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*The Political Role of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem during the Crusades*

Sunday, April 23 2017  
3:00pm  
Oxford Road Building, Presentation Room  
Emory University

Since it was first built in the fourth century, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem has been one of the most important structures in Christendom. When accounting for the enthusiastic turnout that marked the First Crusade and its fight for the city of Jerusalem, twelfth-century historians pointed particularly to vivid reports of the church’s desecration and, as the site of Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection, to the obligation of Christians to liberate it from non-Christian rule. Fueled by presumed righteousness and divine favor, they did just this on July 15, 1099. In the wake of the city’s conquest, this *locus sanctus* (holy place) and the church that protected it, glorified it, and facilitated visits of the faithful to it was immediately the inspiration not only of devotion, as we might expect, but also of political machination. Indeed, in the years that followed conquest, those years during which a new and Latin Christian state would be established, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre announced territory on this kingdom’s coinage, confirmed authority in this kingdom’s coronation rituals, and staged privilege and stability in this kingdom’s royal burials.

The lecture is sponsored by:  
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The event is free and open to the public.