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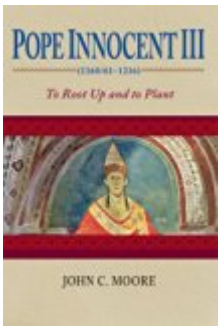
John C. Moore. *Pope Innocent III: To Root Up and to Plant.* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008. xx + 316 pp. $35.00, paper, ISBN 978-0-268-03514-3.



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Commissioned by Susan R. Boettcher

This monograph, by John C. Moore, is a new paperback edition of a work first published by Brill in 2003. In it, he describes Lotario dei Conti of Segni and the pontificate of this man, who became Pope Innocent III, in ten chronological chapters in chronological order. In the preface, the author explains his desire to depict Innocent as he experienced his life from day to day, and to show how experiences in one area of his life might influence decisions in another aspect of his duties. Moore does not want to revisit scholarly debates but instead addresses this work to the general reader. An engagingly written work, its many simplifications make it of at best mixed value to its audiences.

Moore starts with Lotario's biography and stresses his studies in Paris, showing the growing importance of law as a means of reducing social and military violence. It was also an important career track. He mentions Lotario's studies in Bologna, although he neglects to mention that some historians doubt he actually studied there. He also describes the three treatises Lotario composed as a cardinal. Unfortunately, Moore fails to characterize properly the influence of the Gregorian reformers of the church who shaped the concept of the papacy before Innocent came into office. Moore describes his sources, mostly papal letters and the papal register, and deals with his subject's inauguration in 1198 and his policies as the pope. The second chapter starts with Innocent's inaugural sermon on Matthew 24:45 and Jeremiah 1:10 and ends with the motto that Innocent often used at the end of papal letters ("Lord, show me a sign of thy favor"; Psalm 86:17) as a means of suggesting ways in which Innocent might have understood his faith and his papacy. Moore often portrays Innocent as seeking signs of divine favor as an encouragement for papal policies and shows how he used biblical references to describe and explain papal policies in his sermons.

In the following chapters, Moore examines a number of well- and lesser-known protagonists of the thirteenth century in their relationship to the papacy. These characters include the French king,

Philip Augustus, Richard the Lionheart and his brother John, Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI, his wife Constance and son Frederick, Philip of Swabia and Otto of Brunswick, Markward of Anweiler, and the kings of Aragon, Léon, Navarre, and Castile, as well as the princes of the Balkans. Their alliances and conflicts and attitudes towards the papacy at the turn to the thirteenth century unfold before the reader in an interesting, even exciting way. Moore describes Innocent at work as a judge and as a Roman politician. The lawsuit of Gerald of Wales demonstrates the pope's legal skills as well as his sympathies for Gerald, whose views he nonetheless did not support. Conflicting parties in Rome kept Innocent, who hailed from the local nobility, involved in the city's political conflicts. Moore shows that papal duties covered both significant and minor political issues. He skillfully retells the story of the Fourth Crusade and its persons and events without comparing different crusades or embroiling his narrative in scholarly debates. Although the reader learns that the crusade, which ended with the conquest of Constantinople, was not under papal control from the beginning, she is not provided with the information upon which Moore based his conclusion about the relationship between the pope and the European nobility. Although he does mention the unsafe land route, the treaty with Venice, the crusaders' impecunity, the Venetian doge Enrico Dondolo and his old enmity towards the Byzantine Empire, his analysis of these elements is somewhat superficial.

Though gauged toward the interests of a popular audience, Moore's stress on persons and events is not always advantageous in informing it of necessary contexts for understanding these. His warning that modern political structures should not be used to understand thirteenth-century Europe is not bolstered with contrasting information on medieval political and constitutional structures or the period's unique concepts of dukedom, kingdom, and empire. Moore includes two maps (of Europe and of central Italy). The first of these may be misleading, because it uses terms that might be misunderstood as modern European ones and because omissions lead to neglect of major spheres of political influence rooted in medieval constitutional structures such as the Holy Roman Empire and the dukedoms of Saxony and Bavaria, which cannot be traced on the map.

The second half of the monograph recounts the pope's views on Jews and heretics, his defense of the church, and his association with the Lateran Council. After the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204, Innocent III believed he had overcome the schism between the Latin and the Greek churches and developed a vision that would attract Jews and pagans to the faith and convince heretics to stay within the boundaries of the universal church. The papal policy is outlined as successful in accommodating the humiliati and parts of the Waldensian movement, while nonetheless gradually growing stricter and ending in the crusade against the Albigensians of southern France in 1208. Moore stresses that Innocent nevertheless accepted the criticism of the wealthy clergy made by the ascetic movements and points out that while the pope engaged in a bitter fight against heretics he did have the wisdom to accept Francis of Assisi and his followers in 1209. The Franciscan Order grew rapidly and later turned out to be a major supporter of the church.

Concerning the pope's diplomatic efforts to prevent the unification of the German and imperial crown in the hands of one person, Moore tends to describe the emperor as no more than a distant threat from the perspective of the pope. In order to keep the papal state and the papacy independent of imperial influence, Innocent rapidly changed attitudes towards the rival Welf and Hohenstaufen dynasties: this reaction was probably no more than rather helpless defensiveness and not the result of foresight. The text also describes the long papal conflict (1207-13) with the English king, John, concerning the election of the archbishop of Canterbury. The reader's understanding

of papal aims and policy could have been deepened had Moore not contented himself with recounting events, but dared to put these events in the context of a survey of investiture contest. Similarly, the survey of the Gregorian reform in the second chapter could also have shown the reader the concept of the church that Innocent defended and its origins. While the author stresses the pope's legal skills as judge as well as a giver of law, he might have highlighted Innocent's concept of the papacy with respect to the secular rulers, especially the Holy Roman emperor.

According to Moore, the pope interpreted the events of 1212-14--the Christian victory against the Almohads at Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) and the surrender of John, who agreed to receive the kingdoms of England and Ireland as fiefs from the papacy to avoid a French invasion of England--as signs of divine favor. In the Golden Bull of Eger, the young Hohenstaufen, Frederick, elected by the German princes and crowned in December 1212, swore to respect the papal state, to abstain from interfering in ecclesiastical elections, and to support the pope's fight against heretics (as Otto had sworn before him). Did Innocent see the Golden Bull of Eger as a success? He feared that if it were not, his successor would have to fight many of the same battles over again. With renewed energy, Innocent summoned all the secular and religious leaders of the Greek and the Latin churches to the Fourth Lateran Council shortly before his death. Moore informs his audience of the loss of the papal registers of the years 1214-16 and then takes the reader through the long and busy preparations for the council, through the ceremonies and the three formal sessions, and cites the famous papal sermon on Luke 22:15. He also cites and groups the seventy canons of the council, showing how today's Catholics still live with some of its results.

After the council, Innocent sent a letter concerning the next crusade to all Christendom, believing the time was right and signs of divine favor were apparent. He tried fervently to recapture the Holy Land during his reign. At the end of his life, he visited the northern part of the papal state--Viterbo, Orvieto, Todi and Perugia, a region he had not traversed since the first year of his pontificate--and died in Perugia on July 16, 1216.

Moore speculates in his conclusion that Innocent's view of Europe was or could have led to a European federation under papal presidency. But the general reader Moore addresses is deprived of the possibility of understanding medieval European thinking, mixed as it is here with modern terms, notions, and questions. Though it may be tempting to ask about the consequences of such a view for current questions about European unification, the task of the historian should be to understand and analyze the times one deals with. Moore ends his monograph by evaluating Innocent's character according to the standards Lotario set up in one of his treatises: truthful in speech, gentle in heart, and just in deed, and by applying the often-used biblical dictate about rooting up and planting to Innocent's actions.

As limited as it is, Moore's summary of historical debates could have been more precise and may mislead the general readers in his audience. Among German historians, for example, historical debates about the differences in the development of a German nation-state have been quite significant. Though these controversies need not necessarily be mentioned in a biography of Innocent III, they should not have been abbreviated as summarily as they are here. Moore claims that historians accused Innocent of having deprived the German people of the chance for a unified nation. Neither state nor nation are terms that can be applied so directly to medieval times, and if medieval people thought of unity at all, most likely they had Christendom in mind.

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