

**Chris Jones**  
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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Chris Jones grew up in the Middle East and read History as an undergraduate at Durham, before undertaking postgraduate research at Durham and the Université Paris X-Nanterre. After obtaining his doctorate he worked as a London-based consultant to the private equity industry advising, in particular, on Middle East markets. He taught as an Associate Lecturer with the Open University and subsequently undertook postdoctoral research as a Synan Fellow at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto. He joined the University of Canterbury in New Zealand as a Lecturer in 2006. He is currently Senior Lecturer in Medieval History at Canterbury, a member of the University's Academic Board, and, for the Michaelmas term 2009, the Holgate Fellow in residence at Grey College, Durham. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in 2008, sits on the editorial board of the journal *Viator* and serves as a Council Member of the US-based Medieval Association of the Pacific.

Chris's research focuses on the development of medieval political ideas and, in particular, upon attitudes towards the concept of universal temporal authority in late-medieval western Europe. His research career began with a re-evaluation of the context and purpose of Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor pacis*. This argued for the importance of Marsilius's experience as a member of the University of Paris's Arts Faculty in the formation of his thought. He has been meaning to publish elements of this research for at least a decade but is easily distracted and never quite seems to get around to it. He subsequently published on the thought of the early-fourteenth-century lawyer Pierre Dubois and on thirteenth-century attempts to engineer the election of French kings as 'Roman' emperors. These articles were initial exploratory exercises that eventually led to a 2007 monograph *Eclipse of Empire? Perceptions of the Western Empire and Its Rulers in Late Medieval France* (Cursor mundi, vol. 1, Turnhout: Brepols). The latter argues that in order to understand fully the role of the western Empire and its rulers in late-medieval French thought it is necessary to examine more than a traditionally somewhat restricted source base of 'political' tracts and legal commentaries. It concludes that the Empire and the figure of the western emperor continued to occupy an extremely important position in late-medieval thought despite the decline in the actual authority exercised by medieval German emperors and the growing power of the western kingdoms of England and France. This research led Chris to take a particular interest in the thought of medieval chroniclers and in the way in which ideas were transmitted and received.

Chris is currently engaged in writing a monograph on the thought of the late-thirteenth-century Benedictine chronicler, Geoffroi de Courlon of Sens. Geoffroi, a man very much on the periphery and in no way connected with the French royal court, has tended to be somewhat undervalued by historians. His works offers, however, a new and valuable perspective on late-medieval

French society and its assumptions about political organisation. Chris is also editing a volume on the early-fourteenth-century Dominican John of Paris (Jean Quidort). Bringing together a team of sixteen international scholars with a wide range of expertise, *John of Paris: Beyond Royal & Papal Power* will offer the first collection of essays in any language to be dedicated to an exploration of John's thought. The volume re-examines John's view of the relationship between Church and State and his conception of political organisation. It considers the role played by John's background as a member of the Dominican order in shaping his ideas and breaks new ground in exploring the relationship between John's various works, the origins of his thought, and its development.

Chris's seminar paper combines elements of his introduction to the John of Paris volume with his own main contribution which focuses on John's view of history. It is intended as a 'first draft' for discussion and the author hopes to incorporate useful criticism and comment into a revised version that will appear in the final volume. The paper is intended for a broad audience of historians and political theorists.

## **PAPER ABSTRACT**

### ***Title* The Role of Conceptions of History in Shaping Political Ideas: The Case of the early-fourteenth-century Dominican John of Paris**

The Dominican scholar John of Paris (d. 1306) was one of the most controversial members of the University of Paris in the later Middle Ages. The author of over twenty works, he is best known today for *On Royal and Papal Power*, a tract traditionally linked to the explosive confrontation that took place between the French king Philippe IV and Pope Boniface VIII in the early years of the fourteenth century. Although his role as a royal apologist has been questioned in recent years, John's tract is often considered the first great defence of the independence of nation-states in the face of the claims to universal authority made by popes and emperors.

This paper considers the role that one of John's key sources, non-biblical history, played in the formation of this thought. As John remains a somewhat obscure figure, even for specialists in the history of late-medieval France, it begins by offering an outline of what is known of his life and career as an academic in Paris. The paper then questions and overturns some of the traditional assumptions concerning the sources of John's historical knowledge. It moves on to consider why John selected the particular sources he did, the way in which he used them in constructing his arguments, and the manner in which they shaped his ideas.

*On Royal and Papal Power* is a work whose novel elements have tended to be emphasised by historians and political theorists, to the neglect of much of the rest of John's argument. In particular, John's Aristotelian-derived justification for a world of independent self-governing political units has been the focus of much comment while his frequent statements that the 'Roman

Emperor' continued to have a specific role to play in a properly ordered world have been generally ignored or downplayed. This paper argues that this approach has somewhat distorted our picture of John's aims and outlook and his broader place in the development of late-medieval political thought. It will seek to account for the apparent contradictions in John's thought by viewing his ideas in the wider context of the sources he used and, in particular, by considering the impact that a specific set of chronicles prepared predominantly by members of John's own religious order, the Dominicans, had upon the nature of his ideas. It argues, more generally, that unless the context of a work is understood fully, the novelty and nature of the ideas it contains may be over-estimated and misunderstood by modern historians and political theorists and that this is precisely what has occurred in John's case.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### IN DEVELOPMENT

- Monograph: *Geoffrey's World: Constructing An Alternative History of Late-Medieval Europe*
- Article: *Friend, Foe, or simply Forgotten? The English in Late-Thirteenth Century French Thought*
- Article: Marsilius of Padua's Parisian Days and the Context and Purpose of the *Defensor Pacis*.

### FORTHCOMING

#### ***Under contract***

- Edited Essay Collection (sole editor): *John of Paris: Beyond Royal & Papal Power*, Series: *Disputatio* (DISPUT 26, Turnhout: Brepols, provisional publication date: 2012)

#### *Articles in volume:*

- 'Introduction: Part I - Who was John of Paris?'
- 'Introduction: Part III - New Perspectives'
- 'John of Paris, Vincent de Beauvais and a Dominican Understanding of History'

#### ***In press***

- 'Medieval Paris' in *The Seventy Great Cities in History*, ed. by John Julius Norwich (Thames & Hudson, 2009)
- 'Giles of Rome, Political Thought' extended analytical entry in *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy* ed. by Henrik Lagerlund (Springer, 2010)
- 'Chronique dite de Saint-Magloire' entry in *Encyclopaedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, ed. by Graeme Dunphy (Brill, 2010)

- 'Chronique normande du XIVE siècle' entry in *Encyclopaedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, ed. by Graeme Dunphy (Brill, 2010)
- 'Fragment de l'Histoire de Philippe Auguste roy de France' entry in *Encyclopaedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, ed. by Graeme Dunphy (Brill, 2010)
- 'Chronique anonyme finissant en M.CCC.LVI.' entry in *Encyclopaedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, ed. by Graeme Dunphy (Brill, 2010)

#### **MONOGRAPH**

- *Eclipse of Empire? Perceptions of the Western Empire and Its Rulers in Late Medieval France* (Cursor mundi vol. 1, Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), xxiv+415.

#### **ARTICLES & PAPERS**

- 'The Role of Frederick II in the works of Guillaume de Nangis', ed. by Björn K. Weiler and Simon MacLean in *Representations of Power in Medieval Germany, c. 700 - c. 1500* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 273-94.
- '...mais tot por le servise Deu? Philippe III le Hardi, Charles d'Anjou and the 1273/74 Imperial Candidature', *Viator* 34 (2003), 208-28.
- 'Rex Francie in regno suo princeps est: The Perspective of Pierre Dubois', *Comitatus* 34 (2003), 49-87.

#### **ENCYCLOPAEDIA ENTRIES**

- Entries for the *International Medieval Encyclopaedia for the Middle Ages Online*. General editor: Patrick Geary (www.brepolis.net):
  - 'Paris (Paris, France), treaty (1259)' [2008] (extended article)
  - 'Geoffroi de Collon, Benedictine chronicler, d. before 1295' [2006; extensively revised 2008]
  - 'Amiens, Mise of (23 January 1264)' [2006]

#### **ONLINE ESSAYS**

- 'Perspective' article written as part of the Albigensian Crusade entry for a subscription-only database *World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009):
  - 'A War with Unintended Consequences.'  
<http://www.ancienthistory.abc-clio.com> [last accessed 27 January 2009]