideology of Kingship

- coronation rituals and anointing new kings
- **Thaumaturgical** (miracle-working) kingship = power to cure illness of scrofula = “royal touch”
- **Seven** generations of male heirs as kings, from 987-1328
- **Anticipatory succession** = eldest son crowned during father’s lifetime

Philip II Augustus (r. 1180-1223) – consolidates power over Northern France

1204, take Duchy of Normandy from the English king

1214, wins the battle of Bouvines, gains much of Flanders

The Cathar Church and the Albigensian Crusade

South was politically fractured, dominated by the Counts of Toulouse and Barcelona = offered little or no oversight of Christian beliefs in the region

Heresy = false belief under the guise of correct Christianity

Cathars emerged in Southern France during the 1170s/1180s

Cathar Church:

Leaders called *perfecti* = “perfect ones”

Espoused a **dualist heresy** = dichotomy between Good and Evil; body and soul; Old Testament vs. New Testament

Limited rituals emphasizing **prayer** above all

Albigensian Crusade, 1208-1229

Crusade against Christians = a political crusade

Ended with the Treaty of Paris, 1229 – twofold legacy:

- 1) Vast Expansion of Royal Territory
 - 2) Creation of Papal Inquisition to remove heretics and threat of heresy
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Louis IX (b. 1214, r. 1230-1270)

State Administration under Louis IX

Paris = royal capital

Royal Administrative Officials (begun under Philip Augustus)

-- *Prevotes* (provosts) = tax collectors and lesser administration

-- *Baillis* (bailiffs) = exercise royal authority, act as judges in civil cases

Parlement of Paris = high court of appeals

Louis IX and his Crusades

Seventh Crusade (1248-1254) – Egypt and Holy Land, ended in failure

Eight Crusade (1270) – Tunis, Louis dies in North Africa

Enqueteurs = royal investigators sent out to correct abuses by royal officials and to raise funds for campaigns to the east.

Rex Christissimus = the most Christian King

Persecution of Jewish populations – a unifying symbol of Christian kingship

Louis IX becomes **Saint Louis** in 1297 = the Capetians give a divine charge to the medieval state