

The Dynamism of a Crusade Encyclical: Pope Honorius III and *Iustus Dominus* (1223)

By

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Pope Honorius III, so the older historiography led scholars to believe, was an unoriginal plodder. Regularly labelled a „caretaker“ pope, he was thought incapable of the energy and innovation that Innocent III and Gregory IX brought to the office. As a result, for a long time, the originality and importance of his pontificate and the documents that he created were underestimated¹. A series of recent studies on Honorius paint a different picture of the pope, however, who now emerges as a creative and confident pontiff worthy of the same reverence as

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1) Horace K. MANN, *The Lives of the Popes in the Early Middle Ages*, 18 vols. (1902–32) 13 p. 20; Adalbert KEUTNER, *Papsttum und Krieg unter dem Pontifikat des Papstes Honorius III. (1216–1227)* (1935) p. 12; Ernst KANTOROWICZ, *Frederick the Second, 1194–1250*, trans. Emily Overend LORIMER (1931) p. 96; Joseph P. DONOVAN, *Pelagius and the Fifth Crusade* (1950) p. 105; Steven RUNCIMAN, *A History of the Crusades*, 3 vols. (1951–54), 3 p. 164; Thomas C. VAN CLEVE, *The Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen. Immutator mundi* (1972) pp. 108–109; Peter PARTNER, *The Lands of St Peter. The Papal State in the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance* (1972) p. 244; Hans Eberhard MAYER, *The Crusades*, trans. John GILLINGHAM (1988) p. 220 and in the latest German edition, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (2005) p. 259; Colin MORRIS, *The Papal Monarchy. The Western Church from 1050 to 1250* (1989) p. 442; John Norman Davidson KELLY, *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes*, rev. Michael J. WALSH (2010) p. 190.