Trickery and Deception in Medieval Warfare, c. 1000 – c. 1330

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds

Institute for Medieval Studies

March 2019

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, my thanks go to my supervisors, Alan V. Murray and Karen Watts for their guidance, support and understanding throughout the writing of this thesis. I could not have completed it without their constant enthusiasm and encouragement.

Likewise, this project would not have been possible without the funding provided by the University of Leeds's School of History: not just my studentship, which enabled me to study full-time, but also the additional grants that allowed me to travel around the world, presenting my research and meeting new and inspiring scholars.

Many people from the School of History and Institute for Medieval Studies helped and supported me during my studies. Especial mention must go to William Flynn, for his help with some truly tortuous Latin, Jonathan Jarrett, who has provided advice and support, and Emma Chippendale, who has been a model of compassion and cheerfulness. My particular thanks to all the members of the Medieval Warfare Colloquium – Natalie Anderson, Samuel Bradley, Jacob Deacon, Sophie Harwood, Joanna Phillips, Trevor Russell Smith, Iason Tzouriadis – for their insight and friendship over the past few years.

Thank you to all those who offered their advice and expertise, particularly my examiners, William Flynn and Matthew Strickland, as well as Matt Bennett, Robert Jones, Peter Konieczny, Ian Moxon, Carol Sweetenham and George Theotokis.

To Rachael Gillibrand and Rose Sawyer. Thank you for the cups of tea and dreadful puns.

To all those who helped proof read this thesis: Trevor, Rachael, Jacob, Charles Roe and Florence Scott. Any mistakes that remain are mine alone.

To all my friends and family who have helped me in so many ways, both large and small.

To my wife and best friend, Eleanor. 'Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help' (Ecclesiastes 4.9–10).

To Calico and Nimueh, my hard-working editorial team.

And hello to Jason Isaacs.

Abstract

This thesis analyses the use and depiction of deception in warfare during the central Middle Ages (approximately 1000–1320). It studies contemporary narrative histories to understand how combatants employed trickery in combat but also to understand how their society viewed the morality of using such deceitful tactics.

Chapter One examines the challenges of using medieval chronicles, which are often employed as clear windows onto the past, for studying military history. Chapters Two to Seven analyse different forms of military deception and their portrayal in chronicles, beginning with the field of espionage and strategic deception and continuing into more tactical deceptions, such as ambushes and disguises. Chapter Eight undertakes a close reading of the vocabulary used by chroniclers to describe trickery and cunning, revealing that the same terms could be used for both licit and illicit acts of deceit and that cunning was considered a legitimate alternative to brute force in war. The final chapter considers those rare cases when chroniclers explicitly discussed the morality of deception in war, whether between Western Europeans or in conflicts with the variety of non-normative enemies that Westerners encountered in this period. The evidence indicates that trickery occupied an ambiguous place in medieval thought. It could be admired as a display of skill and daring but also portrayed as treacherous and underhand, depending on the individual chronicler's perspective.

The Appendix contains a taxonomy of incidents of deception, drawn from over seventy chronicle sources, demonstrating the ubiquity and variety of trickery in medieval military narratives.

Notes

As much of this thesis involves close analysis of language, I have provided my own translations wherever possible. All the translations in this thesis are mine unless otherwise stated. For the sake of clarity and readability, I have chosen to render the historical present, commonly used by Latin chroniclers for dramatic effect, as the past tense in English.

I have followed Dunbar's convention of leaving the term *castrum* untranslated when translating passages related to southern Italy, it may refer to either a free-standing castle or to a fortified village. See Amatus of Montecassino, *History of the Normans,* trans. by Prescott N. Dunbar, rev by G. A. Loud (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), p. 38.

For Arabic and Turkish names, I have followed the Anglicisation used in *The Crusades: An Encyclopaedia,* ed. by Alan V. Murray, 2 vols (Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2006).

Contents

Abbreviations

AA	Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana: History of the Journey to Jerusalem,* ed. and trans. by Susan Edgington (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007)
AG	*Annals of Ghent,* trans. by Hilda Johnstone (London: Neslon, 1951)
AM	Amatus of Montecassino, *Ystoire de li Normant,* ed. by Michèle Guéret-Laferté (Paris: Champion, 2011)
Amb	Ambroise, *The History of the Holy War: Ambroise's Estoire de la guerre sainte,* ed. by Marianne Ailes and Malcolm Barber, trans. by Marianne Ailes, 2 vols (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003)
BB	Baldric of Bourgueil, *Historia Ierosolimitana,* ed. by Steven Biddlecombe (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2014)
Bible	*Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem,* ed. by Robert Weber, Roger Gryson and Bonifatius Fischer, 5th edn (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007)
BoS	Aelred of Rievaulx, 'Relatio de standardo', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I,* ed. by Richard Howlett, RS, 82, 4 vols (London: Longman, 1884–89), III, 181–201
Bruce	John Barbour, *The Bruce,* ed. and trans. by Archibald Duncan (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1997)
CCA	*La Chanson de la croisade albigeoise,* ed. and trans. by Eugéne Martin-Chabot, 3 vols (Paris: Champion 1931–61)
CDH	Guy (bishop of Amiens), *Carmen de Hastingae proelio,* ed. and trans. by Frank Barlow, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999)
Clari	Robert de Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople,* ed. by Philippe Lauer (Paris: Champion, 1974)
CM	*Chronica de Mailros,* ed. by J. Stevenson (Edinburgh: Bannatyne, 1835)
DEL	*De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi,* ed. and trans. by Charles Wendell David (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001)
Dermot	*Song of Dermot and Earl Richard Fitzgilbert,* ed. and trans. by Denis Conlon (Frankfurt: Lang, 1992)

Dudo	Dudo of Saint Quentin, *De moribus et actis primorum normanniae ducum,* ed. by Jules Lair (Caen: Blanc-Gardel, 1865)
EH	Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica,* ed. and trans. by Scott and Martin (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1978)
FB	Falco of Benevento, 'Chronicle', in *Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily: Selected Sources,* ed. and trans. by Graham Loud (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), pp. 130–249
FC	Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana, 1095–1127,* ed. by Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg: Carl Winter University Press, 1913)
FH	*Flores Historiarum,* ed. by Henry Richards Luard, RS, 95, 3 vols (London: Eyre, 1890)
GB	Galbert of Bruges, *De multro, traditione, et occisione gloriosi Karoli comitis Flandriarum,* ed. by Jeff Rider (Turnholt: Brepols, 1994)
GCA	'Gesta consulum Andegavorum et dominorum Ambaziensium', in *Chroniques d'Anjou,* ed. by Paul Marchegay and Andre Salmon, 2 vols (Paris: Renouard, 1856), I, 1–226
GN	Guibert de Nogent, *Dei geta per Francos et cinq autre textes,* ed. by Robert Huygens (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996)
GF	*Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum,* ed. by Rosalind Hill (London: Nelson, 1962)
GG	William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi,* ed. and trans. by Ralph Davis and Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998)
GH	'Gesta Herwardi incliti exulis et militis', in *Lestorie des engles solum la translacion Maistre Geffrei Gaimar,* ed. and trans. by Thomas Duffus Hardy and Charles Trice Martin, 2 vols (London, 1888), I, 339–404
GM	Geoffrey Malaterra, *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae comitis et Roberti Guiscardi ducis fratris eius,* ed. by Ernesto Pontieri (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1927)
GND	*The Gesta Normannorum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni,* ed. and trans. by Elisabeth van Houts, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992–95)

GPA	William the Breton, 'Gesta Philippi Augusti', in *Ouevres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton: Historiens de Philippe-Auguste,* ed. by François Delaborde, 2 vols (Paris: Renouard, 1882), I, 168–320
GRA	William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum,* ed. and trans. by Roger Mynors, Rod Thomson, and Michael Winterbottom, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998)
GRH	*Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedicit Abbatis, ,* ed. by William Stubbs, RS 49, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1867)
GS	*Gesta Stephani,* ed. and trans. by Kenneth Potter, rev. by Ralph Davis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976)
GT	Ralph of Caen, *Gesta Tancredi,* ed. by Edoardo D'Angelo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011)
GV	Geoffrey de Villehardouin, *La Conquête de Constantinople,* ed. and trans. by Edmond Faral, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Paris: Société d'édition les belles lettres, 1961)
HA	Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Historia albigensis,* ed. Pascal Guébin and Ernest Lyon, 2 vols (Paris: Champion, 1926–30)
HG	'Historia Gaufredi ducis Noramnnorum et comitis Andegavorum', in *Chroniques d'Anjou,* ed. by Paul Marchegay and Andre Salmon, 2 vols (Paris: Renouard, 1856), I, 227–310
HN	William of Malmesbury, *Historia novella,* ed. by Edmund King, trans. by Kenneth Potter (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998)
HH	Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum,* ed. and trans. by Diana Greenway (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996)
HowChr	Roger of Howden, *Chronica,* ed. by William Stubbs, RS, 51, 4 vols (London: Longman, 1868–71)
HPA	Rigord, *Histoire de Philippe Auguste,* ed. and trans. by Élisabeth Carpentier, Georges Pon, and Yves Chauvin (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2006)
HWM	*History of William Marshal,* ed. by Anthony Holden, trans. by Stewart Gregory, 3 vols (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2002–06)

IK	Gerald of Wales, 'Itinerarium Kambriae', in *Opera,* ed. by John Brewer, RS, 21, 8 vols (London: Longman, 1861–91), VI, 3–154
IP	'Itinerarium peregrinoum et gesta regis Ricardi', in *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I,* ed. by William Stubbs, RS, 38, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1864–65), I, 3–450
JF	Jordan Fantosme, *Chronicle,* ed. and trans. by Ronald Johnston (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981)
JH	John of Hexham, 'Historia', in *Historiae Anglicanae scriptores x,* ed. by Roger Twysden (London: James Flesher, 1652), pp. 257–84
JW	John of Worcester, *Chronicle,* ed. and trans. by Patrick McGurk, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998)
LA	Lambert of Ardres, *Historia comitum Ghisensium,* MGH, Scriptores, 24 (Hanover, 1879), pp. 550–642
Lanercost	*Chronicon de Lanercost,* ed. by Joseph Stevenson (Edinburgh: Maitland Club, 1839)
LE	*La Continuation de Guillaume de Tyr, 1184–1197,* ed. by Margaret Ruth Morgan (Paris: Geuthner, 1982)
MFW	*Memoriale fratris Walteri de Coventria,* ed. by William Stubbs, RS, 58, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1872–73)
MGH	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*
MSB	*Les Miracles de Saint Benoit,* ed. by Eugène de Certain (Paris: Renouard, 1858)
NT	Nicholas Trivet, *Annales sex regum Angliae, qui a comitibus Andegavensibus originem taxerunt,* ed. by Thomas Hog (London: Royal Historical Society, 1845)
OD	Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem,* ed. and trans. by Virginia Gingerick Berry (New York: Norton, 1948)
OP	Oliver of Paderborn, 'Historia Damiatina', in *Die Schriften des Kölner Domscholasters, späteren Bischofs von Paderborn und Kardinal-Bischofs von S. Sabina, Oliverus*, ed. by Hermann Hoogeweg, Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins

	in Stuttgart, 202 (Tübingen: Litterarischer Verein in Stuttgart, 1894), pp. 159–282
OV	Orderic Vitalis, *Ecclesiastical History,* ed. and trans. by Marjorie Chibnall, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969–80)
PL	Peter of Langtoft, *Chronicle,* ed. by Thomas Wright, RS, 47, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1866–68)
RA	Raymond of Aguilers, 'Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iheruslaem', in *Recueil des historiens des croisades: Historiens occidentaux tome troisième* (Paris: L'académie impériale des inscriptions et belles-lettres, 1866), pp. 231–310
RM	Robert the Monk, 'Historia Iherosolimitana', in *Recueil des historiens des croisades: Historiens occidentaux tome troisième* (Paris: L'académie impériale des inscriptions et belles-lettres, 1866), pp. 717–882
RC	Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum,* ed. by Joseph Stevenson (London: Longman, 1875)
RD	Ralph of Diceto, *Historical Works*, ed. by William Stubbs, RS, 68, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1876)
RdB	Wace, *Roman de Brut: A History of the British,* ed. and trans. by Judith Weiss, rev edn (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002)
RG	Robert of Gloucester, *Metrical Chronicle,* ed. by William Aldis Wright, RS, 86, 2 vols (London: Eyre, 1887)
RH	Richard of Hexham, 'De gestis regis Stephani et de bello standardii', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I,* ed. by Richard Howlett, RS, 82, 4 vols (London: Longman, 1884–89), III, 139–80
RR	Wace, *Le Roman de Rou,* ed. by Anthony Holden, 3 vols (Paris: Picard, 1970–73)
RS	Rolls Series
RT	Robert of Torigni, Chronicle', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I,* ed. by Richard Howlett, RS, 82, 4 vols (London: Longman, 1884–89), IV

RW	Roger of Wendover, *Chronica,* ed. by Henry Coxe, 5 vols (London: English Historical Society, 1841–44)
SSD	Suger of Saint Denis, *Vie de Louis VI le Gros,* ed. and trans. by Henri Waquet, 2nd edn (Paris: Société d'édition les belles lettres, 1964)
TG	Thomas Gray, *Scalacronica 1272–1363,* ed. and trans. by Andy King (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005)
TW	Thomas Wykes, 'Chronicon', in *Annales monastici,* ed. by Henry Richards Luard, RS, 36, 5 vols (London: Longman, 1864–69), IV, 6–354
VES	*Vita Edwardi secundi,* ed. and trans. Noël Denholm-Young and Wendy Childs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005)
VSL	Joinville, *Vie de Saint Louis,* ed. and trans. by Jacques Monfrin (Paris: Dunod, 1995)
WA	William of Apulia, *La Geste de Robert Guiscard,* ed. and trans. by Marguerite Mathieu (Palermo: Istituto Siciliano di studi Bizantini e Neoellenici, 1961)
WC	Walter the Chancellor, *Bella antiochena*, ed. by Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck: Wagner'schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1896)
WG	Walter of Guisborough, *Chronicle Chronicle,* ed. by Harry Rothwell (London: Royal Historical Society, 1957)
WN	William of Newburgh, *History of English Affairs* ed. and trans. by Walsh and Kennedy, 2 vols (Warminster: Aris, 1988–2007)
WP	William of Puylaurens, *Chronique,* ed. and trans. by Jean Duvernoy (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1976)
WR	William Rishanger, *Chronica et annales,* ed. by Henry Thomas Riley, RS, 28 (London: Longman, 1865)
WT	William of Tyre, *Chronique,* ed. by Robert Huygens (Turnholt: Brepols, 1986)

Introduction

Trickery and Deceit in Medieval Warfare: The Historians' View

> Stratagem slipped into disuse in Europe during the Middle Ages [...] As late as the Battle of Ravenna (1512) adversaries were accustomed to open battle, with chivalrous challenges and to conduct war, at least in theory, in accord with agreed rules and fixed means.[1]

At least, that was the view of the twentieth-century military theorist Barton Whaley, author of an influential study on the military stratagem.[2] While specialists in medieval military history have long rejected this image of medieval warfare, such views can still be encountered in more general scholarship. Christon Archer and his co-authors described medieval warfare as follows: 'Opposing armies generally continued to form up a thousand meters apart and basically to leap, grunt, and hack at each other [...] campaigns were conceived of in terms of individual battles and victory was something to be exploited for plunder rather than pursuit. In most cases "strategy" translated into a single campaign or even a single battle'.[3]

The study of medieval warfare has advanced a long way beyond such crude stereotypes. Scholars have demonstrated that medieval commanders were capable of sophisticated strategic thinking and battlefield tactics were considerably more complex than 'line up and charge'. Medieval commanders engaged in elaborate conflicts of move and counter-move, preferring to attack their enemy's supply lines and strongholds over seeking open battle.[4] Similarly, we now possess a more nuanced understanding of the martial

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[1] Barton Whaley, *Stratagem: Deception and Surprise in War* (Norwood, MA: Artech, 2007), p. 47.

[2] For the purpose of this thesis, I use 'deception', 'ruse', 'stratagem' and 'trickery' interchangeably.

[3] Christon I. Archer and others, *World History of Warfare* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), pp. 143, 145.

[4] The literature on medieval strategy is vast. Key works include Philippe Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Michael Jones (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), pp. 208–37; John France, *Western Warfare in the Age of the Crusades, 1000–1300* (London: University College of London Press, 1999), pp. 150–65; John Gillingham, 'War and Chivalry in the History of William Marshal', in *Anglo-Norman Warfare: Studies in Late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman Military Organization and Warfare*, ed. by Matthew Strickland (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), pp. 251–63; John Gillingham, 'Richard I and the Science of War in the Middle Ages', in *War and Government in the Middle Ages in Honour of J. O. Prestwich*, ed. by John Gillingham and J. C. Holt (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1984), pp. 78–91; John Gillingham, 'William the Bastard at War', in *The Battle of Hastings: Sources and Interpretations*, ed. by Stephen Morillo (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1996), pp. 95–112; Helen Nicholson, *Medieval Warfare: Theory and*

culture of the medieval West, what modern scholars broadly refer to as 'chivalry'. No longer dismissed as mere vanity, a glamour to hide the ugly reality of war or a dogma that robbed fighting men of their reason, chivalry is now appreciated as a complex socio-cultural phenomenon, one that both reflected the values of the medieval aristocracy and challenged them to reform their behaviour.[5]

For all the advances that have been made, however, relatively little attention has been paid to the place of trickery and deceit in medieval warfare. At best it is acknowledged in passing, treated as an amusing curiosity, not a subject for extended research. At worst, it is overlooked altogether.[6] R. C. Smail and J. F. Verbruggen both make brief references to the 'feigned flight' ruse but nothing further.[7] Helen Nicholson mentions accounts of attackers entering castles in disguise but offers only this, highly equivocal, comment: 'The similarity of these accounts indicates that either this was a standard tale to demonstrate the ingenuity of the young warrior-hero, or that this sort of trick was used rather frequently'.[8]

John Gillingham has identified the importance of deception and surprise in the strategic conventions that governed Norman and Anglo-Norman warfare. Describing the campaigns of William I of England, he wrote: 'A strategy of shadowing and harassing involved rapid movement, often with fairly small forces; it involved sudden attacks and equally swift retreats. It is hard to conceive of a type of warfare more dependent upon good group discipline. Equally, it is hard to envisage a type of warfare in which tricks like feigned flights would be more natural and more frequently practised'.[9] Similarly, when

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Practice of War in Europe 300–1500 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 133–43; R. C. Smail, *Crusading Warfare, 1097–1193* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), pp. 138–203; J. F. Verbruggen, *The Art of Warfare in Western Europe during the Middle Ages from the Eighth Century to 1340*, trans. by Summer Willard and Sheila C. M. Southern, 2nd edn (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998), pp. 276–350; Recently, an attempt has been made to reassert the importance of battle seeking in medieval strategy. See Stephen Morillo, 'Battle Seeking: The Contexts and Limits of Vegetian Strategy', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 1 (2002), 21–42; Clifford J. Rogers, 'The Vegetian "Science of Warfare" in the Middle Ages', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 1 (2002), 1–20. For the rebuttal, see John Gillingham, '"Up with orthodoxy!" In Defense of Vegetian Warfare', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 2 (2004), 149–58.

[5] Key works on the development of chivalry include Richard Barber, *The Knight and Chivalry*, rev edn (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995); David Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France 900-1300* (Harlow: Pearson, 2005); Georges Duby, *The Chivalrous Society*, trans. by Cynthia Postan (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977); Jean Flori, *L'Essor de la chevalerie, XI–XIIe siècles* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1986); Jean Flori, *Chevaliers et chevalerie au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Hachette, 1997); Richard W. Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Richard W. Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984); Matthew Strickland, *War and Chivalry: The Conduct and Perception of War in England and Normandy, 1066–1217* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Craig Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood in France during the Hundred Years War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[6] Philippe Contamine, for instance, does not mention the subject at all in his influential *War in the Middle Ages.*

[7] Smail, *Crusading Warfare*, pp. 78–79; Verbruggen, *Art of Warfare*, p. 96.

[8] Nicholson, *Medieval Warfare*, p. 130.

[9] Gillingham, 'William the Bastard', p. 108.

discussing the chivalric values revealed in the verse biography of William Marshal, earl of Pembroke (d. 1219), he noted: 'Just as the kinds of tournament tricks which Philip of Flanders employed seem to have been regarded as perfectly respectable behaviour, so also in war there was clearly nothing dishonourable about deceiving the enemy, particularly if it permitted one to ravage his lands without interruption'.[10] Gillingham's analysis is insightful and persuasive but his focus is restricted to the careers of two extraordinary individuals who are not necessarily representative.

Matthew Strickland has also discussed the place of trickery in Anglo-Norman martial culture. He described how guile and surprise 'were acknowledged as fundamental and ubiquitous aspects of war itself and [...] were often praised as an integral element in the successful prosecution of warfare'.[11] Again, his conclusions are sound but his evidence is restricted to the Anglo-Norman world of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. He also does not give much attention to the actual tricks described in his sources. For example, he glosses over the subject of trickery in siege warfare with the phrase: 'The sources abound with references to castles seized by ruse'.[12]

Scholars of John Barbour's fourteenth-century epic poem *The Bruce* have often mentioned the apparent paradox of a chivalric text that praises acts of deceit and subterfuge, such as James Douglas's attack on an English garrison while in church on Palm Sunday in 1308 or Robert Bruce scaling the walls of Perth by night in 1312.[13] Bernice Kliman claimed that such actions were 'anti-thetical to chivalry in the usual sense'.[14] Sonja Cameron concurred, arguing that Barbour redrew the boundaries of chivalric virtue to emphasise the importance of cunning over brute strength.[15] While there is clearly evidence

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[10] Gillingham, 'William Marshal', p. 260. Gillingham's conclusions were adopted by Crouch in his study of the Marshal's life: David Crouch, *William Marshal: Court, Career and Chivalry in the Angevin Empire 1147–1219* (London: Longman, 1990), pp. 183–84.

[11] Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, p. 129.

[12] Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, p. 130.

[13] Duncan's edition is divided into twenty books, with the line numbers restarting with each book. In order to avoid confusion with works in multiple volumes, I have written the book number in arabic rather than roman numerals, followed by the lines. *Bruce,* 5, lines 271–428; *Bruce,* 9, lines 353–454.

[14] Bernice Kliman, 'The Significance of Barbour's Naming of Commoners', *Studies in Scottish Literature,* 11 (1973), 108–13 (here 110–11). See also Bernice Kliman, 'The Idea of Chivalry in John Barbour's *Bruce*', *Medieval Studies* 35 (1973), 477–508; Bernice Kliman, 'Speech as a Mirror of *Sapientia* and *Fortitudo* in Barbour's *Bruce*', *Medium Ævum* 44 (1975), 151–61.

[15] Sonja Cameron, 'Chivalry in Barbour's *Bruce*', in *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France: Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by Matthew Strickland (Stamford, 1998), pp. 13–29. Similar arguments have been made more recently by Purdie and Given-Wilson: Rhiannon Purdie, 'Medieval Romance and the Generic Frictions of Barbour's *Bruce*', in *Barbour's Bruce and its Cultural Contexts: Politics, Chivalry and Literature in Late Medieval Scotland,* ed. by Steve Boardman and Susan Foran (Woodbridge, 2015), pp. 51–74 (here 70–71); Chris Given-Wilson, 'Chivalric Biography and Medieval Life-Writing', in *Barbour's Bruce and its Cultural Contexts: Politics, Chivalry and Literature in Late Medieval Scotland,* ed. by Steve Boardman and Susan Foran (Woodbridge, 2015), pp. 101–18 (here 116).

of tension in the text regarding the guerrilla-style tactics that Robert Bruce and his followers were forced to employ in the First War of Independence (see Chapter 9), it is not accurate to say that such behaviour was antithetical to conventional chivalry or military practice.[16] As will be demonstrated below, Bruce was far from the only medieval commander to use ambushes and night escalades to achieve his ends and he was not the only individual to be feted in chronicle or verse for his cunning.

Only a handful of scholars have dedicated entire works to medieval military deception. Emily Albu analysed Norman and Byzantine historians' shared interest in stories of trickery and their mutual appreciation for cunning, with particular reference to Anna Komnene's story of how Bohemond escaped her father's patrols by faking his own death.[17] David Whetham's recent monograph is based on a detailed investigation into attitudes towards deception in later medieval theological and legal texts but his conclusions are naïve, to say the least. Interpreting Honoré Bonet's treatise *L'Arbe de batailles* (1387) as a description of historical reality, rather than an idealistic prescriptive text, he concludes that deception was viewed as licit in the Middle Ages because pitched battles between kings were believed to be akin to judicial duels, in which God would award victory to the righteous, and such duels were to be fought by any means necessary.[18] There are numerous problems with this argument. Not only does it misinterpret Bonet, it fails to take into account the so-called private wars of the Middle Ages, fought between aristocrats of various standing, who were just as likely to employ deception as kings or emperors. Furthermore, it places too much emphasis on the set-piece pitched battle. While such encounters could be decisive, and medieval commanders often had important political and cultural reasons to claim that they were seeking battle, the reality was that they were very risky affairs. Commanders generally favoured the safer (and no less effective) strategies of raiding, devastation and capturing enemy strongholds, wearing their enemies down through attrition rather than risking everything in a single dramatic combat. Whetham's theory has little to say about this kind of warfare. Nor does he conduct any significant analysis of the medieval military narratives themselves, relying almost solely upon modern translations of Jean Froissart's chronicle.[19]

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[16] For a detailed criticism of these arguments, see James Titterton, '*Worthy, Wycht, and Wys:* Romance, Chivalry, and Chivalric Language in John Barbour's *Bruce', Bulletin of International Medieval Research,* 20 (forthcoming).

[17] Emily Albu, 'Bohemond and the Rooster: Byzantines, Normans, and the Artful Ruse', in *Anna Komnene and her Times*, ed. by Thalia Gouma-Peterson (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 157–68.

[18] David Whetham, *Just Wars and Moral Victories: Surprise, Deception and the Normative Framework of European War in the Later Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), p. 103.

[19] Whetham, *Just Wars*, pp. 197–234.

At the time of writing, Yuval Noah Harari is the only scholar to have studied medieval accounts of military deception in detail. He created six case studies of stealthy expeditions, ranging from the capture of Antioch by the first crusaders in 1098 to the French officer Blaise de Monluc's raid on the Provençal town of Auriol in 1536. Harari misleadingly refers to these expeditions as 'special operations', even though, as he acknowledges, medieval armies had no equivalent to today's highly-trained special forces.[20] Nevertheless, these case studies brilliantly illustrate the daring and ingenuity that medieval combatants could employ to achieve their aims. Harari's decision to focus on individual incidents helps to engage the reader but also prevents him from placing these extraordinary events in the context of more typical medieval military practice.

Harari aside, scholars have tended to discuss medieval military deceptions in general terms, with reference to only a few specific incidents by way of illustration. No substantial, wide-ranging research has been undertaken into the portrayal of trickery in medieval military narratives or the methods that combatants employed to deceive their adversaries. It is my hope that this thesis will help to fill this lacuna in modern scholarship by analysing both the practice and the perception of trickery in medieval warfare: identifying the various kinds of deception employed by combatants and studying how contemporaries viewed these tactics.

Scope and Definitions

Whaley's understanding of the Middle Ages may be flawed but his definition of 'deception' remains useful as a basis for a thesis of this kind. He defined it as any action '*intended* by its perpetrator to dupe or mislead a victim'.[21] This excludes instances in which the victim simply misunderstands their enemy's intent and is surprised: the deception must be intentional or at least perceived to be so. The purpose of such deceptions in war is to surprise the enemy: 'those instances where a military action by one antagonist has not been predicted, much less anticipated by its intended victim'.[22] Whaley described stratagems as a 'decision-making model', in which the deceiver presents the victim with a number of plausible alternatives in the hope that the victim will make an incorrect choice. Ideally, the

[20] Yuval Noah Harari, *Special Operations in the Age of Chivalry, 1100–1550* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007), pp. 34–37.
[21] Whaley, *Stratagem*, p. 82.
[22] Whaley, *Stratagem*, p. 82.

enemy is presented with only two choices and chooses incorrectly. A sentry sees a group of merchants approaching the castle gate: does he treat them as peaceful merchants or hostile soldiers in disguise? If the sentry makes the wrong choice, his life and the castle's safety may be at risk.[23]

More often, the victim is presented with a range of options. For instance, if a commander sees enemy troops withdrawing before him, he must choose how to respond. If it is a genuine retreat, he might be able to pursue and destroy the enemy force. If it is a feint, however, he might be lured him into an ambush or be drawn away from his position, to the enemy's advantage. The commander is then faced with a dilemma. He could conclude that no deception is taking place, that the retreat is genuine, at the risk of falling into a trap. Alternatively, he could assume that some deception is being employed and act cautiously, by advancing slowly or splitting his force so as not yield ground to the enemy. This too is risky, as it may allow the enemy to escape or weaken his own strength at a key location. His only other options are to guess what his enemy intends at random or to panic and act randomly regardless. Therefore, even if the perpetrator does not entirely succeed in deceiving the victim, he has at least created doubt in the victim's mind and may force a cautious enemy to divert resources to counter a non-existent threat.[24]

This thesis will be confined to acts of deception performed between belligerent parties during an acknowledged time of war: in medieval terminology, when 'banners had been raised'.[25] This is a somewhat artificial distinction, particularly with regard to wars of rebellion that were not perceived as legitimate conflicts by the dominant power.[26] By making this distinction, I intend to restrict my analysis to *military* stratagems, excluding assassination, murder and related varieties of violent deception that occur beyond the military sphere and should be studied in their own right. These are deceptions employed by avowed enemies, who expect that their opponents will seek to do them harm within certain, culturally-specific limits.[27]

I have chosen to focus this study on the predominantly Francophone cultures of Western Europe between the early eleventh and early fourteenth centuries, that is the warrior classes of modern France, the Low Countries and the British Isles, and their encounters with non-Western and/or non-Francophone peoples. This will allow me to

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[23] Whaley, *Stratagem*, pp. 73–74.
[24] Whaley, *Stratagem*, pp. 73–75.
[25] Robert W. Jones, "'What banner thine?" The Banner as a Symbol of Identification, Status and Authority on the Battlefield', *Haskins Society Journal*, 15 (2004), 101–9 (here 108–9).
[26] See Chapter 9 for a discussion of these issues.
[27] See Chapter 7 on the keeping and breaking of truces, for example.

study the use and perception of military deception within a relatively homogenous period. Warfare in Western Europe did not undergo any radical changes between these dates. It remained dominated by two factors. The first was the armoured horseman, whose combination of speed, training and heavy armour made them the core of every significant military force.[28] Foot soldiers, by contrast, were often relegated to an auxiliary role as they lacked the necessary discipline to engage horsemen in the open (although they could be highly effective in a defensive role).[29] The second factor that dominated warfare was the castle: stone or wooden fortifications, either built independently or as part of an urban settlement. Contemporary siege technology had difficulty breaching fortifications, meaning that forces had to commit many resources to either take or contain enemy strongholds. Campaigns often centred on the capture and control of key fortifications.[30]

Over the course of this period, the Western aristocracy and the horsemen who made up their retinues came to regard themselves as a distinct social group, the *militia* or 'knighthood' of Christendom. United by a common language, a common set of cultural values that we would call 'chivalrous' and a common Catholic Christian religion, they formed a reasonably homogenous group whose attitudes can be assessed through historical enquiry. Towards the end of this period and into the fourteenth century there were fundamental shifts in the practice of warfare in the medieval West: the 'feudal vassals' whom princes could call upon for a limited period of military service ceased to play a significant role in armies and waged soldiers became the basis for most forces. Furthermore, social and technological changes led to the emergence of foot soldiers as a potentially battle-winning force, demonstrated by the victories of infantry armies at

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[28] France, *Western Warfare*, pp. 53–65; Nicholson, *Medieval Warfare*, pp. 53–57; Michael Prestwich, '*Miles in armis strenuus*: The Knight at War', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6 (1995), 201–10; Verbruggen, *Art of Warfare*, pp. 19–110.

[29] Matthew Bennett, 'The Myth of the Military Supremacy of Knightly Cavalry', in *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain: Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by Matthew Strickland (Stamford: Watkins, 1998), pp. 304–16; Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, pp. 71–73; John Gillingham, 'An Age of Expansion, c. 1020–1204', in *Medieval Warfare: A History*, ed. by Maurice Keen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 59–88 (here 78); Stephen Morillo, *Warfare under the Anglo-Norman Kings 1066–1135* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994), pp. 150–63; Stephen Morillo, 'The "Age of Cavalry" Revisited', in *The Circle of War in the Middle Ages: Essays on Medieval Military and Naval History*, ed. by Donald J. Kagay and L. J. Andrew Villalon (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), pp. 45–58; Nicholson, *Medieval Warfare*, pp. 56–58; Smail, *Crusading Warfare*, pp. 115–20; Verbruggen, *Art of Warfare*, pp. 182–203.

[30] For the role of castles, see Charles L. H. Coulson, *Castles in Medieval Society: Fortresses in England, France, and Ireland in the Central Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Kelly DeVries and Robert Douglas Smith, *Medieval Military Technology*, 2nd edn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), pp. 187–249; Robert Higham, 'Timber Castles: A Reassessment', in *Anglo-Norman Castles*, ed. by Robert Liddiard (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), pp. 105–18; R. L. C. Jones, 'Fortifications and Sieges in Western Europe, c. 800–1450', in *Medieval Warfare: A History*, ed. by Maurice Keen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 163–85; R. Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

Courtrai (1302), Bannockburn (1314) and Morgarten (1315).[31] While this was certainly not the end of the armoured horseman's dominance, it nevertheless marked a shift in the practice of warfare that sets the fourteenth century apart from those that preceded it, making it a logical delimiting point for this thesis.[32]

In addition, sources from this period are rich in descriptions of armed conflict, ranging from the highly localised, fought over a single county or even a single castle, to the very greatest, in which kings and emperors led armies of thousands against one another. It was a period characterised by territorial expansion and military adventurism. Between 1000 and 1300, Francophone armies travelled across Europe and the Near East and fought against a variety of enemies, some of whom came from markedly different societies. This was the age of the Norman conquests in southern Italy and Sicily, the Anglo-Norman invasions of Ireland and Wales, the First Scottish War of Independence and, perhaps most significantly, the crusades to the Near East, in which the Francophone peoples came into conflict with Arabs, Turks and Greeks. By studying such a broad variety of conflicts, against a variety of foes, I will be able to study attitudes towards deception in different contexts and to determine what role cultural difference played in contemporary perceptions of military trickery. Was there a bias against deception when practiced by the culturally or religious 'other', or were contemporary attitudes more even-handed, respecting cunning and cleverness regardless of where it was found?

Thesis Outline

This thesis is based on a close textual analysis of incidents of military deception recorded in Latin and vernacular chronicles of the central Middle Ages. While there are a number of problems in using chronicle narratives to study military history (as I discuss in Chapter 1) they remain among our best sources for reconstructing the reality of medieval warfare.

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[31] Rogers is the main proponent of this interpretation of the period. Clifford J. Rogers, 'The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years' War', *Journal of Military History*, 57 (1993), 241–78; Clifford J. Rogers, 'Tactics and the Face of Battle', in *European Warfare, 1350–1750*, ed. by Frank Tallett and D. J. B. Trim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 203–35. DeVries provides an informative survey of infantry warfare at the turn of the 14th century. Kelly DeVries, *Infantry Warfare in the Early Fourteenth Century: Discipline, Tactics and Technology* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1996). Stone has provided valuable criticism of Rogers's thesis, shifting the argument away from technological explanations for the rise of 'infantry warfare' and identifying the more fundamental social and economic causes. John Stone, 'Technology, Society, and the Infantry Revolution of the Fourteenth Century', *Journal of Military History*, 68 (2004), 361–80.

[32] Similar periodisation is used in a number of notable survey texts such as Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*; *Medieval Warfare: A History*, ed. by Maurice Keen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Verbruggen, *Art of Warfare*.

Furthermore, even when a chronicler's use of literary convention or outright invention causes us to question the historical basis of their account, a study of the language used can still tell us much about that author's attitudes towards military deception and, by extension, those of their intended audience.

As one of the goals of this project is to demonstrate the ubiquity of deception in medieval military narratives, it has been helpful to construct a taxonomy of trickery, which can be found in the Appendix. The taxonomy contains 427 individual incidents of deception from seventy-six chronicles, which I have classified into ten categories based on their common features. As with any classification, there is a degree of artifice about this exercise: some incidents share features with multiple different categories. Most notably, the categories of 'ambushes' and 'feigned flight to lead an enemy into a pre-prepared ambush' have significant overlap but it was necessary to distinguish the latter as a separate entity, characterised by the use of a decoy force to lure the victims into the ambush, which is not present in most descriptions of ambushes. The analysis in the main text of the thesis is based on a selection of representative incidents selected from the wider corpus of material. The taxonomy has been included to demonstrate that the incidents discussed below are not abnormalities but part of a broader trend within medieval military narratives. Whatever contemporaries may have felt about the use of trickery in war, it was clearly not uncommon.

Chapter 1 provides an outline of the theoretical basis for my use of chronicle narratives as sources for military history in light of the 'linguistic turn' and recent scholarship that has highlighted the literary nature of these ostensibly historical narratives. In addition, this chapter presents some examples of the place of cunning and deception in medieval culture, to give further context for discussions of specifically military deceptions.

Chapters 2 to 7 consider specific types of military deception, what kinds of ruse are reported in the chronicle narratives and how they are presented. The order of subjects has been chosen to reflect the order of Frontinus' *Strategemata,* which is divided into stratagems to be employed before battle, during battle and in siege warfare.[33] Thus, Chapter 2 discusses forms of military deception that occur on the strategic level of war, such as feigned manoeuvres, and what we would today call 'information warfare'. This involves the dissemination of false information and the use of deception to gather accurate information by employing spies. Chapter 3 is the first to consider actual tactics, analysing accounts of surprise attacks in which one force attacked another unawares, either from ambush or

[33] See Chapter 1 for a discussion of Frontinus.

under cover of darkness. Chapter 4 studies the feigned or false flight stratagem and the controversy surrounding its reported use at the battle of Hastings (1066). Chapter 5 analyses various forms of disguise. While these are among the more fantastical stories of trickery in the chronicles, they nevertheless provide valuable information about the link between appearance and social status in medieval society. This chapter also features a section on the development of battlefield heraldry and how it created new opportunities for combatants to disguise themselves by discarding or changing their coat of arms. Chapter 6 considers the role of bribery and inducement in medieval siege warfare, in which an attacking force would offer some form of enticement to gain access to a stronghold. Also associated with siege warfare, Chapter 7 studies the place of the oath in contemporary culture and the circumstances in which combatants swore false oaths or broke their word to an enemy in order to gain a tactical advantage.

Finally, chapters 8 and 9 move beyond analysis of specific ruses to explore contemporary attitudes towards trickery and the associated quality of cunning. Chapter 8 uses close analysis of Latin terminology to reveal how authors viewed trickery and how subtle variations in vocabulary can reveal their ambiguous attitudes towards it. Chapter 9 considers the (considerably rarer) explicit discussions of trickery and its morality, whether in canon law or chronicles, as well as how deceit was perceived in the culturally or religious 'other'. While no one method can conclusively demonstrate 'the medieval attitude' towards military deception (if such generalisations can be made about any historical society), my hope is that, by presenting the evidence in this impressionistic way, it will convey a sense of the broad trends in contemporary thought relating to the use of trickery in war.

The conclusion draws together the different threads of argument to demonstrate that, contrary to Whaley's opinion, deception was an important element in medieval warfare. Chivalric culture may have valued courage, prowess and loyalty in their fighting men but contemporaries were also capable of admiring prudence, cunning and skill in battle. The depiction of military deception was by no means simple and much depended on context and the chronicler's personal opinion. As so often in studies of historical cultures, simple stereotypes quickly break down under examination to reveal a complex, ambiguous reality with few moral absolutes.

Chapter 1
Writing about War in the Central Middle Ages

Before we can analyse the use of deception in warfare during the central Middle Ages, we must establish the the cultural framework within which combatants operated: the social values by which they and contemporaries judged their conduct. It is also necessary to outline the cultural and historical context of our sources. The medieval chronicles, our best sources for studying warfare in this period, are far removed from our notions of impartial reporting. They are conscious literary constructions, drawing on over a thousand years of classical and medieval literature and historical writing. Each chronicle author had their own agenda and nuances that influenced how they depicted warfare.

1.1 Writing War: The Classical Legacy

It may be customary for modern historiography to divide the Roman era from the medieval but medieval culture remained enamoured of the classical world long after the Western empire ceased to exist. Scribes diligently saved, copied and disseminated ancient texts, adding their own commentaries and emendations. Classical figures such as Julius Caesar and Alexander, reimagined as chivalric knights, became staple figures of romance. The field of military theory was also dominated by Roman authors, particularly Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus.

Vegetius, a civil servant from the Eastern Roman Empire, probably composed the text later known as *De re militari* during the reign of Emperor Theodosius the Great (379–95).[1] The text is divided into four books. The first is concerned with how recruits should be selected and trained for the imperial army. The second is about the organisation and administration of the army in previous generations. The third covers strategy and battle tactics. The final book is about siege and naval warfare.

[1] Christopher Allmand, *The 'De re militari' of Vegetius: The Reception, Transmission and Legacy of a Roman Text in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 1.

By his own admission, Vegetius never intended to write an 'art of war', or even an original military treatise, but merely to summarise the work of older authorities.[2] Much of *De re militari*'s content was already antiquated by the fourth century.[3] It has been suggested that Vegetius compiled his text in response to the empire's humiliating defeat by the Goths at Adrianople (378), advocating that the imperial army should be reformed to resemble the legions of the Roman Republic.[4] The sections on strategy and tactics consist largely of banal commonplaces: do not attack an enemy who outnumbers you; it is useful to surprise an enemy; soldiers who are properly led fight better than those who are not etc.[5]

Despite its shortcomings, *De re militari* continued to be copied and transmitted throughout the Middle Ages and beyond: what Sydney Anglo dubbed 'the triumph of mediocrity'.[6] Two hundred and twenty copies of the complete text survive, in addition to forty collections of select extracts, making it one of the most widely copied classical texts during the Middle Ages.[7] Christopher Allmand has argued that the generic nature of *De re militari*'s advice actually contributed to its enduring popularity, as its commonplaces could be applied to a variety of different circumstances. Vegetius' style, favouring the 'terse, easily remembered and recognisable statement', also helped. Finally, it was the only work of theory on the art of war to survive into the Middle Ages.[8]

Although it was widely copied, there is no firm evidence to indicate that *De re militari*'s advice was read and applied by medieval commanders. John Gillingham and others have referred to medieval warfare as 'Vegetian' but Gillingham does not attempt to prove that medieval commanders such as William the Conqueror or Richard the Lionheart actually owned and read *De re militari*, only that their tactics mirrored some of Vegetius' advice, particularly the use of devastation and avoiding pitched battles where possible.[9] Bernard S. Bachrach, however, has argued that *De re militari* was both read and followed in this period, using the example of the Angevin counts Geoffrey le Bel and Fulk Nerra. There is an episode in John of Marmoutier's *Historia Gaufredi* in which Geoffrey is directed

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[2] Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus, *Epitoma rei militaris,* ed. by M. D. Reeve (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), pp. 4–5.
[3] For example, Vegetius's use of *principes, hastate* and *triarii* to describe the battle-order of the ancient legion comes from the Republican armies of the third and second centuries BC. Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus, *Epitome of Military Science,* trans. by N. P. Milner, 2nd edn (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996), p. xvii.
[4] Vegetius, *Epitoma,* p. ix.
[5] Nicholson, *Medieval Warfare,* p. 15.
[6] Sydney Anglo, 'Vegetius's *De re militari*: The Triumph of Mediocrity', *Antiquaries Journal*, 82 (2002), 247–67.
[7] Christopher Allmand, 'Vegetius' '*De re militari*': Military Theory in Medieval and Modern Conception', *History Compass*, 9 (2011), 397–409 (here 398).
[8] Allmand, '*De re militari' of Vegetius*, pp. 252–53.
[9] Gillingham, 'Richard I and the Science of War', p. 82; John Gillingham, 'William the Bastard', p. 102.

by a monk of Marmoutier to consult a copy of *De re militari*, where he learns how to build an incendiary device, at the siege of Montreuil-Bellay in 1150. Even if one leaves aside the fact that Vegetius's original text does not include instructions for building such a device, this is by no means a straightforward historical narrative.[10] The *Historia* is a 'panegyric' of Geoffrey, depicting him as an ideal knight and ruler.[11] Early passages of the *Historia* are pure fantasy. In one passage the young Geoffrey slays a giant at a tournament.[12] In another, he encounters a charcoal burner while lost in the forest who, not recognising his lord, complains of the people's mistreatment at the hands of Geoffrey's officials, prompting Geoffrey to reform the governance of Anjou.[13] In this context, the most we can say about the *Historia's* reference to *De re militari* is that it represents the ideal of a learned commander, following in the illustrious classical tradition.

For Fulk Nerra's use of the *De re militari*, the most that Bachrach could say was that there are 'fragments of circumstantial evidence' to suggest that Fulk may have read it but even Bachrach concedes 'there is no direct evidence'.[14] Likewise, John Hosler, in his study of the military career of Henry II of England, is only able to offer 'circumstantial clues' that Henry may have possibly read *De re militari*.[15] As Vegetius' advice is little more than common sense, it would be very difficult to determine when a commander was following his advice.[16] Furthermore, as Morillo has argued, the particular circumstances of medieval Europe (agrarian society, preponderance of fortifications etc.) favoured the use of so-called 'Vegetian tactics'.[17]

Far more important than any hypothetical impact it may have had on the conduct of war is *De rei militari*'s clear and demonstrable impact on thinking about warfare among medieval authors. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, copies were preserved in the libraries of monastic houses, cathedral chapters and, later, universities, although it was never included in any formal curriculum.[18] As the only 'art of war' to survive from classical Rome, Vegetius was regarded as a major authority on the proper organisation and conduct

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[10] Bernard S. Bachrach, 'The Practical Use of Vegetius' *De re militari* during the Early Middle Ages', *The Historian*, 47 (1985), 239–55 (pp. 243–44).

[11] Jim Bradbury, 'Geoffrey V of Anjou, Count and Knight', in *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood III: Papers from the Fourth Strawberry Hill Conference 1988*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1990), pp. 21–38 (here 22).

[12] *Chroniques d'Anjou,* ed. by Paul Marchegay and Andre Salmon, 2 vols (Paris: Renouard, 1856), I, pp. 238–40.

[13] Chroniques d'Anjou, I, 241–50.

[14] B. S. Bachrach, 'Practical Use', pp. 249, 254–55.

[15] John D. Hosler, *Henry II: A Medieval Soldier at War, 1147-1189* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 126–27.

[16] Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, p. 211.

[17] Morillo, 'Battle Seeking', pp. 28–31.

[18] Allmand, 'Military Theory', p. 400; Allmand, '*De re militari' of Vegetius*, pp. 63–67.

of warfare. *De re militari's* emphasis on the role of the emperor and the soldier's duty to protect the *res publica* was particularly attractive to political theorists who wished to advocate a more centralised form of government and a limit on private warfare. As already noted, John of Salisbury quoted Vegetius extensively in the *Policraticus,* a treatise on government that he prepared for Thomas Becket.[19] Allmand has also identified Vegetius' influence on the thirteenth-century French chronicler Guillaume le Breton, the law code of Alfonso X of Castile (1252–1284) and Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum* (composed 1275–1277)*,* among others.[20]

De re militari also influenced the depiction of battles in medieval chronicles. As will be discussed below, battle narratives were often composed according to set tropes: a competent or successful commander would behave in such a way, a foolish commander in another. Authors could use key phrases and ideas from *De re militari* to demonstrate both their own learning and the martial skill of their subjects.[21] Vegetius taught that a commander should behave cautiously and reasonably, therefore a classically-educated historian would be inclined to portray a successful commander acting according to these precepts.[22] For the purposes of this thesis, it is important to note that Vegetius encouraged his readers to employ deceit and trickery against their enemies. Here is an example from Book 3.6, entitled 'Quanta sit servanda cautela cum vicinis hostibus movetur exercitus' ('How carefully an army should be protected when moving near the enemy'):

> Just as it is useful to us to wisely avoid these things, so, if the enemies' ignorance or our own dissembling should give us an opportunity, it should not be allowed to slip by, but [we should] reconnoitre carefully, entice traitors or deserters in order that we can learn the enemy's plans now or later, and, having prepared our horsemen and our lightly-armed troops, ensnare them with unexpected terror while they are marching or searching for fodder and supplies.[23]

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[19] John D. Hosler, *John of Salisbury: Military Authority of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 5–7.

[20] Allmand, '*De re militari' of Vegetius*, pp. 83–147.

[21] Richard Abels and Stephen Morillo, 'A Lying Legacy? A Preliminary Discussion of Images Antiquity and Altered Reality in Medieval Military History', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 3 (2005), 1–13.

[22] Allmand, '*De re militari' of Vegetius*, pp. 257–58.

[23] Vegetius, *Epitoma,* p. 79: 'Ut nostra commoditas est sapienter ista vitare, ita, si adversariorum imperitia vel dissimulatio occasionem nobis dederit, non oportet amitti, sed explorare sollicite, proditores ac transfugas invitare, ut quid hostis moliatur in praesenti vel in futurum possimus agnoscere, paratisque equitibus ac levi armatura ambulantes eosdem vel pabula victumque quaerentes inproviso terrore decipere'.

Or here, from Book 3.9: 'But if [the commander] sees that the enemy is stronger, he should avoid an open engagement; for those who are few in number and inferior in strength, carrying out sudden attacks and ambushes under good commanders, often obtain victory'.[24] This is not to say that medieval commanders learned about such tricks from *De re militari*, or that every incident of deception in the chronicles is a fictional construct inserted by classicising historians; it simply means that we should be aware that these ideas were in circulation among the literate members of medieval society, in a text that was regarded as an authoritative art of war.

Even more popular than *De re militari* was the *Facta et dicta memorabilia* ('Memorable Doings and Sayings') by Valerius Maximus; more medieval manuscripts of this text survive than any other Latin prose work, except the Bible.[25] It is not a work of military theory but it is relevant to this thesis because it includes a section on stratagems. Almost nothing is known about Valerius except that he lived during the reign of Emperor Tiberius (14–37 CE), to whom the *Facta,* Valerius' only known work, is dedicated.[26] It is a handbook of *exempla,* drawn mainly from ancient history and philosophy, intended to instruct members of the Roman elite in the rhetorical art of declamation.[27] This may have been a thriving genre in early imperial Rome but the *Facta* is the only example to have survived. Despite its shortcomings as both history and literature, it was enormously popular during the Middle Ages: 'hardly a monastery will have lacked a Valerius, judging by the regularity of his appearance in extant medieval library catalogues'.[28] Instances of medieval authors quoting and citing the *Facta* were 'legion' and include Fulbert of Chartres, John of Salisbury, Peter the Chanter, Peter of Blois, Saxo Grammaticus, Gerald of Wales and Petrarch.[29] Like *De re militari*, its popularity likely stemmed from a combination of its antiquity and its short, memorable phrases that could be easily quoted to illustrate a point and demonstrate an author's erudition.

It is notable that such a popular text contains two chapters dedicated to famous examples of cunning. The first, 7.3, entitled 'Vafra dicta aut facta' ('Things Craftily Said or

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[24] Vegetius, *Epitoma,* pp. 87–88: 'Si vero adversarium intellegit potiorem, certamen publicum vitet; nam pauciores numero et inferiores viribus superventus et insidias facientes sub bonis ducibus reportaverunt saepe victoriam'.

[25] W. Martin Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and the Rhetoric of the New Nobility* (London: Duckworth, 1992), p. 2.

[26] C. J. Carter, 'Valerius Maximus', in *Empire and Aftermath: Silver Latin II*, ed. by T. A. Dorey (London: Routledge, 1975), pp. 26–56 (here 31–34).

[27] Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus*, pp. 3–4.

[28] C. J. Carter, 'Valerius Maximus', p. 49.

[29] Dorothy Schullian, 'Valerius Maximus', in *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries,* 11 vols (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 1960), V, 287–404 (here 290–95).

Done') is a mixture of legal and political *exempla*. Valerius introduces them as follows: 'There is another way of acting and speaking that, by turning to its closest neighbour, goes from wisdom to the name of craftiness, that does not find its intended goal unless it took strength from deceitful behaviour and which seeks glory by the secret pathway more than the open road'.[30] The following chapter, however, is dedicated solely to military ruses: 'But there is an eminent piece of cunning, far removed from all censure. These works, because they cannot be suitably expressed in a Latin term, are called stratagems in the Greek manner'.[31]

This chapter contains only seven examples: two from Rome's pre-republican history, three from republican Rome, and two involving non-Roman figures, King Agathocles of Syracuse and Hannibal. Brief as it is, the chapter describes an impressive variety of tactics: seeding false information, feigning flight, concealing troops and sending false deserters into the enemy camp, armed with hidden swords.[32] Valerius offers no condemnation of these actions but celebrates them. Describing how the Roman general Livius Salinator concealed newly-arrived reinforcements from his Carthaginian opponent Hasdrubal, he says: 'So that Punic cunning, notorious throughout the whole world, was duped by Roman prudence'.[33]

This brief summary of stratagems was incorporated into another Roman military text, one which consisted of almost entirely of incidents of military deception: the *Strategemata* by Julius Frontinus. We know much more about Frontinus than either Vegetius or Valerius. He began his career as an army officer in Germany under Domitius Corbulo, commander of the armies in Germania Inferior. From c. 74–78 CE he served as governor of Britain, where he successfully campaigned against the Silures tribe in Cambria (modern Wales). After completing his term as governor he returned to Rome, where he served as the city's water commissioner from 97 until his death sometime in the first decade of the second century. During this time he produced a two-volume work on Rome's aqueducts, *De Aquis Urbis Romae*.[34]

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[30] Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta memorabilia,* ed. by John Briscoe (Leipzig: Teubner, 1998), p. 452. 'Est aliud factorum dictorumque genus, a sapientia proximo deflexu ad uafritiae nomen progressum, quod, nisi fallacia uires adsumpsit, finem propositi non inuenit, laudemque occulto magis tramite quam aperta uia petit'.

[31] Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta,* p. 466: 'Illa uero pars calliditatis egregia et ab omni reprehensione procul remota, cuius opera, quia appellatione Latina uix apte exprimi possunt, Graeca pronuntiatione strategemata dicantur'.

[32] Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta,* pp. 466–73.

[33] Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta,* p. 470. 'ita illo toto terrarum orbe infamis Punica calliditas, Romana elusa prudentia'.

[34] Charles E. Bennett, 'The Life and Works of Sextus Julius Frontinus', in *The Stratagems and the Aqueducts of Rome*, ed. by Mary B. McElwain, trans. by Charles E. Bennett (London: Heinemann, 1925), pp. xiii–xxvii (pp. xiii–xiv); *Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World*, ed. by Hubert Canick and Helmuth Schneider, 15 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2004), V, pp. 562–63.

The *Strategemata* was composed between 84 and 88 CE and is the only surviving Latin example from a wider genre of stratagem collections.[35] It was intended as a companion piece to the author's treatise on the art of war, which is now lost and does not appear to have survived into the Middle Ages.[36] The existence of this lost work is attested by Aelian, a near contemporary, and Vegetius, as well as Frontinus himself:

> Although I alone among those who study the science of military matters undertook to teach it, and I seem to have achieved that goal, to the extent that my concern was satisfied, yet I still think I ought to arrange a work in which I gather the clever deeds of commanders, which were covered by the Greeks in a single term, stratagems into convenient notes,.[37]

These 'notes' are arranged into three books, with a fourth, emphasising the importance of discipline and good conduct, added by an unknown interpolator at a later date, although this interpolation was not always recognised as such by medieval readers.[38] Frontinus summarised the content of the first three books in this way: 'In the first there will be examples which will be relevant for when battle is not yet joined; in the second, examples which will concern battle and thoroughly subduing [the enemy]; the third will consider stratagems for carrying out and breaking a siege'.[39]

Each book is subdivided into types (literally, *species*) of stratagem. Each *species* is composed of examples of how past commanders overcame problems or gained an advantage over their enemies through ruses. For example, in Book Two, under the heading 'On Disturbing the Enemy's Line', Frontinus recounted how Fabius Rullus Maximus sent troops to seize a hill in the rear of a Samnite army.[40] Under the same heading we find a story from Livy in which Marcus Marcellus commanded his camp followers to join in a battle cry in order to make his army appear more numerous.[41] In total there are fifty different *species* listed in the *Strategemata,* ranging from stratagems for concealing one's plans

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[35] Everett L. Wheeler, *Stratagem and the Vocabulary of Military Trickery* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), p. 1.

[36] C. E. Bennett, 'Life and Works', p. xix.

[37] Sextus Julius Frontinus, *Strategemata,* ed. by Robert I. Ireland (Leipzig: Teubner, 1990), p. 1: 'Cum ad instruendam rei militaris scientiam unus ex numero studiosorum eius accesserim, eique destinato quantum cura nostra ualuit satisfecisse uisus sim, deberi adhuc institutae arbitror operae ut sollertia ducum facta, quae a Graecis una στρατηγημάτων appellatione conprehensa sunt, expeditis amplectar commentariis'.

[38] C. E. Bennett, 'Life and Works', pp. xix–xxvi.

[39] Frontinus, *Strategemata,* p. 2. 'in primo erunt exempla quae competant proelio nondum commisso; in secundo quae ad proelium et confectam pacationem pertineant; tertius inferendae soluendaeque obsidioni habebit στρατηγήματα'.

[40] Frontinus, *Strategemata,* pp. 42–43. 'De acie hostium turbanda'.

[41] Frontinus, *Strategemata,* p. 44.

from the enemy, to choosing an advantageous battlefield, to inducing treachery in a besieged garrison, to moving supplies into a stronghold.[42] Frontinus rarely passed judgement on the stories he included, recounting stories of lying, bribery, ambushes and spying without comment.

Although not as widely disseminated as *De re militari,* the *Strategamata* was in circulation during the Middle Ages. One third of the 120 known manuscripts of the *Strategamata* are physically bound to *De re militari,* suggesting that contemporaries saw the two works as complementing one another.[43] It was popular for its classical pedigree, as well as being a source of moral exemplars for sermons, encouraging the virtues of courage and perseverance.[44] John of Salisbury incorporated maxims from the fourth book, emphasising the importance of military discipline, into his *Policraticus.*[45] In the later fourteenth century, Simon de Hesdin and Nicholas de Gonesse added forty-nine examples from the *Strategemata* to their French translation of the *Facta et dicta memorabilia.* This material was later incorporated into the works of the influential chivalric writers Christine de Pizan and Antoine de La Sale.[46]

As with Vegetius, acknowledging that Frontinus was known, read and copied during the Middle Ages does not mean that commanders looked to him for instruction or inspiration. Nor does it mean that every stratagem described in medieval narratives should be dismissed as an imitation, with no foundation in historical reality. We must be aware that such influences were present without dismissing the possibility that medieval warriors and authors could arrive at these conclusions independently. Furthermore, we should be conscious that the most popular, authoritative texts in warfare did not condemn trickery but actively advocated the use of stratagems to achieve victory.

1.2 Writing War: Trickery as a Motif

Stories of trickery and tricksters are universal. From the Three Billy Goats Gruff, to Brer Rabbit, to the impenetrable disguises adopted by Sherlock Holmes, the hero who overcomes obstacles through guile and cunning has been with us as long as human beings

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[42] Frontinus, *Strategemata,* pp. 2–3, 30, 70.
[43] Christopher Allmand, 'A Roman Text on War: The *Strategemata* of Frontinus in the Middle Ages', in *Soldiers, Nobles and Gentlemen: Essays in Honour of Maurice Keen*, ed. by Peter Coss and Christopher Tyerman (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2009), pp. 153–68 (here 155–56).
[44] Allmand, 'Frontinus', pp. 156, 161.
[45] Allmand, 'Frontinus', p. 162.
[46] Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood,* p. 251.

have told stories. Stith Thompson, in his index of motifs found in folk-literature, listed 2399 individual motifs under 'Deception'.[47] Of particular relevance to this thesis are the twenty motifs listed under the subheading 'Military Strategy', including such common ruses as 'Disguise as merchant to enter an enemy castle', 'Capture of castle by feigning death' and 'Hero causes confusion in enemy camp in dead of night', all of which appear in the chronicles discussed below.[48]

The figure of the trickster as a folk archetype in Native American and African cultures has attracted much commentary from anthropologists and historians of religion. Laura Makarius interpreted the trickster as a figure who performed a vital psychological function within society, transgressing taboos in ways that people cannot and thereby allowing them a vicarious emotional release from social constraints.[49] Merrit R. Blakeslee, building upon Makarius' work, analysed the figure of Tristan in Old French literature as a form of 'uncourtly trickster' who broke the medieval taboo against adultery.[50] Blakeslee proposed four essential kinds of trickster, based upon Jung's theories about the underlying psychology of the trickster-myth: the clumsy, inept 'numbskull';[51] the perverse imp, who is consciously and wilfully evil; the self-centred trickster motivated entirely by personal desire, usually for food or sex; and finally the cultural hero who 'through his suffering, [...] approximates a savior figure; through his "craft" […] permits the satisfaction of the collective desires of his people'.[52] Tristan adopts disguises, spins elaborate lies and even injures himself by heroically leaping between beds, in order to continue his affair with Iseut. In his lust, he resembles the self-centred archetype but, by successfully defending the kingdom against giants and her other enemies, he also takes on the character of a cultural hero.[53]

The most famous medieval trickster figure is undoubtedly Renart the Fox. First appearing in a supporting role in the twelfth-century Latin 'beast epic' *Ysengrimus,* Renart

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[47] Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk Literature: A Classification of Narrative Elements in Folktales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Mediaeval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jest-Books and Local Legends*, rev edn, 6 vols (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde, 1955), IV, 231–33.

[48] Thompson, *Motif-Index,* IV, 495–97.

[49] Laura Makarius, 'Le Mythe du "trickster"', *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 75 (1969), 17–46.

[50] Merrit R. Blakeslee, 'Tristan the Trickster in the Old French Tristan Poems', *Cultura neolatina*, 44 (1984), 167–90 (here 190).

[51] The thirteenth-century *fabliaux* of Trubert, a comically foolish yet effective *vilain* trickster, is a medieval example of this archetype. See Norris J. Lacy, 'Trickery, Trubertage, and the Limits of Laughter', in *The Old French Fabliaux: Essays on Comedy and Context*, ed. by Kristin L. Burr, John F. Moran, and Norris J. Lacy (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2007), pp. 82–92.

[52] Blakeslee, 'Tristan', pp. 168–69.

[53] Blakeslee, 'Tristan', pp. 171–72. For further analysis of Tristan as a trickster, see Nancy Freeman Regalado, 'Tristan and Renart: Two Tricksters', *L'Esprit créateur*, 16 (1976), 30–38.

became the central character in a series of forty tales known as the *Roman de Renart,* compiled between 1170 and 1240.[54] The *Roman* was very popular, being adapted into German as *Reinhart Fuchs* by Heinrich der Glîchesaere, into Flemish as *Van den Vos Reinaerde* and into Italian as *Rainardo e Lesengrino.*[55] Inhabiting a world of anthropomorphic animals, Renart is portrayed as a gleefully duplicitous anti-hero, unable to enter into any agreement without immediately seeking a way to break it to his advantage. Lacking the strength of his archfoe Isengrin the Wolf, he is forced to rely on ruses, dissimulation and lies to obtain food and avenge himself upon his enemies. Roger Ballon argued that Renart embodies the Old French concept of *engin,* which may mean 'a trick, wile or dodge' but can also stand for 'an attitude of mind, a rule of conduct, and an approach to life […] all Renart's other characteristics are subordinated to his innate and unfailing trickery'.[56] It is profoundly ambiguous term, as Robert W. Hanning has noted: in twelfth-century romances it can refer to the marvellous creations of human ingenuity and wit, such as machines or beautiful buildings, but to acts of manipulation or deceit.[57]

The *Roman* is a burlesque, a carnival-like upending of social norms: 'overturning all the positive values and aspirations of the day – chivalric codes of loyalty and valour, feudal codes of civil and criminal law, amorous codes governing relations between the sexes, religious codes of veneration for the Church and its teaching and rituals'.[58] Bawdy, vulgar and cheerfully amoral, the stories invite the reader to alternately laugh with Renart as he escapes the consequences of his crimes and to laugh at him when he himself duped, an example of the 'trickster tricked' motif.[59]

Nobility and chivalric conventions are among the *Roman's* many targets, not least in the tale of Renart's encounter with Tibert the Cat. Renart, having enlisted Tibert to fight with him against Isengrin, immediately breaks the rules of 'chivalrous companionship' by trying to push Tibert into a trap he has laid.[60] It is therefore surprising to find a positive

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[54] *The Earliest Branches of the Roman de Renart*, ed. by R. Anthony Lodge and Kenneth Varty (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), p. xiv.
[55] Kenneth Varty, *Reynard the Fox: A Study of the Fox in Medieval English Art* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1967), p. 23.
[56] Roger Ballon, 'Trickery as an Element of the Character of Renart', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 22 (1986), 34–52 (here 34).
[57] Robert W. Hanning, *The Individual in Twelfth-Century Romance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), pp. 105–38.
[58] Lodge and Varty, *Branches*, p. xiii. For a specific example of how the *Roman* satirised the sacred symbols of the crusade, see Sarah Lambert, 'Translation, Citation, and Ridicule: Renart the Fox and Crusading in the Vernacular', in *Languages of Love and Hate: Conflict, Communication, and Identity in the Medieval Mediterranean*, ed. by Sarah Lambert and Helen Nicholson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), pp. 65–86.
[59] Thompson, *Motif-Index,* IV, 413–21.
[60] Lodge and Varty, *Branches*, pp. xlvi–xlvii.

reference to Renart in the famous chivalric text the *History of William Marshal*. In 1208, having regained the favour of King John, the Marshal was permitted to leave the royal court and visit his lands in Leinster, which were under attack from Meiler fitz Henry, the king's justiciar in Ireland. Landing at Glasscarrick in Wexford, he was met by his vassals but was disturbed to see that one of them, John of Earley, was wearing armour: 'The Marshal said to him: "How did this happen? Don't hide anything from me. Sir John, why are you wearing a habergeon? There's a peace now, is there not? Is this a joke?" "Sir, not everybody keeps it'. He answered with subtlety, like Renart the fox"'.[61]

We can be reasonably sure that this comparison was meant to be flattering. John of Earley, who joined the Marshal's household as a squire c. 1187, became one of his closest companions and was still alive at the time of the *Histoire*'s composition. In his introduction to the text, Crouch argued that it was 'likely to have been his recollections on which much of the key detail of the Irish exile and the [Marshal's] deathbed narrative depend'.[62] It is possible that Earley himself told the poet about this conversation or that his answer was remembered as a famous *bon mot* among the Marshal's retainers. Regardless, the poet would have been unlikely to compare the much-honoured (and still-living) Earley to Renart if this would have been taken as an insult. It is worth remembering that a knight could be admired for his fox-like *soutilz* as we go on to discuss their conduct in war in the following chapters.

Cunning was not just useful on the battlefield. Afterall, Christ commanded his disciples to be 'prudent as serpents, and simple as doves'.[63] Christian moralists could and did approve of shrewd intelligence when navigating a dangerous and sinful world. In her study of the fourteenth-century MS Paris BnF fr. 19152, Tracy Adams has proposed that this anthology was compiled to teach readers the importance of 'cunning intelligence' in navigating the difficulties of life. The anthology contains around 88 works, including Marie de France's fables, texts with religious or courtly themes, and a variety of *fabliaux*.[64] This amalgamation of different material disregards the critical distinction between the courtly and the non-courtly, allowing the emergence of 'a new type of character [...] from stories of all registers, one whose success depends upon his or her cunning intelligence'.[65] The

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[61] HWM, lines 13953–60: 'Li Mareschal li dist: "Comment / Avient? nel me celez naient. /Sire Johan, par que raison / Avez vos vestu herbergon? / Dont n'est il pais? est ço dont gas?" / "Sire, tuit ne la tienent pas." / Il respondi comme soutilz: / Issi dist Reinart li gorpilz'.

[62] HWM, III, p. 32.

[63] *Bible,* Matthew 10.16: 'Estote ergo prudentes sicut serpentes, et simplices sicut columbae'.

[64] Tracy Adams, 'The Cunningly Intelligent Characters of BnF fr. 19152', *Modern Language Notes*, 120 (2005), 896–924 (pp. 901–2).

[65] Adams, 'Cunningly Intelligent', p. 898.

anthology opens with a series of framed tales, *Le Chastoiement que li pères ensaigne à son filz,* a vernacular adaptation of the twelfth-century *Disciplina clericalis* by Petrus Alfonsi.[66] In this text, a father teaches his son, through a series of illustrative tales, the two important qualities necessary to attain success in life: *sens et savoir*. This is not the amoral *enging* of Renart, however: the father's first admonition is that his son should fear God and not be a hypocrite:

> *Sens et savoir,* which at first seems to present two qualities, is rather cunning intelligence practiced within a framework of traditional Christian morality […] The world is full of all varieties of false friends, cheating wives, and con artists. The wisdom to identify the cheats of the world is not sufficient: to be successful, one must employ trickery oneself. Still, one must fear God.[67]

The theme of cunning intelligence, tempered by Christian ethics, continues throughout the anthology, reframing the classic, hierarchical relationship between the sexes as portrayed in traditional courtly texts as 'exercises in calculated negotiation'.[68] The prologue to the romantic *Lai de l'ombre,* which depicts the ploys of two lovers seeking to test one another's fidelity, derides the one who lacks the *sens* to distinguish between mere copulation and acts of mutual love.[69] Adams proposes that this ideal of cunning intelligence would have been 'more appealing and useful than the "courtly" values of sincerity, prowess and passivity' to the French nobility, who had to navigate the shifting loyalties and duplicitous culture of the royal and princely courts.[70]

As we can see, there was a widespread interest in stories about cunning in medieval culture. *Fabliaux,* beast epics, fables and sagas all indicate that people took pleasure in hearing about clever tricks or a wily trickster being outwitted. Such stories form a fundamental element of world folklore. Yet they are not confined to tales of talking foxes. The medieval chronicles, upon which so much of our knowledge of this period is based, record incidents of trickery in battle that appear to be pure folklore. Scholars have long struggled to reconcile the chroniclers' seeming acceptance of the supernatural or the fantastical, which they record alongside what appear to be sober historical facts, but much

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[66] The *Disciplina* is itself an adaptation of the Arabic mirror for princes *Kalila wa Dimna*. Adams, 'Cunningly Intelligent', pp. 907–08.
[67] Adams, 'Cunningly Intelligent', p. 905.
[68] Adams, 'Cunningly Intelligent', p. 912.
[69] Adams, 'Cunningly Intelligent', pp. 918–19.
[70] Adams, 'Cunningly Intelligent', pp. 923–24.

less has been written about the merely implausible or the unlikely; the colourful stories, the 'old chestnuts' which raise a wry smile but merit little more than a passing reference. We must now turn to the chronicle sources themselves: their purpose as a genre, their relationship to historical fact and how we are to interpret them as sources for military history.

1.3 Writing War: Chronicles

Traditionally, medieval narratives were studied primarily as windows onto the past. It is the historian's role to peer through different windows, disregard the distortions and resolve the contradictions into something resembling what they believed to be historical reality.[71] If one uses this approach then the miraculous, the strange and the implausible must necessarily be dismissed as products of superstition or credulity; sifted out to reveal credible historical facts. Recent trends, however, have led scholars to analyse the textual nature of the histories themselves. The artificial and fantastical should be viewed as integral to both the text and the author's interpretation of the events they recorded.

This 'turn' has important implications for the study of deception in medieval military narratives, as these incidents have often been dismissed as fantasies, unworthy of consideration in serious military history. Marjorie Chibnall rejected outright Orderic Vitalis's account of how Ranulf, earl of Chester, captured Lincoln castle by trickery in 1141: 'Such themes were part of the fictional element that crept into history at every level […] Even an honest historian, gathering material from the oral accounts of household knights or townspeople, often heard it already contaminated by this fictional element'.[72] Helen Nicholson was more equivocal about the recurring stories of combatants entering strongholds in disguise: 'The similarity of these accounts indicates that either this was a standard tale to demonstrate the ingenuity of the young warrior-hero, or that this sort of trick was used rather frequently'.[73] I propose that these 'tales' (some which may indeed be wholly fictitious) are worthy of serious study and that recent scholarship on fictionality in

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[71] This is not to say that this approach has died out, particularly in the study of military history. For an example, see Kelly DeVries, 'The Use of Chronicles in Recreating Medieval Military History', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 2 (2004), 1–16.

[72] Marjorie Chibnall, 'Orderic Vitalis on Castles', in *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. Allen Brown*, ed. by C. Harper-Bill, C. Holdsworth, and J. L. Nelson (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1989), pp. 43–56 (here 56).

[73] Nicholson, *Medieval Warfare*, p. 130.

medieval narratives can help us to appreciate the role they played in the writing of medieval histories.

Gabrielle M. Spiegel described the linguistic turn as: 'a growing awareness of the mediated nature of perception, cognition and imagination, all of which were increasingly construed to be mediated by linguistic structures cast into discourses of one sort or another'.[74] It was derived from the structuralist theory of linguistics, which posited that language is not a reflection of an objectively-perceived reality but rather constitutes our perception of reality. By extension, historical texts do not tell us about the reality of the past, only the language which described it. It is possible to take these ideas to an extreme and argue that there is no real distinction between reality and imagination, fact or fiction, as all are simply different kinds of linguistic construction.[75] This is, of course, absurd.[76] These ideas do, however, remind us that all history is narrative; that it is impossible to say anything meaningful about the past without resorting to narrative. Monika Otter expressed it this way:

> Reality does not come in narrative form; it is an unlimited, unstructured field of data with multiple connections. History, however, must translate it into narrative, a more or less orderly sequence, one or just a few causal chains, a beginning, middle, and end. The process is marked, at the very least, by selectivity and by some form of "emplotment," [...] Thus, whether fictional or not, narrative consists, first of all, of a selection from a potentially endless number of entities and events.[77]

Making sense of the 'unlimited, unstructured' data of lived experience through narrative is especially relevant to medieval accounts of combat. It has long been recognised that an individual participant in even a relatively small battle has only the vaguest sense of how the

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[74] Gabrielle M. Spiegel, 'Theory into Practice: Reading Medieval Chronicles', in *The Medieval Chronicle: Proceedings of the First International Conference of the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. by Erik Kooper (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), pp. 1–12 (here 5).

[75] For a summary of this complex debate, see Gabrielle M. Spiegel, 'History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages', *Speculum*, 65 (1990), 59–86 (here 59–72); Spiegel, 'Theory', pp. 1–2.

[76] Nancy F. Partner, 'Making Up Lost Time: Writing on the Writing of History', *Speculum*, 61 (1986), 90–117 (here 95–96): 'No one really believes we are sealed in a linguistic house of mirrors, even if we are. The black-hole epistemology can be ignored with the same little lurch of faith that takes us out of bed each morning rashly confident that the floor will be where we left it [...] everyone eventually resorts to some version of "we have to assume...," from which follow Other Minds, and External World, and soon after, Descriptive Language or something that passes for, and the whole show carries on as usual. Except that we feel more sophisticated doing it'.

[77] Monika Otter, *Inventiones: Fiction and Referentiality in Twelfth-Century English Historical Writing* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), pp. 10–11.

conflict is progressing beyond his or her own sphere.[78] Even in a pre-gunpowder era, a combatant's field of vision was limited by the terrain, the men around him, and the enemies before him. This is before we even consider the effect of adrenaline, terror, noise and the general chaos of hand-to-hand fighting. The only way to relate the experience to another, or to account for a defeat that had no obvious cause, would be through narrative. This may help to explain why battle accounts in chronicles are so frequently described using topoi or formulaic language; they were an effective way to translating the inherent confusion of battle into meaningful prose.

It is important to remember that history was regarded as a form of literature in the Middle Ages, rather than an analytical science. Isidore of Seville divided the field of grammar into poetry and prose, then further subdivided prose into *fabula,* 'the story of fictional happenings', and *historia,* 'the narration of things that have actually taken place'.[79] This is extremely broad and encompasses a variety of medieval genres that modern critics would ideally like to distinguish from 'real' histories: hagiography, epic, romance, genealogy and biography. That is a modern problem, not a medieval one. Genre boundaries were indistinct in the Middle Ages, allowing myth to pass for history and history to emulate myth.[80]

If history was literature, then it followed that good history should be well-written. Gervase of Canterbury (d. 1210), influenced perhaps by Cicero's *De Oratore,* distinguished between the true historian, who wrote elegantly, with 'rhetorical flourishes', and the mere annalist who recorded events in a 'direct and straightforward' manner.[81] Elaboration, expressing things in an impressive style, was more highly regarded than conciseness or adherence to strict plausibility: 'The same literary qualities that distinguish the romances and epics of high literature from brief, popular tales also marked the difference between true history and the jottings of annal keepers'.[82] This explains why, in contemporary chronicles, bluff, French-speaking Anglo-Norman commanders suddenly launch into

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[78] John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (London: Pimlico, 1976), pp. 46–54.

[79] Nancy F. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 195.

[80] See Graeme Dunphy, 'Chronicles', in *Handbook of Medieval Studies: Terms, Methods, Trends*, ed. by Albrecht Classen, 3 vols (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 1714–21; Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon, 2004), p. ix; Justin Lake, 'Authorial Intention in Medieval Historiography', *History Compass*, 12 (2014), 344–60 (here 345–47); Monika Otter, 'Functions of Fiction in Historical Writing', in *Writing Medieval History*, ed. by Nancy F. Partner (London: Hodder, 2005), pp. 109–30 (here 111).

[81] Lake, 'Authorial Intention', p. 345.

[82] Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, p. 206. See also Connor Wilson, "To Live is Glory and to Die is Gain": The Use of Battle Rhetoric in the Narrative Construction of Crusading Holy War, c. 1099 – c. 1222' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2019).

flights of Ciceronian rhetoric when they give a pre-battle oration; that was what readers expected a general to do before a major battle. Moreover, it was what they did in all the great Roman histories.[83]

The concept of *auctoritas,* the reverence in which ancient texts were held, is also important to understanding medieval views of historical writing. Otter, discussing the genre of *inventiones* (accounts of the miraculous discovery of saints' relics) identified the philosophical underpinnings of this concept:

> the ultimate standard of truth is conformity to the highest truth, Christian revelation; faithfulness to outside reality, or individual, contingent circumstance, is comparatively less important. The sameness of *inventio* narratives, their conformity to a received narrative type, would therefore not arouse suspicion but inspire trust.[84]

The same is true, to a lesser degree, of 'secular' accounts. Resemblance to an established authority, such as Vergil or Sallust, would not have made the text less trustworthy to a medieval reader but would actually make them appear more reliable because it looked like an established authority.[85] Likewise, a description of a particular ruse or battlefield manoeuvre would be enhanced if it resembled familiar material from Frontinus or Vegetius.

Connected to this trend is the didactic element in medieval historical writing. History was thought to be instructive: 'the "universal truths" to be deduced from any specific episode were just as important as the need to provide an incontestably factual account of that episode'.[86] This is especially relevant for descriptions of battle. A battle was not simply an event, it was 'an exemplar, providing models to imitate or avoid, lessons to be contemplated'.[87] The authoritative texts taught that an army should be disciplined and cautiously but purposefully led, so this was how victorious armies were often depicted.

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[83] See John R. E. Bliese, 'The Courage of the Normans: A Comparative Study of Battle Rhetoric', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 35 (1991), 1–26; John R. E. Bliese, 'Rhetoric and Morale: A Study of Battle Orations from the Central Middle Ages', *Journal of Medieval History*, 15 (1989), 201–26; John R. E. Bliese, 'When Knightly Courage May Fail: Battle Orations in Medieval Europe', *Historian*, 53 (1991), 489–504; Ruth Morse, *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation, and Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 119.

[84] Otter, *Inventiones*, p. 36.

[85] Stephen Mark Carey, 'Fictionality', in *Handbook of Medieval Studies: Terms, Methods, Trends*, ed. by Albrecht Classen, 3 vols (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 1500–1504 (here 1502); Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, pp. 3–5.

[86] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 2.

[87] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 3.

Conversely, the defeated party was usually described as ill-disciplined and burdened with a divided leadership. A story about a commander who avoided an enemy ambush could illustrate the virtue of prudence (by no means a purely martial quality), while a force that gained an advantage through a well-planned ruse showed the importance of foresight. This is not to say that such incidents are necessarily fictitious, only that historians wrote with a didactic agenda in mind and chose to interpret the information they gathered in particular ways.

We must be careful not to overstate the case, however. As Robert M. Stein has noted, the very act of writing in Latin affected how authors described events: 'with Latinity inescapably comes a particular set of ways of rendering the social world, of framing experience and of asserting value'.[88] The vocabulary of battle narratives, the very language used to describe warfare, was the same as that of Vergil and Vegetius, of the Old Testament and the *Civil Wars*. Medieval clerics not only sought to emulate the great histories, they learned much of their Latin by reading them. An author may not even have been conscious of such a borrowing, especially if it came from a popular text; this was simply the most elegant phrase he knew to describe an army on the march, or an ambush, or any number of phenomena.[89]

History was literature and, ideally, it was to be well-written, but it was a branch of literature that was expected to record real events. As already noted, Isidore of Seville distinguished *historia,* which was about true events, from mere *fabula*, which were manifestly untrue. Most medieval historians were reliant upon the testimony of others for information. This was especially true for military matters, as very few combatants composed histories in this period, with a handful of notable exceptions. We must therefore question the standards by which historians judged the information they received.

As Chris Given-Wilson has noted, there were three ways a historian could acquire his information: read it, hear it or witness it themselves.[90] When it came to written testimony, the medieval respect of *auctoritas* once again had a powerful influence. The textual nature of Christianity certainly played a part in this; medieval clerics were predisposed to believe in the possibility of the miraculous because it was attested in

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[88] Robert M. Stein, 'Literary Criticism and the Evidence for History', in *Writing Medieval History* (London: Hodder, 2005), pp. 67–87 (here 74).
[89] Morse, *Truth and Convention*, p. 108. For a related argument, based on a study of Biblical quotations in William of Tyre, see Alan V. Murray, 'Biblical Quotations and Formulaic Language in the Chronicle of William of Tyre', in *Deeds Done Beyond the Sea: Essays on William of Tyre, Cyprus and the Military Orders Presented to Peter Edbury*, ed. by Susan B. Edgington and Helen Nicholson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 25–34.
[90] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 6.

Scripture, even if they regularly expressed scepticism about contemporary reports that occurred outside their prescribed theological framework. The antiquity of a text and its resemblance to other, respected texts, was often enough to render a text 'authoritative' to a medieval scholar.[91] A notable example of this was the enduring popularity of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae,* with its list of spurious kings including, of course, Arthur. It is uncertain to what extent contemporaries believed it to be historical fact but, as Given-Wilson stressed: 'what is incontestable is that is continued to be cited, repeated and embellished *as if* it were historical fact'.[92] Its resemblance to other histories and the lack of a plausible alternative helped to secure Geoffrey's place among the historians, rather than the fabulists.

If an author had not read about an event (unlikely for events contemporary with their lifetime), then they would have had to hear about it or witness it themselves. Elisabeth van Houts has proposed a typology of 'non-written evidence' as used by medieval authors. Beginning with those events personally witnessed by the author, closely followed by a report provided by a first-hand eyewitness, it descends in order of reliability to references to rumour and hearsay, with the least reliable constituting incomplete stories 'considerably removed from the author in time and place'.[93] Historians were often at pains to assure the readers of both their personal trustworthiness and that of their witnesses. Trustworthiness appears to have been measured according to vocation (with senior clergy as the most reliable), status (the nobility being implicitly more reliable that the common mob) and close relationship to the historian, who could vouch for their personal virtue and honesty.[94]

This is not to say that medieval historians were entirely gullible or that they were unaware that false rumour could be mistakenly reported as solemn truth; their very insistence on the reliability of their sources demonstrates that. Historians employed the phrase 'it is said', or 'it is rumoured', to indicate information for which they lacked a reliable chain of testators perhaps because, as Ruth Morse argued, they were 'loathe to lose any remnant of evidence, loathe to relinquish a way of inserting non-authorized opinions which could be attributed to anonymous sources'.[95] Nevertheless, there remained a certain naivety to the medieval historical process: 'there was no systematic or thorough effort to

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[91] Otter, 'Functions', pp. 109–10; Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, p. 190.
[92] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 5.
[93] Quoted in Simon John, 'Historical Truth and the Miraculous Past: The Use of Oral Evidence in Twelfth-Century Latin Historical Writing on the First Crusade', *English Historical Review*, 130 (2015), 263–301 (here 288).
[94] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, pp. 7–8; John, 'Historical Truth', p. 288; Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, p. 190.
[95] Morse, *Truth and Convention*, p. 95.

find ways to detect mistaken or biased "moral truth". The concepts of "trustworthiness" and "accuracy" were not sufficiently distinguished, just as the difference between "possibility" and "probability" in the twelfth century was less marked that it is now'.[96]

How, then, is the historian to categorise accounts of military stratagems? If one does not automatically assume that all such incidents were transcribed from the historian's favourite chapter of Frontinus, then it is most likely that they heard about them from somebody else; potentially the last in a chain of witness stretching back to an eye witness or a participant. Carol Sweetenham's work on anecdotes in the chronicles of the First Crusade is particularly relevant here. These anecdotes started as soldiers' gossip, growing and changing in the telling, before moving, in Sweetenham's memorable phrase, 'from chatter to chapter'.[97] They were preserved in crusaders' letters, in monastic or family records or in personal reminiscences with friends and acquaintances, before finally being set down in the chronicles. These anecdotes helped the historian to emphasise themes already present in their text, such as the cruelty of the Turks or the holy character of the crusade. They also drew the listener imaginatively into the text, providing 'human interest and light relief'.[98]

There are several possible explanations for the presence of stories concerning elaborate stratagems in medieval military narratives: the classical and biblical pedigree of such stories, their folkloric and narrative power, the dissemination and exaggeration of soldiers' gossip. Yet many of the stories are not inherently implausible. It is a plain fact of warfare that combatants will seek any possible advantage over their enemy, often by deception. The history of later, better documented, wars contain similar tales of cunning. Scholars should not discount medieval accounts of deceit on the battlefield, *prima facie,* any more than they should uncritically accept their every claim as literal truth. Each story must be judged according to its own merits and the merits of its author, with an awareness of the influence that other texts, folklore and an unreliable chain of witnesses may have had on its composition. Furthermore, even when one has good reason to question the historical reality of a particular incident, it can still be analysed as a narrative device. Stories of stratagems not only tell us what authors and their audiences thought was plausible but what constituted admirable or shameful behaviour on the battlefield. Although they may appear

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[96] Partner, *Serious Entertainments*, p. 191.

[97] Carol Sweetenham, 'What Really Happened to Eurvin de Créel's Donkey? Anecdotes in Sources for the First Crusade', in *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory*, ed. by Marcus Bull and Damien Kempf (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2014), pp. 75–88 (here 85).

[98] Sweetenham, 'Anecdotes', p. 82.

peripheral to the main narrative, they provide modern scholars with information about both warfare and aristocratic culture in the Middle Ages.

Chapter 2
Military Intelligence: Misdirection, Misinformation and Espionage

For wars to be fought effectively, it was necessary to have as much information as possible about the enemy, their dispositions and the terrain over which one would fight. In the rapid strikes and strategic raiding that characterised medieval warfare, knowing the location and strength of the enemy forces was crucial. An ill-informed army risked blundering unexpectedly into the enemy or being taken by surprise. Basic reason would have told commanders this much, even without Vegetius's maxims to remind them: 'In war, he who is more vigilant in the fields, who works more at drilling the soldiers, is less likely to suffer loss'.[1] Likewise, a commander who was able to conceal his movements and intentions was more likely to operate freely and to be able to surprise his enemy: 'No plans are better than those of which the enemy is ignorant until you carry them out'.[2] All of which was easier said than done, especially in an age before dedicated military colleges, precise maps or specialist intelligence services. Nevertheless, the very fact that medieval armies assembled and campaigned effectively indicates that they were capable of a certain level of intelligence gathering.

2.1 Misdirection: Achieving the 'Mastery of Space and Time'[3]

Carl von Clausewtiz, Prussian general and veteran of the Napoleonic Wars, defined military strategy as follows:

> Strategy decides the time when, the place where, and the forces with which the engagement is to be fought, and through this threefold activity exerts considerable influence on its outcome. Once the tactical encounter has taken

[1] Vegetius, *Eptioma,* p. 117: 'In bello qui plus in agrariis vigilaverit, plus in exercendo milite laboraverit, minus periculum sustinebit'.
[2] Vegetius, *Epitoma,* p. 117: 'Nulla consilia meliora sunt nisi illa quae ignoraverit adversarius antequam facias'.
[3] Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, p. 219.

> place and the result – be it victory or defeat – is assured, strategy will use it to serve the object of the war.[4]

This was also true for medieval warfare. Verbruggen has demonstrated that medieval campaigns were conducted according to sound strategic principles: the maintenance of collective morale, co-ordinating and concentrating one's forces, attempting to attack with superior numbers and the element of surprise and, when necessary, seeking a decisive engagement with the enemy force.[5] Surprise is particularly relevant for this study, as it is usually necessary to deceive the person one wishes to surprise: if somebody is aware of their enemy's intentions and actions, they cannot be surprised by what they do. A simple form of strategic deception is the feint or feigned manoeuvre, in which one party tricks the other into believing that they are going to take a certain course of action, such as attacking a stronghold, when in fact they are intending to do something else. A successful feigned manoeuvre can fulfil all of Clausewitz's criteria for military strategy, allowing the deceiver to decide where, when and with what forces an engagement is fought.

A clear medieval example can be found in the *Gesta Stephani*. In 1138, while campaigning against the rebel Robert of Bampton in Somerset, King Stephen took the castle at Harptree by using a feigned manoeuvre. Stephen left Castle Cary and marched north, 'as if he intended to besiege Bristol with his army', some fifteen miles north of Harptree.[6] The castle garrison sallied out to harass Stephen's army on the march, only for Stephen to suddenly turn back and storm Harptree while it was poorly defended.[7] This deception was not achieved with words but actions. By marching towards the key stronghold at Bristol, Stephen tricked the castle garrison into believing that they had been ignored in favour of a richer prize. They took the bait, seeing an opportunity to attack an unsuspecting enemy. Stephen was able to take advantage of their mistake by rapidly manoeuvring to attack in strength where his enemy was weakest.[8]

In 1138, David I of Scotland attempted to surprise the army assembled by Thurstan, archbishop of York, at Northallerton. Wishing to take advantage of the thick fog

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[4] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 194.

[5] Verbruggen, *Art of Warfare,* pp. 278–88.

[6] GS, p. 68: 'quasi cum exercitu Bristoenses obsessurus progrederetur'.

[7] GS, p. 68: 'cum retrogradum rex citissime faciens reflexum, liberum equis cursum ad castellum indulsit'.

[8] A similar strategy was used during a Muslim invasion of the kingdom of Jerusalem in 1105. The invaders detached a small force to launch a diversionary attack on Ramla, hoping to the lure the Franks away from Jaffa, their true target: FoC, p. 497; WT, p. 465. Philip II of France reportedly used a similar manoeuvre at Le Mans, Maine in 1189. He pretended that he was only stopping at Le Mans on his way to Tours but unexpectedly attacked Le Mans on the day that he intended to depart: HowChr, II, 107.

that had fallen on the morning of 22 August, David forbade his men to burn the villages which they passed, 'as they were accustomed to do', in order to conceal their advance through the countryside and come upon the English army unawares.[9] Although the stratagem failed (the English army was warned of the Scottish advance by a squire) and the Scots were defeated by the fully-prepared English army, it nevertheless offers a rare indication of how medieval combatants might have concealed their movements. By minimising their interaction with the local population, whether hostile or benign, they greatly lessened the chance of their position being betrayed to the enemy forces by spies, informants or refugees fleeing the devastation. Orderic Vitalis's account of the events leading to the battle of Brémule (Normandy, 20 August 1119) illustrates the value of such a stratagem: Henry I of England was able to locate Louis VI of France's army by the smoke rising from a barn that the French had fired near Noyon.[10]

The feigned advance has its obvious counterpart in the feigned withdrawal.[11] According to Symeon of Durham, Malcolm III of Scotland used a form of this manoeuvre during a raid into Teesdale and Cleveland in 1070:

> But when he came to a place which in English is called Hundredesfelde but in Latin is Centum Fontes [Hundred Springs], having slaughtered certain noble Englishmen in that place, the king, retaining part of his army, sent the other part back along the road by which they had come with infinite plunder. By this cunning act, since everybody thought that the enemies had gone away, the wretched natives who, for fear of the enemy had preserved whatever they could, themselves and their belongings, in hiding places, were returning safely to their homes and villages, the king could suddenly attack them while they were unprepared.[12]

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[9] JW, III, 252: 'decreuit nostros preoccupare, quia in articulo ipsius diei maxima nebula erat. Et sic ex improuiso se uenturum super ipsos sperans, multas uillas intactas reliquit, nec suos, sicut solebant, ipsa die aliquid ardere permisit'.

[10] OV, VI, p. 236.

[11] This discussion will be confined to feigned withdrawals on the strategic level of warfare, namely bodies of troops moving over distance with minimal contact with the enemy. The use of tactical retreats employed in actual combat, such as the feigned flight, will be discussed in Chapter 4.

[12] Symeon of Durham, *Historia regum,* ed. by Thomas Arnold, RS, 75, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1885), II, p. 190: 'Ubi autem ventum est ad locum qui dicitur Anglice Hundredeskelde, Latine autem Centum fontes, trucidatis ibidem quibusdam gentis Anglicae nobilibus, rex parte exercitus retenta, partem per viam qua venerant cum infinita praeda domum remisit. Hac scilicet calliditate, ut cum totus hostis putaretur abiisse, miseros indigenas, qui sese suaque propter hostile metum latibulis, quibus poterant, tute conservaverant, secure in villas suas domosque regressos, ipse subito incursu improvisos praeoccuparet'.

Roger of Howden chose to interpret this manoeuvre as a ruse, motivated by greed: Malcolm wished to despoil the English twice over as they emerged from hiding. It is possible, however, that the detached force's primary role was to guard the main army as it returned north, weighed down with the spoils. Whatever additional looting they carried out on the locals may have been coincidental but it suited Howden's portrayal of the Scots as ruthless and greedy to interpret it as their main intention.

A similar manoeuvre is described in the *History of William Marshal*. When talks between Philip Augustus and Henry II of England broke down at Gisors on the Franco-Norman border in August 1188, Philip ordered that the elm tree under which the kings of France and dukes of Normandy had traditionally met for conferences be chopped down. This may have been a political gesture, intended to symbolise the young Philip's intention to establish a new status-quo between France and Normandy, or simply a fit of pique provoked by Henry monopolising the tree's shade in the hot weather.[13] According to the *History*, William Marshal, at that time a member of Henry's household, advised him to disband his army: 'but in secret tell them to return to us without fail on a day set by you'.[14] Once reassembled, the Marshal proposed, they could ravage Philip's undefended lands, declaring: 'Ours will be a finer and more successful exploit [than cutting down one tree]'.[15] Henry was delighted with the proposal, saying: 'Marshal, you are most courtly and you have advised me very well'.[16]

While the scene itself is probably a fiction, intended to emphasise the Marshal's favoured position at the royal court at this time, it provides an insight into the thought-world of the period.[17] The Marshal is commended as *corteis* for his recommendation. He performs the role of the ideal courtier by offering his lord sound advice.[18] He did not recommend giving battle or challenging Philip to single combat but employing a ruse: to feign withdrawal then attack when the French did not expect it. The consequence of this would be the devastation of the French countryside, a 'much finer' deed than Philip's

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[13] For an analysis of contemporary interpretations of this gesture, see Lindsay Diggelmann, 'Hewing the Ancient Elm: Anger, Arboricide, and Medieval Kingship', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 40 (2010), 249–72.

[14] HWM, lines 7787–90. Published translation.

[15] HWM, line 7798. Published translation.

[16] HWm, lines 7800–1: 'Marescahl, molt estes corteis / E molt m'avez conseillié bien'.

[17] For a discussion of this exchange, see Gillingham, 'War and Chivalry in the *History of William the Marshal',* p. 255.

[18] In the Anglo-Norman Text Society edition of the *History*, Stewart Gregory translates *corteis* as 'an excellent man'. This is certainly the sense in which it is used, and is more comprehensible to the general reader, but I have chosen to translate it literally because it makes it clear that the Marshal is being praised specifically for acting as a courtier, giving wise counsel.

attack on a single tree. For the *History*'s audience, and presumably the Marshal's contemporaries, avoiding direct conflict with one's enemy through strategic manoeuvres was an appropriate way to wage war.[19]

2.2 Misinformation: Putting Up a Brave Front

Pretending to attack or withdraw could be accomplished quite simply: sometimes it was sufficient to simply march in the right direction. Medieval chronicles record other, much more elaborate, methods of spreading misinformation among one's enemies, such as pretending to have more supplies than one actually possessed. It is the psychological equivalent of making one's forces appear larger than they truly are.

This kind of ruse has classical antecedents. Frontinus dedicated a whole chapter of the *Strategemata* to them: 'How that which will be lacking may be made to seem plentiful'.[20] The first ruse in Frontinus's list, one of the most famous in Roman history, occurred during the Gauls' siege of the Capitol Hill in Rome in 390 B.C:

> Then, a truce having been made with the Romans, with the permission of the commanders, parleys were held in which the Gauls repeatedly taunted them on account of their hunger, calling upon them to surrender out of necessity. It is said that, in order to disabuse them of this notion, bread was thrown into the enemy pickets from many places on the Capitol.[21]

Ovid referred to this incident in his *Fasti* as an explanation for the presence of an altar to Jupiter the Baker (*Pistor Iovis*) on the Capitol.[22] It is also one of the handful of ruses to appear in the work of Valerius Maximus.[23]

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[19] The poem depicts Richard I of England using a similar manoeuvre to attack the French stronghold at Milly in May 1197. HWM, line 11111. According to two regional chroniclers, Bursuq of Hamadām also employed this stratagem in 1115 to trick Baldwin I of Jerusalem into believing that he had withdrawn from the principality of Antioch, allowing him to raid the land unimpeded: WC, pp. 93–94; WT, p. 503.

[20] Frontinus, *Strategemata,* p. 86: 'Quemadmodum efficiatur, ut abundare videantur, quae deerunt'.

[21] Titus Livy, *Ab urbe condita: Tomus I, libri I–V,* ed. Robert Maxwell Ogilvie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 381: 'Indutiae deinde cum Romanis factae et conloquia permissu imperatorum habita; in quibus cum identidem Galli famem obicerent eaque necessitate ad deditionem uocarent, dicitur auertendae eius opinionis causa multis locis panis de Capitolio iactatus esse in hostium stationes'.

[22] Publius Ovid Naso, *Fastorum libri sex,* ed. by E. H. Alton, D. E. W. Wormell and E. Courtney (Leipzig: Teubner, 1978), p. 149.

[23] Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta*, p. 469.

This story is similar to one recorded by Gerald of Wales in his *Itinerarium Kambriae*. As part of his description of Pembroke, Gerald recalls that, in 1096, his paternal grandfather, Gerald of Windsor, defended Pembroke Castle against the men of south Wales on behalf of his lord, Arnulf of Montgomery:

> But with the burden of the siege growing worse over time and defeat approaching, when those in the castle had almost been brought to the uttermost starvation, Gerald, according to the greatest prudence, imitating hope and promising relief, had the four hog's carcasses which still remained cut into pieces and thrown from the ramparts to the enemies.[24]

Although bacon is substituted for bread, the parallels with the Roman story are clear: the starving defenders pretend that they are so well-supplied that they can afford to throw food away. Gerald credits his grandfather with adding even more elaborate layers to this trick, sending false letters into the Welsh camp that stated the garrison had enough food to last four months.[25] As Gerald is the only source for this siege, we cannot corroborate the details. Whether these ruses were employed exactly as Gerald claims, the stories having been passed down to him as family legend, or whether he fabricated the incident to give the siege a classical veneer, the resemblance to the defence of the Capitol enhanced Gerald's portrayal of his ancestors and, by extension, the Anglo-Norman conquest of southern Wales.

Shortage of food was not the only deficiency that a medieval army might wish to conceal. In January 1148, towards the end of its gruelling march through Anatolia, Louis VII of France's crusading army was encamped before the town of Adalia (mod. Antalya, Turkey). The Turks, believing that the French had no horses left, planned an assault on their camp. Learning of their plan, Louis 'hid with him the wealthy men who still had their destriers, although they were starving, and the Templars. When [the Turks] approached, appearing unexpectedly, killing some, he forced them to return across the river without using a bridge and to believe thereafter that the army had many very fine horses'.[26]

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[24] IK, pp. 89–90: 'Invalescente vero et gravius incumbente per moram temporis obsidionis incommodo, cum ad ultimam fere inediam jam in castro perducti fuissent, Giraldus, ex summa prudentia spem simulans et solatia spondens, quatuor qui adhuc supererant bacones a propugnaculis frustatim ad hostes projici fecit'.
[25] IK, p. 90.
[26] OD, p. 134: 'Quod notum factum est regi et contra illos abscondit secum viros ditiores qui dextrarios suos, quamvis famelicos, adhuc servaverant et fratres Templi. Venientibusque apparens subito coegit eos occidendo sine ponte fluvium retransire et credere deinceps in exercitu equos optimos abundare'.

An incident during the siege of Acre (August 1189 – July 1191) further emphasises the importance of making a conspicuous display of strength in order to discourage one's enemies. Ambroise records that, early in 1190, three 'Turkish' ships were wrecked attempting to bring supplies to the garrison which was under siege by the crusaders. Many of the crew drowned but the cargo was saved, reviving the garrison's spirits and encouraging them to attack the crusaders.[27] Richard de Templo added the following detail in the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum*:

> Then the besieged dissolved into immoderate joy, as if their prayers had been answered. With cymbals and flutes and high-pitched wailing voices they testified that they were not confounded. This din was made as a sign, lest it be supposed that they had sustained a loss.[28]

This was no ruse, as the garrison truly had been resupplied, but it demonstrates that maintaining the appearance of strength could be a conscious element of medieval strategy, particularly during a long, psychologically-wearying siege such as Acre. John Lackland's garrison at Nottingham Castle initially refused to surrender to Richard I of England upon his return from captivity in March 1194 because they believed that the trumpet calls that announced the king's presence had been arranged by the 'leaders of the army in order to fool them'.[29] They were quickly disabused of this notion and surrendered four days later, but it is noteworthy that they considered this to be a plausible trick.

2.3 Misinformation: Rumours and Lies

All of the above incidents relied upon the enemy deducing certain information from the deceivers' actions. The following section will consider a more direct method: actively supplying false information to the enemy. We are not always able to determine exactly how such information was transmitted. Combatants relied on an informal network of contacts for intelligence gathering, questioning travellers, local peasants and deserters from the enemy (see below). In such an environment, it would have been relatively easy to

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[27] Amb, lines 3433–56.

[28] IP, p. 86: 'Unde obsessi nimia dissoluti laetitia tanquam voto eorum fuerit satisfactum, cum cymbalis et tibiis ululantes vocibus altisonis testati sunt se perplexos non esse. Fit igitur plausus ad indicium, ne putentur sustinere dispendium'.

[29] HowChr, III, 238: 'sed sperabant totum hoc factum fuisse a principibus exercitus ad illudendum eis'.

deliberately plant false information among the gossip and rumours that flowed in and out of an army or garrison. For example, Raymond of Aguilers reported that Raymond of Saint-Gilles retreated from the siege of Arqah in May 1099 because of false rumours, spread by the garrison, that the 'pope of the Turks' (*papa Turcorum,* presumably a reference to the caliph, al-Mustazhir) was approaching with a vast army. Raymond does not elaborate on how this information was received, saying only 'it was reported to us' (*nuntiatum est nobis*) and that, afterwards 'it was discovered to have been false; and that the Saracens had arranged it in order that, having frightened us away, they might enjoy a little respite from the siege'.[30]

Cultivating a double agent within the enemy force was an effective way of spreading false information. For example, in 1106 Baldwin I of Jerusalem assembled an army to defend Tiberias from an attack by Tughtagin, atabeg of Damascus. One night, five Turks came to Baldwin's camp: 'they were sent as envoys of the rest, speaking about various things and urging [him] to make peace'. [31] Baldwin entertained them and sent them away with many lavish gifts. The envoys returned to their commander and reported that the Christian army was seven times greater than it actually was. Believing their report, Tughtagin withdrew without giving battle.[32]

We must be cautious when discussing such incidents, however. Not all incidents are as clear cut as Baldwin's bribery. We are often reliant on the chroniclers' interpretation of events and people's motivations. What a hostile author interpreted as a malicious attempt to spread false intelligence may have been no more than an honest mistake. Take Albert of Aachen's account of the siege of Jabala on the Syrian coast in March 1099, for example. Albert, consistently hostile in his depiction of Raymond of Saint-Gilles, says that the reports of a large army approaching Raymond at Arqah were nothing more than lies concocted to draw the rest of the crusaders away from their siege of Jabala, sixty miles to the north.[33] Albert claims that the citizens of Jabala bribed Raymond to do this.[34] A similar incident is reported by Orderic Vitalis during a conflict in 1118 between the Norman magnate Richer of Laigle and Henry I of England over the inheritance of lands in Sussex. William Tancarville, chamberlain of Normandy and England, deliberately passed a false report to Henry that the forces of William Clito, the disenfranchised son of his brother

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[30] RA, pp. 277–78: 'Interim inventum est falsum; et quod Sarraceni illud composuerant, ut, nobis taliter deterritis, aliquantulum respirare possent obsessi'.
[31] AA, p. 742: 'qui legati ceterorum de diuersis negociis et pace componenda plurimum loquentes et agentes'.
[32] AA, p. 742.
[33] For Albert's hostility towards Raymond of Saint-Gilles, see AA, p. xxxii.
[34] AA, pp. 380–82. See also WT, p. 322.

Robert Curthose, had fortified the monastery of Holy Trinity near Rouen, in order to make Henry abandon the siege of Richer's castle at Laigle.[35]

In times of rebellion, when loyalties could shift back and forth, it could be difficult to distinguish good intelligence from bad. In 1079, during a rebellion against Robert Guiscard by a number of his vassals, the Apulian town of Giovinazzo, which had remained loyal to Guiscard, was saved thanks to the timely use of false information. William fitz Ivo, the governor of Bitonto, which lies six miles south of Giovinazzo, sent a messenger to Amicus II, count of Molfetta, who was besieging the town. The messenger gave Amicus 'false reports' (*ficti rumores*) that Guiscard's son, Roger Borsa, was approaching with a large army.[36] Amicus, evidently thinking that William was of the same party and that his information was reliable, broke camp and fled.[37]

A famous example of a combatant taking advantage of an uncertain political climate to employ false information occurred after the battle of Dorylaion (1 July 1097, near modern Eskişehir, Turkey). Qilij Arslān, the sultan of Rūm, fleeing ahead of the victorious crusaders through Phrygia, spread false information that enabled his forces to devastate the region. Here is the *Gesta Francorum's* account of these events:

> Coming to every castle or city, lying and deceiving the inhabitants of those lands, [the Turks] said: 'We fell upon the Christians, and conquered them all, so that none of them now dare to stand against us. Let us in!' Entering, they despoiled the churches and houses and everything else, and carried off the horses and donkeys and mules, the gold and silver and whatever else they could get. Not only that, they took the sons of the Christians with them and burned or destroyed everything that was convenient or useful, being greatly terrified and fleeing before our face. Therefore, we pursued them through a barren, arid and uninhabitable land, from which we barely escaped or passed through alive.[38]

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[35] Orderic does not suggest a motivation for Tancarville's actions. OV, VI, 198–201.

[36] For the case for translating *rumores* as 'reports' rather than 'rumours', see J. O. Prestwich, 'Military Intelligence under the Norman and Angevin Kings', in *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy: Essays in Honour of Sir James Holt*, ed. by George Garnett and John Hudson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 1–30 (here 11).

[37] WA, p. 194.

[38] GF, p. 23: 'At illi uenientes ad cuncta castra siue urbes, fingentes et deludentes habitatores terrarum illarum dicebant: "Nos deuicimus Christianos omnes, et superauimus illos, ita ut nullus eorum iam unquam audeat erigere se ante nos; tantum permittite nos intus intrare". Qui intrantes spoliabant ecclesias et domos et alia omnia, et ducebant equos secum et asinos et mulos, aurum et argentum et ea quae reperire poterant. Adhuc quoque filios Chrisitanorum secum tollebant, et ardebant ac devastabant omnia conuenientia siue utilia,

This use of misinformation differs from others discussed above inasmuch as it was directed against the inhabitants of Phrygia rather than Qilij Arslān's enemies, the crusaders. Nevertheless, even if the method was unusual, this kind of 'scorched earth' tactic was in keeping with conventional medieval strategy.

Some forms of misinformation could be gruesome. In 1102, while besieging Jaffa, an Egyptian army cut the head and legs off an unfortunate crusader named Gerbod of Windeke, whom they had captured in battle near Ascalon. Dressing the remains in purple (a colour associated with royalty), they displayed them to the garrison, claiming that they belonged to Baldwin I of Jerusalem and that no aid was coming to relieve the city. This claim was believed by Arda, Baldwin's queen, and the rest of the garrison. It was only the arrival of the real Baldwin by sea, alive and well, that dissuaded them from surrendering.[39] A similar ruse was reportedly employed at the Battle of the Standard (1138), in a rare example of misinformation being employed to inspire one's own forces. According to Aelred of Rievaulx, when Henry, son of David I of Scotland, led a charge through the English line and began to attack the baggage in the rear, the 'unarmed commoners, terrified, began to run away'. The situation was saved by a 'deception' (*figmentum*) improvised by a 'certain prudent man'. Holding up the severed head of a man he had killed, he shouted that King David was dead. The commoners, 'having been recalled, charged violently into their opponents in [their] usual manner'.[40]

Misinformation could be employed in a variety of ways. It could be used to make a force seem stronger than it truly was, to trick the enemy into retreating or even to inspire one's own forces. All of this raises the question of espionage: how did armies and their commanders acquire reliable information about their enemies?

2.4 Espionage: Spies and Spying

Studying espionage in the Middle Ages is difficult, not least because Latin does not possess a simple equivalent for the modern term 'spy', meaning a person who gathers information

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fugientes et pauentes ualde ante faciem nostram. Nos itaque persequebamur eos per deserta et inaquosam et inhabitabilem terram, ex qua uix uiui euasimus uel exiuimus'. See also BoB, pp. 34–35; GdN, p. 69; OV, v, 65; RM, pp. 114–15.

[39] AA, p. 646.

[40] BS, pp. 196–97: 'Hujus igitur admirabili impetu plebs inermis perterrita labebantur. Sed prudentis cujusdam viri figmento, qui, caput unius occisi in altum erigens, regem clamabat occisum, revocati, vehementius solito irruunt in obstantes'.

secretly. Chroniclers frequently refer to *exploratores* being sent out to gather intelligence.[41] Lewis and Short define *explorator* as 'a searcher out, examiner, explorer; a prying person, a spy'. In a military context, however, it can also mean 'scout'.[42] The Old French *espie,* from which we derive the English 'spy'*,* can also designate either a scout or a spy.[43] This makes it difficult to determine exactly what is being described in a given instance. Take the following incident from the Book of Joshua, which would have been familiar to medieval clerics:

> And so Joshua, son of Nun, secretly sent two men, *exploratores,* from Shittim and said to them: 'Go and examine the land and city of Jericho'. Going ahead, they entered the house of a woman, a prostitute named Rahab, and they rested there. And this was reported to the king of Jericho: 'See! Men from the sons of Israel entered here by night in order to reconnoitre the land'. And the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying: 'Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house. For they are *exploratores* and they came to examine the whole land'.[44]

How should we translate *exploratores* here? These men were sent out in a military capacity, to reconnoitre the land ahead of the Israelites' attack on Jericho, so they could be called 'scouts'. Yet they are sent 'secretly' (*abscondito*) and conceal themselves within the city at Rahab's house, which seems more characteristic of a spy. The same ambiguity is present in the medieval chronicles. The function of an *explorator* was to gather information but their methods are often left unclear. This makes the modern distinction between scout and spy unhelpful. For a medieval author, the two roles were not easily separated. *Explorator* described an individual's role, not their methods.

Little scholarship has been produced concerning espionage in the Central Middle Ages. Until recently, J. O. Prestwich's essay on the intelligence networks of the Anglo-Norman kings was the only major publication on the subject. Lacking explicit evidence for

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[41] *Speculator,* from *speculor* (to watch, observe, explore) is another frequently-used term which may mean 'spy' or 'scout'. See below.

[42] Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), p. 696.

[43] 'espie', *Anglo-Norman Dictionary: Online Edition,* ed. by William Rothwell and others (London: MHRA, 1977–92), <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/espie[1]> [accessed 8 Nov 2017]. See also, 'spy, n.', *OED Online,* <www.oed.com/view/Entry/188063> [accessed 15 November 2017].

[44] *Bible,* Joshua 2.1–3: **'**misit ergo Iosue filius Nun de Setthim duos viros exploratores abscondito et dixit eis ite et considerate terram urbemque Hiericho qui pergentes ingressi sunt domum mulieris meretricis nomine Raab et quieverunt apud eam nuntiatumque est regi Hiericho et dictum ecce viri ingressi sunt huc per noctem de filiis Israhel ut explorarent terram misitque rex Hiericho ad Raab dicens educ viros qui venerunt ad te et ingressi sunt domum tuam exploratores quippe sunt et omnem terram considerare venerunt'.

eleventh-century intelligence gathering, Prestwich argued from inference. For example, William I was forewarned about the attempted rebellion by the Godwinson family at Exeter in 1068 and the Danish invasion of northern England in 1075. The chroniclers do not tell us how this intelligence was gathered but the fact that William anticipated and swiftly countered these threats demonstrates that he had access to reliable information from both England and the Continent.[45]

Susan Edgington has gone further and argued that Bohemond of Antioch 'made systematic use of professional interpreters/scouts/spies' on the First Crusade.[46] Edgington cites the *Gesta Francorum*'s reference to *cursores* (lit. runners, messengers) as evidence that specialist scouts were employed in Bohemond's army: 'When we had begun to approach the Iron Bridge, our *cursores,* who were always accustomed to go ahead of us, discovered that innumerable Turks had gathered against us, hurrying to give aid to Antioch'.[47] Fulcher of Chartres likewise refers to crusader *speculatores* (scouts). By contrast, the *Gesta* describes the Syrian and Armenian Christians who mingled with the crusaders before Antioch (see below) as *ingeniose inuestigabant* ('cleverly investigating') the camp on behalf of the Turkish garrison, while Albert of Aachen calls them *delatores* (informers). 'The vocabulary of intelligence-gathering is significant', says Edgington: "our" side has "scouts" or "runners", while the enemy has "spies".[48] This is not a fair comparison, however. The crusader *cursores* and *speculatores* appear in a purely military context, performing reconnaissance for the army. Edgington herself notes that the Turks are depicted deploying *praecursores* (lit. an advanced guard) for the same purpose.[49] The Antiochene Christians are a different case: they were non-combatants who came to the crusaders in bad faith, pretending to be in distress but intending to inform the Turks of the crusaders' plans, hence their condemnation by the chroniclers.

Although she refers to Bohemond using 'professionals', Edgington does not define what constituted 'professionalism' in this instance, saying only: 'It is very probable that Bohemond had recruited Greek and Arabic speakers in southern Italy who had been

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[45] J. O. Prestwich, 'Military Intelligence', pp. 4–9.

[46] Susan B. Edgington, 'Espionage and Military Intelligence during the First Crusade, 1095-99', in *Crusading and Warfare in the Middle Ages: Realities and Representations. Essays in Honour of John France*, ed. by Simon John and Nicholas Morton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 75–86 (here 79).

[47] GF, p. 28: 'Cum coepissemus appropinquare ad Pontem Farreum, cursores nostri, qui semper solebant nos precedere, inuenerunt Turcos innumberabiles congregatos obuiam eis, qui dare adiutorium Antiochiae festinabant'.

[48] Edgington, 'Military Intelligence', p. 77.

[49] Edgington, 'Military Intelligence', p. 77.

selected and trained for their role as scouts and interpreters'.[50] It is almost certain that Bohemond's army, raised in the polyglot lands of Sicily and southern Italy, included speakers of both Greek and Arabic. This would explain why it was Bohemond, of all the leading crusaders, who established a relationship with the Greek-speaking Firuz at Antioch but this is not the same thing as possessing 'trained [...] scouts and interpreters'. Edgington draws a contrast between Bohemond, who supposedly employed these specialists, and the other leading crusaders, who had to rely on ordinary troops to gather intelligence. She cites Raymond of Saint-Gilles's use of knights to reconnoitre Antioch in 1098 but the chronicle text suggests that, far from being an aberration, this was a prestigious task, performed by picked men:

> Therefore, taking counsel with his men, he chose those whom he would send ahead to diligently investigate this [report] and otherwise carefully reconnoitre. The viscount of Castillon, William of Montpellier, Peter Roasa [and] Peter Raymond, men of comital rank, not ignorant of military discipline, were appointed to this [task] with many knights.[51]

Compare also William of Poitier's description of William the Conqueror taking a band of twenty five knights to personally reconnoitre the area around Hastings in 1066.[52] It is not impossible that Bohemond's *cursores* were trained specialists: it is notable that all reference to scouting and spying disappears from the *Gesta*'s narrative once Bohemond breaks with the other crusaders.[53] However, we lack the evidence to state conclusively that such training was provided. *Explorator* may refer to a specialist in espionage but it is just as likely to be a functional designation: individuals assigned to 'explore' for the army at a given time.

As Yuval Noah Harari has observed, this lack of a dedicated intelligence 'branch', combined with the relatively small, geographically concentrated nature of medieval armies, meant that it was difficult to prevent information from circulating among the troops.[54] Incidents such as the crusaders' negotiations with the Portuguese at the siege of Lisbon in 1148 or the crusader army's influence over Richard I's decision to march on Jerusalem in

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[50] Edgington, 'Military Intelligence', p. 78.

[51] BB, p. 37: 'Igitur cum suis consiliatus, elegit quos praemitteret, qui rem diligenter inuestigarent et cetera curiosi explorarent. Ad hoc directi sunt consulares uiri, discipline militaris non ignari, uicecomes de Castellone, Willelmus de Monte Pislerio, Petrus de Roasa, Petrus Raimundi, cum militibus multis'.

[52] GG, pp. 114–115.

[53] Edgington, 'Military Intelligence', p. 79.

[54] Yuval Noah Harari, 'Knowledge, Power and the Medieval Soldier', in *'In laudem Hierosolymitani': Studies in Crusades and Medieval Culture in Honour of Benjamin Z. Kedar*, ed. by Iris Shagrir, Ronnie Ellenblum, and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 345–56 (here 349–50).

1192 demonstrate how combatants could use this 'operational knowledge' to further their own goals, sometimes in opposition to their commander's preferred strategy.[55] Furthermore, as has already been observed, this lack of effective secrecy meant that enemies could easily plant false information among the rumours and gossip that flowed in and out of a medieval army.

Espionage in the later Middle Ages has received more scholarly attention, in part due to the greater survival of written reports and records of payment.[56] Even here, however, it can be difficult to identify the spies themselves. By their very nature, their role was a secret one, often cloaked in euphemism: 'If a *nuntius,* a *vespilio,* a *coureur,* or a *chevaucheur* may have been a spy, an *espie* or an *explorator* was almost certainly one'.[57] John Alban and Christopher Allmand have established that, in the fourteenth century, the role of messenger or ambassador frequently overlapped with that of a spy. As individuals who had been granted safe passage through enemy territory, they were ideally placed to gather intelligence while ostensibly fulfilling another, legitimate function.[58] Bastian Walter described how the towns of Switzerland and the Upper Rhine used merchants to gather intelligence during their wars against Burgundy (1468–1477): they were often multi-lingual, travelled widely and had connections with other merchants across Europe.[59] It is likely that commanders of earlier centuries also made use of these well-placed sources for information gathering.

For the purpose of this thesis, I have chosen to translate *explorator* and *espie* as 'scout' and confine my analysis to incidents in which chroniclers explicitly describe deception being used to gather intelligence. Such incidents are relatively rare, as should be expected: if done correctly, espionage should be entirely undetected. Chroniclers frequently employ generic phrases such as 'we learned', or 'it was reported', without identifying how or where the information was gathered. Much of it was probably acquired on an ad hoc basis by interrogating travellers, local peasants or enemy deserters, but the chronicles occasionally reveal concerted efforts to covertly gather intelligence on enemies.

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[55] Y. N. Harari, 'Knowledge', pp. 351–54.

[56] See Bastian Walter, 'Urban Espionage and Counterespionage during the Burgundian Wars (1468–1477)', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 9 (2011), 132–45 (here 138).

[57] J. R. Alban and Christopher Allmand, 'Spies and Spying in the Fourteenth Century', in *War, Literature, and Politics in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. by Christopher Allmand (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1976), pp. 73–101 (here 74).

[58] Alban and Allmand, 'Spies', pp. 75–9. See also James P. Ward, 'Security and Insecurity, Spies and Informers in Holland during the Guelders War (1506–1515)', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 10 (2012), 173–96 (here 188–89).

[59] Walter, 'Urban Espionage', p. 135.

Some reveal an alarmingly lax attitude towards camp security. One may wonder how commanders managed to conceal anything from the enemy.[60] The *History of William Marshal* contains one such incident among a series of vivid anecdotes about the Marshal's childhood. In 1152, King Stephen laid siege to John Marshal's castle at Newbury in Berkshire and the infant William was sent into the king's camp as a hostage. One day, while playing with Stephen in his tent, William spotted a young man passing by outside and innocently exclaimed: 'Welcome, Wilikin, my friend. Tell me who sent you here! How is my lady mother? How are my sisters and my brothers?'[61] The unfortunate Wilikin, whom the poet tells us was 'a servant of his mother's chamber' and had been sent into the camp to check on William, promptly fled.[62] This anecdote may have been recorded solely for its comic value but it may also have been intended to contrast the child-Marshal's innocence with the ruthless and cynical behaviour of the adults who controlled his fate. Upon hearing that Stephen was threatening to hang the boy if John did not surrender, the elder Marshal famously said that 'the child did not concern him, for he still had the anvils and hammers from which he could forge better ones'.[63] The presence of a spy in the siege camp is passed over in the narrative as an unremarkable detail. It is the child's unwitting betrayal that is notable, not Wilikin's presence, which suggests that it was quite conventional to send spies out in this way. This incident also shows that an individual could pass in and out of a besieged stronghold undetected, probably after dark or through a postern gate, indicating that medieval armies did not, or could not, cut off a stronghold entirely from the outside world but had to be content with stopping large numbers of troops or supplies entering.

Infiltrating an enemy force of the same race and who spoke the same language would be relatively simple, as in the above example where an English army besieged an English garrison. It would have been more difficult when a force and its enemy looked different or spoke different languages.[64] This may be one reason why so many references to spies occur in crusade narratives. Operating in unfamiliar terrain, surrounded by a potentially hostile population, it is only natural that the crusaders regarded the people of

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[60] Bahā' al-Dīn refers to 'thieves' among Saladin's army at the siege of Acre who would enter the Franks' tents, stealing things and even kidnapping people. See Bahā al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin or al-Nawadir al-Sultaniyya wa'l-Mahasin al-Yusufiyya*, trans. by D.S. Richards (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 147–48.

[61] HWM, lines 631–34: 'Bien vingiez, Wilikin amis, / Dies kui vos a ça tramis. / Que fait or ma dame ma mere? / Que funt mes sorors e mi frerer?'

[62] HWM, lines 623–24: 'Un vailleit qu'il ben conoisseit, / De la chambre sa mere esteit'.

[63] HWM, lines 513–16: 'Mais il dist ke ne li chaleit / De l'enfant, quer encore aveit / Les enclumes e les marteals / Dunt forgereit de plus beals'.

[64] For more discussion on this subject, see Chapter 5.

the Holy Land with suspicion. The chroniclers of the First Crusade are universally hostile towards the Syrian and Armenian Christians who came into the crusader camp during the siege of Antioch (October 1097 – June 1098). Baldric of Bourgueil's description is typical:

> There were many Armenians and Syrians in the city. They were Christians but many were beholden to the Turks. Pretending to flee, they came boldly into the camp, begging and asking for public alms. They habitually returned to their family homes because their wives were in the city; and these ill-natured scouts were faithfully insinuating to the Turks whatever they were hearing in the camps.[65]

As noted above, we should be cautious about taking the crusaders' claims at face value. The Antiochenes probably did not endear themselves to the crusaders, short-supplied as they were, by begging from them. If they were in fact going between the city and the camp (another example of how porous a medieval siege could be), then it would be reasonable to suspect them of passing information to the garrison. The Muslim chronicler Ibn al-Athīr suggests that the Antiochenes were distrusted as much by the Turks as they were by the crusaders. He writes that Yaghī Siyān, the ruler of Antioch, ordered all the Christians to go out and help 'dig the moat', but then refused to readmit them. He kept their wives and families within, ostensibly for protection but more likely as hostages.[66]

Walter the Chancellor records another episode of Turkish espionage, from the campaign that terminated at the Battle of the Field of Blood. Īlghāzī's army located Roger of Antioch's force in the Ruz Valley in late June 1119 by sending out 'scouts dressed as bird sellers'.[67] Thomas Asbridge and Susan Edgington, in their commentary on this chronicle, note that 'Walter does not comment upon this seemingly unusual choice of disguise. This might suggest that the Latins were used to purchasing supplies from the local Muslim population'.[68] This illustrates how difficult it was to keep a medieval army camp secure. Ordinary camp followers (leaving aside potential enemies disguised as pedlars) who

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[65] BB, p. 39: 'Erant autem in ciuitate Armenii multi et Suriani, ipsi equidem Christiani, sed Turcis multum obnoxii. Ipsi fugam simulantes audacter exibant in castra, mendicantes et stipem publicam postulantes. Hi, quoniam eorum mulieres erant intra ciuitatem, ad familiares redibant lares; et exploratores maligni quecumque in castris audiebant Turcis fideliter insinuabant'. See also AA, p. 220; GF, p. 29; OV, v, 71; RM, p. 121, WT, pp. 221–23.

[66] The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh: Part 1. The Years 491–541/1097–1146, the Coming of the Franks and the Muslim Response, trans. by D.S. Richards (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 14.

[67] WC, p. 81: 'Missis namque exploratoribus quasi uolatilium uenditoribus'.

[68] Walter the Chancellor, *The Antiochene Wars,* trans. by Thomas S. Asbridge and Susan B. Edgington (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), p. 115 n. 31.

passed in and out of an army as a matter of course, could be compelled or bribed into passing on information.

It was not just Muslim rulers who employed locals for information gathering, of course. The *Itinerarium Peregrinorum* records that Richard I of England employed three scouts to locate caravans travelling from Egypt into Palestine in June 1192. The chronicle refers to one as 'Bernard, the king's scout' (*explorator regis*). They were 'natives of that region, dressed in Saracen clothes [and] nobody spoke the Saracen language better'.[69] Ambroise says that Bernard was 'a man born in Syria' (*Uns hom qui iert nez de Sulie*) but his Western name, combined with the chronicler's statement that they went into Egypt in Muslim clothes (suggesting that this was unusual), indicates that all three were Franks.[70] Greek, Syrian and Armenian polyglots had been employed by the crusaders as interpreters and envoys since the First Crusade. By the Third Crusade, after a century of close contact and acclimatisation, some of the nobility of the kingdom of Jerusalem had become fluent in Arabic: Reynald de Sidon acted as an intermediary with Saladin for both Guy of Lusignan and Conrad de Montferrat, while Humphrey IV of Toron acted as interpreter for Richard I of England. This was a specialist skill, however, and would have been highly valued by the newly-arrived crusaders form Western Europe.[71] The fact that the three *exploratores* were paid a hundred silver marks each demonstrates how highly Richard valued their service.[72] The *Itinerarium*'s description highlights how important language, appearance and local knowledge were for effective intelligence gathering.[73]

The narrative continues with Richard leading his army from Bayt Nuba to 'Galatia' (Qaratiya, approximately 15 miles east of Gaza).[74] An *explorator* (presumably not one of the three mentioned above) informed him that a caravan was passing near Tell-Khuwailifa. Richard, however, was sceptical:

> But because this scout had been born in that land, the king decided that complete faith could not be placed in him alone. Therefore he immediately

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[69] IP, p. 384: 'cum alliis duobus, qui illius terrae fuerunt omnes indigenae, cum vestibus Saracenicis, qui de partibus Babyloniae venerunt, qui revera a Saracenorum in nullo discrepabant habitu'.
[70] Amb, line 10242.
[71] K. A. Tuley, 'A Century of Communication and Acclimatization: Interpreters and Intermediaries in the Kingdom of Jerusalem', in *East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: Transcultural Experiences in the Premodern World*, ed. by Albrecht Classen (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), pp. 311–40.
[72] IP, p. 384: 'ecce Bernardus explorator regis, cum aliis duobus, qui illius terrae fuerunt omnes indigenae, cum vestibus Saracenicis [...] Nemo ipsis efficacius Saracenico loquebatur idiomate; horum trium quilibet, hujus gratia ministerii, prius acceperat a rege Ricardo centum marcas argenti'.
[73] Another *explorator regis,* named Jumas, is recorded by Ralph of Coggeshall. He acted as a lookout near Richard's camp at Bayt Nūbā in June 1192. RC, p. 39.
[74] Amb, II, p. 167, n. 649.

> sent out a certain Bedouin and two most prudent native Turcopoles to inquire as to the truth of this [report] and establish it for certain. He had them wrapped up in the Bedouin manner in order to pass for Saracens.[75]

It is notable that Richard did not trust the scout because he was a native, whereas the three men sent into Egypt were both trusted and richly rewarded. This may have been because the latter were Franks or because they had proven themselves reliable. This appears to have been the case with the two Turcopoles sent out to confirm the caravan sighting. We are told that the Bedouin warned them not to speak when they encountered an enemy patrol, as this would give them away, so they were obviously not selected for their ability to blend in.[76] It is more likely that these were trusted men, sent along to protect the Bedouin or to make sure he did not defect to the enemy.

Although their activities are often hidden from us by euphemistic language or their own successes, we can learn something about military espionage in this period from the chronicle sources. Commanders certainly valued individuals who could provide reliable intelligence. There is little to suggest that these individuals received special training for this role, or that it was a recognised identity, but acting as an *explorator* nevertheless required certain skills or qualities: discretion, loyalty, knowledge of the local area and, most importantly, the ability to speak the language. In local conflicts in Western Europe, and especially during times of civil unrest, it would have been easy to find individuals who possessed the latter skills. On crusade, or any conflict between markedly different forces on unfamiliar ground, they were much harder to acquire. This would explain the imbalance in the source evidence. In the West, such individuals were practically invisible in reality and the written record. In the Holy Land, they were noteworthy exceptions among a hostile population.

2.5 The Role of Clerics in Military Espionage

While the medieval model of a society divided into those who pray, those who fight and those who work would appear to clearly separate clerics from the world of warfare, recent

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[75] IP, pp. 385–86: 'Verum quoniam explorator ille illius terrae fuerat oriundus, rex ei soli certissimam non arbitrabatur fidem habendam. Missit igitur statim Bedewinum quendam et duos vernaculos Turcopolos prudentissimios, ad rei veritatem inquirendam et certius indagandam, quos et in modum Bedewinorum redimitos fecit Saracenis assimilari'.

[76] IP, p. 386: 'Quibus Bedewinus, duobus suis sociis innuens ut tacerent, ne ex idiomate possent agnosci, respondit quod a partibus Ascalonis redirent, quo perrexerant causa praedandi'.

scholarship has shown that the two intersected in a variety of ways. Daniel Gerrard has described the fighting clergy as 'a defining paradox of the culture of the medieval church'.[77] It may seem strange to read about the ministers of the Prince of Peace leading armies, or even hacking away in a melee, but there are numerous accounts of medieval clerics taking to the battlefield in defiance of Church strictures. Since the earliest days of Christianity, clerics have been prohibited from fighting: at the Council of Nicaea (325 CE), it was decreed that those who returned to the military role after renouncing it for a religious vocation must perform thirteen years of penance.[78] The collections of church canons assembled in the eleventh century by Burchard of Worms and Ivo of Chartres also forbade clerics from carrying arms. Gratian, in Causa 23 of his *Decretum,* stated that the clergy should not bear arms, nor should any offerings be made for clerics killed in battle.[79] It is important to recognise, however, that 'canon law was promulgated by segments within the "church" as a whole, and did not represent a unified and contested "voice of the church"'.[80] The historical record testifies that members of the higher clergy, who were often sons of the warrior aristocracy, felt able to ignore these prohibitions and take up arms when they felt it to be necessary. Odo, bishop of Bayeux (d. 1097), commanded armies in Normandy prior to the conquest of England, participated in the Battle of Hastings and held Dover for William I of England during the rebellion of 1067.[81] During the conflict between Robert Guiscard and Gisolf II of Salerno, Alfanus I, archbishop of the city (c. 1020–1085), established four new bishoprics in the south of the principality that commanded approaches to the city, with the intention of blocking any attack by Guiscard while also increasing his own power.[82] Hugh of Noyers (1183–1206), bishop of Auxerre in Burgundy, was praised by his biographer, Eustache of Auxerre, for his use of military force to stamp out dissent and heresy in his diocese.[83] Clerics might be criticised for adopting the trappings and lifestyle of secular lords but they could also be praised for defending the Church and its people in times of crisis.[84]

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[77] Daniel M. G. Gerrard, *The Church at War: The Military Activities of Bishops, Abbots and Other Clergy in England, c. 900–1200* (London: Routledge, 2017), p. 2.
[78] Craig M. Nakashian, *Warrior Churchmen of Medieval England, 1000–1250: Theory and Reality* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2016), p. 31.
[79] Nakashian, *Warrior Churchmen*, pp. 87–93.
[80] Gerrard, *Church at War*, p. 8; Nakashian, *Warrior Churchmen*, p. 88.
[81] Gerrard, *Church at War*, pp. 35–40; Nakashian, *Warrior Churchmen*, pp. 129–35.
[82] Valerie Ramseyer, 'Pastoral Care as Military Action: The Ecclesiology of Archbishop Alfanus I of Salerno (1058–1085)', in *The Bishop Reformed: Studies in Episcopal Power and Culture in the Central Middle Ages*, ed. by John S. Ott and Anna Trumbore Jones (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 189–208 (here 201–5).
[83] Constance Brittain Bouchard, *Spirituality and Administration: The Role of the Bishop in Twelfth-Century Auxerre* (Cambridge, MA: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1979), pp. 99–120.
[84] Nakashian, *Warrior Churchmen*, pp. 22–23.

Even when they were not actively engaged in combat, clerics played an important role in war by interceding with God on behalf of the combatants through prayer and litanies. David Bachrach has examined the spiritual dimension of medieval warfare and the role played by clerics. Although he is often too ready to take chronicle accounts at face value, ignoring the religious and cultural impetus to depict victorious armies as overtly pious, Bachrach's study does indicate that medieval battles were frequently preceded or accompanied by religious rituals. Prayers of invocation might be made for divine protection and assistance, Mass celebrated, and sacred relics or banners displayed to assure the combatants of God's favour.[85] One of the most famous and ostentatious displays of this kind took place at the Battle of the Standard (1138), in which the English clergy accompanied the army bearing banners and relics from local churches. The titular Standard, the rallying point for the English army, was a ship's mast erected on a cart, with the Host and other religious relics hanging from it.[86] There are also accounts of clerics hearing confessions from the combatants before battle, although this would have been very time-consuming for the whole army. It was probably only those wealthy enough to employ their own chaplains that were able make a personal confession.[87] There are even reports of clerics continuing to invoke divine aid during combat. William the Breton, chaplain to Philip II of France, claims that he and another priest stood behind the king chanting psalms throughout the battle of Bouvines (27 July 1214).[88] All of the above suggests that clerics were not an anomaly on the medieval battlefield. Even when they were not physically engaged in combat, they performed an important spiritual and pastoral role to support those who were.

These pastoral duties may explain an unusual detail in the *Gesta Stephani*'s account of the siege of Exeter Castle in 1136. Reporting a stratagem used by Alred, son of Judhael, to enter the castle through King Stephen's siege line (see Chapter 5), the chronicler describes how Alred informed the garrison of his arrival: 'Then, when a messenger had been sent into the castle, since captives and *religiosi* often went in and out [of the castle] for certain reasons, he made his arrival known to Baldwin [de Redver's] knights'.[89] K. R. Potter rendered *religiosi* as 'priests' in his published translation but this may have been an error.

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[85] David S. Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War, c. 300–1215* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), pp. 78–95.
[86] D. S. Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War*, pp. 154–55.
[87] D. S. Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War*, pp. 95–98.
[88] It is not recorded whether Philip found this inspiring or simply distracting. D S. Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War,* p. 186.
[89] GS, p. 37: 'Deinde legato intra castellum misso (captivi siquidem et religiosi de causis introeundi vices frequentabant) Balduini milites de adventu suo certificauit'.

Later in the *Gesta,* the chronicler describes the Empress Matilda constructing a castle at Cirencester near 'the holy church of the *religiosi*'.[90] Cirencester Abbey, founded in 1117, was a house of Augustinian canons, which indicates that the author understood the word *religiosus* to mean a member of a religious order, such as a monk or canon, not a priest.[91]

The *Gesta* does not explicitly say that it was a *religiosus* who carried the message; it could have been one of the captives or somebody disguised as a *religiosus*. Yet it is significant that these clerics were permitted to enter and leave the castle. An exchange of prisoners during a siege is not particularly remarkable: they may have been captured in a skirmish, then ransomed, or the garrison may simply have been unwilling to use their precious supplies to feed prisoners (they were eventually starved into surrendering). So why were the *religiosi* permitted to go back and forth? They may have been acting as messengers because they were perceived as trustworthy 'neutral parties' who could mediate between the two forces. Another possibility is that these *religiosi* were also ordained as priests and were admitted into the castle to provide pastoral care for the garrison: hearing confessions, saying Mass and burying the dead. This is speculation but their presence at the siege and their ability to move between the belligerent parties suggests that clerics were seen as impartial. Their vocation placed them beyond partisan politics.

If other sources are to be believed, this perceived neutrality was sometimes exploited for distinctly partisan ends. Amatus of Montecassino records that Robert Guiscard, duke of Apulia, used a certain 'Peter the Deacon' to gather information on the city of Palermo in 1068. Hearing that Robert was making peace with the other towns and cities of Sicily, and fearing that he would be left isolated, the emir of Palermo sent gifts to Robert in the hope of currying favour. In response, Robert devised 'a great piece of cunning' (*une grant soutillesce*): he sent Peter to Palermo as a messenger to thank the emir for his gifts. Peter 'who understood [the Saracen language] and spoke like the Saracens' was instructed only to listen and observe what he saw in the city, presumably so that the citizens would speak candidly around him, thinking that they would not be understood.[92] Peter reported 'that the city was desolate and that [the people] of the city were like a body without a soul': an easy target for the next Norman conquest.[93] Graham Loud speculates that this Peter 'was probably a Greek Christian', one of many bilingual inhabitants of

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[90] GS, p. 189: 'tertium penes civitatem Cirencestriae, juxta piam religiosorum ecclessiam, tanquam alterum Dagon juxta Arcam Domini'.
[91] K. J. Beecham, *The History Cirencester and the Roman City Corinium* (Dursley: Sutton, 1887), p. 53.
[92] AM, p. 404: 'liquel entendoit et parloit molt bien coment li sarrazin'.
[93] AM, p. 404: 'Et Pierre fait assavoir a lo duc coment la cité est asoutillié, et ceuz de la cité sont comme lo cors san l'arme'.

eleventh-century Sicily, although not one for whom Arabic was his first language, else the deception would not have worked.[94] This is an example of a spy employing a twofold cover: his holy vocation as a cleric and his diplomatic role as Guiscard's messenger. Of the two, the latter is probably the most significant here, as a Muslim ruler was unlikely to hold a cleric in the same esteem as a Christian would, but it is nevertheless notable that Guiscard chose a cleric for this covert task rather than a warrior or other secular person.

Another possible reason why certain clerics were so useful for gathering or disseminating intelligence was their connection to specific locations. While merchants and ambassadors were useful because they travelled widely as a matter of course, priests and monks were attached to a single place through their parish or monastery. They had intimate knowledge of the local geography and were likely to be familiar with the local news. In short, they were ideal informants for a medieval army, especially one operating in unfamiliar territory. Conversely, as demonstrated in several chronicle sources, local clerics were well placed to spread misinformation to credulous enemies. Gerald of Wales records a humorous anecdote about how a deacon from Cantref Mawr, named Guaidan, duped a certain Breton knight. In 1163, Henry II of England was planning to assault Rhys ap Gruffydd, king of Deheubarth, at his castle at Dinevor (in mod. Carmarthenshire). The king instructed Guaidan to guide an unnamed knight of 'Armorican Brittany' (*de Armorica Britannia*) to 'reconnoitre the site and the fortification of the country', presumably because of his local knowledge.[95] Gerald describes what happened next:

> But the priest, having been ordered to show the better and easier road to the castle, instead deliberately led him through difficult and inaccessible approaches. And wherever they crossed through grassy defiles, the priest ate the grass while [the knight] stared in astonishment; stating that the inhabitants and native peoples, when starvation threatened, were accustomed to subsist on and enjoy grass and roots. So, when the knight returned to the king, he related everything which seemed worth telling or hearing; the land was certainly uninhabitable, the land was impassable and inaccessible, there were no people except those like beasts and it was necessary to adopt the habits of beasts to live there.[96]

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[94] AM, p. 142 n. 38.

[95] IK, p. 81: 'locique situm, et patriae munitionem exploraturum'.

[96] IK, pp. 81–82: 'Presbyter autem, monitus ut per viam meliorem ad castrum et faciliorem militi praeberet iter, per magis difficiles et inaccessibiles aditus ipsum ex industria circumduxit. Et ubicunque per saltus

Gerald's attitude towards the Welsh and their alleged propensity for deceit is complex and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 9. In this instance, at least, it would appear that Gerald is on the side of the Welsh, with Henry and his credulous vassal acting as the butt of Guaidan's joke. Henry, Gerald tells us, believing Dinevor to be inaccessible, called off the assault and instead made peace with Rhys through an exchange of oaths and hostages.[97]

As with all stories of deception, we must be conscious of authorial prejudice. Roger of Wendover, an English Benedictine, recorded a story of clerical deceit that cast the Welsh Cistercians in a dubious light. In July 1231 Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, king of Gwynedd, pillaged the Welsh marches, burning Montgomery, Radnor, Hay and Brecon in an act of vengeance against Hubert de Burgh, regent of England.[98] According to Roger, Llewelyn employed a local monk to lure the garrison of Montgomery Castle into an ambush, who told the garrison that Llewelyn was close at hand and that they could easily ride across the nearby meadow to attack him. In reality, the meadow was a bog and the garrison became stranded. 'Then the Welsh, seeing the submersion of their enemies, turned back to attack them and cruelly killed the knights and horses who were wallowing in the mire with their lances'.[99] It is difficult to believe that the garrison would have been so ignorant about the nearby terrain. The castle had been built in 1223 by Hubert de Burgh, who expended considerable effort to strengthen the garrison, including transferring all castle-guard service from nearby Shrawardine Castle to Montgomery.[100] Roger himself seems to have had reservations about the story's veracity, prefixing it with the chroniclers' ubiquitous phrase, '*ut dicitur*' ('as is said'), used to indicate information that they did not consider wholly reliable.[101] Nevertheless, he did not pass over an opportunity to disparage the Welsh or report the punishment inflicted on Cumhyre Abbey by Henry III.[102] Even if the incident is of dubious historicity, the garrison's use of a local cleric to gather information (and the subsequent opportunity to spread misinformation) corroborates stories from other

herbosos transsitum faciebant, cum intuentium admiratione presbyter herbam pascebatur; asserens accolas et indigenas herbis et radicibus, ingruente inedia, vivere et vesci solere. Ad regem itaque milite reverso, cunctisque relatis quae vel digna relatu viderat vel audierat; terram scilicet inhabitabilem, terram inviam et inaccessibiliem, nullique genti nisi bestiali et bestiarum more viventi victui necessariam'.

97 IK, p. 82.

98 Frederick C. Suppe, *Military Institutions on the Welsh Marches: Shropshire, AD 1066–1300* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994), p. 21.

99 RW, IV, 222–23: 'Tunc Wallenses, hostium submersionem cognoscentes, reversi sunt cum impetu super eos, et cum lanceis suis milites et equos in coeno volutantes crudeliter peremerunt'.

100 Suppe, *Institutions*, p. 137.

101 Morse, *Truth and Convention,* p. 95.

102 RW, IV, 223.

chronicles. It was a plausible course of action for an army campaigning in unfamiliar terrain.

A full study of this topic is beyond the scope of this thesis, partly because little work has been done on the role of clerics within medieval warfare as non-combatants. Scholars have studied churchmen as fighters or victims but there is more to be said about their role as auxiliary figures: care-givers, pastors and informants. The handful of incidents presented above suggest that clerics, like women, were frequently non-combatant participants in war whose roles are obscured, often invisible, in the historical record. Their sacred vocation set them apart, allowing them to cross battle lines in ways that secular individuals could not. Their unique status in the society of Western Europe provided cover to clerics who chose to act as spies or *agents provocateurs* in secular conflicts.

2.6 Conclusion

Some of the incidents described above are difficult to credit, either because of implausible details or their resemblance to ancient archetypical stories. Even if one disregards the less plausible tales, however, the chronicle sources testify to the importance of military intelligence in medieval warfare. Commanders sought reliable information about their enemy and the local environment and were willing to pay significant sums to acquire it. Conversely, they attempted to prevent their opponents from gathering accurate intelligence about them. This appears to have been difficult, as medieval armies could be very lax in their security arrangements. Whether carried by pedlars, spies or just simple gossip, information flowed in and out of the medieval army camp, as well as between the tent of the commander and the common soldier. This made it very easy to deliberately spread misinformation as a stratagem. Sometimes there was little discernible difference, to either the commander or the chronicler, between a deliberate ruse and an honest mistake. The fact that so many of these incidents were recorded, even the more outlandish varieties, indicates just how confusing and precarious waging war in the Middle Ages could be.

Chapter 3
The Element of Surprise: Ambushes and Night Raids

Surprise can grant a decisive advantage in battle. Barton Whaley calculated, based on a study of incidents across sixteen wars between 1914 and 1968, that 'while the usual non-surprise operations produce casualty ratios of about 1-to-1, those with surprise yield ratios of 5-to-1. That is, surprise may be rather reliably depended upon to quintuple the enemy's casualty rates, *relative to one's own*'.[1] We lack the data to make a comparable analysis of medieval combat but Whaley's conclusions demonstrate the impact that a properly conducted surprise attack can have on its victims. It may challenge modern notions of fair and chivalrous fighting but the evidence presented below indicates that medieval combatants regularly sought to launch precisely these kinds of devastating attacks on unsuspecting enemies and took precautions to avoid being surprised themselves.

3.1 Ambushes: Setting, Executing and Avoiding

Ambushes were ubiquitous in medieval warfare: they account for nearly a third of the incidents in the taxonomy presented in the Appendix. They were simple to arrange: all that was required was a suitable hiding place and sufficient patience to wait for the enemy to appear. If executed correctly, they could confer an overwhelming tactical advantage. The English 'ambush' comes from the Old French *embusche,* which is derived from the Latin *inboscāre,* a compound of *in* and *boscus,* 'woodland'.[2] Therefore, a literal definition of an ambush would be 'people concealed in woodland' for the (implied) purpose of attacking an enemy by surprise. Forests can provide cover for a large number of people and were very common in the predominantly rural environment of pre-modern Europe, which is probably why they became synonymous with surprise attacks.[3] For the purposes of this thesis, I have defined an ambush as any incident in which troops were concealed (in woodland or elsewhere) in order to take their enemy by surprise.

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[1] Whaley, *Stratagem*, p. 130.
[2] 'ambush, v.', *OED Online,* < http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/6260> [accessed 7 March 2018].
[3] Malcolm Barber, *The Two Cities: Medieval Europe, 1050-1320* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 11–23.

While such incidents are relatively easy to identify in Old French narratives, Latin terminology presents some difficulties. *Insidia,* which can be translated as ambush or ambush party, can also be used in a figurative sense for any sort of 'artifice, crafty device, plot [or] snare'.[4] For example, in Genesis 42, when Joseph accuses his brothers of having entered Egypt as spies, they protest: 'We are peaceful and we are not attempting any *insidiae*'.[5] Similarly, in *Quaestionum in Heptateuchum libri VII*, Augustine used *insidia* to stand for all the varieties of stratagem (which he contrasted with *aperta pugna,* 'open battle') in his discussion of right conduct in warfare.[6] This ambiguity is also present in the medieval chronicles. See, for example, the *Gesta Stephani*'s description of Miles of Gloucester's behaviour following his defection from King Stephen's cause to the Empress Matilda in 1138:

> Now he abducted innumerable animals from the furthest limits of England, now he harassed with fire and sword those around him who were loyal and whom he knew had done homage to the king: here he wove *insidiae* for the king and his adherents, there he mostly cruelly devastated their lands and possessions until they became a desert.[7]

It is likely that Miles laid ambushes for Stephen's supporters at some point during his campaigns but the chronicler does not appear to be describing specific tactics here. This is a summation of Miles's behaviour, intended to emphasise his utter hostility towards Stephen's supporters. Furthermore, the use of the verb *texere* (to weave) suggests that this is a metaphor, depicting Miles as a hunter laying snares for his unsuspecting prey. In view of this ambiguity, I have confined analysis in this chapter to incidents in which combatants are explicitly depicted intentionally concealing themselves in some manner, waiting for the enemy to approach and then attacking them unawares.

The chronicles give little indication that ambushes required specialist training or that they were performed exclusively by specialist troops. Depending on the situation, ambush parties could be mounted or on foot but the chroniclers rarely describe how they

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[4] Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary,* p. 964.

[5] *Bible,* Genesis 42.31: 'cui respondimus pacifici sumus nec ullas molimur insidias'.

[6] See Chapter 9 for a detailed discussion of this passage. Augustine, *Quaestionum in Heptateuchum libri VII,* ed. by Joseph Zycha (Vienna: Tempsky, 1895), pp. 428–29.

[7] GS, p. 90: 'Et nunc quidem de remotissimis Angliae finibus innumerabilis multitudinis animalia abducere, nunc quos circa se fide, et hominio regi allectos praenoverat, igne, et gladio validissime vexare; illic juges regi, suisque confraganeis insidias texere, istic eorundem terras, et possessiones usque ad solitudinem crudelissime nudare.'

were composed. Raymond of Aguilers's description of an ambush carried out by Raymond of Saint-Gilles in 1099 in Syria, on the road between Shaizar and Damascus, implies a mounted ambush party:

> And so, while we were advancing in this way, certain Turks and Arabs were following the army; and they were killing and despoiling the poor, who remained far behind the army on account of their weakness. When this had been done once or twice, the next day the count [Raymond of Saint-Gilles] remained behind in secret, while the rest of the army went on. And the enemy were following our army in their usual way, in the hope of plunder and the freedom [to commit] murder. But when they had passed by the ambush, our knights, together with the count, coming out of [their] hiding places, assaulted, confounded and dismayed the enemy divisions; they killed them and led away their best horses to the army with great rejoicing.[8]

The description of the ambush party as *milites,* rather than foot soldiers or archers, combined with the description of them leading away the enemy's best horses (which would have been difficult on foot), suggests a mounted ambush party.

The accounts of Henry II of England's relief of Rouen in August 1174 contain a rare description of specialist troops being employed to lay an ambush. Rouen had been under siege from the north bank of the Seine by the combined forces of Louis VII of France, Philip I of Flanders and Henry's eldest son, the Young King, since 22 July. Henry II, with characteristic rapidity, arrived on the south bank on 11 August. William of Newburgh described his next move as follows:

> But in the night he secretly sent out a troop of Welshmen which he had brought from England, in order that, hidden in the shadows of the forests (for this race of men is agile and has experience of the forests), they might watch all the necessities that were being brought to the army. When the time was right, rushing out from the forests, they attacked a convoy. When the horses which

[8] RA, p. 273: 'Sic itaque quum anterius progrederemur, quidam Turci et Arabes exercitum sequebantur; et pauperes qui pro debilitate sua longe post exercitum remanebant, interficiebant et spoliabant. Quumque hoc semel et secundo fecissent, alia die remansit comes in occultis, donec omnis exercitus pertransiret. Hostes vero, impunitate caedis et spe rapinae, exercitum nostrum more solito insequebantur. Sed quum jam praeterissent insidias, egressi milites nostri de occultis cum comite agmina hostium invadunt, conturbant et confundunt; atque ipsos interficiunt, et equos eorum optimos cum grandi exsultatione ad exercitum deduxerunt'.

> were pulling it had been compelled to flee, and all of the supplies destroyed, together with a great slaughter of men and pack animals, they took themselves back into the forests. Then it was commonly said that the forests were teeming with Welshmen and so, since the army's supplies had been cut off, starvation afflicted it for two days.[9]

Roger of Howden calls these troops Henry's 'Welshmen' (*Walenses sui*) and describes the enemy reaction as follows: 'they were so terrified by this report that nobody thought of anything except flight'.[10] Robert of Torigni's account differs slightly, calling them 'Welsh marchers' (*marchisi Walenses*), suggesting that they may have been Cambro-Normans rather than native Welshmen.[11] The terror that they reportedly inspired would seem to indicate native Welsh, however: a force that appeared suddenly out of the trees, shouting in an alien language, perhaps in unfamiliar costume, would have had a profound psychological impact on the French and Flemings. Regardless, the sources identify these Welshmen as specialists, used to fighting in forests and other broken terrain, who were employed by Henry for this reason.[12]

As identified above, the very word 'ambush' derives from woodland. Not only could forests conceal large numbers of troops, the enemy were restricted to specific roads, which made them easy to locate. Robert de Clari provides a description of such an ambush in his account of the Fourth Crusade. In the winter of 1203, while the crusaders were besieging Constantinople, Henry of Flanders led a raid on the nearby city of Philia. As he was returning, his force was ambushed by the Byzantine emperor, Alexios V Doukas Mourtzouphlo. Robert's account conveys something of the panic and the vicious close-quarter fighting involved:

> When they saw [the Greeks] they were very much afraid, and many began to call upon the Lord God and Our Lady, and they were so dismayed that they

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[9] WN, II, 153: 'Porro ipse Walensium turmam ex Anglia accitam per noctem latenter emisit ut siluarum opacitate tecti (nam hoc genus hominum agile et siluarum gnarum est) locis opportunis obseruarent qua tanto exercitui necessaria conuehebantur. Hi nimirum captato tempore siluis erumpentes commeatum inuaserunt, equitibus, a quibus deducebatur in fugam actis, et toto illo apparatu pessum dato cum ingenti hominum et iumentorum exitio, in siluas se receperunt. Tunc uulgatum est siluas Walensibus esse refertas, atque ita intercepto commeatu exercitus per biduum inedia laborauit'.

[10] GRH, pp. 74–75: 'Quod cum nunciatum esset regi Franciae et exercitui ejus, tali rumore perterriti, jam nihil nisi de fuga cogitabant'.

[11] RT, p. 265.

[12] This corroborates Gerald of Wales's description of the difference between warfare on the Continent and warfare in Wales, to which the armoured knight was woefully unsuited. See Chapter 9 for a detailed discussion.

> did not know what to do. Then they said to one another: '*Par foi*! If we flee, we are all dead: it would be better that we die defending ourselves than fleeing' [...] When the French saw that the Greeks were attacking them from all sides, they dropped their lances to the ground, drew the knives and misericordes which they had, and fought to defend themselves most vigorously, and they killed many.[13]

The fact that the crusaders with 'knives and misericordes', instead of lances or swords, suggests they were attacked in a very narrow place, which restricted their movements: another advantage of conducting an ambush in woodland.[14]

Forests were not essential for laying an ambush, of course. Any difficult terrain that allowed combatants to conceal themselves could serve. For example, according to John of Hexham, in February 1138 David I of Scotland attempted to ambush Stephen, king of England, while he rested at Roxburgh by positioning his army in 'a certain marsh' (*qua palus*) nearby.[15] The semi-legendary English rebel Hereward led a successful guerrilla campaign against the Normans out of the Cambridgeshire Fens in 1070–71. The laudatory *Gesta Herwardi* records several instances of ambushes and counter-ambushes in the marshland by Hereward and his enemies.[16]

Passes through steep hills or mountains were also good locations to lay ambushes. As in a forest, the narrow pathways restricted the enemy's movements and made it easy to judge where the enemy force would have to pass. According to *The Song of Dermot and Earl Richard fitz Gilbert,* an Old French poem celebrating Richard Strongbow's conquests in Ireland, Strongbow was ambushed in 1172 while returning from a raid into Offaly to his base in Kildare, possibly through the Slieve Bloom mountains: 'Straightaway, at the end of the pass, he rushed upon them from all sides; O'Dempsey [king of Uí Failghe] and the Irish of Offaly rushed upon them; everybody from that region attacked the rearguard'.[17] The

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[13] I have chosen not to translate the colloquial exclamation 'Par foi' because a modern English rendering would be unnecessarily stilted. Clari, p. 66: 'Quant il les virrent, si eurent molt grant peur, et molt commenchierent a reclamer Damedieu et Nostre Dame, et furent si esmari qu'il ne se seurent consellier, et tant qu'il disent entr'aus: "Par foi! se nous fuions, nous sommes tout mort; miex nous vient morir en desdendant que en fuiant" [...] Quant li Franchois virent que li Grieu leur couroient si sus de toutes pars, si laissierent les lanches caïr jus, si traient coustiaus et misericordes qu'il avoient, si s'acueillent a desfendre molt vigeureusement, si en ochient mout'.

[14] The misericorde was a short knife or dagger which was used to kill an enemy who refused to surrender or ask for mercy, hence its name. It was clearly a weapon of last resort. Victor Gay, *Glossaire archéologique du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance*, ed. by Henri Stein, 2 vols (Paris: Éditions Auguste Picard, 1928), II, 133–34.

[15] JH, p. 8.

[16] See GH pp. 374–77.

[17] Dermot, lines 2801–06: 'Tut dreit al issir del pas / lur currut sure tost vias / sur lur currut O'Dymmesy / E les Yrreis de Offaili; / L'arere garde unt asailiz / Les tuz de cel païs'.

author of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum* describes how Frederick, duke of Swabia, was wounded when the rearguard of the German contingent of the Third Crusade was caught in a similar ambush laid by Turkish forces near Iconium in Phrygia on 3 May 1190:

> There was a place where the high cliffs, rugged ascents [and] narrower paths, made it difficult to cross over, where, when the first part of the army, which was being led by the emperor's son [Frederick of Swabia], had crossed, Turks suddenly rushed out of ambush on all sides and fell upon those in the very rear [...] The dreadful report flew to the duke's ears. No more! Then he turned to go back into danger; rejoicing, he returned without hesitation to the difficulties which he had overcome; anger does not attend to danger. The horses were forced to gallop where they could not walk. And then while he was searching for his father [Emperor Frederick Barbarossa], calling for his father, running about anxiously and incautiously, his helmet was struck by a stone, smashing out his teeth.[18]

This passage conveys the chaos and fear experienced by a force caught in an ambush, as well as the difficulties that horsemen faced when manoeuvring in a confined space. Frederick of Swabia's decision to turn back and help the rearguard was considered particularly heroic. The author of the *Itinerarium* reported that his wounds became a badge of honour: 'every time his lips withdraw, his empty mouth testifies to the glory of his victory'.[19]

Ambushes were not confined to warfare in the countryside. Fortifications and settlements also provided locations where troops might be concealed. Suger of Saint Denis describes how Louis VI of France was ambushed while attempting to storm the defensive works of the rebel castle at Toury in 1112:

> Meanwhile, Ralph of Beaugency, a man of great shrewdness and activity, fearing what had happened earlier, concealed an unknown army in part of the

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[18] IP, pp. 50–51: 'Erat locus quem rupes arduae, conscensus asperi, semitae strictiores, difficilem ad permeandum reddebant, qua cum prior pars agminis, filio imperatoris ductante, transisset, in postremam subito Turci undique ex indisdiis irruunt [...] Rumor ad aures ducis dirus allabitur, nec mora, praeceps quo venerat redit; difficultates quas exsuperasse gaudebat incunctanter relegit; ira non attendit periculum. Equi, qua ire non poterant, coguntur ad cursum. Denique dum huc illuc patrem quaerens, patrem vociferans, anxius et incautus discurrit, ictu saxi eliditur galea, excutiuntur dentes'. This incident is also recorded in the contemporary German chronicle, the *Historia de Expeditione Friderici Imperatoris.* See *The Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa: The History of the Expedition of the Emperor Frederick and Related Texts,* trans. by G. A. Loud (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), p 102.

[19] IP, p. 51: 'nam quoties labra secedunt, victoriae gloriam os nudum testatur'.

> castle, hidden by the height of a certain church and the shadowiness of the nearby houses. When he saw the fugitives pass through the gate, the army having been brought to halt by the weariness of the king's knights, he attacked them very heavily.[20]

Suger is at pains to excuse Louis's defeat, although it is important to note that nowhere does he call Ralph's tactics dishonourable or illegitimate. Indeed, he criticises the knights (although not Louis directly) for fighting in a disadvantageous position: 'Too late they realised how much wisdom surpasses courage, since, if they had been awaiting them in order in the field, they would have subjugated them all to their will'.[21]

According to the *History of William Marshal,* on 20 May 1217, the elder Marshal sent his nephew John to reconnoitre Lincoln in preparation for battle against the French and their allies, who were besieging the town's castle. Having met with a member of the garrison, Geoffrey de Serlant, who showed him a suitable entrance for the royal army, John was ambushed by a group of Frenchmen: 'Just as he was about to turn, the French, who were lying in ambush, suddenly rushed upon him. He was not amazed but boldly met the first who came, and not one of them could stand against him on account of his boldness and prowess'.[22]

As mentioned above, it was important to be able to determine exactly where the enemy would be at a given time in order to ambush them. This was made easier if the enemy was short of supplies and had limited opportunities to replenish them. Several of the accounts of the crusaders' siege of Jerusalem in 1099 refer to the Muslims blocking or fouling local water sources and laying ambushes around others.[23] Amatus of Montecassino recounts a particularly cruel variant of this stratagem employed by the Norman force that besieged Palermo in 1071. The inhabitants were starving and many were sick:

> And the malicious Normans made small loaves of bread and left them at the foot of the Saracens' [walls]: and twenty or thirty [Saracens] ran out to take the

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[20] SSD, pp. 158–60: 'Interea Radulfus Baugentiacensis, vir magne sagacitatis et strenuitatis, idipsum quod contigit prius formidans, exercitum celaverat in parte castri, altitudine cujusdam ecclesie et opacitate vicinarum domorum incognitum. Qui, cum fugitivos suos jam per portam exire videret, pausatum exercitum lassatis regiis militibus apponit, gravissime impetit'.

[21] SSD, p. 160: 'quantum sapientia prestet audacie, licet sero, animadvertentes, cum, si eos ordinati in campo expectarent, voluntati sue eos omnino subjugarent'.

[22] HWM, lines 16437–43: 'Si comme il s'en guida torner, / Li Franceis, qui en aguet furent, / Erraument sore li corrurent. / Ne fist pas esbaïement, / Ainz encontra herdïement / Toz les primereins qui li vindrent, / Si qu'onques vers lui ne se tindrent, / Par herdement e par proëce / E par bien faire e par vistesse'.

[23] AA, p. 410; BB, p. 105–06; GF, p. 89; GN, p. 128; OV, V, 163.

> bread. And on the second day, they placed loaves of bread further from [their] ground; and [the Saracens] ran out to take the bread, and they lay in wait for them, and more came out. On the third day, they placed loaves even further away, and when [the Saracens] all came out to get the bread, they captured them all and kept them as slaves or sold them into distant lands.[24]

Ambush parties possessed a great tactical and psychological advantage. They were able to attack at a time and place of their choosing and with the element of surprise on their side. Several accounts suggest that ambush parties would try to make a loud noise as they attacked, by shouting or blowing horns, presumably to further confuse the enemy and increase the psychological impact of their assault. In the *Roman de Brut,* Arthur sends Cador, earl of Cornwall, to attack a force of Saxons, led by Badulf, brother of Colgrim, which was waiting to ambush the Britons near York:

> He provided him with a hundred of his knights and three thousand foot soldiers and secretly sent them to attack Badulf in ambush. The Saxons never heard a word, nor a cry, nor any sound until Cador shouted his battle-cry, attacking without hesitation. He killed more than half of them. Surely, he would not have allowed one of them to get away on foot if the night had not hidden them and the forest had not hindered him.[25]

In April 1128, the Flemish baron Lambert of Aardenburg laid siege to the castle at Oostburg in defiance of his nominal lord, Thierry of Alsace. Galbert of Bruges describes how a relief force from Aardenburg (whose citizens were, somewhat confusingly, enemies of Lambert) terrified the besiegers into retreating:

> Those who had leapt forth, disturbing the air with clamour and infinite battle-cries, immediately rendered the besiegers so astonished that they began to flee

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[24] AM, p. 429: 'Et li maliciouz Normant faisoient poiz de lo pain et lo lessoient a pié de li sarrazin: et corroient a .xx. et .xxx. pour prendre lo pain. Et lo secont jor, metoient un poi li pain plus loing de la terre; et cil corroient a prendre lo pain, et se asseguroient, et plus en venoient. Lo tiers jor, lo mistrent un poi plus loing, et quant vindrent li paien tuit defore, furent tuti pris et gardez pour serf, ou estoient vendut en longes part'.

[25] RdB, lines 9081–92: 'Livra li sis cenz chevaliers / E de la gelde treis milliers / Sis enveiad celeement / Sur Badulf en l'enbuschement. / Unches li Saisne mot n'en sorent / Ne cri, ne noise oï n'en orent / Dessi que Cador s'escria, / Ke de ferir ne se targa. / Plus en ocist de la meitied, / Ja n'en laissast aler un pied / Se la nuit obscure ne fust / E se li bois ne li neüst'.

> and, throwing away their shields and arms, they tucked their clothes into their belts to run in flight.[26]

Roger of Wendover describes Richard, earl of Cornwall, employing similar tactics when ambushing a French force in the woods near Rieux in Gascony in 1225: 'and when [the French] were passing the ambush in the direction of the siege, earl Richard and his followers rushed on them with the noise of trumpets and brandishing spears'.[27]

There was another, uniquely medieval, factor that made ambushes so effective, which can be demonstrated by analysing an incident from the *History of William Marshal*. The poem describes how the Marshal's uncle Patrick, earl of Salisbury, was killed in an ambush in Poitou in 1168.[28] Patrick had been ordered to escort Eleanor of Aquitaine through the region, where the Lusignan family had risen in rebellion against Henry II of England. The poet describes the circumstances of his death:

> He did not want to flee either up or down [the road]; resolutely he called for his warhorse, but it was still a long way away, nor could he have it in his great need, for he did not have time to be armed. Unarmed, upon his palfrey, he rushed to attack them in a great rage, and his warhorse came there. His companions did not follow him, for they were intent on arming themselves. This story is very painful to tell: when he wanted to mount his warhorse, before he was properly seated in the saddle, a traitor, an assassin, struck him from behind with a lance, piercing him through the body, in such a way that he was slain on the spot, which was a great misfortune to all his men.[29]

Patrick was killed while trying to change horses in the midst of the fighting. When he realised that he was under attack he called for his horse, *son chival*.[30] This does not mean that he was on foot at the time, however, as the poet says he attacked the Poitevins 'sor son

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[26] GB, p. 153: 'Statimque strepitum et clamores infinitos in aera moventes illi qui prosilierant, perterritos et prorsus attonitos reddiderunt obsidionem facientes in tantum ut fugam inirent et, clipeis et armis abjectis, ad cursitandum in fuga sese succingerent'.

[27] RW, p. 285: 'qui dum locum insidiarum versus obsidionem pertransissent, comes Richardus et socii ejus cum strepitu buccinarum et vibramine hastarum irruerunt in ipsos'.

[28] This much, at least, is corroborated by other sources such as RT, p. 236; HowChr, I, 273.

[29] HWM, lines 1635–52: 'N'en vot fuïr n'amont n'aval; / Forment demanda son chival, / Mais uncor li esteit trop loing, / Nel pout aveir a grant bosoign / N'il ne pout a tens estre armé. / Sor son palefrei desarmé / Par grant ire lor corut sore, / E sis chivals vint en illore. / Si compaingnon pas nel sivirent, / Quer a els armer atendirent. / Ci a trop fot conte a conter: / Quant e son cheval volt monter, / Anceis qu'es archuns fust asis, / Uns traïtres, un hanseïs / Le feri d'un glaive desriere / Parmi le cors, en tel manere / Que tantost murir l'en estut, / Dunz a toz les suens mesestut'.

[30] HWM, line 1636.

palefrei' (upon his palfrey), indicating that the horse he called for was a warhorse or destrier.[31] A palfrey was evidently considered an unsuitable mount for combat, except in an emergency. It is noteworthy that the poet did not feel it necessary to specify the type of horse Patrick called for: both he and his audience knew what he would have needed in that situation.

The second noteworthy detail is that Patrick is described as 'unarmed' (*desarmé*). Yet this cannot mean 'without a weapon', as he is depicted fighting, so it must mean 'not wearing armour'. This agrees with lines 1643–4: 'His companions did not follow him, for they were intent on arming themselves'.[32] It would have only taken a moment to grab a lance or a sword but putting on a hauberk and other pieces of equipment would have been time consuming and required the men to dismount.[33] Later in the *History,* Geoffrey Plantagenet, the future duke of Brittany, is said to have been able to perform the remarkable trick of putting on his hauberk while in the saddle: 'But the good count, completely unarmed, sprang quickly onto his horse. All the knights of the army were arming themselves everywhere; and he, mounted on his horse in this way, without pause or assistance, threw his hauberk upon his back'.[34] When asked why he did this, he explained: 'He who is armed in a time of need such as this, but his horse is far away, if the enemy sees him, is more quickly taken and held, and they do him more harm and hurt, than if he had been upon his horse'.[35]

Patrick is not censured by the poet for travelling without his armour, which suggests that this was considered normal behaviour. Other sources also indicate that medieval combatants did not wear their armour unless they expected to fight imminently.[36] See, for example, the description of Charlemagne's behaviour the morning after the battle of Roncevaux in the *Chanson de Roland*: 'The king ungirded himself, and he removed his arms, and the rest of the army disarmed themselves too. Then they mounted, to ride hard upon those long ways and those great roads'.[37] Even though the men had slept in their

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[31] HWM, line 1640.

[32] HWM, lines 1643–44: 'Si compaingnon pas nel sivirent, / Quer a els armer atendirent'.

[33] The hauberk was made all in one piece, so the wearer was usually required to bend double or find assistance to put it on: DeVries and Smith, *Medieval Military Technology*, p. 64.

[34] HWM, lines 2164–70: 'Mais li boens quens toz desarmez / Salli a son chival molt tost, / E tuit li chivalier de l'ost / S'armerent amont e aval; / E il eissi tost a cheval, / Senz nul respit e sanz ados / Jeta son hauberc en son dos'.

[35] HWM, lines 2177–82: 'Qui est armez en tel bosoing, / Se son chival li est trop loing / E si enemi li sorvenent, / Plus tost le prenent e retienent / E li funt plus ennui e mal / Que s'il esteit en son chival'.

[36] See Roger of Howden's account of the death of Geoffrey, count of Vendôme, in 1189, when he was caught *inermus* in an ambush by the viscount of Mont Double: HowChr, II, 364.

[37] *The Song of Roland: An Analytical Edition,* ed. and trans. by Gerald J. Brault, 2 vols (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), lines 2849–52: 'Lis reis descent, si ad rendut ses armes, / Si se

armour, because they expected to be attacked by the Muslims, they removed it when they had to ride a long way. It was considered so unusual to wear armour on the march that Fulcher of Chartres remarked upon it as a special precaution taken by Baldwin II of Jerusalem as he advanced against Damascus in 1126: 'And when they had gone deeper into the enemy land, [it was] wiser to advance with banners raised and they protected themselves with their arms so that they would not be thrown into confusion by any unexpected danger'.[38]

This is what made ambushes particularly effective in the Middle Ages: they often allowed the attackers to catch defenders without their specialist equipment. An unarmoured man on a riding horse was a much easier target than the same man, fully armoured and mounted on a warhorse. Travelling without armour might seem reckless but it was probably so heavy and uncomfortable that contemporaries felt it was worth the risk. Furthermore, there was the need to keep the warhorses fresh for combat and not tire them out through extended usage. If their scouts and informers could keep the knights well-informed, they would have sufficient time to equip themselves before combat, hence the attraction of catching an enemy unawares.

Several of the ambushes described above were directed against the rear of an enemy force, perhaps because it was easier to approach unseen. The ubiquity of ambushes, particularly when campaigning in enemy territory, made the rear of a medieval army a dangerous place and, consequently, it appears to have been a station of special honour, reserved for the bravest or most reliable troops. The *Itinerarium Peregrinorum* tells us that Frederick Barbarossa took command of the rearmost division of his army on the march to Iconium in 1190, leaving the vanguard to Frederick of Swabia and placing the baggage and pack animals in the middle.[39] In the passage from the *Song of Dermot* discussed above, we are told that Strongbow entrusted the rearguard to his constable, Robert de Quency.[40] Robert was one of the earl's most trusted followers, the standard bearer for the whole force: 'In short, Robert de Quency was killed that day, he who bore the banner and the pennon of the region of Leinster, to whom the earl had given the constableship as a

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desarment par tute l'ost li altre. / Puis sunt muntet, par grant vertut chevalchent / Cez veiez lunges e cez chemins mult larges'.

[38] FC, p. 787: 'Et cum terram hostilem profundius introissent, levatis signis incedere sapientius et armis suis se munierunt, ne inopinato periculo perturbarentur'.

[39] IP, p. 49: 'At ne molem tantam confusi ordinis turbaret seditio, in artem trinam, totus secessit exercitus; prima duci Suaviae, postrema imperatori, media summariis, et sarcinarum custodiae deputata'.

[40] Dermot, lines 2797–800: 'Li quens esteit al frunt devant / Od mil vassals combatant; / Le conestable esteit destrefs / En l'arere garde remés'.

hereditary possession'.[41] Describing Simon de Montfort's retreat from the siege of Toulouse in 1217, the anonymous continuator of the *Chanson de la croisade albigoise* says that he retreated: 'in close array, and formed the rearguard out of those with the best horses'.[42] In his account of the battle of Mansurah (8 February 1250), Jean de Joinville reports that, towards the end of the battle, Walter de Châtillon (nephew of Hugh, count of Saint-Pol) actually requested that Louis IX give him command of the rearguard.[43] He must have done well, as he also commanded the rearguard on the crusaders' retreat to Damietta in April of the same year.[44]

In summary, ambushes were a significant feature of medieval warfare. They were employed by every kind of force, in every region and terrain type. As well as conveying significant tactical and psychological advantage to the ambush party, the contemporary practice of travelling without armour made ambushes particularly effective. Contemporaries were aware of this and regarded it as an honour to command the rear division of an army on the march, where one was most likely to be ambushed.

3.2 Night Attacks and Dawn Raids

An ambush was not the only kind of surprise attack employed by medieval combatants. A sleeping enemy was even more vulnerable to attack than one on the road. Although not mentioned as frequently as ambushes, attacks launched on an unsuspecting enemy by night or at the break of dawn appear regularly in the chronicle narratives.

Latin chroniclers do not appear to have regarded attacking a sleeping opponent as dishonourable. Indeed, the Book of Judges provided a model upon which descriptions of such stratagems could be based. Having selected a force of 300 from among 32,000 Israelites, the judge Gideon led a night attack on the camp of the Midianites at Moreh, blowing trumpets and waving torches. The Midianites, thinking that they were under attack by a very large force, panicked and fell to fighting one another.[45]

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[41] Dermot, lines 2807–12: 'Le jor enfin esteit occis / De Quenci Robert li [gen]tis / Que t[i]nt l'enseigne e le penum / De Leynestere la regiun, / A qui li quens aveit doné / La conestablerie en herité'.
[42] CCA, III, 46: 'E lo coms s'en repaira, streitament esarratz, / E fetz la reire garde dels ben encavalgatz'.
[43] VSL, p. 120: 'Sire, mon seigneur de Chasteillon vous prie que vous li donnez l'ariere garde". Et le roy si fist moult volentiers, et puis si se mist au chemin'.
[44] VSL, p. 152: 'Il me dit que il avoit lessié la seue bataille et c'estoit mis entre li et mon seigneur Geffroy de Sargines, et en la bataille mon seigneur Gautier de Chasteillon, qui fesoit l'ariere garde'.
[45] *Bible,* Judges 7.16–20.

Dudo of Saint Quentin, author of the semi-legendary *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum*, appears to have been influenced by the story of Gideon when describing a night attack allegedly carried out by the Normans' ancestors in 911. The 'Danes' were trapped on a mountain near Lèves, Chartres, by a much larger force of Franks and Burgundians, led by Ebalus, count of Poitou. An anonymous Frisian warrior in Danish service suggested how they might escape:

> Silently, in the dead of night, some of us should secretly go down from the mountain top and sound trumpet calls around the outside of the [enemy] tents. For they, having heard the noise of the trumpets, thinking Rollo, our duke, has arrived, will flee, being frightened, senseless and panic struck, scattered hither and thither. But we, coming down from the mountain, charging into the main camp, and having sternly vanquished them, ought to pass through the middle of them and hasten to join our leader and so escape risk of death.[46]

The parallels are not exact: the Danes had no torches and their primary aim was to escape, not kill their enemies. Nevertheless, the reference to sounding trumpets in the dark to spread panic in an enemy encampment suggests that Dudo may be have been influenced, perhaps unconsciously, by the Biblical narrative.

Just as Dudo did not think it was shameful to depict the Normans' ancestors engaging in a night attack, Henry of Huntingdon used a similar incident to demonstrate the great valour of the English in his *Historia Anglorum*. In 1019, King Cnut of England led a combined force of Englishmen and Danes to Denmark to fight against the Wends, a Slavic people on the southern shore of the Baltic:

> But on the day when they were going to fight, when they had drawn near to the enemy camp, Godwin, the earl leading the English army, set out against the enemy in the night, although the king did not know it. So, he attacked them while they were unprepared, killed them and put them to flight. But first thing in the morning, the king, thinking that the English had fled or treacherously crossed over to the enemy, directed his well-ordered divisions against the

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[46] Dudo, pp. 164–65: 'Intempestae noctis silentio, quidam nostrorum de cacumine montis clam descendant, et forinsecus circa tentoria buccina clangant. Illi namque, audito clangore tubarum, autumantes adesse Rollonem, nostrum ducem, formidolosi stupidque atque pavidi, fugitabunt, huc illucque divisi. Nos vero de monte descendentes irruamus super castra principum, duriterque debellando eos, transeamus per medium illorum, et festinemus aggredi seniorem nostrum, et sic evademus mortis periculum'.

> enemy. He found nothing in their camp except blood, corpses and booty. On account of this he held the English in the highest honour thereafter, no less than the Danes.[47]

Henry is the only source for this incident. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle confirms that Cnut was in Denmark in 1019 but does not mention an expedition against the Wends. The *Life of King Edward* records that Earl Godwin earned praise for his conduct in an expedition to Denmark in 1025, suggesting Henry may have conflated the two campaigns.[48] Regardless, it is significant that Henry chose to depict a night attack as the means by which the English won 'the highest honour', rather than a stereotyped pitched battle. Cnut is shown valuing the English for their foresight and cunning as much as for their physical courage.

Roger of Wendover reports an unusual case of a commander demurring from joining in a night attack. On 11 November 1233, Richard Marshal and his Welsh allies learned that Henry III of England was encamped with his army before the castle at Grosmont (near Abergavenny, Monmouthshire): 'Then the whole multitude, except the Marshal (who refused to attack the king), with Welshmen and a well-equipped army, on the day of Martinmas, hurrying there after the twilight of evening, attacked them, [while they were] lying fast asleep in their tents'.[49] Wendover, who was a great partisan of Richard and consistently depicted him as the wronged party in his quarrel with the king, emphasised that, although the attackers took a lot of booty, they exercised great restraint: 'the victors did not want to injure or capture any of them; only two knights out of all [the king's army] were killed'.[50] His claim that Richard was not present, and therefore not guilty of treason, may be spurious but the stated rationale clearly had nothing to do with the tactics employed: Richard was a loyal subject who refused to attack the king in person by day or night.

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[47] HH, pp. 362–64: 'Cnut, tercio anno regni sui, iuit in Daciam, ducens exercitum Anglorum et Dacorum in Wandalos. Cum autem hostibus crastina die conflicturus appropinquasset, Godwinus consul Anglorum ducens exercitum, rege inscio, nocte profectus est in hostes. Igitur inprouidos inuasit, occidit, fugauit. Rex uero summo mane cum Anglos fugisse uel ad hostes perfide transisse putaret, acies ordinatas in hostem dirigens, non inuenit in castris nisi sanguinem, et cadauera, et predam. Quamobrem summo honore deinceps Anglos habuit, nec minori quam Dacos'.

[48] HH, p. 364 n. 77; M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: England's Viking King, 1016–35*, 2nd edn (Stroud: History Press, 2011), pp. 88–90.

[49] RW, p. 59: 'Tunc omnis multitudo, praeter Marescallum, qui regem invadere noluit, cum Wallensibus et exercitu copioso, in die sancti Martini episcopi post crepusculum vespertinum illuc properantes, et illos, qui in tentoriis soporati jacebant, invadentes'.

[50] RW, p. 60: 'nec ex eis quenquam laedere vel captum abducere voluerunt victores illi, praeter duos milites, qui ex omnibus interfecti fuerunt'.

As mentioned in the discussion of ambushes, making a loud noise could greatly increase the psychological impact of a surprise attack. This was particularly true for night attacks, when a small force could easily be mistaken for a large one. Orderic Vitalis reports that one Arnold of Échauffour, who spent three years ravaging the Lieuvin region of Normandy after William the Conqueror confiscated his lands in 1061, seized the castle at Échauffour:

> One night he came to Échauffour with four knights; and, secretly entering the castle with his men, he rushed forth with a great yell. When the duke's sixty knights heard this, they thought there was a great army with Arnold and, terrified, they fled, abandoning the castle which they should have been guarding.[51]

Orderic also records that Raymond of Poitiers, prince of Antioch, carried out a night attack in which loud noises were used to spook the defenders. In 1137 the Byzantine emperor John II Komnenos laid siege to Antioch in retaliation for Antiocheone attacks on Byzantine possessions in Cilicia.[52] Raymond, who had been leading an army south to fight alongside Fulk of Jerusalem, turned back but, fearing that he would not be able to break though the emperor's lines to reach the city, took counsel with his men. One of them, a man of 'noble spirit' (*magnanimus*), proposed the following:

> It's well known that the Greeks are strong in prudence and foremost among the other nations in eloquence, but in difficult things they lack boldness and fortitude. So, o fine comrades and esteemed champions, if you deign to follow my counsels, manfully take up your arms and, so armed, go silently among the imperial squadrons all the way to the tent of Augustus himself and enter the Ionian legions. Then cry out with frightful voices close to the emperor's ears and boldly reveal who you are.[53]

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[51] OV, II, 92: 'Quadam nocte cum quatuor militibus Excalfoium uenit; et in castrum cum suis clam ingressus in magnam uociferationem prorupit. Quam ut lx milites ducis audierunt; magnum cum Ernaldo exercitum adesse putauerunt, territique castrum quod custodire debebant relinquentes aufugerunt'.

[52] See Andrew D. Buck, *The Principality of Antioch and its Frontiers in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2017), pp. 27–31, 192–99.

[53] OV, VI, 504: 'Satis notum est quod Greci prudentia pollent, et eloquentia caeteris nationibus eminent, sed in arduis rebus audacia et fortitudine carent. Vnde o probi commilitones et probati athletae, si meis dignamini consiliis adquiescere; arma uestra uiriliter sumite, et armati tanquam de turmis imperialibus usque ad ipsius augusti tentorium silenter ite, et Ionias legiones penetrate. Tunc prope imperatoris aures terribiliter exclamate, et qui sitis audacter demonstrate'.

Everybody agreed to the plan and the Latins infiltrated the Byzantine army. Their battle-cry was so terrifying that the Greeks fled and did not stop running for three miles.[54] It is a colourful story that reflects Orderic's pronounced anti-Greek prejudice but it is probably a fiction. William of Tyre, who was much better placed to gather reliable information about the campaign, simply says that Raymond entered the city by a gate near the citadel.[55] Nevertheless, the presence of this story in Orderic's chronicle gives us an insight into Anglo-Norman attitudes towards warfare. Attacking the Greeks by night was not considered shameful but the product of a *magnanimus* spirit. Raymond and his men are portrayed as brave and hardy, despite their 'sneaky' tactics, in contrast to the feeble and easily-startled Greeks.

Fortifications were particularly vulnerable to night attacks, as there was less chance of the attacking force being spotted by sentries. Galbert of Bruges's chronicle provides a very detailed account of a dawn raid carried out by the men of Bruges on their own castle (which had been occupied by the Erembald clan and their followers) on 19 March 1127. They were greatly aided by the garrison's complacency and the inclement weather:

> When dawn was breaking, the besieged, who, after daily battles, having been harassed on different sides of the castle, rested their limbs, since they were more secure for a brief while, because the day before they had fought excellently against the foreigners from Ghent. Because of this security, day having been proclaimed, the sentries of the walls went into the count's house to warm themselves by the fire on account of the harsh cold and winds, leaving the castle courtyard empty.[56]

The citizens of Bruges took the opportunity to climb the walls using 'slender ladders and lattices'.[57] Once inside, 'they gathered themselves together in great divisions without a sound or a cry and, having prepared themselves to fight, immediately ordered that the lesser among them should go to the larger gates to remove from the door the earth and stones which had been piled up and to make an entrance for all those who were still

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[54] OV, VI, 504: 'et relictis omnibus per tria miliaria quasi gladium ceruicibus suis imminere uidisset fugit'.
[55] WT, p. 670.
[56] GB, p. 90: 'cum lucescente mane, obsessi in diversa vexati parte castri post pugnas quotidianas membra dedissent quieti et cum paulisper securiores forent quod hesterno die egregie pugnassent contra forinsecos Gendenses, namque ea securitate vigiles murorum praeconato die introierant in domum comitis ad ignem tepefacere se propter asperitatem frigoris et ventorum, in vacuum relicta curte castri'.
[57] GB, p. 90: 'subtiles scalas et latrices'.

outside, who were unaware that this had been done'.[58] This account portrays a significant level of tactical co-ordination among the attackers, particularly the division of labour once they had occupied the courtyard. It is not clear what Galbert meant by 'the lesser' (*minores*) of the citizens, who were sent to clear the gates. These may have been men of lesser social status, and consequently poorly equipped, leaving the wealthier and more heavily-armed citizens to do the actual fighting, or they may have been younger and less experienced.

It is notable that this attack was undertaken independently, without the knowledge of the rest of the army. Galbert is at pains to ascribe this successful attack to the citizens of Bruges alone, implicitly contrasting it with the failed assault launched by the 'foreigners from Ghent' the day before. At this time the besieging army included several forces from beyond Bruges, including a contingent from Ghent (traditional enemies of Bruges) and the army of Louis VI of France. There was frequent contact between the garrison and the besiegers, and several of the leading conspirators had been able to secretly buy safe passage out of the castle.[59] There was so much mistrust among the besiegers and a very real possibility that the plan might be betrayed to the garrison that the citizens of Bruges seem to have felt it was necessary to carry out the dawn attack alone and in secret.[60] Galbert describes the surprise among the besiegers when they heard that their allies were inside and had forced a side gate: 'Our burghers immediately opened it with swords and axes, and then, having raised a great cry and noise of arms inside, threw the army around the castle into a tumult and confusion'.[61]

Night-time provided cover for more than just attacking one's enemies. Moving and erecting war machines or other equipment took a long time and left the crew vulnerable to attack. Moving it by night, although not without its risks, was safer and could potentially surprise the enemy. A number of chronicles of the First Crusade mention the Byzantine forces transporting boats across land by night to Nicaea in June 1097. The combined

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[58] GB, p. 90: 'cives nostri in meridionali parte, qua sanctorum reliquiae elatae fuerant, intro conscenderunt per subtiles scalas et latrices quas solus homo ferret. Intus quippe sine sonitu et clamore sese collegerunt in magnas acies et praemunitas ad pugnandum, statimque ordinabant minores inter se ituros ad portas majores ut terrae et simul lapidum congeriem sustollerent a portis et introitum facerent extra consistentibus universis, qui hoc factum adhuc ignorabant'.

[59] GB, pp. 69–73.

[60] For a detailed study of the 1127 siege, see Steven Isaac, 'Galbert of Bruges and the Urban Experience of Siege', in *Galbert of Bruges and the Historiography of Medieval Flanders*, ed. by Jeff Rider and Alan V. Murray (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), pp. 89–106. Marvin's study provides a thorough narrative of the siege but his argument that knights were nearly useless in siege warfare is spurious. Laurence W. Marvin, '"...Men famous in combat and battle...": Common Soldiers and the Siege of Bruges, 1127', *Journal of Medieval History*, 24 (1998), 243–58.

[61] GB, p. 90: 'Quam statim ipso accessu gladiis et securibus nostri burgenses aperuerant, et tunc concitato clamore et strepitu armorum intrinsecus in tumultum et concursum conturbaverunt exercitum in circuitu castri'.

forces of the crusaders and Byzantines were besieging the city but could not cut off the garrison's supply route across the nearby lake, so an appeal was sent to Alexios Komnenos for boats to form a blockade. Boats were dragged across land then lanched onto the lake under cover of darkness. The sudden appearance of a fleet on the lake thoroughly demoralised the garrison and the city surrendered shortly thereafter.[62]

During the crusaders' siege of Jerusalem in 1099, the force under the command of Godfrey of Bouillon encamped on the west side of the city and began to construct a mobile siege tower. The garrison, observing this, responded by strengthening their defences on that side of the city. On the night of 9 July, the crusaders disassembled the tower and relocated it to a comparatively undefended stretch of wall on the eastern side of the city. Although it took three more days to prepare the ground for an assault, the garrison was unable to sufficiently strengthen this section of wall to repel the attack when it finally came on 13 July.[63]

The twelfth-century Flemish chronicler Lambert of Ardres describes another remarkable feat of night-time logistics: the transportation and construction of an entire castle. This took place c. 1137, during a conflict over the succession to the county of Guînes. The old count, Manasses, had died without a direct male heir. Henry of Bourbourg fought against the count's nephew, Arnold of Ghent, on behalf of Albert the Boar, husband of the late count's granddaughter. Although driven from Audruiq, Henry still held the town of Bourbourg, some seven miles to the north east, and devised a plan to threaten Arnold at Audruiq. Conveniently for Henry, there was a large mound known as Amaurival, the remnants of an old siege castle, outside the town:

> So, Henry, castellan of Bourbourg, sent surveyors and carpenters to Amaurival, or rather to the mound, to inspect the position with geometric instruments and, since Arnold and the people of Guines were unaware [of his plan], secretly build a tower and warlike defences and other engines near Bourbourg that were proportional to the size of the mound and the area of the position, and silently fit them to Amaurival in the dead of night, not without knights, men and resources. So said Henry, and everything was done and prepared, collected and erected on the height in that place by his men [...] Arnold [of Ghent], rising at dawn, and seeing that the tower and defences, with other war

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[62] AA, p. 117; GF, p. 16; BB, p. 27; GN, pp. 151–52; WT, p. 160.
[63] See AA, p. 414; GF, p. 90; RA, p. 298; GT, p. 101.

> machines, had suddenly and unexpectedly been erected and raised, stirred the whole country to arms.[64]

The psychological impact of a fully-constructed castle appearing overnight before Audruiq must have been immense. This was clearly a wooden castle, similar to the 'flat pack' kind that William the Conqueror brought with him to England in 1066. It was a sturdy structure, as the garrison repelled the first attempt to storm it, only retreating back to Bourbourg when the enemy numbers grew overwhelming. Afterwards, Arnold of Ghent made sure to level both the castle and the mound to prevent if being refortified.[65]

Like ambushes, night attacks could convey a great tactical advantage to the attackers, potentially allowing a small force to overcome a much larger enemy, but the risks were very great. In an age without electric lights or communications technology, simply manoeuvring in the dark could be hazardous. In 1067 Eustace I, count of Boulogne, landed on the Kentish coast, intending to seize Dover by night. According to Orderic, this was supposed to be a prelude to an uprising against the Norman invaders but it swiftly degenerated into a farce when the garrison sallied out. Eustace's men broke and fled, with many stampeding over the cliffs in the dark.[66]

Coordinating the actions of separate forces has always been a challenge for commanders. Attempting to do so at night, without long-distance communications, only compounded the problem, as illustrated by John of England's failed attempt to relieve Château-Gaillard in September 1203. The fullest description we possess was written by Philip II of France's chaplain, William the Breton, and, as such, is openly hostile towards John and his followers. Nevertheless, if one can look past the anti-Plantagenet rhetoric, it illustrates the great difficulty that medieval commanders faced when trying to coordinate separate attacks in the dark. Two forces were to attack the French at dawn simultaneously: one from the land and the other from a fleet of ships on the Seine. It is unclear whether the

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[64] LA, pp. 589–90: 'Misit ergo Henricus castellanus Broburgensis secreto geometricos et carpentarios ad Almari-vallum vel aggerem, ut locum cum geometricalibus particis ambirent et ad mensuram aggeris proportionaliter metirentur et pro quantitate loci, ignorantibus Arnoldo et Ghisnensibus, apud Broburgum turrim et bellica propugnacula aliaque machinamenta clanculo construerent et Almari-vallo in intempeste noctis silentio non sine militibus, viris et viribus adaptarent. Dixit ergo Henricus, et facta et parata sunt omnia et suo in loco in sublime erecta et collocata [...] Surgens ergo mane Arnoldus, et videns turrim et propugnacula cum ceteris bellicis machinamentis in Almari-vallo subite et inopinate erecta atque elevata, universam commovit in arma patriam'.

[65] LA, pp. 590–91.

[66] OV, II, 204–06.

landward force was too hasty or the fleet was delayed, but the landward force attacked before the fleet appeared:

> There was an outcry in the camps; they rose up quickly and fled to the bridge in such numbers that the bridge broke, nor were they able to cross over the Seine, since the bridge had been broken, nor obtain help from those who were on the bridge; but the knights and others of better spirit, especially William de Barres, having seized their arms, opposed those fleeing and forced them to stand, and crying loudly they crossed over, right up to the enemies, and turned them into a praiseworthy host. Many [of the enemy] were killed and more held prisoner.[67]

With the landward force defeated, and the French awake and ready to defend themselves, the fleet was also driven back.[68] The relief effort had failed and, although the garrison continued to put up a remarkably determined defence, the castle fell in March 1204. It is surely no coincidence that the *History of William Marshal,* whose subject was one of the commanders of the landward force, does not mention this battle.

Combatants were, of course, fully aware of how vulnerable an encampment or stronghold was during the night and most took measures to avoid being surprised, such as posting sentries or erecting temporary fortifications to protect the camp. The fact that we have so many records of successful night attacks is remarkable. Good intelligence could completely nullify the attackers' advantage. Roger of Howden reported that, at the siege of Acre, the Christians were regularly informed about the garrison's plans through letters written in Latin, Greek and Hebrew by an anonymous citizen. In the last days of the siege, on 5 July 1191, Saladin attempted to create a diversion that would allow his garrison to slip through the Christians' lines but was undone by this informant:

> But the kings were prepared through the command of the aforesaid man of God who was in the city. They placed guards around the city walls, so that none of the pagans would be able to go out in safety. When this was done there was great unrest throughout the Christians' army, who, roused from

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[67] GPA, p. 213: 'Exoritur clamor in castris; surgunt velocius et fugiunt ad pontem in tanta frequentia ut pons frangeretur, nec potuerunt, ponte fracto, transire ultra Sequanam, nec habere adjutorium ab illis qui erant in ponte illo; sed milites et alii melioris animi, inter quos specialiter erat Willelmus Barrenssi, armis arreptis, fugientibus obsistunt, et eos stare cogunt, et transeunt vociferando usque ad hostes, et eos virtute laudabili convertunt, multis occisis et pluribus retentis'.
[68] GPA, p. 214.

> sleep, and swiftly putting on their arms, approached the trenches and made an assault against the pagans and killed many of them, putting the rest to flight.[69]

When a commander had reliable intelligence that the enemy was at hand and was intending to attack, one solution was simply to keep the army in readiness all through the night. Several of the accounts of the Hastings campaign report that William the Conqueror did this upon learning that Harold Godwinson was planning to attack him by night:

> Meanwhile the king, seat and heir of deceit, active in the robber's art, ordered his divisions to arm under cover of night. He ordered this so that they would prevail if they attacked the duke's troops. He estimated that the unwatchful enemies would be struck down by these deceits. While he sought to deceive he was himself deceived to his ruin because the duke, when the messenger had been sent, stood on watch all night; he was aware of [Harold's] artifice through his superior talent.[70]

This is a rare example of a text explicitly condemning a commander for attempting to carry out a night attack, describing it as a product of the 'robber's art'. It comes from the *Carmen de Hastingae proelio,* a Latin poem written by Guy, bishop of Amiens, shortly after the battle to both celebrate and vindicate William's conquest. It is a work of propaganda that denigrates Harold at every opportunity, portraying him as a wicked usurper. His attempt to attack the Normans unawares could be contrasted with William's decision to fight a pitched battle, trusting in God to vindicate his claim to the throne through trial by battle. Other chroniclers, writing with less partisan motivations, were usually more even-handed in their depiction of such stratagems, accepting them as part of the reality of warfare or even celebrating them as demonstrations of skill and prudence.

In summary, despite the difficulties and risks of attempting to manoeuvre and fight in the dark, medieval combatants were often willing to hazard an attack by night or at dawn. An enemy who was caught sleeping, or who panicked at the unexpected attack, was much more easily defeated than one who was fully prepared. Night was also a good time to

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[69] HowChr, III, 118: 'Sed reges inde praemuniti per mandatum praedicti viri Dei qui in civitate erat, custodes per circuitum murorum posuerunt, ita quod nulli paganorum securus patebat egressus. Factus est ergo clamor magnus per exercitum Christianorum, qui a somno excitati, et arma sua velociter sumentes, accesserunt ad fossata, et impetum fecerunt in paganos, et multos ex illis interfecerunt, caeteros autem fugaverunt'.

[70] CDH, p. 18: 'Interea, sedes fuscate fraduis et heres / Nocte sub obscura, furis in arte vigens, / Rex acies armare jubet, ducis atque latenter / Mandat ut invadant agmina si valeant / Estimat invigiles prosternere fraudibus hostes; / Fallere dum quaerit, fallitur atque ruit / Dux quia, directo legato, peruigil extat; / Eius et ingenio conscius artis erat'. See also GND, II, 169; RR, lines 6973–7050; OV, II, 173.

move cumbersome machinery or equipment, and could surprise an enemy by suddenly appearing in an unexpected location. Conversely, the ability to resist a night attack appears to have depended on the intangible qualities of good morale and discipline. Any force that fell to confusion and panic in the dark was easily destroyed, whereas a force that maintained its composure and resisted the attack was much more likely to survive.

Chapter 4
The Feigned Flight

The feigned flight or retreat – pretending to run away in order to trick an enemy force into pursuing – is one of the most famous stratagems employed in medieval warfare and its most famous use occurred at the battle of Hastings (although this has been the subject of some debate). This makes it a logical place to begin an analysis of this stratagem: whether such a manoeuvre was even possible, what may have happened at the battle, and how it was portrayed by chroniclers. A wider reading of medieval narratives will reveal that, far from being an isolated incident, the feigned flight was employed in numerous conflicts and by numerous armies throughout the period.

4.1 The Battle of Hastings

Several scholars have claimed that the description of the Norman army feigning flight to draw the English off Senlac Hill on 14 October 1066 was a fiction, invented after the fact to cover up a very real and embarrassing retreat that almost cost them the battle. The source of this theory appears to be Col. Charles H. Lemmon, who argued that 'such a manoeuvre is contrary to the principle that troops once committed to the attack cannot be made to change their direction'.[1] Lemmon's argument was quoted at length by John Beeler, who concluded that the story of a feigned flight at Hastings was nothing more than a 'legend', a historical 'hoax' perpetrated by the Norman chroniclers.[2] More recently, John Marshall Carter argued that there is limited evidence that the Normans were able to use this tactic and that the topography of the battlefield would have made it difficult for cavalry to perform such a manoeuvre.[3] Carter proposed that the story of the feigned flight was inserted into the Hastings narrative by the early chroniclers in imitation of Vegetius, in order to make the Normans appear more skillful.[4]

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[1] Quoted in John Beeler, *Warfare in England, 1066–1189* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 21–22.
[2] Beeler, *Warfare in England*, p. 21.
[3] John Marshall Carter, 'Une réévaluation des interprétations de la fuite simulée d'Hastings', *Annales de Normandie*, 45 (1995), 27–34 (here 31–33).
[4] J. M. Carter, 'Une réévaluation', p. 30.

Bernard S. Bachrach provided a thorough criticism of this thesis, demonstrating that the feigned flight was employed by both the Huns and the Visigoths, many centuries prior to Hastings.[5] However, his own theories about the origin of this stratagem are as spurious as those he criticised. Bachrach claimed that the Normans inherited the concept of a feigned flight from the steppe peoples who settled in Gaul under the Roman emperors and whose influence subsequently 'permeated the military tactics of western France'. Bachrach specifically highlighted the influence of the Alans, who settled in Armorica in the fifth century, stating that it was from them that the Normans, 'with their usual hospitality to effective military innovations learned the tactic'.[6]

The basis for his extraordinary claim rests on a single sentence in the chronicle of Regino, abbot of Prüm (d. 915). Describing the arrival of the Magyars into Europe (a description which he adapted from that of the Scythians in the works of Justin and Paul the Deacon) Regino explicitly compared their tactics with those of the Bretons:

> For they do not know how to fight hand-to-hand in formation or when besieging cities. They fight by either running forwards on horses or turning back, indeed they often feign flight [...] The more their manner of fighting is unfamiliar to other peoples, the more dangerous it is indeed. There is only one difference between the Bretons' manner of battle and theirs, that one uses missiles, the others arrows.[7]

From this slender evidence, Bachrach argues that there was direct continuity between the tactics of the fifth-century Alans, a former steppe people, to the tenth-century Bretons and from them to the eleventh-century Normans.[8] While it is notable that a chronicler drew parallels between a Eurasian steppe people and the Bretons, this was not the stratagem described at Hastings. The Bretons are depicted employing hit-and-run tactics, throwing

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[5] Bernard S. Bachrach, 'The Feigned Retreat at Hastings', *Mediaeval Studies*, 33 (1971), 344–47 (here 346).
[6] B. S. Bachrach, 'Feigned Retreat', p. 347.
[7] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon cum continuatione Treverensi,* ed. by Friedrich Kurze, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, 50 (Hannover: Hahn, 1890), p. 183: 'Comminus enim in acie preliari aut obsessas expugnare urbes nesciunt. Pugnant aut procurrentibus equis aut terga dantibus, saepe etiam fugam simulant [...] Quorum pugna, quo ceteris gentibus inusitata, eo et periculosior. Inter horum et Brittonum conflictum hoc unum interest, quod illi misilibus, isti sagittis utuntur'. For Regino's adaptation of earlier descriptions of the Scythians, see Simon MacLean, 'Introduction', in *History and Politics in Late Carolingian and Ottonian Europe: The Chronicle of Regino of Prüm and Adalbert of Magdeburg,* ed. and trans. by Simon MacLean (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), pp. 1–60 (here 46–47).
[8] B. S. Bachrach, 'Feigned Retreat', p. 347; See also Bernard S. Bachrach, 'The Alans in Gaul', *Traditio*, 23 (1967), 476–89 (here 488–89); Bernard S. Bachrach, 'The Origins of Armorican Chivalry', *Technology and Culture*, 10 (1969), 166–71 (here 168).

missiles at their enemies and refusing to engage at close quarters in a manner similar to the ancient Parthians or medieval Turks. Regino described exactly this kind of fighting in his account of a battle between Charles the Fat and the Bretons in 851:

> Battle was engaged and the Saxons, who were mercenaries, were placed in the front rank to ward off the repeated swerves of the swift horsemen but in the first assault, terrified by the Bretons' darts, they hid themselves in the formation. The Bretons, in their usual manner, were rushing hither-and-thither, using horses trained for this manner of fighting. They assailed the densely-packed Frankish formation in this way, and tormented all the men in the midst with their darts, now feigning flight they pierced their chests with darts just the same. The Franks, who were accustomed to fight hand-to-hand with swords, stood amazed.[9]

The Norman stratagem at Hastings appears to have involved a number of charges to engage the English at close quarters, followed by a turn and a withdrawal to lure them into pursuing (see below). There is no indication that they threw *spicula* from horseback in the manner described above. Nor does Bachrach provide any further evidence that the Normans learned their horsemanship from the Bretons, or that the Bretons had inherited their mode of fighting from the Alans. In fact, Bachrach's own work contradicts him on this point, as he had previously stated that the fifth-century Alans resembled the Roman cataphracts who 'fought as a mounted phalanx of heavy cavalry'.[10] This would actually be an example of discontinuity: between their settlement in Armorica in the fifth century and their wars with the Carolingians in the ninth, the Alano-Bretons modified their tactics to suit their circumstances.

The Normans did not need to learn or inherit the feigned flight from anybody else: it is a logical tactic to employ, especially for a force of skilled horsemen. As R. A. Brown has said, even if the Norman force did not feign flight en masse at Hastings, the individual units of knights, 'trained together over long, arduous years, and bound by the companionship of expertise, had ample discipline and the capacity not only to work and

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[9] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon,* p. 79: 'Pugna committitur, Saxones, qui conducti fuerant, ad excipiendos velocium equorum anfractuosos recursus in prima fronte ponuntur, sed primo impetu spiculis Brittonum territi in acie se recondunt. Brittones more solito huc illucque cum equis ad huiuscemodi conflictum exercitatis discursantes modo confertam Francorum aciem impetunt ac totis viribus in medio spicula torquent, nunc fugam simulantes insequentium nihilominus pectoribus spicula figunt. Franci, qui comminus strictis gladiis pugnare consueverant, attoniti stabant'.

[10] B. S. Bachrach, 'Alans', p. 485.

fight together but also to combine with other similar units'.[11] Nor was this stratagem introduced to Europe in 'the mid-fifth century by the nomadic tribes of the Huns', as Georgios Theotokis has said.[12] This claim would have certainly surprised Frontinus who, in the first century, recorded that Romulus had employed a feigned flight in the fifth century BCE:

> Romulus, when he had drawn near to Fidenae [a town five miles north of Rome], having stationed some of his troops in hiding, feigning flight, led the enemies, who were blindly pursuing him, to the place where his soldiers were lying hidden, who, rushing out and attacking from all sides, killed those who had pursued him incautiously.[13]

The stratagem is also depicted in the Bible. It was employed against the Benjamites by the other tribes of Israel in Judges 20 and against the citizens of Ai in Joshua 8:

> When the king of Ai saw this in the morning he hastened and came out with the city's whole army and, not knowing that [Israelites] were lying hidden in the rear, directed his division against the desert. But Joshua and all Israel withdrew from there, feigning fear and fleeing along a road into the wilderness.[14]

The accounts of the battle of Hastings form a useful case study in how different chroniclers could subtly alter the depiction of the same event to suit their narrative agenda. The two earliest descriptions of the battle refer to both a 'true' and a feigned flight by the Normans, although with significant differences. The *Carmen de Hastingae proelio* depicts the feigned retreat taking place first, as a deliberate stratagem to disrupt the English formation:

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[11] R. Allen Brown, 'The Battle of Hastings', in *Anglo-Norman Warfare: Studies in Late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman Military Organization and Warfare*, ed. by Matthew Strickland (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), pp. 161–81 (here 176). See also David Bates, *William the Conqueror* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 242; David R. Cook, 'The Norman Military Revolution in England', in *Proceedings of the Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies I*, ed. by R. Allen Brown (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1979), pp. 94–102 (here 99); Stephen Morillo, 'Hastings: An Unusual Battle', in *The Battle of Hastings: Sources and Interpretations*, ed. by Stephen Morillo (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1996), pp. 219–28 (here 225).

[12] Georgios Theotokis, *The Norman Campaigns in the Balkans 1081–1108* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2014), p. 159.

[13] Frontinus, *Strategemata,* p. 45: 'Romulus, per latebras copiarum parte disposita, cum ad Fidenas accessisset, simulata fuga temere hostes insecutos eo perduxit, ubi occultos milites habebat, qui undique adorti effusos et incautos ceciderunt'.

[14] *Bible,* Joshua 8.14–15: 'Quod cum vidisset rex Hai, festinavit mane, et egressus est cum omni exercitu civitatis, direxitque aciem contra desertum, ignorans quod post tergum laterent insidiæ. Josue vero et omnis Israël cesserunt loco, simulantes metum, et fugientes per solitudinis viam'.

> Nor would they have been able to penetrate the dense forest of Englishmen if ingenuity had not given reinforcements for the troops. The French, having been instructed in craft, skilful in waging war, feigned flight as if they had been defeated. The rustics rejoiced, and thought that they had conquered; they pursued the rearmost with naked swords [...] All those who were feigning flight turned their faces back with eagerness; they gathered up all those whom they surrounded in the rear to be slaughtered.[15]

According to the poet, the Normans subsequently panicked when a rumour circulated that Duke William had been killed. The feigned flight was in danger of becoming a true rout until William rode up, removed his helmet and rallied his troops. The *Carmen* depicts the final stages of the battle as an epic charge, led by William, that broke through the English lines and killed Harold.[16]

William of Poitiers, Duke William's chaplain, included a prose account of Hastings in his *Gesta Guillelmi* that depicts a different sequence of events. He placed the true flight before the feint. Furthermore, unlike the author of the *Carmen*, whose poem emphasised the non-Norman contributions to Duke William's victory, William made it clear that it was not the Norman knights who fled, nor should the Normans accrue any shame for the blunder:

> Behold! The foot soldiers, and however many auxiliaries were in the left wing, together with the Breton horsemen, terrified by the fierceness [of the English], were driven back; they withdrew almost to the duke's division, if such a thing might be freely said of the invincible Norman nation. The majestic Roman army, containing the armies of kings, accustomed to conquering by land and sea, sometimes fled when their commander was known or believed to have been killed.[17]

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[15] CDH, p. 26: 'Nec penetrare valent spissum nemus Angligenarum / Ni tribuat vires viribus ingenium / Artibus instructi, Franci, bellari periti / Ac si deuicti fraude fugam simulant. / Rustica letatur gens, et superasse putabat; / Post tergum nudis insequitur gladiis [...] Quique fugam simulant instantibus ora retorquent; / Constrictos cogunt uertere dorsa neci'.

[16] CDH, pp. 28–32.

[17] GG, p. 128: 'Ecce igitur hac saeuitia perterriti auertuntur pedites pariter atque equites Britanni, et quotquot auxiliares erant in sinistro cornu; cedit fere cuncta ducis acies, quod cum pace dictum sit Normannorum inuictissimae nationis. Romanae maiestatis exercitus, copias regum continens, uincere solitus terra marique, fugit aliquando, cum ducem suum sciret aut crederet occisum'.

The chronicler locates Duke William's heroic rallying of the troops here, saying that the left wing of the army turned and cut down the English who had pursued them off Senlac Hill. This was then followed by a series of feigned flights, depicted as an adaptation to the tactical situation rather than a pre-conceived stratagem:

> The Normans and their multitude of allies, observing that they could not conquer an enemy that was making a stand in this way without bringing disaster upon themselves, headed for the rear, intentionally feigning flight. They remembered how, a little while before, flight had given them an opportunity to do that which they desired [...] The Normans, suddenly turning their horses around, slaughtered everybody they could cut off and encircle, sparing none. They used the same trick twice, attacking those who remained with greater enthusiasm: until then, that division had appeared terrifying and was extremely difficult to surround.[18]

Later accounts of the battle omit the true flight but retain the feint or series of feints. The anonymous *Chronicle of Battle Abbey,* composed sometime after 1135, is the most straightforward. There is no rout and the feigned flight is depicted as a deliberate stratagem: 'Finally, when the duke's army had feigned flight, the most active Eustace, count of Boulogne, since this skilful [piece of] craft had been secretly considered in advance, rushed upon the English from behind with a powerful hand while they were scattered in pursuing [the Normans] with great agility'.[19]

Henry of Huntingdon's description is more unusual. He appears to have conflated the feigned retreat and an incident that other chroniclers placed later in the day, when a group of Norman knights, intent on pursuing the English as they fled, accidentally rode into a nearby ravine and were crushed to death:

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[18] GG, p. 132: 'Animaduertentes Normanni sociaque turba, non absque nimio sui incommodo hostem tantum simul resistentem superari posse, terga dederunt, fugam ex industria simulantes. Meminerunt quam optatae rei paulo ante fuga dederit occasionem [...] Normanni repente regiratis equis interceptos et inclusos undique mactauerunt, nullum relinquentes. Bis eo dolo simili euentu usi, reliquos maiori cum alacritate aggressi sunt: aciem adhuc horrendam, et quam difficillimum erat circumuenire'. Orderic Vitalis's account of the battle, which is based on the *Gesta Guillelmi,* offers no significant variations in the depiction of the feigned flight: OV, p. 174.

[19] *Chronicle of Battle Abbey,* ed. and trans. by Eleanor Searle (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 38: 'tandem strenuissimus Bolonie [com]es Eustachius clam callida premeditata arte, fuga cum exercitu duce simulante, super Anglos sparsim agiliter insequentes cum manu ualida a tergo irruit, sicque et duce hostes ferociter inuadente, ipsis interclusis utrinque prosternuntur innumeri'.

> Duke William instructed his men to feign flight: but while fleeing they came to a certain great pit that had been deceitfully concealed, whereby many of them, falling in, were crushed to death. The English, who had been pursuing, stopped. The first division of the Normans had passed right through the middle of the English troops. Seeing this, the pursuers were compelled to retire over the aforesaid pit, where a great many of them were destroyed.[20]

Wace's *Roman de Rou,* composed nearly a hundred years after the battle, is also noteworthy for its depiction of the feigned flight. Whereas other accounts suggest a series of short retreats followed by a turn, Wace depicts a gradual withdrawal, performed by the entire army: 'They did just as they had said, they attacked them while retreating, and made a great show of fear, and the English pursued them; the Normans fled little by little and the English followed after them, the more the Normans withdrew, the more the English approached'.[21] While this may not be an accurate representation of how the feigned retreat was performed at Hastings, it may nevertheless indicate how Wace's courtly audience expected such a maneouvre to be performed.[22]

Finally, William of Malmesbury presents the English at Hastings in a very sympathetic manner, whereas the Norman tactics are morally ambiguous. The English are depicted fighting bravely, if not very shrewdly:

> All the foot soldiers, [armed] with battle axes, made an impenetrable formation, linking a *testudo* of shields before them; which, having been accomplished, would have been their salvation that day if the Normans had not, in their usual manner, feigning flight, opened up their close-packed troops [...] So, having been surrounded through a ruse, they won a noble death in revenge for their country, nor did they neglect their revenge, but, having made

[20] HH, pp. 392–94: 'Docuit igitur dux Willelmus genti sue fugam simulare: fugientes autem ad quandam foueam magnam dolose protectam deuenerunt. Vbi multus eorum numerus corruens, oppressus est. Dum igitur Angli insequendo persistunt, acies principalis Normannorum mediam Anglorum cateruam pertransiit. Quod uidentes qui persequebantur per foueam predictam redire compulsi, ibidem ex magna parte perierunt'.
[21] RR, lines 8189–96: 'Si com il l'orent dit si firent, / retraanment les assaillirent / e du fuïr grant semblant firent, / e li Engelis les parsuïrent; / poi e poi vont Normant fuiant / e li Engleis les vont sivant, / tant com Normant plus s'eloignierent / e li Engleis plus s'aprocierent'.
[22] For an analysis of how Wace's writings can be used to study contemporary military practice, see Matthew Bennett, 'Wace and Warfare', in *Anglo-Norman Studies XI: Proceedings of the Battle Conference, 1988*, ed. by R. Allen Brown (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1989), pp. 37–57.

> a stand, they made many extraordinary mounds of casualties from among their attackers.[23]

This passage includes two noteworthy phrases. The Normans are described as feigning flight in *suo more,* which could mean 'in their usual manner' or 'according to their custom'. This may mean that William associated this specific stratagem with the Normans or that it was in keeping with their reputation as cunning and ruthless warriors to use stratagems to deceive their enemies. The second phrase is even more ambiguous: the English were surrounded due to *ingenium.* This has multiple possible meanings. It can mean a trick or clever scheme but it can also mean somebody or something's nature, their innate character, or the cunning that conceives of such a scheme.[24] So the above phrase can be interpreted as saying that the English were surrounded due to a trick (the ruse of a feigned flight) or due to the ingenious character of the Normans (who were accustomed to employing such ruses). The double-meaning of these two phrases contribute to William's portrayal of the English defeat as a tragedy: they fought bravely, winning a 'noble death', but were undone by a more cunning enemy.

4.2 Feigning Flight: Western Variants

Perhaps the most convincing argument against the feigned flight at Hastings being a fiction is the fact that Norman forces are depicted employing the same ruse at other times and in other places. For example, during Roger I of Sicily's raid against Messina in 1060:

> But the count, most astute and cunning in military matters, having been attacked, first pretended to be afraid. When he had enticed [the citizens] a long way from the city, he rushed fiercely upon them and put them to flight. When

[23] William is clearly describing a 'shieldwall' formation here but I have chosen to translate it literally in order to retain the classical resonance. William may have deliberately used Roman military teminology here to emphasise the English army's discipline and virtue. GRA, I, 452–54: 'Pedites omnes cum bipennibus, conserta ante se scutorum testudine, impenetrabilem cuneum fatiunt; quod profecto illis ea die saluti fuisset, nisi Normanni simulata fuga more suo confertos manipulos laxassent [...] Ita ingenio circumuenti pulchram mortem pro patriae ultione meruere, nec tamen ultioni suae defuere, quin crebro consistentes de insequentibus insignes cladis aceruos facerent'.

[24] Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary*, p. 950.

> those in the rear had been killed, he pursued the fugitives with a hateful and threatening gaze all the long way to city gates.[25]

Likewise, Bohemond of Taranto is depicted employing the feigned flight against the Turkish garrison at Baalbek, Syria, which harassed him as he travelled north from Jerusalem in 1111:

> But, as I said, they took care of their hunger by the speed of their feet, and they anticipated the fury of the three hundred knights who harassed them from the castle at Baalbek with skill in the military arts; for, when they had feigned flight for a short while, escaping through narrow passes in order to lead the Turks on, they deliberately withdrew, but soon they turned around back. They routed the scattered enemies as it pleased them.[26]

Gerald of Wales describes how, in 1169, a Cambro-Norman force led by his uncle, Robert fitz Stephen, used a feigned flight to draw the men of Osraige out of the forests and marshes, where they were accustomed to fight, and into the open: 'Assured by their previous successes, they now pursued them all the way onto the plain. But fitz Stephen's horsemen turned back against them, and at once began assaulting them fiercely, and having made no little slaughter, they scattered them across the plain and ran them through with their lances'.[27]

This tactic was not unique to the Normans, of course. Chroniclers depict other Western European forces employing feigned flight.[28] William of Malmesbury's description of the battle of Nar al-Kalb (24–26 October 1100) contains a vivid description of two forces, commanded by Baldwin I of Jerusalem and Duqāq, king of Damascus, attempting to employ the feigned flight as they fought on the narrow coastal road near Beirut:

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[25] GM, p. 30: 'Porro comes, ut semper astutissimus et militia callens, primo timore simulato, cum eos longius ab urbe seduxisset, impetu facto, acerrime super eos irruens, in fugam vertit. Sicque extremos quosque cedendo, usque in portam civitatis longo reditu fugientibus, visu odibili comminator, reduxit'.

[26] GRA, I, 664: 'Sed fami, ut dixi, consuluere pedum celeritate, et trecentorum militum, qui eos de Baldac castello infestabant, furori prospexerunt militaris artis calliditate; namque simulata paulisper fuga, ut ipsi de angustiis locorum euadentes Turchos inducerent, consulto cessere, sed mox retro uersi dispersos hostes pro libito fudere'.

[27] EH, p. 36: 'Unde et solitis confisi successibus, ipsos etiam usque in ipsa campestria longe persequuntur. Stephandie vero equites in eosdem reversi, statim acriter irruentes, facta strage non modica, ipsos passim per campara diffusos lanceis confodiunt et confundunt'.

[28] For example, Llewellyn ap Iorwerth, who sent a Cistercian monk to misinform the garrison of Montgomery Castle in 1231, as discussed in Chapter 2, feigned flight to draw members of the garrison onto boggy ground where they sank and were easily killed: RW, IV, 11–12.

> Then Duqāq sent some men ahead to provoke and entice the incautious to give battle, holding most of his men in advantageous positions. So, at first these men came forward in a great rush, then immediately withdrew, in order to draw our men into the narrow places. This sort of cunning did not deceive Baldwin; but, instructed by ancient military practice, he indicated to his men that they should feign flight, and also, to reinforce the suspicion of fear, he ordered them to pick up the burdens and baggage which they had just put down and to drive the pack animals on with goads and, in fact, to open up the ranks so that the enemies could attack them.[29]

This is an unusually detailed description of how an army might give the appearance of panicking: carrying their gear, driving the baggage animals ahead, and breaking formation. We can extrapolate from this to learn how a brave or resolute army was expected to behave: dropping their burdens in order to fight more effectively, sending the pack animals away and maintaining a close formation. Malmesbury's description of how Baldwin's army turned once it had reached an open plain corroborates this, as he emphasises how the troops were able to reform and attack in the correct manner: 'For, when it appeared that they had pretended to be afraid for long enough, their ranks having been reformed and the banners having been turned around, rushing forward, they now surrounded the enemies'.[30]

We must be cautious when using Malmesbury's account of this battle, however. Fulcher of Chartres, who was Baldwin I's chaplain and whose chronicle was Malmesbury's main source for events in Outremer, describes a different sequence of events. After an initial clash with the Turks, and a sleepless night during which they were attacked from both land and sea, the Franks took the decision to make a fighting retreat back down the coast.[31] Fulcher attributes the army's subsequent decision to turn and charge when it had reached the plain as a product of divine inspiration, with no mention of any feint or pre-arranged stratagem:

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[29] GRA, I, 668: 'Tunc Ducah mittit aliquos qui prelia prima lacessant elitiantque incautos, retentans ampliores uires in locis oportunis. Itaque illi primo magno impetu uenire, mox subinde subterfugere, ut nostros in angustias deducerent. Non latuit Balduinum huiuscemodi calliditas; sed, antiquae militiae usu instructus, suis ut fugam simularent innuit, simul et, ut suspitionem metus urgeret, sarcinas et impedimenta quae iam deposuerant resumi et iumenta stimulis agitari, quin et ordines laxari ut hostes incurrerent edixit'.

[30] GRA, I, 668: 'Namque, ut uisum est satis metum finxisse, consertis ordinibus et conuersis signis inimicos iam iamque incursantes inclusere'.

[31] FC, pp. 359–62.

> But God, of great mercy and power, observing our humility on earth from heaven, and the affliction and the danger into which we had fallen for love and service of Him, moved by pity, which always comes to rescue His people, supplied such great boldness of prowess to our knights, that they should in no way desire to defend themselves, in order that, having suddenly turned back along the three-forked road, those who had been fleeing could put [the enemy] to flight.[32]

It is possible that Malmesbury had other sources of information about the battle and that Baldwin's flight was indeed a ruse but it is equally likely that he chose to reinterpret a potentially embarrassing incident to show Baldwin in a better light. Even if this were so, it is still noteworthy that he chose to portray Baldwin as a skillful and cunning general, refusing to be drawn by the Turks' feint and tricking them in turn into pursuing him, when he could have rewritten the battle as an epic cavalry charge.

Although his conclusions may lack substance, Lemmon's theory about the feigned flight raises an important point about the depiction of these stratagems in chronicle narratives. How can we be certain that a particular retreat was actually a feint? It is plausible that combatants, recounting the events of a battle, may have claimed that their flight was intentional, part of a masterful strategy, rather than admit that they panicked and ran. There is also the possibility that a chronicler might deliberately reinterpret a shameful incident of this kind to fit their narrative agenda. Consider Galbert of Bruges's account of the battle of Akspoele (21 June 1128), fought between William Clito and Thierry of Alsace near Bruges. Galbert reports that, after the initial clash between the vanguards of the two armies, led by William Clito and Daniel of Dendermonde respectively, William's division fled:

> While both sides were labouring hard, one in fleeing, the other in pursuing, the second part of Count William's division, which was lying in ambush, rushed in front of Daniel and his men. And because they had been encouraged by fresh strength and unity of action, and trained for war, they opposed the pursuers with spears and swords without hesitation. Then Count William, swiftly returning from flight, recovered himself together with his men and, in a single

[32] FC, pp. 362–63: 'Sed magnae Deus clementiae atque potentiae prospiciens de caelo in terram humilitatem nostram atque angustiam necnon periculum, quod incideramus propter amorem eius atque servitium, motus pietate, qua rite semper praesens suis subvenit, tantae probitatis audaciam militibus nostris praestitit, ut recursu repentino per viam trifurcam fugarent eos fugientes, ut nunquam animum defendendi se haberent'.

> charge, with a manly spirit and the strength of their bodies, pursued the cruel [work] of arms and the dispersion of his enemies.[33]

This was the decisive moment of the battle: Thierry's army broke and ran, leaving William in possession of the field. But what are we to make of William's flight? Galbert portrays it as a genuine retreat, which was only halted when the ambush party intercepted the pursuers. But it is possible that this was, in fact, a stratagem: a feigned flight, designed to lure Thierry's vanguard into a pre-prepared ambush.[34] Thierry was, at that time, based in Galbert's home town of Bruges, so he would have been able to question members of the defeated army. They appear to have believed that the flight was genuine but that may only demonstrate how effective the ruse truly was. Galbert reports that other citizens of Bruges had their own interpretations of the battle:

> Again our ignorant priests were saying that Consul Thierry and his men had been put to flight in the battle through the incantations of the presbyter from Aartrijke and the presbyter from Knesselare and the cleric from Odfried, although God disposes and ordains all things.[35]

This is a salutary reminder for modern military historians. Although we look for mundane explanations for events, attributing victories to superior resources or strategies, medieval observers were just as likely to attribute these same events to supernatural forces. The priests of Bruges thought Thierry was defeated by magic, whereas Galbert thought it was the will of God. Neither ascribed it to William Clito's superior tactics. When studying medieval military narratives, we must appreciate that they are not written for us, for our culture or our conceptual framework, and resist trying to sanitise or simplify them to serve our particular interests.

Until now, this discussion has focused almost entirely on one form of the feigned flight, what might be called the Hastings variant, in which the retreating troops intended to

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[33] GB, p. 160: 'Cumque utrimque laborarent, illi in fugiendo, illi in persequendo, secunda pars cuneorum Willelmi consulis, quae ad insidiandum latebat, prosiluit in adversas facies Danielis et suorum. Et quia recenti virtute et unanimi consensu exhortati fuerant et instructi ad bellum, in nullo hesitantes, hastis et gladiis persecutores illos interruperunt. Tunc comes Willelmus a fuga velociter resiliens, sese cum suis recepit, unoque cursu et animo virili, robore corporum suorum, crudelitati armorum, et dispersioni inimicorum insistebat'.

[34] J. F. Verbruggen, 'La Tactique militaire des armées de chevaliers', *Revue du Nord*, 29 (1947), 161–80.

[35] GB, p. 161: 'Iterum nostri sacerdotes idiotae dicebant presbyterum ex Artrica et presbyterum ex Cnislara et Odfridum clericum per incantationes fugasse in bello consulem Theodericum et suos, cum Deus omina disponat et ordinet'.

lure their enemy away from their present location. Once they were on ground of their choosing, they could wheel round and attack their pursuers, who would have broken formation in their haste to take captives, making them vulnerable to a sudden charge. There was, however, another form of the feigned flight, in which the retreat was intended to lure the enemy into a prearranged ambush. The fleeing force, usually a smaller detatchment of the main army, might still turn back and engage the pursuers but its primary role was to act as bait.[36] For example, William the Conqueror established a siege castle near Arques in 1052, which was held against him by his uncle, also called William. Henry I of France led an army to relieve Arques and encamped near Saint-Aubin:

> The duke's knights, learning of his arrival, sent out some of their number to see if they could perhaps draw off some men from the king's company, whom they, lying in wait, might capture while they were following them incautiously. When they had come there, drawing out no small part of the army, they fled in order to lead them into the ambushes. And suddenly, when they had turned back, those who had seemed to be fleeing began to strike fiercely at them to such a degree that, in that fight, Enguerrand, count of Abbeville, was killed, run through, together with many men and Hugh, known as Bardulf, was captured with many others.[37]

Geoffrey V, count of Anjou, is described employing similar tactics against the rebel garrison of Thouars (a strategically important town in southern Anjou) in 1129:

> But, since [the besieged] had grown accustomed to success, one day, in the hope of being led to a richer victory, more of them sallied out than usual. So the count's men, having learned of their approach, placed five hundred knights in ambush in the dim shadow of a nearby forest but they themselves, as if going to engage in battle, advanced against them. The townspeople threatened them, the count's men falling back according to their purpose, and prolonged the feigned retreat past the location of the ambush. But those who maintained

[36] The taxonomy presented in the Appendix indicates that this latter kind of feigned flight was the more common of the two, with 22 examples of its use to 14 examples of the more famous Hastings variant.

[37] GND, II, 104: 'Cuius aduentum milites ducis comperientes de suis miserunt, si quos forte hostium a regio cetu abstraherent, quos illi in latibulis degentes incautos exciperent. Quo dum uenissent, non minimam exercitus partem inde protrahentes, in insidias induxere fugientes. Statim uero qui uidebantur fugere, uersa facie, ceperunt eos acriter cedere, adeo ut in hoc conflictu cum pluribus Ingrelannus Abbatisuille comes confossus perimeretur, et Hugo cognomento Bardulfus cum multis aliis caperetur'. See also RR, lines 3455–508.

> their hiding places, proceeding cautiously from the hiding places, pursued those who were pursuing their companions with reckless daring: but those who had made the feigned retreat, seeing the others appear, turned [their] reins, with swords and lances drawn, vented their rage against those who were pursuing them.[38]

In this latter incident, Geoffrey's knights were aided by the defenders' overconfidence. They had been victorious in previous skirmishes and had put the count's men to flight, which made it easier to trick them into mistaking a feigned retreat for a real one.[39] A similar incident occurred in 1057 when Richard, the Norman count of Aversa, attempted to compel the Lombard prince, Guaimar IV of Salerno, to pay him tribute. Guaimar refused and the citizens of Salerno drove Richard away with arrows. The next day, Richard feigned flight in front of Guaimar to draw him into an ambush:

> In the evening, the count arranged an ambush. And the prince rode out safely in the morning, and called the young men with him, who carried weapons and bows to draw. And the count's knights, when they saw that the prince had come out of the city, fraudulently began to flee. And the men of Salerno, who were dressed in linen clothing, followed them to the place where they had laid the ambush. And those who were lying in ambush saw the men of Salerno, rushed upon them and they were unable to flee. Some of them threw themselves into the sea, and they made a slaughter of the rest.[40]

According to Roger of Howden, overconfidence derived from a previous victory was crucial to the success of Robert de Breteuil, earl of Leicester, at Pacy-sur-Eure in Normandy in 1198. The castle had formerly belonged to Robert but he had been forced to

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[38] HG, pp. 262–64: 'Assuetis autem successibus insolentiores effecti, quadam die, spe abundantioris victoriae ducti, solito plures exierunt, sed praeter spem illud evenit. Comperto siquidem consulares eorum accessu, quingentos milites, in vicini nemoris umbrosa opacitate, in insidiis posuerunt, ipsi vero, tanquam contra eos congressuri, obviam processerunt. Instant oppidani, cedunt ex industria consulares, et ultra insidiarum loca fuga fallaci protrahunt. Illi vero qui latebras fovebant de latibulis suis caute progredientes, eos qui ausu temerario suos insequebantur insequuntur: illi autem qui simulatoriam fugam arripuerant sentientes suos adesse, vertunt habenas et ensibus strictis et lanceis in insecutores suos desaeviunt'.

[39] Stephen Morillo has discussed the importance of this aspect of medieval tactics in Stephen Morillo, 'Expecting Cowardice: Medieval Battle Tactics Reconsidered', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 4 (2006), 65–73.

[40] AM, pp. 337–38: 'Lo soir, lo conte ordena lo agait. Et lo prince chevaucha securement au matin, et clama li jouvencel avec lui, qui portoient fionde et arc pour traire. Et li chevalier del conte, quant il virent que lo prince estoit issut de la cité, par fraude commencerent a fouir. Et ceauz de la cité de Salerne, liquel estoient vestut de dras de lin, les secutoient jusques au lieu out estoit fait l'esguait. Et cil qui faisoient l'esgait virent cil de Salerne, il lor corurent sus et cil non porent fuir. Et alcun se jetterent en mer, et alcun furent occis'.

surrender it to Philip II of France after he was captured at Gournay in 1194. Although he had been defeated by Philip's garrison the day before, Robert was able to lure it into an ambush in their next encounter by feigning flight: 'And when the knights of the castle, who the day before had put him to flight from the field, had seem him, they sallied out with fury and he fled before them until they fell into the ambushes, and eighteen knights and many commoners were captured from among them'.[41]

There is substantial evidence that, far from being a 'hoax' perpetuated by the Conqueror's propagandists, the feigned flight was known and employed by the armies of Western Europe before and after 1066. The Normans and their descendants appear to have employed it frequently (accounting for 12 out of the 19 incidents of feigned flight by Western forces recorded in the Appendix) but it was not an exclusively Norman tactic. Nor is there any reason to suppose that other peoples learned it from the Normans, or that the Normans needed to learn it from this or that steppe tribe: it was a logical and achievable stratagem for any well-disciplined force of horsemen.

4.3 Feigned Flight: The Near East

Until now, this discussion has been confined to incidents within Western Europe or performed by Western Europeans, in order to establish that the feigned flight was known and used by Latin Christians, independent of any encounters with other military cultures. It was also employed by Turkish forces of the period but with unique features that require separate analysis.

In the ninth century, the armies of the Islamic world came to be dominated by elite bands of Turkish horsemen from Central Asia. They were a nomadic people, famous for their endurance and skill as horse archers, who lived by plunder. In an effort to harness this potentially destabilising force, the caliphs encouraged the Turks to migrate to the fringes of the Islamic world, mainly Central Asia and Anatolia, to harass and displace the infidel. At the same time, Muslim rulers began to employ troops of Turkish soldier-slaves, either purchased in Central Asia or captured in war, called *mamlūks*. These highly-trained horse archers formed the core of most Islamic armies of the crusading period, supplemented by

[41] HowChr, IV, 60: 'Cum autem milites castelli, qui pridie eum a camp fugaverant, vidissent illum, exierunt cum impetu, et ipse fugit ante illos, donec inciderunt in insidiantes, et capti sunt ex eis xviii. Milites et plebs multa'.

mercenaries, tribal forces and urban militia.[42] In battle, they did not fight in rigid formations but in small groups that attacked the enemy continuously from all sides, dispersing when charged, before returning to the attack. The riders would charge towards their enemy, only to wheel away at the last moment and shoot as they retreated. The aim was to disrupt the enemy formation sufficiently to allow a final, decisive charge with sword and lance. These tactics were disconcerting to Latin Christians, who sought to maintain solid, close-order formation in battle.[43]

Chapter 9 will discuss how Latin sources portrayed these tactics in detail but for now it is sufficient to say that they were aware that the crusaders had encountered a different mode of fighting, one that did not conform to their strategic or tactical mores. The *Itinerarium Peregrinorum* compares the Turkish horsemen to irritating flies that cannot be driven off:

> Indeed, the Turks were not burdened with armour, like our men, but, advancing lightly-armed, they often disturbed our men with many greater injuries [...] For it is the Turks' custom that when they are fleeing and they see that those pursuing them have stopped, then they themselves stop fleeing, like a wearisome fly which will fly away when you drive it off but which returns when you stop, it will flee for as long you chase but is still there when you cease.[44]

These tactics (sometimes referred to as Scythian or Parthian tactics) involved a form of feigned flight but one that should be distinguished from the variants discussed above. The two former variants, intended to lure an enemy away from a strong position or into a pre-prepared ambush, were intentionally deceptive. They required the fleeing force to make a convincing show of fear in order to trick the pursuers into breaking formation and giving chase. They were effective because they played on conventional expectations of military

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[42] David Ayalon, 'From Ayyūbids to Mamlūks', *Revue des etudes islamiques*, 49 (1981), 43–57; Hamilton A. R. Gibb, 'The Armies of Saladin', in *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*, ed. by S. J. Shaw and W. R. Polk (Boston: Beacon, 1962), pp. 74–90; Hugh Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 123.

[43] France, *Western Warfare*, pp. 212–13; John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 147–49; Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), pp. 439–44, 512–13; Smail, *Crusading Warfare*, pp. 78–82.

[44] IP, p. 247: 'Turci denique non, ut nostri, armaturis sunt onerati, sed incedentes expeditiores nostros multo majori saepius perturbant gravamine [...] Turcorum etiam moris est, ut quando persenserint se fugantes a persequendo cessare, tunc et ipsi fugere cessabunt, more muscae fastidiosae, quam si abegeris avolabit, cum cessaveris redibit, quamdiu fugaveris fugiet, cum desieries praesto est'. See also Amb, lines 5629–66.

behaviour in the Latin West. It was generally understood that, when a force stood facing another in close order with banners raised, it was prepared to give battle, which meant fighting at close quarters. A force that turned and moved away, refusing to fight at close quarters, was retreating and would not fight effectively if pursued. This was not the case for troops who employed Parthian tactics. The sudden turns, shooting and dispersing involved were not primarily intended to deceive but to protect the archers, who could not engage a heavily-armed enemy at close quarters. This would not have been apparent to people used to fighting according to Western customs who, assuming that a force that was withdrawing in front of them was retreating, would have pursued, only to be surprised when it turned back and resumed the attack.

Latin Christians fighting in the East had to adapt to these unfamiliar tactics. John France has identified two principal changes in crusader warfare over the twelfth century in response to these tactics. First, the Latin states of Outremer began to recruit their own horse archers, known as turcopoles, made up of a mixture of Turks, Syrian Christians and Franks.[45] They were never the primary arm of the Latin forces, however, and appear to have operated as auxiliaries to the knights.[46] The other adaptation was the tactic of the mass charge. Rather than operating as smaller units that could be isolated and overwhelmed by the Turks, the entire Latin army would charge as one, breaking the enemy in a single, devastating attack. This required significant discipline among the Latin troops, especially the foot soldiers who had to protect the horsemen until the order was given to charge.[47]

Muslim forces did use the other variants of feigned flight, of course. After the armies of the First Crusade seized Antioch in June 1098, the Turkish commander Karbughā sent a force of horsemen to lure some of the Franks into an ambush: 'Thirty from among them, who seemed to have swift horses, occupied the land before the city in order to deliberately ride about, pretending to be ignorant and riding about incautiously'.[48] It is not entirely clear what is meant by 'riding about incautiously'. It may mean they scattered in different directions, so that they would not be drawn up to fight should they be attacked. Whatever they did, it was clearly effective. One Roger de Barneville, who served

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[45] Yitzak Harari, 'The Military Role of the Frankish Turcopoles', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 12 (1997), 75–116.

[46] John France, 'Crusading Warfare and its Adaptation to Eastern Conditions in the Twelfth Century', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 15 (2000), 49–66 (here 58–59).

[47] France, 'Crusading Warfare and its Adaptation', pp. 60–61.

[48] WT, p. 308: 'Ex quibus triginta, qui equos videbantur habere velociores, usque ad urbem ceperunt discurrere, ex industria ignorantiam pretendentes et discurrentes incautius'.

under Robert Curthose, duke of Normandy, took the bait and sallied out with fifteen men to attack what he thought would be an easy target: 'He charged boldly with loose rein against the aforesaid enemies who were riding about, but they suddenly and fraudulently turned around in flight, continually fleeing for a long time until they reached their men's ambushes'.[49] Roger and his men tried to retreat to the safety of Antioch but he was killed by an arrow and his body decapitated in sight of the city walls.[50]

An example of the Hastings variant of a feigned flight, which includes explicit description of Turkish horsemen pretending to be afraid, appears in Walter the Chancellor's account of the campaign that culminated in the Field of Blood in 1119. Roger of Antioch was encamped before Athrab when a detachment of Turks approached. The town garrison sallied out to give battle, in conjunction with men from Roger's army:

> the enemies held themselves as if faltering in spirit and as if afraid to fight, turning back with loud complaints, although they appeared to be supported by 60,000 knights or more, their reins tightened, their bows taken from where they were hanging and drawn from the arm to the breast, their shields taken from their shoulders to their arms. But these things had been deliberately hidden by deceit, in order that, by these signs, they could draw our men far out of the camp.[51]

The description of the Turks grumbling and complaining as they fled is another reminder of the importance of shouts and cries on the medieval battlefield: as means of identification (see Chapter 5), to raise morale, to increase the impact of a surprise attack and, as here, creating the illusion of discontent or fear.

In conclusion, the chronicles reveal several variations of feigned flight. Sometimes it was employed to disrupt the enemy formation and lure them away from their defensive positions. At others, it was to lure an enemy force into an ambush. The third variant, employed by the horse archers of the steppes and the Muslim Near East, was not intended to deceive as much as to keep them out of reach their enemies, although it might have been interpreted as such by those used to fighting hand-to-hand. We cannot always be certain

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[49] WT, p. 308: 'Qui dum laxis habenis in predictos excursores irrueret animosius, subito sed fraudulenter in fugam versi sunt, tam diu fugam continuantes, quousque ad suorum pervenerunt insidias'.
[50] See also AA, pp. 286–88.
[51] WC, p. 81: 'hostes, licet .lx. milibus militum uel ultra uallati uiderentur, retentis tamen habenis ac de parte pendula sumptis arcubus parmisque ab umeris ad brachia, a brachiis ad pectora reuocatis, quasi animo titubantes et quasi pungere [variant reading: *pugnare*] metuentes, terga uersi fremendo se habebant. Sed res erat tecta fraude ex industria, ut his indiciis remotius a castris nostros extrahere potuissent'.

that a particular incident of feigned flight was not a plain rout that was later recast as a cunning ruse but there is sufficient evidence to indicate that both Latin Christians and their enemies were capable of performing such manoeuvres and that they knew that their enemy might do the same.

Chapter 5
Disguises

This chapter will analyse the variety of disguises that appear in military contexts in the sources. While the most obvious form of disguise is visual (e.g. dressing up as somebody else), there was also an important verbal and performative element to a number of the disguises discussed below. These incidents have been divided into categories according to their intended effect: to make a combatant appear to be some kind of non-combatant, to make a fighting force appear larger than it truly was and to make one combatant look like another, be that friend or foe. This will require a detailed discussion of how medieval combatants distinguished these categories in the first place and how they expected to recognise one another on the battlefield. Many of these disguises reveal important cultural assumptions about the visual markers that distinguished fighting men from other social groups in the central Middle Ages.

5.1 Escaping and Infiltrating

The disguises analysed in this section can be classified as 'category disguises': they served to move the deceiver from one conceptual category (hostile enemy combatant) to another (non-hostile non-combatant) in the mind of the deceived. By adopting the disguises described, people sought to pass as someone harmless or beneath notice, either to escape from an enemy or to infiltrate a stronghold undetected.

A disguise could be useful if one wished to escape from one's enemy after a major defeat. According to Robert the Monk, the Turkish governor of Antioch, Yāghī Siyān, fled the city in June 1098 'covered in cheap rags' (*vilibus pannis obsitus*) when he learned that the crusaders had seized the outer defences, probably attempting to pass himself off as a pauper or beggar. Unfortunately for him, he was recognised on the road by a band of Armenians, who killed him and presented his head to the crusaders.[1] While chivalric convention in the West offered a level of protection to a defeated nobleman, who could expect to be spared in return for a ransom, this was not guaranteed. Furthermore, ransoms

[1] His pauper's disguise was clearly not very thorough, as the Armenians also gave the crusaders the belt he had been wearing, which was valued at sixy besants: RM, p. 806.

could be cripplingly expensive, so it is no wonder that chroniclers occasionally reported that individuals evaded capture by adopting a disguise. The *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* records an elaborate disguise adopted by Hugh III, count of Maine, following his failed assault on the Norman castle at Tillières c. 1013, alongside Odo II of Chartres and Waleran I of Meulan:

> It is certain that Hugh, since the horse he had mounted had been killed, fleeing on foot, turned aside to a sheepfold, hiding the hauberk which he was wearing under a furrow of earth. Then, clothing himself in a shepherd's cloak, and, covered by these things, tirelessly carrying them from place to place, he encouraged the Normans to pursue all their enemies, who were close by, fleeing shamelessly. When they had withdrawn, led by a shepherd, taking a path through the wild forests, after three days he came at last to Le Mans, his feet and shins bleeding wretchedly from the thorn-bushes and briars.[2]

While the *Gesta Normannorum* does not explicitly comment on Hugh's adventure, Wace stated that this behaviour was shameful when he adapted the story for the *Roman du Rou*: 'When those who had been hunting him returned in that direction, in the evening, when it had grown dark, the count went forth on foot. Without shoes, disguised as a shepherd, he escaped dishonourably'.[3] A similar story can be found in Orderic Vitalis's *Historia*, concerning the Norman baron William Lovel, who had rebelled against Henry I of England in favour of William Clito. Lovel escaped after the battle of Bourgthéroulde (26 March 1124) to his stronghold at Ivry:

> But William Lovel, having been captured by a certain peasant, gave his arms to him as a ransom and, his hair having been cut in the manner of a squire by the peasant, taking a staff in his hand he fled to the Seine, and, disguised, he gave his boots to a boatman in place of a fare to cross the river, and he returned to

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[2] GND, II, 24: 'Hugo nempe, equo cui insederat extincto, pede fugiens, ad caulas ouium diuertit, loricam quam indutus erat sub sulco tegens telluris. Dehinc clamide opilionis se amiciens, septaque gregum infatigabiliter humeris de loco ad locum ferens, Normannos ortabatur, ut quamtotius persequerentur hostes non longe ante illos turpiter abeuntes. Quibus recedentibus, preuio pastore siluarum lustra carpens, tandem post triduum Cinomannis uenit, uepribus et sentibus miserabiliter pedes ac tibias cruentatus'.

[3] RR, lines 1675–80: 'Quant cil s'en furent repairie, / Ki cele part orent chacie, / Al seir, quant bien fu annuitie, / S'en est li quens ale a pie: / Nuz piez, a guise de pastur / S'en eschaps a deshonur'.

> his home with bare feet, rejoicing that, slipping away, he had escaped howsoever from the hand of his enemies.[4]

The reference to William's hair appears to be linked to the contemporary fashion for courtiers to wear their hair long, making long hair a sign of noble status.[5] As *armiger* is more likely to refer to a lowborn arms-bearer than a knight-in-training in the twelfth century, they would have been expected to wear their hair short.[6] It is not clear from the text if the peasant cut William's hair at his request (i.e. it was a deliberate part of his disguise) or whether it was forced upon him in order to humiliate him (the clause is passive, with no reference to William requesting or ordering the peasant to cut his hair). Shame is the overriding feature in both of these accounts: the deceiver removes his arms, dresses like someone of lower social status and reaches safety by walking barefoot. For a social group defined by its ability to fight on horseback, being forced to travel on foot in this way would have been particularly humiliating.

There are echoes of this idea in an episode from the *Gesta Tancredi,* in which the author explains how Tancred, alone among all the leaders of the First Crusade, avoided doing homage to Alexios Komnenos at Constantinople in April 1097:

> So, coming to Constantinople, he did not bow to the king like the others, nor did he send ahead trumpet calls or sound a trumpet: he crossed over in secret. For, when his knightly dress had been laid aside, he dressed himself as a foot soldier; since it was peasant garb, while it protected Tancred, it deceived Alexios.[7]

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[4] OV, VI, 352: 'Guillelmus uero Lupellus a quodam rustico captus arma sua illi pro redemptione sui dedit, et ab eo tonsus instar armigeri manu palum gestans ad Sequanam confugit, et incognitus ad transitum fluminis pro naulo caligas suas nauclero impertiuit, nudisque pedibus proprios lares reuisit, gaudens quod de manu hostili utcumque prolapsus euaserit'.

[5] For an example, see Eadmer, *Historia in novorum in Anglia,* ed. by Martin Rule (London: Longman, 1884), p. 214. There is also the curious story recorded by Geffrei Gaimar, in which Walter Giffard had his squires, his knights and his own head shorn ahead of William II of England's Easter court in 1099. This was to protest at the king's delay in knighting his squires. The king seems to have thought this a splendid joke and had twenty of his own squires shorn as well. See Geffrei Gaimar, *Estoire des Engleis,* ed. and trans. by Ian Short (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), lines 6077–6102.

[6] Matthew Bennett, 'The Status of the Squire: The Northern Evidence', in *The Ideals and Practices of Medieval Knighthood: Papers from the First and Second Strawberry Hill Conferences*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986), pp. 1–11; For the significance of hair in Anglo-Norman aristocratic culture, see Pauline Stafford, 'The Meanings of Hair in the Anglo-Norman World: Masculinity, Reform, and National Identity', in *Saints, Scholars, and Politicians: Gender as a Tool in Medieval Studies*, ed. by Mathilde van Dijk and Renée Nip (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 153–72.

[7] GT, p. 15: 'Constantinopolim igitur ueniens, non sicut ceteri declinat ad regem, non classica premittit, non tuba intonat: clam transit. Nam exuto milite, peditem induit; quatinus uestis rustica, dum Tancredum tegeret, Alexium falleret'.

This scheme is not presented as humiliating or shameful but prudent: Ralph of Caen says that Tancred acted 'wisely' (*sapienter*). Nevertheless this ruse, like the two described above, relied on the distinction between the usual appearance of a knight (*miles*) and that of a foot soldier (*pedes*) or peasant (*rusticus*). The use of *induere* in the main clause suggests that *miles* is referring to clothes here but the language indicates a fundamental connection between appearance and social status. By abandoning the distinctive clothes and equipment that marked him out as a *miles* and choosing to travel on foot, Tancred was abandoning an essential part of his identity.[8] What distinguished his disguise from that of Hugh of Maine or William Lovel was his motivation: Tancred adopted it to avoid the 'crafty devices' of Alexios (*Alexii tegnas*), whereas they adopted it out of fear.

Escaping in disguise sometimes made a combatant harmless in both fact and appearance, as he had to abandon his weapons and armour. Infiltrating a stronghold presented additional challenges: the combatant had to appear harmless but still bear arms. Once he was inside, he needed to be able to overpower the guards and seize the defences. The obvious solution was to choose a disguise that included a large cloak or similar garment that would hide his weapons. For example in 1263, during the Second Barons' War in England, Henry de Montfort allegedly gained access to Gloucester by sending two knights disguised as wool merchants:

> Sir John Giffard and Sir John de Balun came there that day, riding upon two woolpacks [a sack packed with wool] as if they were merchants, over the bridge to the western gate and bade the porters to let two wool merchants bring in their wares. They were both covered with Welsh mantles. When the gates were opened they both leapt down from their horses and cast aside their mantles and stood armed from head to toe.[9]

The porters immediately surrendered the keys and allowed the barons to take the town. When the royalists recaptured the town the following year, the unfortunate porters were hanged for their trouble.[10]

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[8] This agrees with Kostick's conclusions on the meaning of *miles* and other related terms in the chronicles of the First Crusade: Conor Kostick, 'The Terms *milites*, *equites* and *equestres* in the Early Crusading Histories', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 50 (2006), 1–21.

[9] RG, lines 11170–77: 'Sir Ion giffard come aday & sir Ion de balun þere / Ride vpe tueye wolpakces chapmen as hii were / To þe west ȝate ouer þe brugge & þe porters bede / To late in tueie wolmongers hor caffare in to lede / Biweued hii were boþe mid welsse mantles tueie. / Þo þe ȝates were vndo hii hupte adoun beye / Of hor hors & caste hor mantles awei anon / & þo stode hii Iarmed fram heued to þe ton'.

[10] RG, lines 11,294–97.

Louis VI of France took the town of Gasny in 1116 using a disguise, in a rare case of two independent, contemporary chroniclers reporting the same incident. Gasny controlled a strategically vital ford on the Epte, allowing the French to cross into Normandy. Louis's biographer Suger said that he sent a detatchment ahead of his main army 'down the public road as if they were travellers, hauberks and swords hidden beneath their cloaks'.[11] When they revealed their true identity, the inhabitants assaulted them and Louis was forced to charge into the town with the rest of his force: 'he captured both the town hall and the fortified church with a tower without loss to his men'.[12] Orderic Vitalis, a Norman, recorded the same incident but with some significant variations:

> Also Louis deceitfully attacked the ford of Nicaise, which is commonly called Gasny, and entered it as if he were a monk, together with his household knights who had been dressed in black cloaks; and he built a castle there in the cell of the monks of St. Ouen and, in the house of the Lord, where solemn prayers should be offered to God, he disgracefully established a den of thieves.[13]

The basic story is the same: French troops enter and capture Gasny wearing cloaks, but Orderic's account explictly portrays it as an immoral act. Not only does he use the adverbs 'deceitfully' (*fraudulenter*) and 'disgracefully' (*turpiter*), he includes blasphemous elements not present in Suger's version: instead of general 'travellers' (*viatores*), Louis and his men are explicitly dressed as monks (*monachi*).[14] Furthermore, whereas Suger implies that the monastery was already being employed as a fortress (*munita ecclesia*), Orderic states that it was Louis who turned this sacred space into a 'den of thieves', a reference to Christ's words during the Cleansing of the Temple: 'Was it not written: "Because this is my house, it will be called a house of prayer for all peoples"? But you made it a den of thieves'.[15] The

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[11] SSD, p. 186: 'tanquam viatores, loricati sub cappis et gladiis cincti, publica via descendentes'.

[12] SSD, p. 186: 'tam ville atrium quam munitam turre ecclesiam non sine suorum damno occupat'.

[13] OV, VI, 184: 'Porro Ludouicus uadum Nigasii quod Vani uulgo uocatur fraudulenter adiit, ac ueluti monachus cum sociis militibus qui nigris capis amicti erant ex insperato intrauit; ibique in cella monachorum sancti Audeoni castrum muniuit, et in domo Domini ubi solummodo preces offerri Deo debent speluncam latronum turpiter effecit'.

[14] It is possible that Suger used *viatores* to mean lay brothers, which would agree with Orderic's description of the French wearing monastic-style robes, but, as Suger does not use this word anywhere else in this chronicle, we lack a basis for comparison. I have therefore chosen to follow the more obvious interpretation of the word. For the alternate meaning of *viatores,* see Du Cange and others, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis,* ed. by Leopold Favre (Niort: Favre, 1883–87) <http://ducange.enc.sorbonne.fr/VIATORES1> [accessed 3 May 2018].

[15] *Bible,* Mark 11.17: 'Nonne scriptum est : Quia domus mea, domus orationis vocabitur omnibus gentibus ? vos autem fecistis eam speluncam latronum'. See also Matthew 21.13 and Luke 19.46.

truth of the matter is unclear. It would certainly have been surprising if the Norman dukes had not fortified Gasny against invasion. Orderic may have objected, not so much because Louis seized the monastery, but because he used it to raid into Norman lands, whereas formerly the 'thieves' garrisoning the town had been raiding in the opposite direction, into the Ile de France.[16]

While Orderic's account of this action was intended to be moralistic, Suger's account of another incident of infiltration by disguise was probably intended to be humorous. In 1109 Louis VI had laid siege to the castle at Ferté-Baudouin (mod. La Ferté-Alais) to rescue Odo, count of Corbeil, and Anselm of Garlande from Odo's brother, Hugh of Crécy. Hugh, finding himself outside the royal siege lines, attempted to pass through in disguise: 'He was troubled and distressed. He plotted how he might enter the castle, now on horseback, now on foot, adopting the likeness of a jester and a prostitute'.[17] Unsurprisingly, he failed and was pursued by Anselm's brother, William of Garlande. Hugh, however, escaped through a ruse worthy of Renart the Fox:

> Deceitfully pretending that he himself was William of Garlande, he cried out that Hugh was chasing him, William, and summoned the king's men to obstruct him as if he were an enemy. In this way and others, as much by a crafty tongue as by a bold heart, escaping through flight, one man made fools of many.[18]

While the elements of cross-dressing and slapstick comedy suggest that this tale may be more salacious gossip than factual history, there is nevertheless a hint of admiration in Suger's description of Hugh's escape, the 'one who made fools of many': an example of admirable cunning, even in a rebel.

When Baldwin II of Jerusalem was captured by the Turkish ruler Balak, nephew of Īlghāzī, in April 1123 and imprisoned in his fortress at Kharput, north of the Euphrates, an extraordinary rescue mission was launched to save him.[19] Fulcher of Chartres reports that it

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[16] OV, VI, 186.

[17] SSD, p. 94: 'anxiatur, laborat, et quomodo castrum ingredi possit, modo eques, modo pedes, multiformi joculatoris et meretricis mentito simulachro, machinatur'.

[18] SSD, pp. 94–96: 'Nisi cum simulata fraude seipsum Garlandensem Guilelmum fallendo, Guilelmum autem Hugonem se sequentem conclamaret et ex parte regis ut eum tanquam hostem impedirent invitaret. His et aliis hujusmodi, tam lingue cautela quam animi strenuitate fuga lapsus, multos unus derisit'.

[19] For a comprehensive study of this operation and its context, see Y. N. Harari, *Special Operations*, pp. 74–90.

was the prisoners themselves who arranged the mission, through the Armenians 'whom they consorted with':

> And when this had been confirmed, after many gifts and promises, with obligations of faith on both sides, nearly fifty of the wisest citizens were sent there from Edessa; and, as if they were the poorest of men, carrying goods and selling goods all the way up to the gates of the inner castle, when the opportunity arose, they let themselves in one by one.[20]

William of Tyre, doubtless reflecting the numerous tales that circulated about this adventure, describes two possible versions of the Armenians' plan:

> So they disguised themselves in monk's habits, carrying daggers beneath their loose clothing, directing their course to the aforesaid town as if they were conducting the business of monasteries, by word and gesture and facial expression they pretended that they had suffered violence and injury from somebody [...] Others say they entered the town as merchants, the bearers of cheap goods.[21]

The former version, in which the Armenians posed as supplicants seeking justice from Balak, is also found in Matthew of Edessa's chronicle.[22] Sadly for the Armenians, although they succeeded in penetrating Kharput and freeing the prisoners, no aid followed to bring them home. Balak laid siege to the fortress and, having recaptured it after a brief siege, executed the entire garrison, sparing only King Baldwin and two senior Frankish noblemen.[23]

The final variation of the 'category disguise' not only transformed the combatant into a non-combatant but from a human being into an inanimate object. Ralph of Caen claimed that this trick was employed to capture of the Cilician city of Adana. Having left the main crusading force on 14 September 1097, Tancred travelled to Adana where he was

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[20] FC, pp. 678–79: 'Et cum post aliqua dona et promissa plurima hoc fidei nexu utrimque confirmatum esset, de Edessena urbe sagacissime L fere clientes illuc ob id missi sunt; et quasi pauperrimi merces ferentes atque vendentes usque ad portas interioris castri, occasione quadam nata, se paulatim intromiserunt'.

[21] WT, p. 568: 'Habitu ergo se simulant monachos, sicas sub laxis vestibus portantes, ad predictum tendunt opidum tanquam de negociis monasteriorum acturi aliquid, simulant verbo et gemitu et faciei modificatione se a quibusdam vim iniuriamque passos [...] alii dicunt eos quasi mercatores, vilium mercium portitores, opdium ingressos'.

[22] *Armenia and the Crusades, Tenth to Twelfth Centuries: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa,* trans. by Ara Edmond Dostourian (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993), pp. 229–30.

[23] Y. N. Harari, *Special Operations*, p. 86.

warmly welcomed by 'Ursinus', the city's Christian ruler. Tancred asked how Ursinus was able to maintain his rule there, surrounded as he was by the Turks. Ursinus responded with a detailed account of how he had recently liberated Adana from Turkish rule. The citizens of Adana, noticing that the hay carts they brought in from the fields were never inspected by the Turkish guards, conceived a plan to smuggle armed men into the city under the hay. Ursinus provided both the infiltrating force and a diversion, raiding in sight of the walls and then feigning flight in order to draw the garrison away. Once the infiltrators had seized the defences, Ursinus turned back and drove the Turks to the city gates, which were now shut against them, where they were all killed. According to Ralph, Tancred's only response to this tale was to exclaim: 'Thanks be to God!'[24]

Scholars have struggled to conclusively identify 'Ursinus'. F. C. R. Robinson, P. C. Hughes and Christopher MacEvitt all tentatively identify him with Oshin of Lampron, head of the noble Armenian family the Hethoumids. In 1072 Oshin was granted command of the Cilician fortress of Lampron by the Byzantine governor of Tarsus. Taking advantage of the disintegration of both Turkish and Byzantine power in the region, he may have sought to claim Adana for himself in 1097.[25] While Ralph of Caen portrays 'Ursinus' as an eager ally of Tancred and the other Franks, MacEvitt suggested that Ursinus's suggestion that Tancred attack the city of Mamistra was actually a cynical act of self-preservation. As a recent newcomer to the region himself, Ursinus was uncertain of his position and sought to use the crusaders against his own enemies.[26]

How then should we interpret 'Ursinus's tale in the *Gesta*? It cannot be corroborated: no other crusading chronicle mentions it. Albert of Aachen does refer to Tancred's expedition to Adana but his account is quite different: instead of Ursinus, he reports that the town had recently been captured by a Burgundian crusader named Welf, with whom Tancred later negotiated a trade deal.[27] Stephen Runciman attempted to square the two accounts by arguing that Oshin had captured only part of the city, while Welf held the citadel, but there is no contemporary evidence to support this.[28] The story of the troops hidden in the hay wagon is probably a fiction, either repeated or invented wholesale by

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[24] GT, pp. 39–41.

[25] Christopher MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East: Rough Tolerance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 55–57; F. C. R. Robinson and P. C. Hughes, 'Lampron: Castle of Armenian Cilicia', *Anatolian Studies*, 19 (1969), 183–207 (here 184).

[26] MacEvitt, *Christian World*, p. 58.

[27] AA, pp. 152–54.

[28] Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), I, p. 199.

Ralph, but it is still significant that it was ascribed to the generally admirable figure of 'Ursinus' and that Tancred is depicted approving of the stratagem.[29]

5.2 Dead Bodies and Fake Corpses

Feigning death to enter or exit a stronghold, a variant of the 'category disguise', is simultaneously one of the least plausible tales of military deception in medieval history and one of the most widely circulated, being attributed to a variety of actors in a variety of theatres. The first written account of the ruse appears in Dudo of Saint Quentin's *Historia Normannorum.* Dudo's chronicle, commissioned by Richard I of Normandy c. 994–96, was composed to help legitimise the ducal dynasty as Christian lords worthy to be counted among the princes of Western Europe. Rollo, the first duke, inspired by a divine vision, is depicted leading his people across the sea into a new land, where they are baptised into the Christian faith.[30] His foil in the narrative is Hasting, a violent and unrepentant pagan chieftain who, although unrelated to Rollo by blood, serves as a symbolic ancestor to both the Norman dukes and their people: he is a representation of their dark past that was abandoned at the baptismal font.[31]

Hasting's chief outrage was the sack of the Italian city of Ligna (which he believed to be Rome). Realising that he could not take the city by force, Hasting 'invented a cunning stratagem of most abominable deceit'.[32] First, he sent word to the citizens that he was dying and wished to be baptised. The citizens believed him, agreed to a truce and permitted him to enter the city for baptism. Dudo makes much of this act of impiety: 'Meanwhile the bath is prepared by the bishop, which will be of no benefit to the faithless man [...] The faithless man enters the font, washing only his body. The wicked man receives baptism, to the ruin of his soul'.[33] Hasting then instructed his men to claim that he had died in the night and that they wished to bring the 'corpse' into the city for a Christian burial. The

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[29] Hanawalt has suggested that this may have been due to the fact that Tancred was reliant upon the local Armenians during these early campaigns and that he grew to 'genuinely' admire them: Emily A. Hanawalt, 'Norman Views of Eastern Christendom, from the First Crusade to the Principality of Antioch.', in *The Meeting of Two Worlds: Cultural Exchange between East and West during the Period of the Crusades*, ed. by Vladimir P. Goss (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986), pp. 115–21 (here 119).

[30] Dudo of Saint Quentin, *History of the Normans*, trans. by Eric Christiansen (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998), p. xxiii; Benjamin Pohl, *Dudo of Saint-Quentin's Historia Normannorum: Tradition, Innovation and Memory* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2015), p. 83.

[31] Dudo, *History*, p. xix; Pohl, *Dudo of Saint Quentin's Historia*, pp. 135–36.

[32] Dudo, p. 133: 'dolosum reperit consilium nefandissimae fraudis'.

[33] Dudo, p. 133: 'Interim praeparatur ab episcopo balneum, perfido non profuturum [...] Intrat perfidus fontes, corpus tantum diluentes. Suscipit nefarius baptismum, ad animae suae interitum'.

citizens agreed and admitted the burial party, who had secreted weapons inside the funeral bier. Following the funeral Mass, once again conducted by the bishop: 'Hasting jumped off the bier, and drew his gleaming sword from its sheath. The cruel man attacked the prelate, who was holding a book in his hand'.[34] The city was pillaged and all the citizens either slaughtered or enslaved. When the raiders discovered that they were not actually in Rome but Ligna, they burned the city and rampaged through the surrounding country in revenge.[35]

Hasting is clearly the villain of Dudo's chronicle, the mirror image of the heroic Rollo, whose sincere baptism parallels the false one Hasting received to gain entry to Ligna. As Benjamin Pohl has observed, Rollo's baptism cleanses him and the Norman people from the 'original sin' of Hasting.[36] This makes it all the more remarkable that the ruse of the fake corpse, the instrument of Hasting's greatest crime, was attributed to a variety of individuals over the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, usually in a laudatory context. Robert Guiscard was claimed to have employed it in no less than three separate chronicles. Matthew Paris wrote that he used it to seize Monte Cassino:

> That mountain was impregnable, that is to say, accessible to only a few, unless the monks and the other inhabitants wished it; Robert Guiscard only captured the monks' *castellum* unexpectedly through a contrivance, by which he pretended to be dead and was carried inside on a bier.[37]

In the *Gesta Tancredi,* during a conflict between Arnulf of Chocques, who had assumed the authority of the papal legate, and Tancred following the sack of Jerusalem in 1099, Arnulf lambasts Tancred for dividing the plunder from the Temple with his men, which ought to have gone to the Church:

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[34] Dudo, p. 134: 'Alstignus feretro desiluit, ensemque fulgentem vagina deripuit. Invasit funestus praesulem, librum manu tenentem'.

[35] Dudo, p. 135.

[36] Pohl, *Dudo*, p. 212. For more analysis of Hasting, see Pierre Bouet, 'Hasting, le Viking pervers selon Dudon de Saint-Quentin', *Annales de Normandie*, 62 (2012), 215–34; Frederick Amory, 'The Viking Hasting in Franco-Scandanavian Legend', in *Saints, Scholars and Heroes: Studies in Medieval Culture in Honour of Charles W. Jones*, ed. by Margot H. King and Wesley M. Stevens, 2 vols (Collegeville, MN: University of Collegeville, Minnesota, 1979), II, 265–86.

[37] Matthew Paris, *Chronica majora,* ed. by Henry Richards Luard, RS, 57, 7 vols (London: Longman, 1872–83), III, 538: 'Erat autem mons ille inexpugnabilis, immo inaccessibilis alicui, nisi ex voluntate monachorum et aliorum inhabitantium in eo; nisi tantummodo quod R[obertus] Guichard per excogitationem, qua se mortuum simulavit, in feretro in illum delatus, castra monachorum subito occupavit'.

> But one ought to be kind to a Guiscard: for he followed in his forefathers' footsteps. Who, amidst embraces, amidst kisses, threw his own cousin tumbling from the walls? Guiscard, of course! Who was borne alive into Monte Cassino like one dead, living as if to be buried? Surely it was Guiscard! Who first poured hot water then cold upon his nephew, whom he had enticed into friendship? The same Guiscard! Yet he is said have been a founder of churches, not a destroyer: he did not despoil but furnished many.[38]

The context here, listing the 'fake corpse' ruse between two examples of familial treachery, is certainly negative. Tancred's response, however, indicates that this was not a universally held opinion:

> You all heard him, there is no need for an external witness, with what persuasive force he savaged my ancestry: a man who has not seen any prince arise from his own lineage disparaged such a prince as Guiscard, second only to Alexander in boldness. The deeds of Guiscard are known throughout the world. It is impossible to disparage them, unless one always tried to paint white on black and black on white.[39]

The portrayal of Guiscard elsewhere in the *Gesta Tancredi* is more in keeping with Tancred's valorization than Arnulf's criticism. Compare the opening section of the chronicle, which celebrates Tancred's relation to Guiscard through his mother: 'For who does not esteem the valour of Guiscard, before whose conquering banners, it is said, in one day the Greek and German emperors trembled?'[40]

The most detailed account of Guiscard's use of the 'fake corpse' trick is found in William of Apulia's laudatory *Gesta Roberti Wiscardi*. William does not name the town that Guiscard attacked, saying only that 'it was difficult for him to climb up to because there

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[38] GT, pp. 112–13: 'At indulgendum est Wiscardidae: secutus est enim patrum suorum uestigia. Quis inter amplexus, inter oscula compatrem suum a menibus rota deiecit? Nempe Wiscardus! Quis uiuus pro mortuo, incolumis pro tumulando, in montem Cassinum perlatus est? Vtique Wiscardus! Quis nepotem suum, ad concordiam elicitum, prius calida mox gelida perfudit? Idem Wiscardus! Qui tamen fertur ecclesiarum fundator, non subuersor; nec denudasse, at multas ornasse'.

[39] GT, p. 114: 'Audistis ipsi, non est externo opus teste, qua ui persuadente genus meum corroserit: Wiscardo, secundae ab Alexandro audaciae, detraxit, tanto principi homo, de cuius sobole quispiam principem non uidit. Wiscardi acta nota sunt orbi, non est qui possit detrahere, nisi qui semper studuit candidum in nigra, nigrum in candida colorare'.

[40] GT, p. 6: 'Quis enim Wiscardi probitatem non probet, cuius signa sub uno, ut aiunt, die Grecus Alemannusque imperator tremuerunt uictricia?'

were many inhabitants, also a monastic flock, who would not permit strangers to enter'.[41] Unable to storm the town, Guiscard sent word that one of his men had died and he needed to bury him in the town's monastery. The monks agreed and the 'corpse' was prepared for burial. William adds the notable detail that he 'was placed upon a bier and a silk cloth spread over him, having been commanded to hide his face, as it is the Normans' custom to cover up corpses'.[42] The funeral procession entered the town but, in contrast to the story of Hasting, they never actually entered the monastery, only reaching the entrance (*limina*) before the deception was revealed and swords were drawn. Nor was there any great slaughter: '[the townsfolk] were all captured, and Robert established his first garrison in the *castrum*. The monastery was not destroyed, the monastic flock was not expelled from there'.[43] The essential story is the same but William has removed the sacreligious and morally troubling elements from Dudo: the fake baptism, the slaughter of the clerics, the destruction of holy places. All that remains is an irreverent display of Guiscard's 'craft' (*arte*).

This ruse was also associated with other members of Guiscard's family. Otto of Freising attributed it to Roger II of Sicily, claiming that he employed it during the invasion of Corfu in 1147:

> Therefore, when certain men had been sent ahead, so it is said, who pretended to carry a corpse to be buried — for there is a community of clerics or monks in the citadel of the aforesaid fortress, in the Greek manner — they rushed into the *castrum*, occupied the citadel, and, when the Greeks had been ejected, they placed their own men there.[44]

Anna Komnene described Bohemond using a similar trick to escape Antioch in September 1104. As he was struggling to defend his newly-founded principality against both the neighbouring Muslim powers and the Byzantine empire, Bohemond planned to return to Western Europe and raise fresh forces to help bolster his position in the Near East.

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[41] WA, p. 150: 'sed eius / Difficilis conscensus erat, quia plurimus huius / Accola, grex habitans etiam monasticus illic, / Non alienigenam quemvis intrare sinebant'.
[42] WA, p. 150: 'Qui cum, quasi mortuus, esset / Impositus feretro, pannusque obducere cera / Illitus hunc facie iussus latitante fuisset, / Ut Normannorum velare cadavera mos est'. Reading *saeta* for *cera*.
[43] WA, p. 150: 'omnes capiuntur, et illic / Praesidium castri primum, Roberte, locasti. / Non monasterii tamen est eversio facta, / Non extirpatus grex est monasticus'.
[44] Otto von Freising and Rahewin, *Die Taten Friedrichs oder richtiger Cronica,* ed. by Franz-Josef Schmale, trans. by Adolf Schmidt (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftleiche Buchgesellschaft, 1965), p. 198: 'Igitur premissis quibusdam, ut dicitur, qui se quempiam mortuum humandi gratia deferre simularent – est enim in predicta arce castri, sicut Grecis mos est, congregatio clericorum seu monachorum – idem castrum irruunt, arcem occupant, Grecis eiectis presidiisque suis ibidem locatis'.

According to Anna, in order to avoid capture by the Byzantine navy, he spread the rumour that he had died. A special coffin was prepared, with hidden air holes, and the 'body' was carried onto a ship at Soudi. When the ship was out at sea, Bohemond would get out of the coffin and walk around but, when approaching the land, he would climb into the coffin with a dead cockerel 'in order that the corpse might appear to be in a state of rare putrefaction'.[45]

There is a second, apparently independent tradition, that attributes the 'fake corpse' ruse to Harald Sigurtharson, also known as Harald Hardrada. Following the battle of Stikalrstathir in 1030, Harald was exiled from Norway. In 1034 he entered the service of Michael IV the Paphlagonian, emperor of Byzantium, as a member of the elite Varangian Guard. Between 1038 and 1041, Harald fought under Georgios Maniakes in a campaign to reconquer Sicily for the empire.[46] It is in this context that the story of him employing the 'fake corpse' ruse appears in the *Morkinskinna,* the earliest surviving compendium of Norse king's sagas, compiled c. 1220.[47] In this version of the tale, the plan is proposed by Harald to enter a city that the Byzantine army cannot storm. As in the *Gesta Roberti Guiscardi,* the (empty) coffin never actually enters the monastery: it is dropped across the city gateway to wedge it open while the rest of the army rushes inside.[48]

As this compilation was written down long after their first composition, it is difficult to determine what its original sources were. Theodore M. Andersson and Kari Ellen Gade suggest that the descriptions of Harald's Byzantine service may have been based on oral testimony, as does Sigfus Blöndal, who described the spectacular adventures as 'much-expanded self-justifications, originally told by Haraldr [sic] and blown up by his flatterers'.[49] This fails to explain the similarities between the story in this saga and that of Hasting in Dudo's chronicle, which predated Harald's exile in Byzantium by some thirty years. While it is possible that both tales have their origins in a lost, oral motif from Scandinavian folklore or saga traditions, there is no textual evidence for this. The striking similarities between these two tales must lead one to prefer Dudo as the originator of the tale and the sagas as the imitator. It may have been transmitted orally, via Scandinavians in

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[45] Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad,* trans. by E. R. A. Sewter (London: Penguin, 1969), pp. 366–67.
[46] Sigfus Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium: An Aspect of Byzantine Military History*, trans. by Benedikt S. Benedikz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 65–67.
[47] *Morkinskinna: The Earliest Icelandic Chronicle of the Norwegian Kings (1030–1157),* ed. and trans. by Theodore M. Andersson and Kari Ellen Gade (London: Cornell University Press, 2000), p. 1.
[48] *Morkinskinna,* pp. 141–43. This saga was also included by the Icelandic writer Sturlson (d. 1241) in his collection of kings' sagas, the *Heimskringla*: Snorri Sturlson, *Heimskringla: History of the Kings of Norway,* trans. by Lee M. Hollander (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1964), p. 585.
[49] *Morkinskinna*, p. 63; Blöndal, *Varangians*, p. 66.

Byzantine service, from Normans in southern Italy, as Klaus Rossenbeck has suggested, or by Scandinanvian scholars who travelled south and encountered the story in a Continental chronicle.[50] This would explain why the sagas depict a Muslim garrison permitting a Christian burial party to enter their city: it is a legacy from the original, Dudo's *Historia,* that becomes a nonsense when it became applied to Harald's historical campaign.

As stated at the beginning of this section, this is a highly implausible ruse. It is very unlikely that Guiscard, or any other commander, ever actually employed it. Yet its very survival, across multiple texts from different locations, tells us that it was a story that contemporaries enjoyed hearing. Stripped of the blasphemous elements that made the original so monstrous, it became an exemplar of cunning that could be comfortably ascribed to either a hero or a worthy foe.

5.3 Strength in Numbers: Looking More Numerous

The disguises analysed above were employed by, at most, a handful of individuals. The following section considers a form of disguise employed by entire armies: ruses to make a force appear more numerous than it truly was. This stratagem dates back to the pre-Christian era. Frontinus records that in 109 B.C.E., during a battle with the Scordisci and Dacians of central Europe, the Roman general Minucius Rufus sent trumpeters into the hills to give the impression that reinforcements were approaching.[51] In 358 B.C.E. the consul Gaius Sulpicius Peticus had mule drivers mount their animals to simulate a cavalry force in a battle against the Gauls.[52] The latter example, from Livy's *Ab urbe condita,* may have influenced Andrew of Fleury's *Miracula Sancti Benedicti,* a mid-eleventh-century chronicle of the region around Fleury Abbey in central France. According to Andrew, in 1038 Odo, count of Déols, refused to submit to the peace council convened by Aimon, archbishop of Bourges. Aimon assembled an army and confronted Odo's forces on the banks of the Cher. Andrew ascribes Odo's subsequent defeat to both divine intervention, in the form of a thunderbolt that fell in the midst of Odo's army, and the army's ingenuity:

> Furthermore, the people, seeing that they were far fewer in number than their adversaries, who outnumbered the grains of sand in the sea, seized upon this

[50] Klaus Rossenbeck, *Die Stellung der Riddarassogur in der Altnordischen Prosaliteratur: Eine Untersuchung an Hand des Erzählstils* (Bamberg: Rodenbusch, 1970), pp. 78–79.
[51] Frontinus, *Strategemata,* p. 43.
[52] Frontinus, *Strategemata,* p. 43.

> strategy: that the foot soldiers, having climbed up onto whatever animals there were to hand, should mingle in the middle of the band of knights, so that they were thought to be knights by [their enemies] as much from the appearance of the horsemen as from the opposition of arms. About two thousand of the common multitude, having mounted asses, were distributed among the ranks in the middle of the horsemen.[53]

This battle is another reminder of the importance of reading medieval military narratives in their full context, rather than selecting the 'plausible' details. Andrew of Fleury attributed Aimon's victory to both the miraculous thunderbolt and the ruse: both were evidence of the righteousness of the archbishop's cause and a demonstration of God's favour. His account probably tells us more about the political and religious significance of the Peace of God movement and the influence of Livy on medieval historians than about the realities of warfare.

One method of making a force appear larger that is found in multiple chronicles was displaying numerous banners. A banner (which should be distinguished from the smaller pennant or *gonfanon*) served as a rallying point and identification for a substantial group of combatants, such as the following of a great lord or members of an urban guild.[54] A force with many banners could be assumed to contain many people. Roger of Wendover reports that the commanders of the Anglo-French force besieging Lincoln on 20 May 1217, Thomas, count of Perche and the 'Marshal of France', made just this assumption when viewing the approaching royalist army.[55] Although their English allies reported that the royalists were few in number, the French were not convinced:

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[53] MSB pp. 196–97: 'Porro adversa partis populus multo se inferiorem prospiciens, cum illi numero maris superarent arenam, id consilii capiunt ut pedites, ascensis quibuscumque animalibus, mediis militum se miscerent cohortibus, ut tam ex figurata specie equitandi quam ex oppositione armorum milites arbitrarentur ab illis. Nec mora, ad duo millia plebeiae multitudinis, ascensis asinis, medio equitum ordine partiuntur equestri'.

[54] See below for a discussion of the different methods by which combatants distinguished friend from foe in this period.

[55] Roger does not name the Marshal, presumably the same *mareschallus Franciae* who was listed among the French noblemen who escaped the ensuing battle: RW, IV, 26. Identifying him is difficult. Henry Richards Luard, in his edition of Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora,* calls him Walter of Nismes but provides no supporting references: Paris, *Chronica Majora,* III, 20 n. 4. This would be Walter of Nismes the Younger, who fought at Bouvines and died while participating in the Fifth Crusade, but he does not appear to have been in England at this time: John W. Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus: Foundations of French Royal Power in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986), p. 108. The question is further complicated by the fact that, according to Baldwin, the title 'Marshal of France' was not yet a hereditary one in 1217: Baldwin, *Philip Augustus,* p. 113. A more plausible identification may be William of Beaumont, known as Rat's Foot, whom the *Histoire des ducs de Normandie* says accompanied Louis of France to England in 1216 and who 'was the marshal of many others': *Histoire des ducs de Normandie et des rois d'Angleterre,* ed. by Francisque Michel

> Replying to them, the count of Perche and the Marshal said: "You assessed them according to your knowledge; and we will go out now, to assess them according to the Gallic custom". So they went out to assess the king's army which was coming but they were deceived in their assessment; for, when they first saw the wagons and baggage behind the army with their guards, who were following the formations which had been arranged for battle, they reckoned that they were part of the same army because they observed a great multitude there with fluttering banners; for each magnate had two banners, one, as we said, following with the baggage in the rear, far from the formations, and the other preceding the body of each, by which they might be known when engaging in battle; and so the count of Perche, with the Marshal, being duped, returned to their allies feeling doubtful.[56]

While this does not appear to have been a deliberate stratagem by the royalists (Roger's intent was probably to highlight the arrogance of the French, who insisted on using 'Gallic custom' rather than rely on the Englishmen's assessment) it nevertheless illustrates the principle behind such ruses: raising many banners gave the impression that many men were at hand, which would intimidate the enemy and make them less inclined to stand and fight.

Ralph of Caen reports that this ruse was used by participants in the First Crusade at the siege of Antioch. As Karbughā's army approached to relieve the city in February 1098, the crusaders sent a force across the Iron Bridge to confront them, taking up position at the foot of a small hill:

> However crossing over, as prudent as they were bold, they struck terror into the enemies and added to their belief that our few men were a great multitude. For this reason the Turks, when they approached, halted, fearing that the aforementioned hill, which showed a few, might conceal many. Pretending that

(Paris: Renouard, 1840), p. 161: 'et Guillaumes de Biaumont, uns petis chevaliers que on apieloit en sournon Piés-de-rat, et pluisour autre dont Guillaumes Piés-de-rat fu mareschaus'.

[56] RW, IV, 21: 'Quibus comes Perticensis et Mareschallus respondentes dixerunt, "Vos aestimastis illos juxta scientiam vestram; et nos exibimus modo, ut aestimemus eos juxta consuetudinem Gallicanam". Exierunt ergo ut aestimarent exercitum regis venientem, sed in aestimatione decepti fuerunt; nam, cum primo vidissent a tergo exercitus bigas et sarcinas cum custodibus earum, qui cuneos jam ad bellum dispositos sequebantur, aestimaverunt unum esse per se exercitum, quia ibi multitudinem magnam cum vexillis micantibus inspexerunt; habuerunt enim singuli magnatum duo vexilla, unum, ut jam diximus, cum sarcinis a tergo remotius cuneos sequens, et aliud corpora singulorum praecedens, per quod cognoscerentur praelia conserentes; sicque comes Perticensis cum Mareschallo illusus ad socios remeavit incertus'.

> this was so, the Christians equipped their lances with banners, each and every one, as if many divisions were hiding as the number of banners they held up.[57]

A similar incident, also from Outremer, was recorded by Guibert de Nogent. He reported that Baldwin I of Jerusalem exiled Gervais de Bazoches, lord of Tiberias, from the kingdom due to his 'insolence'.[58] Gervais departed Tiberias with only two knights, 'attended by many squires', when he was attacked by a large force of Muslims:

> Despairing of the number of his men, but constantly looking to God, cutting his shirt, which is called an 'under-tunic', he put it on a lance like a banner and ordered his men to do likewise. This being done, and having raised a battle-cry, they urged their horses on with their spurs, and were carried into the enemies barring their way, who, being terrified by their unexpected daring, since they thought they were being followed by many cohorts, took flight and exposed themselves by withdrawing before those three.[59]

Gervais was victorious but, 'moved to repentance by God', he returned to Baldwin and threw himself on his mercy. While his stratagem appears to have been more makeshift than the one employed at Antioch, it was essentially the same plan, especially if one assumes that the *armigeri* were also equipped with fake banners. These two incidents underline the importance of performance in executing ruses, as previously discussed in relation to the feigned flight: it was not simply the display of the banners that deceived the enemy, it was the confidence with which the crusaders attacked that convinced them that they were facing a large and powerful force.

Banners were not the only means by which a small force could be made to seem large. On 16 February 1099, Raymond Pilet and and Raymond, viscount of Turenne, detatched themselves from the crusading army of Raymond of Saint-Gilles in order to

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[57] GT, p. 55: 'Illa autem transmeatio, tam prudens quam audax, magnum incussit terrorem hostibus, nostrorumque paucitatem plurimae multitudinis opinione cumulauit. Ideo Turci, cum appropiant, substant, metuentes, ne mons prescriptus paucos ostenderet, multos absconderet. Ipsum hoc simulantes, Christicolae hastas uexillis armant, singula singulis aptantes, quasi tot abderent agmina, quot proderent uexilla'.

[58] Guibert does not provide a date for this misadventure but, as Gervais was appointed to the lordship in 1106 and was executed in May 1108 after being captured by the Damascene Turks, we must assume it happened sometime between those two dates.

[59] GdN, pp. 347–48: 'Qui suo diffidens numero, ad deum vero utcumque respectans, concisa camisia quam "subuculam" dicunt, hastae pro vexillo apposuit itidemque socios facere iussit. Fecerunt, et clamore sublato sonipedes calcaribus urgent obviosque feruntur in hostes, qui territi repentinis ausibus, dum estimant quod quasi previos sequerentur multae cohortes, fugam ineunt seque tribus illis cedendos exponunt'.

attack the coastal city of Tortosa (mod. Tartūs, Syria). According to the *Gesta Francorum,* although they were unable to take it in the initial assault:

> when it was already late in the day, they withdrew into a certain out-of-the-way spot, where they were lodged; they made innumerable fires, as if the whole host was there. And the pagans, much frightened with dread, fled secretly in the night, and left the city full of all good things, which also has a most excellent port by the sea.[60]

Some of the descriptions of the battle of Ascalon (12 August 1099) suggest that the crusaders' army appeared much larger to the Egyptians because herds of animals had become intermingled with their formations. Fulcher of Chartres interpreted this as a miracle:

> You should see the aforesaid plunder [i.e. the animals that were going to be plundered by the crusaders], on the right and left of the divisions, acting correctly, as if it had been commanded by the leaders, advancing in step with them, although it is being driven by nobody: so that from a distance many of the pagans, seeing it advancing with our men, reckoned that it was all the army of Franks.[61]

Albert of Aachen offered a more mundane interpretation:

> Whence, ears pricked up, [the animals] were stunned, and standing for a long time, eventually they were joined by our horsemen and foot soldiers, and so, having been mixed up with the formations of armed men, they advanced when they advanced, and they stood when they stood, and multiplying the dust cloud, at a distance they struck fear in the Saracens, who were ignorant of this, by their great numbers.[62]

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[60] GF, pp. 83–84: 'Sero autem iam facto, secesserunt in quemdam angulum, ibique hospitati sunt; feceruntque innumerabiles ignes, ita ut tota hostis esset ibi. Pagani uero timore perterriti nocte latenter fugerunt, et dimiserunt ciuitatem plenam omnibus bonis, quae etiam ualde optimum portum secus mare in se retinet'. See also RM, p. 854.

[61] FC, pp. 313–14: 'videretis praedictam praedam tanquam monitu ducentium a dextra et laeva parte acierum gressum suum recte agere, licet a nemine minaretur: ita ut multi paganorum eam a longe cum militibus nostris euntem spectantes, totum aestimarent esse Francorum exercitum'.

[62] AA, p. 462: 'Vnde arrectis auribus stupefacti, et inmobiles diu persistentes tandem sociantur equitibus et peditibus, et sic armatis cuneis permixti, cum euntibus ibant, et cum stantibus stabant, ac nubem pulueris

Both chroniclers are clear that the Egyptians were only deceived 'from a distance' (*a longe*) but the effect on their morale was clearly believed to have been significant enough to be worthy of record.

Albert's reference to the great dust cloud raised by the herds at Ascalon is reminiscent of an incident recorded in Raymond of Aguilers's *Historia Francorum*. In June 1099, during the siege of Jerusalem, Geldemar Carpinel was sent by Raymond of Saint-Gilles to collect supplies that had recently been landed at Jaffa. He was attacked near Ramla by a much larger force of Muslims and was on the verge of surrendering when a second force, commanded by Ramond Pilet, came to his rescue:

> But when our leaders, now greatly wearied from exhaustion rather than from fear, might have been willing to surrender, a cloud of dust being seen in the distance, the swift Raymond Pilet entered headlong into the fight, and so much dust was stirred up that the enemies believed a great many knights to be with him.[63]

It is noteworthy that all of the examples discussed in this section are from chronicles of the First Crusade, the first major military encounter between Western Europeans and peoples of the Near East in this period. Some were caused by the geography. After all, it is easier to raise a dust cloud during summer in Palestine than during winter in Normandy. The ability to dupe enemies with false banners, however, may have been due to the Turks being unfamiliar with Western military custom. No Western observer would have mistaken a shirt tied to a lance for a banner but, if this was the Turks' first encounter with a crusading force, they might have failed to make this distinction. It is telling that the only Western example I have found of somebody making this mistake, at Lincoln in 1217, comes from a hostile chronicler who wished to highlight the dupes' arrogance and ignorance.

5.4 Marks of Distinction: Cries, Cognizances and Coats of Arms

The final category of disguise to be analysed in this chapter encompasses those disguises that made the deceiver appear to be a different combatant, be that an ally of the deceived

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multiplicantes, Sarracenis rem ignorantibus sua multitudine copiosa a longe metum inferebant'. See also WT, pp. 435–36.

[63] RA, pp. 294–95: 'Sed dum nostri duces, jam magis fatigati ex lassitudine quam ex timore confecti, declinare vellent, cognito pulvere a longe Raimundus Pelet praeceps et festinus in pugnam intravit, atque tantum pulverem commovebat, ut crederent hostes cum eo plurimos esse milites'.

or simply a different individual. This requires a discussion of how medieval combatants were able to distinguish friend from foe in an age before standardised uniforms, and the origins of heraldry, which first appeared in the twelfth century, and its practical function on the battlefield.

Some method of identification was clearly necessary, especially with the development of the great helm in the late twelfth century, which covered the wearer's entire head, rendering combatants practically anonymous. The problem of distinguishing one group of armoured men from another is aptly illustrated by an incident that occurred during King Stephen of England's siege of Baldwin de Redvers at Exeter in 1136. One of Baldwin's allies, Alred, son of Joel, arrived secretly at the siege with a band of knights, where they 'mingled with the king's knights under the appearance of aiding the king, for it was not possible, among so many wearing hauberks, to easily distinguish who was who'.[64] Sending messengers into the castle (as discussed in Chapter 2), Alred arranged for Baldwin's garrison to make a sally at a pre-arranged time. In the confusion, Alred's men were able to break away from the royal siege lines and enter the castle unhindered.[65]

A simple way of identifying oneself in battle was by shouting a distinctive word or phrase.[66] For example, Wace recorded the various battle-cries used by the commanders at Val-ès-Dunes (1047):

> As they spur their horses on, they shout out their particular war-cry: those from France shout '*Montjoie!',* it pleases them to hear that; William [the Conqueror] shouts: '*Deus aïe!*'; that's the war-cry of Normandy; Nigel [II, viscount of the Cotentin] cries: "*Saint Salveor",* that is the war-cry of his domain, and Ranulf [of Briquessart, viscount of the Bessin] shouts in a loud voice: '*Saint Saveir, sire Saint Saveir!*', and Haimo Longtooth [lord of Torigny] goes forward calling: '*Saint Amant, sire Saint Amant!*'[67]

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[64] GS, pp. 37–39: 'Esoniamque cum fortissima militum manu frater illius latenter aduentans, inter regios milites (nec enim possible erat, inter tot loricatos, quis ille vel iste esset facile discernere), sub specie regem adjuuantium se commiscuit)'.

[65] If true, this incident would be another example of how lax security arrangements could be in a medieval army camp. One would have expected a newly-arrived troop of knights to be at least questioned by somebody.

[66] Isabelle Guyot-Bachy, 'Cris et trompettes: Les Échos de la guerre chez les historiens et les chroniqueurs', in *Haro! Noël! Oyé! Pratiques du cri au Moyen Âge*, ed. by Didier Lett and Nicolas Offenstadt (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2003), pp. 103–16 (here 109–13).

[67] RdR, 3, lines 3877–3950: 'si com poignent criant vont / itels enseignes com il ont. / Cil de France crient: "Montjoie" / ceo lor est bel que l'en les oie; / Guillame crie: "Deus aïe" / c'est l'enseigne de Normendie; /

Note that *enseigne,* used here for war-cry, could also be used to mean a banner, standard or any sign or token, emphasising its purpose as a means of identification.[68] The French use of '*Montjoie'* can be traced back at least as far back as the Oxford *Chanson de Roland*: '[Oliver] does not want to forget Charles's war-cry, "*Munjoie!*" he cries, high and clear'.[69]

Unsurprisingly, some enterprising individuals adopted their enemy's war-cry in order to deceive them. Orderic Vitalis relates how in 1119 a certain Ascelin, son of Andrew, wishing to revenge himself upon Geoffrey, archbishop of Rouen, who had seized land from him, approached Louis VI of France with a promise to betray the Norman town of Andely.[70] Ascelin was given a band of 'most valiant men' (*probissimos satellites*), whom he introduced into Andely, hiding them under some straw in his storehouse. That night, Louis's army approached the town:

> In the morning, when the king was seen, the people cried out in a loud voice, and a great commotion seized the inhabitants on account of this sudden, unexpected occurrence. But those who had been lying under the straw suddenly rushed forth and, shouting the royal war-cry of the English together with the commoners, ran to the citadel; but, having entered, they changed to crying 'My joy!', which is the French war-cry. And so, when the inhabitants had been shut out, the French held the castle interior, and the king's troops violently entered through the gates and obtained the whole town.[71]

Marjorie Chibnall is almost certainly correct to identify the phrase 'Meum gaudium' as a translation of the vernacular 'Montjoie', presumably mistaking *mont* for *mon*.[72] Note also the similarity between the Latin *signum* and the Old French *enseigne:* both can mean sign, banner or war-cry, depending on the context.[73] Orderic's use of the phrase 'royal war-cry of the

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Neel crie "Saint Salveor!" / ceo est l'enseigne de s'enor, / e Ranof crie o grant poeir: "Saint Saveir, sire Saint Saveir" / e Ham as Denz vait reclamant: "Saint Amant, sire Saint Amant"'.

[68] 'enseigne', *Anglo-Norman Dictionary: Online Edition*, <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/enseigne> [Accessed 07 Jun 2018].

[69] *Song of Roland*, lines 1973–74: 'L'enseigne Carle n'i volt mie ublïer, / Munjoie escriet e haltement e cler'. For a study of the use of 'Munjoie' in the chanson, see Julian Harris, '*Munjoie* and *Reconuisance* in *Chanson de Roland*, l. 3620', *Romance Philology*, 10 (1956), 168–73.

[70] Andely, the future site of Château Gaillard, was a site of major strategic importance on the Franco-Norman frontier. The archbishops of Rouen had a fortified manor there: OV, VI, 216 n. 2.

[71] OV, VI, 217: 'Mane uiso rege uociferatio populi personuit, et nimia perturbatio pro tam insperata re repente incolas inuasit. Latitantes uero sub stramine subito proruperunt, et regale signum Anglorum cum plebe uociferantes ad munitionem cucurrerunt; sed ingressi "Meum gaudium" quod Francorum signum est uersa uice clamauerunt. Exclusis itaque indigenis Galli castrum interius optinuerunt, et turmae regis per portas uiolenter intrauerunt, totamque uillam nactae sunt'.

[72] OV, VI, 218.

[73] Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary,* pp. 1697–98.

English', rather than 'the Normans', can be explained by the fact that the citadel of Andely was held at that time by Richard of Lincoln, an illegitimate son of Henry I of England, who was permitted to depart, together with his garrison, after the assault.[74]

Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, a chronicler of the Albigensian Crusade, records that Peter-Roger, the lord of Cabaret, used a similar ruse in 1210 to escape from Simon de Monfort's men after a failed attempt to burn their siege engines in a night raid: 'likewise they might have captured the lord of Cabaret, P[eter] Roger, two or three times, but he began to cry out with our men, "Montfort! Montfort!" out of fear, as if he were one of us, and so escaping and fleeing through the mountains, he returned to Cabaret after less than two days'.[75] Peter reports a grim sequel to this incident that occurred after a crusader victory at Castelnaudary in 1211. The crusaders, upon capturing one of the fleeing enemy, would force them to kill one of the other fugitives to prove their identity, then kill the captive regardless.[76] This suggests that there was some other way for the crusaders to distinguish their enemies from their companions, such as their appearance or the fact that the enemy would have spoken Occitan, which the crusaders, drawn mostly from northern France, would not. By contrast, it would have been much easier to pass men from the Ile-de-France for French-speaking Anglo-Normans, as Orderic claims happened at Andely.

This form of diguise could work just as easily the other way, of course: shouting out false information to confuse or misdirect the enemy. As described above, Aelred of Rievaulx claimed that the English army was rallied at the battle of the Standard when somebody held up a severed head, (falsely) shouting that the king of Scotland had been killed.[77] A similar, if less gruesome, ruse reportedly saved Richard I of England from being captured in a skirmish outside Jaffa in September 1191. Richard and his men had gone out ahead of the main army and pursued a band of Turkish horsemen into an ambush. According to the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum*:

> Perhaps the Turks might have captured him then, for he was devoid of human aid, if they had recognised him. But see! since those who were struggling in that combat had become mixed together, one of the king's companions, named William of Préaux, cried out, shouting out in the Saracen language that

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[74] OV, VI, 217 n. 4.
[75] HA, pp. 171–72: 'dominum etiam Cabareti, P. Rogerii, bis vel ter cepissent, sed ipse cum nostris cepit clamare "Mons Fortis, Mons Fortis" pre timore, ac si noster esset, sicque evadens et fugiens per montana, non nisi post duos dies rediit Cabaretum'.
[76] HA, pp. 270–71.
[77] See Chapter 2.

> he was the *melech,* that is 'king' in Latin, and the Turks, believing him, capturing that William, immediately led him away as a captive to their army.[78]

William's capture is also reported by Roger of Howden, although without any reference to a deception.[79] This act of self-sacrifice made an impression on the Muslim chroniclers too. Ibn al-Athīr describes how one of Richard's companions 'sacrificed himself' during the skirmish, allowing the king to escape, while Bahā al-Dīn says that the man was actually killed by a lance thrust intended for Richard.[80] Al-Isfahānī claims that Richard was fighting in disguise (*incognito*) and that the knight who saved him attracted the Turks' attention not with words but 'the beauty of his garments'.[81] The *Itinerarium's* account is not implausible, however. William of Préaux, a Norman, was a member of Richard's household prior to the crusade but it is conceivable that he could have acquired a few words or phrases in Arabic during his three months in Outremer.[82] Richard was evidently grateful to him: Ambroise and the *Itinerarium* both record that he exchanged ten Turkish nobles for William's freedom.[83]

These verbal signs had several crucial drawbacks as a means of identification: they might not be heard, especially over the other sounds of battle, they did not protect against

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[78] IP, p. 287: 'Quem forte tunc humano destitutum auxilio comprehendissent, si Turci tunc ipsum cognovissent. Sed ecce, confuso certamine contendentibus, exclamavit unus sociorum regis nomine Willelmus de Pratellis, idiomate Saracenio vociferans se esse Melech, quod Latine dicitur rex*,* quod Turci credentes confestim ipsum Willelmum comprehensum ad exercitum suum deduxerunt captivum'. See also Ambroise, lines 7083–7175. *Mālik* is the Arabic for 'king'.

[79] HowChr, III, 133: 'Sed Willelmus de Pratellis, quidam familiaris suus, ibidem captus fuit, et Reginaldus socius ejus interfectus est, et unus destrariorum regis ibidem captus fuit, et ductor illius interfectus, et rex per vim evasit'.

[80] Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle for the Crusading Period from al-Kamil fi'l-ta'rikh*, trans. by D. S. Richards, 3 vols (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006–08), II, 392; Bahā al-Dīn, *The Rare and Excellent History*, pp. 181–82.

[81] 'Imād ad-Dīn al-Isfahānī, *Conquête de la Syrie et de la Palestine par Saladin (al-Fatḥ al-qussî fî l-fatḥ al-qudsî)*, trans. by Henri Massé (Paris: Geuthner, 1972), p. 347: 'par la beauté de son vêtement, il attira l'attention de celui qui s'en prenait au roi, de sorte que cet homme ne s'occupa plus que de lui et le fit prisonnier'.

[82] William, son of Osbert, lord of Préaux, appears to have followed a parallel, if less exalted, career path to that of William Marshal. He also appears in the *History of William Marshal,* together with four of his brothers, competing at a tournament at Lagny-sur-Marne (c. 1179) as part of the retinue of Henry the Young King. HWM, lines 4662–74. As mentioned above, he was a member of Richard I's household prior to the Third Crusade, witnessing royal charters at Geddington (Sept. 1189) and Canterbury (Dec. 1189) alongside another de Préaux brother, Roger, who was a royal steward: Lionel Landon, *The Itinerary of King Richard I* (London: Ruddock, 1935), pp. 17, 20. According to the Colbert-Fontainebleau version of *L'Estoire de Eracles,* William acted as Richard's envoy to Isaac Komnenos upon his arrival on Cyprus: *The Conquest of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade: Sources in Translation,* trans. by Peter W. Edbury (Farnham: Ashgate, 1996), pp. 176–77. William remained in royal service under John, playing a key role in the defence of Normandy in 1204, where he remained following the French conquest. In October 1215 he relocated to England, where John courted his support during the First Barons' War with marriage to the heiress of Coleby and other land grants: S. D. Church, *The Household Knights of King John* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 27; S. D. Church, 'The Rewards of Royal Service in the Household of King John: A Dissenting Opinion', *English Historical Review,* 110 (1995), 277–302 (here 299–302).

[83] IP, p. 440; Ambroise, lines 12257–70.

unforeseen attacks (one cannot warn a potential friend not to attack if one does not see them coming) and, as we have seen, they were easily imitated by the enemy. A clear visual signifier was obviously preferable yet it is not always clear how medieval combatants used such visual tokens. Even with the development of heraldry in the late twelfth century, it is debatable what precise function it served on the battlefield.

The banner, or standard, was one means of visual identification on the battlefield, usually carried on behalf of a prince or great lord. It functioned as a symbol of the leader's presence: if the banner fell, it signified their death or retreat. It also served as a rallying point for their troops, to be followed and defended in the melee. As Robert Jones has argued, if such banners were to function as recognisable symbols, their designs would have had to remain consistent over a substantial length of time.[84] Like other means of identification, a banner could be employed as a disguise. We have already seen how raising additional banners could give the impression that more troops were present than there truly were. In December 1216, the royalist garrison of Berkhamsted Castle in Hertfordshire was besieged by baronial forces who had given their support to Louis the Lion, future king of France. During a sally, they captured the banner of one William de Mandeville. The same day, they then sallied out to attack the besiegers' camp again, this time flying the captured banner.[85] The aim here does not appear to have been to pass for Mandeville himself (who was presumably still present at the siege) but simply to create confusion and disorder in the camp. A more explicit, and successful, attempt to pass for another force with captured banners reportedly occurred at the battle of Evesham (4 August 1265). According to Walter of Guisborough, Edward, prince of Wales, approached the town from three sides, hoping to trap Simon de Montfort's force there, while flying the banners which he had captured from Montfort's son (also Simon) at Kenilworth the day before:

> And when the earl's scout, Nicholas, a barber who was an expert in the knowledge of arms, had seen the armed men coming from a distance, he said to the earl: 'See! Many armed men are coming from the north and, as can be recognised from a distance, they carry your banners'. And he said: 'It is my son;

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[84] Robert W. Jones, 'Identifying the Warrior on the Pre-Heraldic Battlefield', in *Anglo-Norman Studies XXX: Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2007*, ed. by C. P. Lewis (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2008), pp. 154–67 (here 158); R. W. Jones, 'Banner as Symbol', pp. 104–5.
[85] RW, IV, 5–6.

> do not be afraid, but go and look around, lest perhaps we be caught, having been surrounded'.[86]

Nicholas climbed the bell tower of Evesham Abbey to look again. It was only then that he saw Edward and his allies flying their true banners, causing him to cry out to Montfort: 'We are all dead men!' (*Mortui sumus omnes*). We can assume that Edward raised his own banners once he felt sure that Montfort could no longer escape.

Another incident involving Simon de Montfort and banners occurred at the battle of Lewes (14 May 1264). It is an instructive example of how tales grow in the telling and the same incident could be interpreted in a variety of ways. Montfort had broken his leg in December 1263 and, although he fought on horseback at Lewes, he had been forced to travel long distances in a cart.[87] This cart, which was decorated with Montfort's banners, was left with the baggage during the fighting. When Prince Edward's division broke through the London militia, who were fighting for Montfort, they set about pillaging the baggage:

> And seeing a cart upon the plain, which had been made for earl Simon to ride, standing with the horses and without driver or guide for the road, they galloped up and tore it to pieces in a moment; and they also slew two burgesses [of London] with the sword, whom they found within it.[88]

The presence of the cart, and the death of the two burgesses, who had hidden themselves inside for safety, was subsequently interpreted by other chroniclers as some kind of stratagem. Thomas Wykes, a chronicler sympathetic to the royalist cause, described it this way:

> Therefore [the Londoners] abandoned the earl of Leicester's four-horse cart, to which he had dishonorably fixed his banner, if one may rightly say so, in order that it might be thought that he was lying quiet in there, as if he were powerless

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[86] WG, p. 200: 'Cumque vidisset speculator comitis, Nicholaus scilicet barbitonsor eius qui homo expertus erat in cognicione armatorum, armatos sic a longe venientes dixit ad comitem: "Ecce veniunt armati multi a septentrione et, vt cognosci potest a longe, apparent vexilla tuorum". Et ille, "Filius meus est; ne timeas, sed vade et circumspice ne forte preocupemur circumuenti"'.

[87] For Montfort's breaking his leg, see 'Annales de Dunstaplia,' in *Annales monastici,* ed. by Henry Richard Luard, RS, 36, 5 vols (London: Longman, 1869), III, 3–408 (here 227).

[88] WG, p. 195: 'Et videntes sui in planicie currum, quem fieri fecerat comes Symon ad equitandum, stantem cum equis absque aurgia vel duce itineris, cucurrerunt et quasi in momento dilacerauerunt eum; duos etiam burgenses, quos inuenerunt in eo, gladio peremerunt'. See also FH, pp. 495–96.

> or sick. Certain citizens of London had been placed in there, namely Augustine of Hadstock, Richard Picard and Stephen of Chelmsford who, in order not to appear unfaithful to their lord king, had refused to put on their hauberks, so that [Montfort] might expose them for sacrifice as fearful or faithless.[89]

The anonymous author of the *Chronicle of Melrose* also depicted this incident as a deliberate ruse but portrayed it as an admirable display of Montfort's cunning:

> So Simon ordered his banners, which are called pennons, to be hung around the cart, so that the king and the army might be fooled into believing that Simon was in the cart, which Simon was not. However Simon was then hiding in a wooded spot, since it was surrounded on all sides by mountains and steep cliffs.[90]

In this account, the cart becomes a lure that draws the royalist army into a trap. The citizens are not killed but, by the time the royalists realised their mistake, the ambush had already been sprung.[91] The chronicler defends Montfort for using the burgesses in this way:

> So he carried them off justly. He did not, by means of the cart, betray those two native enemies who, out of madness, wished to prevent the city of London (which is greater than all the carts and towers of Christendom) from giving aid to the barons, since without the city's excellent and most powerful aid, they could not have expelled the foreigners on account of the king's power, which had beset them from all sides.[92]

As in other cases where chroniclers explicitly excuse the conduct of their subjects, it indicates that not all contemporaries approved of Montfort's actions.

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[89] TW, IV, 150–51: 'Relinquentes igitur quadrigam comitis Leycestriae, cui vexillum suum, si fas sit dicere, minus honeste infixerat, ut putaretur in eo quiescere tanquam impotens vel aegrotus, impositis in ea quibusdam civibus Londoniae viz. Augustino de Hadestok, Ricardo Pycard, Stephano de Chelmareford, qui ne viderentur infidi contra dominum regem loricas induere recusabant, ut eos tanquam formidolosos vel infidos exponeret ad victimam'.

[90] CM, p. 193: 'In giro ergo illius currus vexillula sua, que pensilia nominantur, Simon fecit appendi, ut per ea deluderetur rex et exercitus ejus dum putarent Simonem esse in curru, in quo non erat Simon. Erat autem Simon tunc delitescens in locis nemorosis, montibus et rupibus prearduis undique circumobsessis'.

[91] Compare William of Apulia and others removing the violent elements from the Dudo's story of the 'fake corpse' ruse in order to present their subject in a better light.

[92] CM, p. 195: 'Juste ergo tradidit, non prodidit pene duos contradictores indigenas per currum, qui civitatem omnibus Christianismi curribus et turribus meliorem, Londonicam loquor urbem, voluerunt alienando avertere a succursu baronum, cum sine tante civitatis eximio et permaximo auxilio, expulsionem alienorum nullatenus facere potuissent, propter potestatem regiam, que undique eos circumvallavit'.

During the crusader siege of Acre (1189–91), Saladin was able to send supplies and reinforcements to the garrison on ships, which he disguised in a variety of ingenious ways. According to Bahā al-Dīn: 'A number of Muslims boarded the buss in Beirut and dressed up as Franks, even shaving their beards. They also placed pigs on the deck, so that they could be seen from a distance, and flew crosses'.[93] This corresponds with the *Itinerarium*'s claim that Muslim ships were able to intermingle with the crusaders' because they were 'furnished with both Christian language and Christian insignia'.[94] Roger of Howden reported that Richard I encountered a large Muslim ship off the coast of Cyprus in June 1191 'decorated with the banners of the king of France and his allies'. [95] Richard ordered the crew to join his fleet but they shot arrows at his messenger, leading to a brief sea battle in which the Muslim ship was sunk. This encounter is mentioned in other chronicles but none of them mention the Muslims flying French banners.[96] The *Itinerarium* directly contradicts Howden on this point, claiming that, when Richard came close enough to inspect the ship, he 'did not hear any French language, nor see any Christian sign or banner, that made him believe their answer [that it was a French ship]'.[97] Whether this particular ship was sailing under 'false colours' or not is unclear but the incident does highlight the significance of banners in the medieval West as markers of identity, as well as agreeing with Bahā al-Dīn's more general observation about Muslim ships 'flying crosses' to disguise themselves.

In land warfare, a banner could be used to locate a significant individual or to identify them and their following from a distance. Combatants could also adopt signs and symbols to mark them out as individuals or members of a particular group. This practice was not exclusive to medieval Europe, of course, but the discussion is complicated by the appearance of heraldry in the mid-twelfth century. Simply put, heraldry refers to the use of unique devices, known as 'coats of arms', or simply 'arms', that individuals used to decorate their shields. What distinguishes 'true' heraldry from other forms of historical battlefield identification is an adherence to a system, the 'science' of blazon, governing the colours

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[93] Baha al-Din, *History,* p. 124.

[94] IP, pp. 91–92: 'Interdum vero Gentilium classis nostrae furtim permixta procedit; et tam lingua quam insignibus Christicolarum mentita paratus, inopinos et subitos ad urbem cursus subducit'.

[95] HowChr, III, 112: 'Et crastino, scilicet feria sexta in hebdomada Pentecosten, cum ipse iter ageret versus Accon, vidit in mari ante se busciam quandam magnam, onustam viris bellicosis, et ornatam vexillis regis Franciae et sociorum suorum'.

[96] Baha al-Din, *History,* p. 151; Ibn al-Athir, *Chronicle,* p. 387; RC, p. 32; RD, pp. 93–94.

[97] IP, pp. 205–6: 'Quam cum responso reddito didicisset regis esse Franciae, rex in impetu ferventissimo eo versus appropians, nec Francorum idioma, vel aliquod signum vel vexillum attendit Christianorum, quod eorum responso faceret fidem'.

and symbols displayed on the shield, and the heritability of arms: the passing of the same coat of arms from one generation of a family to the next. In this sense, 'true' heraldry did not fully emerge until the mid-thirteenth century. Although many heraldic devices first appeared prior to 1200, Michel Pastoureau has deemed the period between 1000 and 1250 as an age of 'proto-heraldry'. It contained many of the features that would come to define 'true' heraldry but lacked certain crucial elements, particularly the transmission of coats of arms within families.[98]

Developments in military technology between 1000 and 1200 afforded combatants greater scope for martial display. The development of the couched lance, which was decorated with a small flag or pennant, the adoption of surcoats and caparisons, which covered both man and horse, and the disappearance of the shield boss all provided additional space for decoration.[99] Individual noblemen took to displaying distinctive devices on their shields, which were in turn carried by members of their following, the low-born household knights, as a sign of loyalty but also to stake their claim to be considered part of the chivalric class.[100] By the end of the thirteenth century, possession of a coat of arms became one of the defining characteristics of the medieval nobility.[101] Note that, from the very beginning of the period, heraldic devices and their informal antecedents were the preserve of the mounted elite. Indeed, as we shall see below, the very act of bearing these symbols would have marked an individual as a member of the elite who was worthy to be ransomed.

Heraldry is actually a poor system of distinguishing friend from foe. The individual combatant would be unlikely to recognise more than a handful of blazons among the dozens, if not hundreds, on a single battlefield, let alone use them to identify their enemies. The system soon became so complex that a new profession, the herald, had to be created to regulate it. Yet the medieval nobility certainly wore their coats of arms into battle. Their function, as Jones and Fergus Cannan have both argued, was not to separate friend from foe but to announce the bearer's presence to both:

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98 R. W. Jones, 'Pre-Heraldic', p. 165; Keen, *Chivalry*, pp. 125–34; Michel Pastoureau, 'L'Apparition des armoiries en Occident: État du problème', *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes*, 134 (1976), 281–300 (here 291); Michel Pastoureau, 'La Diffusion de armoiries et les débuts de l'héraldique', in *La France de Philippe Auguste: Le Temps des mutations*, ed. by Robert-Henri Bautier (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1982), pp. 737–60 (here 747–49).

99 Adrian Ailes, 'The Knight, Heraldry and Armour: The Role of Recognition and the Origins of Heraldry', in *Medieval Knighthood IV: Papers from the Fifth Strawberry Hill Conference 1990*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), pp. 1–21 (here 14–15); See also Pastoureau, 'L'Apparition', p. 287.

100 Adrian Ailes, 'Knight, Heraldry and Armour', p. 18; Pastoureau, 'La Diffusion', p. 754.

101 Keen, *Chivalry*, p. 128.

> Whilst historians have tended to focus on the dangers of being recognised by your enemies on the battlefield, in cultural terms it was desirable. It gave the warrior the honour of being a target, of gaining greater honour and prestige through feats of arms.[102]

This provided fertile ground for new forms of deception: discarding one's arms or dressing others in them made for an effective disguise.

Identifying these deceptions in the Latin sources is difficult, however, as the chroniclers usually use the highly generic term *arma,* which can mean any sort of military equipment, for 'coats of arms'. In his description of Louis VI of France's siege of the Norman town of Breteuil in 1119, Orderic Vitalis describes how the captain of the Norman garrison, Ralph the Breton, 'hurried from gate to gate, frequently changing his *arma* to avoid recognition'.[103] This ruse proved deadly for one of Louis's men:

> A handsome and very strong Fleming laid low Ralph the Red, Luke of La Barre and other strenuous horsemen and took their horses. He was arrogantly puffed up and did not cunningly take precaution against a similar, sad fate. He rushed upon the unconquerable Breton in his usual way, as if he were some commoner, and soon fell, fatally wounded from the blows he gave him. He died, along with many captives, after fifteen days in prison in Breteuil.[104]

It is highly unlikely, at this early date, that Orderic was referring to Ralph wearing a coat of arms. It is more likely that Ralph was varying the equipment he was using in order to avoid being marked as a potential target for capture or to make it appear that there were more knights in the garrison than there actually were.

Wearing expensive equipment was in itself a significant visual identifier, one that distinguished a member of the knightly class, worthy of capture and ransom, from the common foot soldier, who could be ignored or killed with impunity.[105] We have already

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[102] Robert W. Jones, *Bloodied Banners: Martial Display on the Medieval Battlefield* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010), p. 27; See also Fergus Cannan, 'The Myths of Medieval Heraldry', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 47 (2003), 198–216 (here 212–13).

[103] OV, VI, 246: 'Insignis Radulfus de porta ad portam discurrebat et arma sepe ne cognoscentur mutabat'.

[104] OV, VI, 246–48: 'Pulcher et probissimus Flandrita Radulfum Rufum et Lucam de Barra aliosque strenuos equites prostrauit, et abductis eorum equis arroganter intumuit, nec uicinum sibi triste fatum callide precauit. Inuictum Britonem ut quempiam plebeium solito more occurrit, et mox ab eo letaliter percussus cecidit et coram multis captus post xv dies in carcere Britolii expirauit'.

[105] Moffat's study, although concerned with the later Middle Ages, is very instructive on this point: Ralph Moffat, 'The Importance of Being Harnest: Armour, Heraldry and Recognition in the Melee', in *Battle and*

observed how discarding one's armour could act as a disguise. In the *Gesta Stephani,* following the rout at Winchester in 1141, the Empress Matilda's supporters are described as follows: 'Indeed, what should I say about the knights and the greatest barons who, when they had cast aside all marks of knighthood [*militandi insignia*], gave false names and fled, on foot and without honour'.[106] As with Ralph the Breton, it is unlikely that *insigna* refers to coats of arms at this early date. It is more likely, particularly combined with the reference to travelling on foot, a reference to the equipment that marked them out as *milites,* such as horse and hauberk, or some sort of field sign or cognizance (see below).

In thirteenth-century sources, however, it is more probable that *arma* refers to a heraldic device.[107] On 1 April 1234, Richard Marshal was killed at a parley on the Curragh Plain in Kildare with his enemies, led by Maurice, justiciar of Ireland. According to Roger of Wendover:

> The Irish noblemen, fearing the courge and prowess of the Marshal, gave their arms to knights who were unknown and very strong, whom they had assembled there to kill that innocent man; in this way, desiring to kill him, they would not be seen to have killed him.[108]

During the fighting, Marshal challenged a knight 'to whom Richard de Burgh had given his arms', believing that he was Richard himself.[109] These references may refer to the actual armour and weaponry but, as they were used to identify (or misidentify) an individual, they may refer to coats of arms.

Heraldry gave rise to the peculiarly medieval practice of kings and other important noblemen entering battle wearing another individual's coat of arms or dressing one or more of their bodyguards in identical blazons to misdirect the enemy.[110] At the battle of

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Bloodshed: The Medieval World at War, ed. by Lorna Bleach and Keira Borrill (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 5–24.

[106] GS, p. 134: 'Quid loquar de militibus immo et de summis baronibus, qui omnibus militandi abiectis insigniis, pedites et inhonori, nomen suum et fugam mentiebantur'.

[107] The earliest unequivocal use of *arma* to mean 'coat of arms' identified by the compilers of the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* is from the Pipe Rolls, dated to 1237: R.E. Latham and D. R. Howlett, 'arma', *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources,* 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975–2013), I, 216.

[108] RW, IV, 304: 'Proceres autem Hiberniae, audaciam Marescalli ac probitatem metuentes, arma sua militibus fortissmis tradiderant et ignotis, quos ad hoc conduxerant, ut perimerent innocentem; sic eum occidere cupientes, ut non occidisse viderentur'.

[109] RW, IV, 305: 'Indignatus autem, hoc viso, miles quidam ut gigas fortissimus, cui Richardus de Burgo arma sua tradiderat, ut Marescallum occideret, impetum fecit in eum, volens galeam de capite ejus evellere truculenter; quem videns Marescallus existimabat quod esset Richardus de Burgo'.

[110] This latter ruse appears frequently in the fourteenth century and beyond. John II of France famously went into battle at Poitiers (19 September 1356) with twenty knights dressed in his arms. Henry V of England made do with only two doppelgangers at Agincourt (25 October 1415): M. Prinet, 'Séance du 15 décembre:

Courtrai (11 July 1302), for example, the Flemish commander Willem van Jülich dressed his servant, Jan Laminc, in his arms so that he could withdraw from the field and rest without the enemy or his own men becoming aware of it.[111]

The Anonymous of Béthune reports a peculiar example of a nobleman wearing another's arms in their account of the battle of Bouvines (27 July 1214):

> Odo, the duke of Burgundy, wore the coat of arms of the good knight William of Barres, but he bore his own shield. Know that [William] did such feats of arms that people spoke well of him as far away as Syria.[112]

It is unclear why Odo chose to wear William's arms or why he confused matters by carrying his own shield. The two had very different blazons: Odo's seal depicts him with a shield *bendy, a bordure*, while William's shows a shield *lozengy.*[113] Jones has suggested that this was a form of 'Batesian mimicry', similar to an animal evolving to match the appearance of a more dangerous species, with Odo attempting to 'awe his opponents' by adopting the guise of William, a famous warrior and crusader.[114] The real William was also present at Bouvines, fighting in King Philip's division in his capacity as the king's seneschal, so it may be that this stratagem was intended to confuse the enemy, making this fearsome knight appear to be in multiple places at once.[115]

Wearing the arms of a less distinguished individual might make somebody a less tempting target for capture but it brought the risk of being killed out of hand. On 12 September 1213, Peter II of Aragon was killed fighting against the crusading forces of Simon de Montfort at the battle of Muret. All the major chronicles of the Albigensian Crusade mention the battle but only Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, a staunch apologist for Montfort and the crusaders, claims that the king died because he was not recognised:

Présidence de M. M. Prou, président', *Bulletin de la société nationale des antiquaires de France*, (1909), 363–69 (here 368).

111 J. F. Verbruggen, *The Battle of the Golden Spurs: Courtrai, 11 July 1302*, ed. by Kelly DeVries, trans. by David Richard Ferguson, rev edn (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002), pp. 107, 234.

112 'Chronique française des rois de France par un anonyme de Béthune', in *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France,* ed. by Léopold Delisle, 24 vols (Paris: Palmé, 1840–1904), XXIV, 750–76 (here 769): 'Oedes, li dus de Borgoigne, qui la cote à armer Guillaume des Barres le boen chevalier avoit vestie, mais il portoit son meisme escu. Sachiés qu'il i fist tant d'armes qu'il en fu parlé en bien dusqu'en la terre de Surie'.

113 Sadly, the seals do not preserve the tinctures: Douët D'Arcq, *Collection de sceaux,* 3 vols (Paris: Plon, 1863), I, 337, 467.

114 R. W. Jones, *Bloodied Banners*, p. 27.

115 Georges Duby, *The Legend of Bouvines: War, Religion and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Catherine Tihanyi (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 24, 40.

> in that combat the king of the Aragonese lay dead and many Aragonese with him: for he, a very arrogant man, had stationed himself in the second division, when kings are always accustomed to be in the very rear; moreover, he had changed his arms and had dressed himself in another's arms.[116]

The implication is clear: if the king had conformed to tradition and fought in his proper place, in his own arms, then the crusaders would have recognized him and spared his life.[117] On some occasions, however, the opposite ran true. At the battle of Mons-en-Pévèle (18 August 1304), Philip IV of France only survived a surprise attack on his camp by the Flemish army because his guards stripped him of his coat of arms:

> they were unable to distinguish him among the fallen because, in the peril of the combat, the aforesaid guards had torn off his coat of arms, which was decorated with his sign, namely lilies, out of fear, so that he would not be recognised by the enemies, who would have more gladly killed him than any other.[118]

Heraldic arms made the great and the powerful stand out on the battlefield but, for the purpose of distinguishing friend from foe, medieval combatants appear to have employed a more informal system of field signs or 'cognizances' (OF: *conoissances*). It is often difficult to tell exactly what form these took, especially in early texts. Scholars have tended to interpret the term as another way of describing shield devices.[119] This may have been true in some cases but the term appears to have a broader meaning, one that encompassed a variety of

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[116] HA, pp. 153–54: 'in quo congressu rex Arragonum occubuit et multi Aragonenses cum eo: ipse enim, utpote superbissimus, in secunda acie se posuerat, cum reges semper esses soleant in extrema; in super arma sua mutaverat armisque se induerat alienis'.

[117] A similar fate befell Manfred of Sicily at Benevento (26 February 1266), Charles I of Hungary (10 November 1330) and Anthony of Brabant at Agincourt (25 October 1415). Prinet, 'Séance', pp. 366–68; Anne Curry, ed. and trans, *The Battle of Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), p. 174.

[118] AG, p. 71: 'nesciens ipsum inter alios prostratos discernere, eo quod custodes predicti in periculo conflictus pre timore supertunicale suum bellicum, suo signo, scilicet liliorum, decoratum, ne ab hostibus, qui libentius ipsum quam aliquem alium occidissent, agnosceretur, abruperant'.

[119] A. Ailes, 'Knight, Heraldry and Armour', p. 12; Gerard J. Brault, *Early Blazon: Heraldic Terminology in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries with Special Reference to Arthurian Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 147–48; L. Bouly de Lesdain, 'Etudes historiques sur le XIIe siècle', *Annuaire du conseil heraldique de France*, 20 (1907), 185–244 (here 196); Victor Schirling, *Die Verteidigungswaffen im altfranzösischen Epos* (Marburg: Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1887), p. 21.

signs and marks.[120] Consider Alexander's stratagem to retake Windsor Castle in Chrètien de Troyes' *Cligés*:

> 'Let's change our *conuissances*,' he said, 'Let's take the shields and lances from the traitors whom we have killed. Let's go to the castle in this way, so that the traitors inside will believe that we are their men, and whatever they deserve, the gates will be opened for us. And do you know what we'll give them in return? We will kill or capture all of them, if God wills it'.[121]

The shields are part of the disguise but they are given equal standing with the lances, which are presumably painted in specific colours or are decorated with distinctive penons, as necessary *conuissances* to deceive the garrison.

Wace describes the Norman army making *conoissances* on the day of the battle of Hastings (1066):

> The knights wore shining hauberks, iron chausses, bright helms, shields on their necks, lances in their hands, and they had all made *conoissances*, that one Norman would know another, that they would not attack each other, that Norman would not kill Norman, nor one Norman strike another.[122]

This was clearly an informal, last minute act and is unlikely to refer to painting specific devices on shields. Wace makes another illuminating reference to cognizances in his *Roman de Brut*. The British princes Belin and Brenne, having suffered a reverse in a battle against the Romans, prepare their army to make a counterattack: 'They made most of their men, and the best of them, dismount from their horses and ordered and arranged them in the middle of the field on foot. They had cut their lances in two and discarded their *conuissances*'.[123] The lances are presumably broken in order to wield them more effectively

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[120] Derived from *connaître,* 'to know', a *conoissance* could be anything that allowed somebody to know another or be known by them. *Anglo-Norman Dictionary: Online Edition*, < http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/conoissance > [Accessed 15 Jun 2018].

[121] Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligés*, ed. by Stewart Gregory and Claude Luttrell (Cambridge: Brewer, 1993), lines 1827–37: '"Chanjons", fet il, "noz conuissances; / Prenons des escuz et des lances / As traïtors qu'ocis avons. / Ensi vers le chastel irons, / Si cuideront li traïtor / Dedanz que nos soiens des lor, / Et quiex que soient les dessertes, / Les portes nos seront overtes. / Et savez quiex nos lor randrons? / Ou morz ou vis toz les prandrons, / Se Damedex le nos consant'.

[122] RdR, 3, lines 7667–98: 'chevaliers orent hauber(n)s blanz, / chauces de fer, helmes luisanz, / escuz as cols, es meins lor lances, / e tuit orent fait conoissances, / que Normant altre coneüst, / qu'entrepresture n'i eüst, / que Normant Normant n'oceïst / ne Normant altre ne ferist'.

[123] RdB, lines 3128–32: 'Le mielz de lur gent e le plus / Descendirent des chevals jus, / En mi le champ furent a pied / Oredeneement e rengied. / Cil unt par mi trenché lur lances, / E guerpies lur conuissances'.

on foot but why discard their cognizances? We can assume that Wace did not mean that they dropped their shields, as this would have been suicidal. It is more likely that the act of discarding the cognizances, which marked them out as men worth sparing for ransom, in combination with dismounting to fight on foot, indicated that the Britons intended to fight to the death, expecting no quarter and giving none in return.[124]

Identifying these cognizances in Latin chronicles is more difficult, as the chroniclers rarely mention any use of identifying signs and, when they do, they do not use consistent vocabulary. How, for example, should one understand the following passage from Aelred of Rievaulx's *Relatio de Standardo*? Henry, son of David of Scotland, had become trapped behind the English line with his retinue. In order to escape, he proposed they employ a ruse:

> And so, when the *signa* have been thrown down, by which we are distinguished from the rest, let's mingle among our enemies, as if we were pursuing alongside them, until we have gone past all of them to my father's formation, which I see from afar is waiting in strength to withdraw, as is necessary, as soon as we can come there.[125]

Signum can mean banner but, if this is what Aelred meant, why not use the more specific *vexillum*? It is possible that *signum* is being used in a more general sense, referring to some token that distinguished the Scots from the English. Orderic Vitalis's description of the aftermath of the battle of Brémule (20 August 1119), in which Henry I of England defeated Louis VI of France, is less ambiguous:

> Peter of Maule and several other fugitives threw away their cognizances so that they would not be recognized and, having been mixed up with their pursuers, they cunningly shouted the victors' war-cry and proclaimed the greatness of their king Henry with feigned praises.[126]

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[124] R. W. Jones, *Bloodied Banners*, pp. 15–16.

[125] RS, p. 198: 'Projectis itaque signis, quibus a ceteris dividimur, ipsis nos hostibus inseramus, quasi insequentes cum ipsis, donec praetergressi cunctos ad paternum cuneum, quem eminus video in suo vigore manentem cedere necessitati, quamtocius veniamus'.

[126] OV, VI, 242: 'Petrus de Manlia aliique nonnulli fugientum cognitiones suas ne agnoscerentur proiecerunt, et insectantibus callide mixti signum triumphantium uociferati sunt; atque magnanimitatem Henrici regis suorumque fictis laudibus preconati sunt'.

This ruse combined visual anonymity with the verbal disguise of shouting an enemy war-cry. It was so effective that Roger of Courcy the younger was captured when he unknowingly entered the nearby town of Noyon in the midst of a group of French knights: the only one of the victors to be captured that day.[127]

Occasionally the sources actually describe what these field signs may have looked like. Wace depicts the retinue of Ralph of Taisson, lord of Cinglais, fighting at Val-ès-Dunes (1047) with wimples tied to their lances.[128] At Bouvines (1214), the Imperial army adopted the symbol of the cross:

> They prepared to attack the French, together with the Flemings, with an insatiable hatred, and in order that they could easily recognise one another, they fastened the sign of the cross on pieces of cloth to their the front and back.[129]

Likewise, both sides at Evesham (1265) used a cross for their field sign:

> a single knight and a single squire with him were killed by their allies, because they had not carried their comrades' sign upon their arm, which they had been given. For they were all marked with the sign of a red cross upon both arms, and the other side [Montfort's] were all marked, front and back, with a white cross.[130]

The choice of a cross has obvious crusading overtones, perhaps intended to declare the righteousness of the army's cause and invoke God's blessing on the wearers.[131] One can even draw parallels between these informal field signs and the badges of later periods, such as those Richard II commanded his troops to wear on his expedition into Scotland in 1385:

> Item, that everybody of our party, of whatever estate, condition or nation, should bear a large sign of the arms of St. George on their front and back on

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[127] OV, VI, 242.
[128] RdR, 3, lines 3853–56: 'set vint chevaliers out od sei, / tant en aveit en son conrei, / tuit aloient lances levees / e en totes guimples fermees'.
[129] 'Relatio Marchianensis', in *Ex rerum francogallicarum scriptoribus,* MGH, Scriptores, 26 (Hanover, Hahn, 1882), pp. 390-91 (here 390): 'Nempe cum Flandrenses odio insatiabili Francigenas persequi prepararent, ut se et suos ad invicem facilius recognoscerent, quedam crucis signacula suis ante et retro panniculis affixerunt'.
[130] *Flores historiarum,* III, 6: 'unus miles et unus armiger eo quod signum suorum commilitonum in brachio non portassent, a sociis suis ut fertur interfecti sunt. Namque erant omnes hi rubeo signo in brachiis ambobus cruce signati, ac caeteri partis adversae omnes cruce alba ante et retro insigniti'.
[131] R. W. Jones, *Bloodied Banners*, p. 61.

> peril that, if he is wounded or killed because he does not have it, the one who wounded or killed him will not be punished for it.[132]

A similar ordinance was issued to the Scottish army assembled that same year to repel the English:

> Item, that all the French and Scots should have a sign on their front and back, namely, a white cross of St. Andrew and if his jack is white or his coat is white, he should wear the said white cross on a round or square piece of black cloth.[133]

To conclude, establishing identity on the medieval battlefield was a many-layered process. An individual might be identified as somebody of (literal) high or low value by the quality and style of their equipment or by bearing heraldic arms. Announcing one's status through appearance carried great social and cultural value but at the cost of making one an obvious target for capture or even death. Combatants had to balance their desire for renown with the practicalities of fighting safely and effectively, which might entail adopting some form of disguise. When it came to the vital business of distinguishing friend from foe, however, war-cries and simple field signs were employed, which could be easily imitated or cast away if one wished to escape notice.

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[132] Anne Curry, 'Disciplinary Ordinances for English and Franco-Scottish Armies in 1385: An International Code?', *Journal of Medieval History*, 37 (2011), 269–94 (here 288): 'Item qe chescun de quel estat condicion ou nacio quil soit issint qil soit de nostre partie porte un signe des armes de Seint George large devant et autre aderer sur peril qe sil naufra ou mort en defaute dycel cely qe le naufra ou tue ne portera nul jeusse pur li'. My thanks to Dr. Trevor Russell Smith for bringing this source to my attention.

[133] Curry, 'Ordinances', p. 292: 'Item que tout home fracois et escot ait un signe devant et derrere cestassavoir une croix blanche saint Andrieu et se son jacque soit blanc ou sa cote blanche il portera la dicte croix blanche en une piece de drap noir ronde ou quaree'.

Chapter 6
Bribes and Inducements

In 1122, William VI, count of Auvergne, seized the town of Clermont-Ferrand, along with its cathedral. Suger of Saint Denis offers this cryptic statement on how it was accomplished: '[Aimeri, bishop of Clermont-Ferrand], appealing to the lord king, laid before him a tearful complaint on behalf of the Church, that the count of Auvergne had occupied the city and had fortified the Church of the Blessed Mary through the deception of his dean, together with many tyrannical acts'.[134] No additional information is provided. Who was this dean? Why did he help William? What was the nature of the *fraus* he committed and how did it help William fortify the cathedral? It is not always possible to tell how and why a stronghold fell, especially when chroniclers use vague terms such as 'fraud' or 'treachery'. Some cases, however, are more explicit and commanders are depicted actively solliciting traitors from within an enemy stronghold. This is a sound strategy, as it allowed the attackers to gain a stronghold quickly and without the risk of a full-front assault. Frontinus dedicated a section of his *Strategemata* to various examples of how to entice members of a garrison to commit treachery ('De eliciendis ad proditionem'):

> Marcus Marcellus, when he had sollicited a certain Sosistratus of Syracuse to commit treachery, learned from him that the guards would be more slack on a feast day, when Epicydes was going to provide much wine and food. So, lying in wait for the merry-making (and what followed it), he scaled the walls and, when the sentries had been cut down, he opened the city, famous for noble victories, to the Roman army.[135]

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[134] SSD, p. 232: 'ad dominum regem confugiens, querelam ecclesie lacrimabilem deponit, comitem Alvernensem civitatem occupasse, ecclesiam Beate Marie episcopalem decani sui fraude multa tirannide munivisse'.

[135] Frontinus, *Strategemata*, p. 73: 'M. Marcellus, cum Syracusanum quendam Sosistratum ad proditionem sollicitasset, ex eo cognouit remissiores custodias fore die festo, quo Epicydes praebiturus esset uini epularumque copiam. Insidiatus igitur hilaritati et (quae eam sequebatur) socordiae munimenta conscendit, uigilibusque caesis aperuit exercitui Romano urbem nobilibus uictoriis claram'.

When discussing siege warfare, medieval chroniclers would sometimes present bribery as the logical alternative to violent assault. This is a variation of the common topos of presenting force and trickery as two potential methods of achieving victory (see Chapter 8). For example, Roger of Wendover described Louis VIII of France's advance to La Rochelle (ruled at that time by Henry III of England) in 1224 as follows: 'In that same year Louis, king of the French, led a grand army to La Rochelle, to conquer the town either by arms or by money'.[136] Baldric of Bourgueil placed this topos into Bohemond of Taranto's mouth, as part of a speech made to persuade the other leaders of the First Crusade to grant him lordship of Antioch:

> This city, as you all see, is impregnable. For what rams, what ballistae, what machines were of use to conquer this city? So it follows that we ought to turn to the remedies of counsels, since plans, either of arms or battles, are of no use to us. So, conscript fathers, each one of you should try, either by coin, or friendship, or threats, or whatever means you can, to claim this city for yourself on account of [our] distress; we ought to grant [the city] willingly to the one who is able to accomplish this [deed] through ingenuity.[137]

William of Apulia employed this topos more frequently than most chroniclers, probably due to the frequency with which his subject, Robert Guiscard, employed bribery to acquire strongholds in southern Italy. Describing Guiscard's capture of the Calabrian town of Montepeloso (modern Irsina) in 1068, he wrote: 'because the duke [Robert] was not strong in arms, he took the *castrum* by craft [...] he beguiled Godfrey, the keeper of that *castrum*, with promises, giving it over to him, and promising that he would give him more things and a stronger *castrum*'.[138] Similarly, when Guiscard bribed a Venetian nobleman to help him enter Dyrrachion (modern Durrës, on the coast of Albania) in 1082, William of Apulia wrote: 'So the duke took Dyrrachion for himself, and because he was unable to conquer

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[136] According to Roger, the citizens, despairing of receiving any aid from Henry III of England, accepted Louis's money and surrendered: RW, II, 277: 'Eodem anno rex Francorum Lodowicus duxit exercitum grandem ad Rupellam, ut villam vel armis vel pretio subjugaret'.

[137] BB, p. 55: 'Ciuitas hec, ut uidetis, inexpugnabilis est. Nam quid hic arietes, quid baliste, quid quelibet ad expugnandam ciuitatem hic prodessent machine? Restat ergo ut ad consiliorum diuertamus experimenta, quandoquidem nobis non prosunt uel armorum, uel congressuum machinamenta. Temptet igitur unusquisque uestrum, patres conscripti, an pecunia, an amicitia, an minis, an quibuslibet ciuitatem hanc sibi uindicare preualebit angariis; eamque illi ultronei concedamus, qui hoc efficere quolibet poterit ingenio'. The phrase *patres conscripti* is a traditional form of address to Roman senators, employed in Sallust's *Jugurthine War* and the letters of Cicero and Livy, and was probably used here to emphasise Bohemond's eloquence: BB, p. xxxvii.

[138] WA, p. 156: 'dux quod non evalet armis / Arte capit castrum [...] promissis decipit hujus / Custodem castri Godefridum, dans sibi quaedam, / Pluraque pollicitus castrumque valentius illo'.

through arms, he subjugated it through craftiness to achieve victory'.[139] He also used the topos in a more general sense, for example when discussing how Guiscard returned to Apulia and Calabria from the Balkans in 1079 to put down a rebellion against his rule: 'He overcame them all, either by craft or by arms; some he won over, some he enticed with sweet words, others he broke in battle; cunning and bold, he knew both methods; he seized some castles, others, which could not be obtained by warlike violence, he persuaded to surrender with charming words'.[140] Clearly, contemporaries thought that bribery fell under the general category of stratagems, so it is necessary to examine the various methods by which combatants induced their enemies to turn traitor or otherwise act in their interests.

We must be cautious when discussing incidents of bribery, however, as chroniclers sometimes accused castle garrisons of accepting bribes when it appeared that they had surrendered unnecessarily. Contemporaries did not expect garrisons to fight to the death in defence of strongholds, although they might express great admiration for those that did. For both practical and ethical reasons, it was accepted that a garrison that ran out of supplies or that could not reasonably expect to be relieved by a field army could surrender without censure. If an attacker was forced to take a stronghold by storm, it was generally understood that the garrison had forfeited any right to clemency: a powerful incentive to come to terms. The garrison was expected to present at least a token resistance, however. Surrendering without a fight could be interpreted as an act of betrayal by the commander, just as if he had let down a ladder for the attackers.[141] In 1136, the rebel Baldwin de Redvers's garrison at Plympton in Devon surrendered to Stephen, king of England, without a fight. Even the author of the *Gesta Stephani,* who was a great partisan of Stephen's, criticised this:

> The knights into whose care Baldwin had given the castle at Plympton despaired of their lord, on account of the unbeatable army which they had heard was present with the king, and secretly sent word to the king about giving up the castle and establishing a mutual peace, so that lives would not be

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[139] WA, p. 230: 'Sic sibi Dirachium dux subdidit, atque quod armis / Vincere non potuit, victoria subiugat artis'.

[140] WA, pp. 194–96: 'vel arte vel armis / Omnes exsuperat; monitis quam dulcibus illos / Allicit, hos bello domitat; versutus et audax / Novit utrosque modos; adimit sua castra quibusdam, / Quosdam blanditiis verborum commovet ultro / Tradere, quae nequeunt violento marte parari'.

[141] Maurice Keen, *The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1965), p. 124; Strickland, *War and Chivalry,* pp. 208–17, 224–29.

> placed in danger. They were most weak and fickle in heart, more afraid than was proper.[142]

William of Newburgh made similar allegations against William, count of Aumale, when the Norman town of Aumale surrendered to Philip I of Flanders in June 1173 during the Great Rebellion against Henry II of England: 'Doubtless the town was conquered without an assault because of him, since he is believed to have colluded with the count of Flanders'.[143]

William of Tyre presents three possible explanations for the fall of the Cave de Suète (al-Habis Jaldak) to Saladin's nephew, Farrūkh Shāh, in July 1182. Constructed on the east bank of the Jordan in the side of a cliff overlooking the Yarmuk valley, it consisted of three floors of chambers connected by stairways cut into the rock. It had its own water supply, collected in cisterns, and the only way to approach it was along a single path that ran along the cliff face.[144] It was considered impregnable, which may explain why William of Tyre devoted so much attention to the possible reasons for its fall. He considered three possibilities in turn. First, that the garrison accepted bribes. Second, that the Muslims tunnelled through the rock itself to invade the caves from above. Third and finally, what he believed to be the true cause:

> But afterwards it was discovered that it was officials' fault, those who were in charge of the rest, who caused the fortress to come into the enemies' possession, for the others wanted to resist them, but those who were in authority prevented them from making a defence and afterwards, having opened the fortress to the enemies, joined with them. Also it was said that those who were in charge of that place were Syrians, whom we hold to be effeminate and cowardly, whence the greater fault lies with Fulk [of Tiberias, the castle's lord], who ought to have placed suitable people in charge.[145]

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142 GS, pp. 34–36: 'milites Balduini, quibus obseruandi castelli sui de Plintona curam indulserat, propter insuperabilem, quam adesse cum rege audierant, uirtutem, de domino suo desperantes, et ne uitae suae periculum incurrerent, ut inertissimi et inconstantis animi, plus iusto formidantes, de reddendo castello pacisque concordia inter eos statuenda regi occulte miserunt'.

143 WN, II, 210: 'Qui nimirum pro eo quod oppidum minus oppugnatum cito expugnatum est, cum Flandrensi creditus est comite collusisse'.

144 Hugh Kennedy, *Crusader Castles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 52–53.

145 WT, p. 1029: 'Compertum est autem postmodum quod culpa magistratuum, qui ceteris preerant, municipium ad hostes pervenerit, nam aliis resistere volentibus, ipsi auctoritate qua preminebant inhibebant defensionem et postmodum resignato municipio ad hostes se contulerunt. Dicebantur autem esse qui loco preerant Syri, qui apud nos effeminati et molles habentur, unde maior culpa in predictum refunditur Fulconem, qui tales loco prefecerat tam necessario'.

We can see here how stories of blame and recrimination could circulate following the fall of (supposedly) invincible stronghold, stories which the chronicler had to judge whether they should be included in his text. William of Tyre recorded three possible explanations that he had heard for the loss of the castle but chose to affirm the one that supported his prejudices about the native Syrians. Many chroniclers give only a single explanation, hiding the process of evaluation that William presents to his readers. We must be cautious about reading any description of bribery or betrayal as an objective report. More often than not, the explanation conforms to the chronicler's own political or religious leanings.

Chroniclers do not usually specify what precisely was offered as a bribe. Often they simply refer to general 'money' (*pecunia*) or 'bribes' (*munera*). According to Henry of Huntingdon, in 1090 William Rufus, during his campaign against his brother, Robert Curthose, gained the Norman castles of Saint-Valéry and Aumale by 'giving bribes' (*muneribus datis*) to their garrisons.[146] Robert of Torigni claimed that, during the Great Rebellion of 1173 against Henry II of England, the Breton magnate Ralph of Fougères used *pecunia* to take two strongholds: 'Ralph of Fougères, having bribed the guards with money and requests, who ought to have held the castle of Combourg and the city of Dol for the king of the English, took those fortifications'.[147] Similarly, the French chronicler Rigord reported that Richard I of England took the castle of Nonancourt, on the Franco-Norman border, in 1196 with *pecunia* while Philip II of France was besieging Aumale: 'But while King Philip was making a delay in this place, the king of England recovered the castle that they call Nonancourt through trickery and betrayal, giving money to the knights who were guarding it'.[148]

It is not clear whether these traitors were paid 'cash in hand' or whether the money was to be received at a later date. It might be more accurate to say that they received a *promise* of material reward, should the attackers be victorious. This indicates a process of negotiation between the besiegers and the traitor, one that required a level of trust that the besiegers would fulfill their side of the bargain. Occasionally this is made explicit in the narrative, as in the case of the 'charming words' which Robert Guiscard used to win over the rebel fortresses in Calabria (see above). Describing how William of Arques raised a rebellion against his nephew, William II of Normandy, in 1053, William of Malmesbury

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[146] HH, p. 414. See also GRA, p. 549.

[147] RT, p. 259: 'Radulfus de Fulgeriis, delinitis custodibus pretio et precibus, qui custodire debebant castrum de Cumburc et civitatem Dolensem ad opus regis Anglorum, cepit illas munitiones'.

[148] HPA, pp. 340–42: 'Dum autem rex Philippus ibi moram faceret, rex Anglie, in dolo et sub proditione castellum quod Norencort vocant, data pecunia militibus ipsum custodientibus, recepit'.

wrote: 'For that reason [Duke] William had entrusted the strength of the castle [at Arques] to certain men, whom he had falsely supposed to be loyal; but in fact [his uncle], who was skilled in guile, having given many bribes, having promised more, brought them over to his side. So having become master of the fortification, he declared war against his lord'.[149] Similarly, on 2 April 1317, Berwick was betrayed to the Scots by a member of the garrison named Peter Spalding:

> On the second day of April, in the middle of Lent, around midnight on Sunday, they treacherously took the town of Berwick thanks to a single Englishman, Peter Spalding, who allowed them to climb the wall and to enter the part of the wall which he had been assigned to guard and watch over, in return for a large sum of money and the promise of lands.[150]

The governor of Banyas in Syria only agreed to abandon his allegiance to Zangī, ruler of Mosul and Aleppo, and surrender to the combined forces of Muʿin al-Dīn of Damascus and Fulk of Jerusalem in June 1140 on the agreement that he would receive an annual payment: 'For it seemed shameful and unseemly that a nobleman and a lord of such a famous city should be driven from his own inheritance, forced to become a beggar'.[151]

Arguably one of the most lavish bribes recorded in this period was offered by Robert Guiscard in February 1082. Unable to storm Dyrrachion, he bribed one Dominic, a Venetian in Greek service, to admit his men in return for marriage to his niece. Geoffrey Malaterra claimed that this arrangement was mainly negotiated through intermediaries, whereas William of Apulia said that Dominic used a 'deserter from Bari' (*perfuga Barinus*) to arrange a face-to-face meeting with Guiscard at a nearby church.[152] Malaterra's account is particularly interesting for his portrayal of Dominic. While he is clear that the impetus for the betrayal came from Guiscard, he censures Dominic for being greedy enough to accept it: 'But his heart was sick with greed, so that when lust was mixed with promises of avarice, it was easily corrupted, it slipped further down this slope on account of a good and honest

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[149] GRA, I, 432: 'Quapropter Willelmus quibusdam, quos fideles falso arbitrabatur, firmitatem castelli commiserat; uerum ille astu quo callebat, multa largiendo, plura pollicendo, in suas partes eosdem traduxit. Munitione igitur potitus, bellum domino suo denuntiauit'.

[150] Lanercost pp. 234–35: 'Secundo die mensis Aprilis [Scotti] villam Berwici in medio quadragesimae, circa mediam noctem post diem Sabbati, proditiose ceperunt per unum Anglicum in villa exsistentem, Petrum de Spaldynge, qui, pro maxima summa pecunia ab eis recepta et terris sibi promissis, permisit eos ascendere murum, et intrare in illam partem muri ubi ipse custos et vigil fuerat deputatus'. See also TG, p. 78, although this account lacks the reference to promised riches.

[151] WT, p. 689: 'turpe enim videretur et indecens, ut vir nobilis et tam famose urbis dominus propria pulsus hereditate mendicare compelleretur'.

[152] GM, p. 74; WA, p. 230.

proposition'.[153] Note that the proposition — to betray the city in return for marriage into a powerful and influential family — is *bonus honestusque* but the one who was propositioned was motivated by *cupiditas* and *luxuria*. Malaterra appears to be attempting to shift responsibility for a morally dubious affair from Guiscard to Dominic. William of Apulia, by contrast, places the impetus on Dominic, claiming that it was he who contacted Guiscard, on account of his jealously towards his commander.[154]

Bribery could operate in the opposite direction, with garrisons paying attackers to lift the siege and depart. This does not appear to have occurred in Western Europe, where garrisons were usually attacked by armies from neighbouring polities, which could simply return next year and demand an even greater sum. There are several notable accounts from Outremer, however, in which autonomous cities secretly paid one element of an attacking force to raise the siege. Note that this differs from citizens offering tribute in order to 'buy off' a crusading army because this was not negotiated openly, with the entire force, but in secret with one sub-group or individual.[155] Albert of Aachen claims that the citizens of Jabala offered to pay Godfrey of Bouillon's army a sum of money to leave in March 1099 but Godfrey instead demanded their surrender:

> So the citizens and the governor of the city, realising that they could not corrupt the aforesaid princes with money nor any other precious bribes to withdraw their camps, secretly sent messengers to count Raymond [of Saint-Gilles] at Arqah, since he was widely known to be foremost among his people in deeds and power, that, if he should induce the Christian princes to withdraw from the siege by a request or some other craft, he would receive the money which the duke and the others had refused.[156]

Albert claimed that Raymond accepted the money and lured Godfrey and the others away from Jabala by falsely reporting he was about to be attacked by a large army of Turks (see Chapter 6).

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[153] GM p. 74: 'Animus vero cupiditate aeger, ut a promittentibus avaritiae luxuria admiscetur, facile corruptus, a bono honestoque proposito proclivis in deterius dilapsus est'.

[154] WA, p. 230.

[155] For a study of the giving of tribute in Outremer, see Alan V. Murray, 'The Origin of Money-Fiefs in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem', in *Mercenaries and Paid Men: The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages. Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of Wales, Swansea, 7-9th July 2005*, ed. by John France (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 275–86 (here 283–86).

[156] AA, p. 380: 'Intelligentes ergo ciues et urbis magistratus quoniam non pecunia nec aliquibus preciosis muneribus corrumpi possent prefati principes ut castra amouerent, nuncios clam ad Arcahs comiti Reimundo, factis et potentia apud primores gentilium diffamato, miserunt, ut pecuniam a duce et ceteris refutatam acciperet, quatenus ab obsidione Christianos principes prece aut aliqua arte recedere suaderet'.

William of Tyre wrote a lengthy reflection on why the armies of the Second Crusade failed to take Damascus in July 1148, in which he reported that the citizens had bribed some of the crusaders to recommend shifting the camp to a less advantageous position on the south east side of the city:

> For when, as we said, the citizens had been placed in such straits, they did not have any hope of rescue nor of remaining in their city but were arranging to leave that place, with their belongings ready, since the sins of our men were being weighed, they chose to trust in the greed of certain of our men, and, with the assistance of their money, to conquer the hearts of those who were attacking them, whose bodies they despaired of being able to conquer: for, raising themselves with all attention to the various matters, in their zeal they persuaded certain of our princes, promising an infinite amount of money that had been collected, that the work of the siege ought to be broken up, that they ought to perform the office of the traitor Judas.[157]

William of Tyre, writing twenty five years after the events he described, claimed to have interviewed those who could still remember the siege, in order to determine who was responsible for giving this treacherous advice. Some said that certain noblemen from the kingdom of Jerusalem had conspired with the citizens because they resented the efforts made by Thierry, count of Flanders, to secure rule of the city should it fall, others that it was Raymond, prince of Antioch, who wished to take revenge against Louis VII of France, who had refused to help him and instead chosen to travel south to Jerusalem, and still others said that the traitors were never identified.[158] Contemporary German chroniclers, such as Gerhoh of Reichersberg, blamed Baldwin III of Jerusalem, claiming he abandoned the crusaders, or even the Knights Templar.[159] Modern scholars, drawing on the accounts of Ibn al-Qalānisī and Ibn al-Athīr, now argue that the Christians shifted their attack from the heavily-defended western approach after encountering heavy resistance and, believing that a Turkish relief force was approaching from Aleppo, wagered that they could storm

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[157] WT, p. 766: 'Nam dum, ut diximus, civitas in arto constituta esset nec eius cives resistendi aut salutis spem haberent ullam, sed compositis sarcinis migrare e loco disponerent, peccatis nostris exigentibus ceperunt de nostrorum presumere cupiditate et pecuniarum interventu eorum expugnare animas sunt aggressi, quorum corpora posse vinci diffidebant: tota enim sollicitudine in argumenta varia se attollentes, quibusdam de principibus nostris, promissa et collata infinite quantitatis pecunia ut eorum studio et opera obsidio solveretur, ut Iude proditoris officio fungerentur persuaserunt'.

[158] WT, pp. 768–69.

[159] A. J. Forey, 'The Failure of the Siege of Damascus in 1148', *Journal of Medieval History*, 10 (1984), 13–23 (here 14).

the city more quickly from the south east.[160] The accusations of bribery and treachery are indicative of later attempts to explain the failure of the siege and to find a scapegoat. As with his later account of the siege of the Cave de Suète, William of Tyre's report is more illuminating for the insight into his historical method and the contemporary rumours that surrounded the siege of Damascus, than for what it actually tells us about the events of 1148.

Money and power were not the only inducements that an attacker could use to persuade an enemy to come over to their side. Religion could also be a powerful motivator. In 1094, prompted by rumours that his brother-in-law the duke of Apulia, Roger Borsa, had died, the Norman baron William Grandmesnil seized a number of Calabrian strongholds for himself. Borsa, together with Bohemond of Taranto, moved swiftly to put down Grandmesnil's rebellion. They were able to induce the town of Rossano to surrender (although not the citadel, which was held by men loyal to Grandmesnil) with promises to reverse an unpopular decision that Borsa had made the year before:

> He crossed over to Rossano from there, because William had offended those who supported him: he had taken away the sons of the powerful citizens to be hostages. But because the year before the duke, contrary to the wishes of the Greeks (who made up the greater part of his subjects in the city), deposing the Greek archbishop from his seat, had elected a Latin as his successor (but who had not yet been confirmed by consecration), having rejected the election of the Latin, provided that the duke conceded that the Greeks would be free to elect an archbishop from among their own people, he won their support and occupied the town together with their surrender.[161]

The Greek citizens were clearly shrewd enough to exploit the conflict between their Norman rulers to their own advantage.

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[160] G. A. Loud, 'Some Reflections on the Failure of the Second Crusade', *Crusades*, 4 (2005), 1–14 (here 14); Jonathan Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 221–26.

[161] GM, p. 100: 'Inde Rossanam usque pertransiens, quia Guillelmus filios potentiorum civium sibi obsides adduxerat, minus sibi assentientes offendit. Sed quia ipse dux jam ante annum, contra voluntatem Graecorum, qui eidem urbi maxima ex parte principabantur, graeco archiepiscopo eiusdem sedis defuncto, successorem latinum eligendo subrogaverat, sed necdum consacratione firmatus erat, electione latini frustrata, dum a duce conceditur ut de sua gente archiepiscopum sibi Graeci pro libitu eligant, favorem illorum adeptus, urbem quoque illorum deditione obtinuit'.

Geoffrey Malaterra relates an unusual account of a Christian leader persuading a Muslim commander to both betray his stronghold and convert to Christianity. In 1086, Roger of Sicily sought to add the Sicilian town of Castrogiovanni to his holdings:

> Hurrying to Castrogiovanni at daybreak with a hundred knights, having made an agreement, he invited Chamut [the governor] to talk with him. Assailing him with many roundabout words, he urged him to surrender the *castrum* and to receive Christian baptism. Having learned about the experience of others, knowing that the count was never frustrated in anything he set out to do, since fortune favoured him, he was also somewhat inspired, silently, within his breast, to convert to the faith. He secretly arranged that, when the count came before the *castrum* with his army, he and his household would be received, together with all his belongings, when he went over to his side.[162]

The qualifying adverb 'somewhat' (*aliquantulum*) suggests that Malaterra may have doubted the sincerity of Chamut's conversion. Nevertheless, he reported that, having settled in Calabria (he feared reprisals from the citizens whom he had betrayed), Chamut remained a loyal subject of Roger.[163]

Arguably the most famous medieval example of an attacker inducing somebody to betray their stronghold occurred in June 1098, at the siege of Antioch. It was the incident that enabled the armies of the First Crusade to take the city after an ineffective blockade that lasted for nine months and opened the way to Jerusalem. As a result, every chronicle of the First Crusade mentions it, although there is great variation in even the basic details. The *Gesta Francorum* gives what is probably the plainest account:

> There was a certain emir of Turkish race named Pirrus, who had entered into a very close friendship with Bohemond. Bohemond often urged him, having sent one messenger after another to him, to receive him within the city in the most friendly manner; he promised him the freedom of the Christian religion, and committed to make him wealthy with much honour. He agreed to his

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[162] GM, p. 88: 'Unde et quodam diluculo cum centum militibus versus Castrum-Johannis properans, Chamutum, foedere interposito, sibi locutum invitat. Quem diversis verborum circuitionibus attentans, deditione castri et conversione ad Christi baptismatis regenerartionem pulsat. Porro ille, cognoscens, experimento de aliis sumpto, comitem ad quodcumque intenderet, fortuna favente, nihil furstra niti, aliquantulum etiam de conversione ad fidem tacito sub pectore inspiratus, clam suos agit, ut, statuto termino, comes, cum suo exercitu ante castrum veniens, ipsum cum omni suppellectili sua ad se transfugientem suscipiat'.

[163] GM, p. 88.

> words and promises, saying: 'I guard three towers, and I gladly promise them to him, and I will receive him into them at whatever hour he wishes'.[164]

According to France, Bohemond may have made contact with Pirrus during an extended truce that took place between the crusaders and the garrison in the spring, which was reported in a letter of Anselm, bishop of Ribemont, but is not recorded in any of the surviving chronicles.[165] Having made this arrangement, Bohemond then used his potential strategic coup to persuade the other leading crusaders to turn the city over to him, should he manage to capture it, in defiance of their standing agreement with the Byzantine Emperor Alexios Komnenos. The actual attack took place on the evening of 2 June, after the main crusader force had made a show of withdrawing, as if going to forage for supplies. Bohemond led a small force to the foot of the tower which Pirrus guarded, climbed the wall and took control of the city, although the citadel would remain in Turkish hands until the crusaders' victory over the army of Karbughā on 28 June.[166]

The *Gesta Francorum* reports Bohemond's approaches to Pirrus in a straightforward manner. Pirrus would betray the city and convert to Christianity, in return for which he would receive wealth and honour. Joshua Birk has suggested that the author, who was probably a Norman from southern Italy who had served in Bohemond's following, was not unduly troubled by this agreement, as similar arrangements were well-known in Italy and Sicily (see above).[167] By contrast, the other crusader chroniclers, who were mostly monks from northern France with little to no contact with Muslims, were more troubled by Pirrus's easy conversion and Bohemond's use of bribery to achieve a holy goal.[168] To make the historical events conform to the theological framework which they had constructed for

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[164] GF, p. 44: 'Erat quidam ammiratus de genere Turcorum cui nomen Pirus, qui maximam amicitiam receperat cum Boamundo. Hunc sepe Boamundus pulsabat nuntiis adinuicem missis, quo eum infra ciuitatem amicissime reciperet; eique christianitatem liberius promittebat, et eum se diuitem facturum cum multo honore mandabat. Consensit ille dictis et promissionibus dicens: "Tres turres custodio, eique libenter ipsas promitto, et quacunque hora voluerit in eas eum recolligam"'.

[165] John France, 'The Fall of Antioch during the First Crusade', in *Dei gesta per Francos: Etudes sur les croisades dédiées à Jean Richard*, ed. by Michel Balard, Benjamin Z. Kedar, and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 13–20 (here 17–19).

[166] For a complete study of this incident, see Y. N. Harari, *Special Operations*, pp. 53–73.

[167] Joshua C. Birk, 'The Betrayal of Antioch: Narratives of Conversion and Conquest during the First Crusade', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 41 (2011), 463–86 (here 464).

[168] Slitt has explored the social anxieties raised by an apparent friendship between a crusader and a Muslim and the strategies the chroniclers employed to minimise it in their narratives, either by elevating Pirrus's social status or emphasising Bohemond's spiritual and military superiority: Rebecca L. Slitt, 'Justifying Cross-Cultural Friendship: Bohemond, Firuz, and the Fall of Antioch', *Viator*, 38 (2007), 339–49.

their narrative, Pirrus's treachery was portrayed as a product of divine inspiration.[169] Fulcher of Chartres introduces his account of the fall of Antioch with the phrase: 'So hear about an act of fraud and yet not fraud'.[170] In Fulcher's text, Pirrus received three visions from God, urging him to surrender the city to the crusaders. Here the agency is ascribed to God, with Bohemond being an almost passive recipient of God's gift in Pirrus.[171] Robert the Monk retained Bohemond's central role but, instead of a simple act of bribery, their relationship becomes an extended act of evangelism on Bohemond's part, as he persuades Pirrus of the truth of the Christian faith and its inevitable triumph over Islam.[172] Guibert of Nogent, however, claimed that Pirrus's conversion was short lived and that he soon betrayed the Franks:

> Thereupon, when he had utterly deserted the Christians, he resumed the luxurious and impure living of the Gentiles that he had followed of old. Nor was this any shame to him: for Pyrrus is the Greek for the Latin *Rufus* and it is well known that the unfaithful are marked by their red hair, so it is proven that this man did not stray far from his line.[173]

There is a possibility that Pirrus was in fact an Armenian in Turkish service who had nominally converted to Islam and used the siege as an opportunity to aid his co-religionists. This is doubtful however: the only Western chronicler who calls Pirrus an Armenian is Ralph of Caen, who was writing much later than the authors discussed above.[174] The Damascene chronicler Ibn al-Qalānisī identifies him as an Armenian serving Yāghī Siyān as an armourer but this may be an attempt by al-Qalānisī to shift the blame for the city's fall away from his own people and onto somebody who was neither Arab nor Muslim.[175] By contrast, Ibn al-Athīr simply describes him as 'an armourer' who was guarding one of the towers, with no mention of his ethnicity or religion.[176]

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[169] Levine has performed a thorough rhetorical study of the different accounts of Pirrus's treachery. Robert Levine, 'The Pious Traitor: Rhetorical Reinventions of the Fall of Antioch', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch*, 33 (1998), 59–80.
[170] FC, p. 231: 'Audite ergo fraudem et non fraudem'.
[171] FC, pp. 230–31.
[172] RM, pp. 796–801.
[173] GN, p. 251: 'Ibi prorsus Christianitate deserta, veteris luxuriae et gentilitatis inquinamenta resumpsit. Nec id iniuria: si enim Pyrrus grece "rufus" est latine et infidelitatis nota rufis inuritur, isdem ergo a sua minime linea exorbitasse probatur'.
[174] GT, pp. 59–60.
[175] The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades: Extracted and Translated from the Chronicle of Ibn Al-Qalānisī, trans. by H. A. R. Gibb (London: Luzac, 1932), pp. 44–45.
[176] Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle,* I, 14–15.

When faced with the formidable task of taking a medieval stronghold, it is little surprise that commanders would seek to use every method available to avoid having to make a direct assault, including resorting to bribery. While chronicle accounts of bribery are suspect, often reflecting the authors' prejudices and the accussations that inevitably circulated in the aftermath of a defeat, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that such inducements were an effective, if morally dubious, means of acquiring strongholds without violence. Avoiding violence in this way could even be presented as a positive attribute by a sympathetic chronicler, such as William of Apulia, who could claim it demonstrated ingenuity and political acumen.

Chapter 7
Oaths and Truces

Despite Christ's injunction to his disciples to refrain from swearing oaths, oaths and oath-taking were a fundamental element of medieval Christian culture.[1] Oaths 'served as a method of proof and a guarantee of truth in legal process and social life', whether this was the truth of a statement, such as the testimony of a witness in court, or the truth of a promise to undertake some course of action, such as wedding vows.[2] The medieval aristocracy, both laymen and clergy, was acutely aware of the importance of oaths. Vassals swore an oath of homage to their lord, monks swore an oath of obedience to their abbot and clerics to their superiors in the Church hierarchy.[3]

The most common Latin words for oath were *iusiurandum* and *iuramentum,* deriving from *ius* (right or law), which indicate their legal nature, and *sacramentum,* from *sacrum* (sacred), indicates their connection with the spiritual and divine.[4] Canon lawyers were unanimous that oaths fell under 'natural' or divine law, as the violation of an oath was a crime against God, who was invoked as a witness to its content.[5] Oath-taking rituals frequently involved the swearer making physical contact with a scared object, such as a Gospel book or relic.[6] Contemporaries made a distinction between this kind of solemn oath, which invoked the divine, and other promises.[7] There was also powerful social pressure for people to keep their oaths: oath-taking often formed part of public rituals and witnesses were expected to ensure that its terms were ahered to. An oath-breaker would lose face before their peers and be ostracised from normal social relations, as one who could not be trusted to keep their word.[8]

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[1] *Bible,* Matthew 5.33–37.
[2] *Oxford Dictionary of the Middle Ages,* ed. by Robert E. Bjork, 4 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), III, 1220.
[3] Kenneth Pennington, 'Feudal Oath of Fidelity and Homage', in *Law as Profession and Practice in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Kenneth Pennington and Melodie Harris Eichbauer (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 93–116 (here 105–6).
[4] *Dictionary of the Middle Ages,* ed. by Joseph R. Strayer, 13 vols (New York: Scribner, 1982–89), IX, 207.
[5] Lisa Jefferson, *Oaths, Vows and Promises in the First Part of the French Prose Lancelot Romance* (Bern: Lang, 1993), p. 29.
[6] Jenny Benham, *Peacemaking in the Middle Ages: Principles and Practice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 150.
[7] Jefferson, *Oaths*, p. 30.
[8] Björn Weiler, 'Knighting, Homage and the Meaning of Ritual', *Viator*, 37 (2006), 275–300 (here 276–77).

In the context of medieval warfare, combatants would make agreements with their opponents, usually to observe a truce, suspending hostilities for a given period for a parley or other reason. This was a generally accepted custom, similar to the granting of a conditional respite to a garrison or surrendering a stronghold when there was no prospect of mounting an adequate defence. It can be difficult to determine precisely what was said in a given situation and what oaths, if any, were sworn. These were verbal, ad-hoc arrangements, made between the commanders of the two forces. When chroniclers explicitly state that oaths were sworn, it was usually to criticise the one who subsequently broke an agreement: not only were they dishonest, they were also sacrilegious.

It is important to stress that these agreements were customs, not laws: there were no texts that specified that combatants should behave in this way. There was no formal medieval 'law of war'. Transnational 'courts of chivalry', at which individuals might seek redress for offences committed against the 'law of arms', would not develop until the mid-fourteenth century.[9] In the period under discussion, the process was governed solely by the values of honour and shame: in theory, both sides sought to protect their reputation by maintaining the agreement and risked attracting shame if they failed. Modern readers may scoff at this, and there are many examples of individuals abusing the custom, as shall be discussed below, but there is evidence that it was taken very seriously. As Fredric Cheyette has demonstrated, the distinction between 'laws' and 'customs', between stated rules and observed practice, was not so great in the West during this period as it would become in later centuries.[10] Studying the resolution of tenure disputes in twelfth- and early thirteenth-century France, Cheyette showed how arbitrators were appointed, not to make settlements according to objective case law, but to resolve the dispute so that neither side unduly lost face. This was possible because '[there existed] a social group whose members rubbed each other often enough for their pressure to be effective and the ritual to perform its appointed task'.[11]

In a similar way, fear of losing status in the eyes of their peers governed the behaviour of medieval combatants. According to Richard of Devizes, when Richard I of England rallied his men for an attack on Messina in October 1190, he laid down

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[9] Yvonne Friedman, 'Did Laws of War Exist in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem?', in *De Sion exibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem: Essays on Medieval Law, Liturgy, and Literature in Honour of Amnon Linder*, ed. by Yitzhak Hen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), pp. 81–103 (here 82); Keen, *Laws of War*, pp. 23–59; Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, pp. 46–47.

[10] Fredric L. Cheyette, 'Giving Each his Due', in *Debating the Middle Ages: Issues and Readings*, ed. by Lester K. Little and Barbara H. Rosenwein (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 170–79 (here 171).

[11] Cheyette, 'Giving Each', p. 176.

punishments for those who fled: 'This law is to be kept without remission: the foot soldier who flees on his foot shall lose that foot; the knight will be stripped of his belt'.[12] It is noteworthy that a knight losing his *cingulum,* the symbol of his social status and honour, was considered comparable to crippling a foot soldier. Consider also William of Malmesbury's account of the death of Harold Godwinson at Hastings. One of William the Conqueror's knights struck Harold's corpse in the thigh: 'because of this he was branded with disgrace by William, because he had done this ignoble and shameful thing, he was banished from the *militia*'.[13] While this incident is almost certainly apocryphal, it is a valuable insight into the aristocratic culture of Malmesbury's period, a generation before Richard I's: the shame of losing one's status as a knight was evidently considered a severe punishment.

There was also a practical dimension to these customs. Strickland has noted that garrisons that were granted conditional respites were rarely actually relieved: besiegers only allowed them to seek help when they felt confident that no help would be forthcoming.[14] Regarding the observation of periods of truce, this also had pragmatic advantages: 'If safe conduct during parleys was consistently violated, both parties ran the risk of rendering unworkable the very mechanisms by which warfare might be postponed or brought to a conclusion'.[15] Nevertheless, we should not discount the very real role that honour and the avoidance of public shame played in regulating warfare. Consider Philip II of France's violent reaction when he learned that Richard I of England was assaulting Acre in 1191 at the same time as he was conducting negotiations with representatives from the garrison, to whom he had given a pledge of safe conduct:

> When the king of France learned that the king of England was assaulting the city in contravention of the pledge that he had given to [the garrison], he was very angry. He gave leave to the Saracens and had them conducted to the city, and gave them leave and commanded them to defend themselves. And the king, on account of his anger, ordered his men to take up arms to go and

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[12] Richard of Devizes, 'De rebus gestis Ricardi primi', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I,* ed. by Richard Howlett, RS, 82, 4 vols (London: Longman, 1884–89), III, 381–454 (here 399): 'Sit lex servata sine remedio: pedes pleno pede fugiens, pedem perdat; miles privetur cingulo'.

[13] GRA, p. 456: 'unde a Willelmo ignominiae notatus, quod rem ignauam et pudendam fecisset, militia pulsus est'.

[14] Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, p. 210.

[15] Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, p. 49.

> attack the king of England. And he had even laced up his chausses, when the worthy men of the army intervened to sooth his anger.[16]

This story is probably a fiction: it comes from the Lyon Eracles, a markedly pro-Capetian source, but it remains a useful illustration of what contemporaries considered dishonourable behaviour. Richard humiliated Philip in front of the citizens of Acre by ignoring his pledge of safe conduct. He had made him appear weak, unable to command respect among his allies and, even worse, untrustworthy, liable to break any future agreement. Hence Philip's angry and impulsive recourse to violence in order to reassert his dominance over Richard and to avenge the insult to his honour.

Geoffrey de Villehardouin reported a similar incident that occurred during negotiations between Henry of Hainault, regent of the Latin Empire of Constantinople, and the citizens of Apros (near modern Kermeyan, Turkey) in 1205:

> Since [the Franks] wanted to assault them, [the citizens] sought an agreement whereby they could surrender. While they were seeking an agreement in one place, members of the host were entering in another; Henry, the regent of the empire and those who were talking in that place did not know a thing about it, and it was very upsetting to them. And the French began to kill the Greeks, and to seize the possessions of the town, and to take it all: many were killed and much was taken. And in this way Apros was taken.[17]

In both incidents, the violation of the truce provoked anger. Not only did it damage a commander's reputation as a man of honour, it also risked undermining the conventions of siege warfare. If their enemies came to believe that they could not be trusted, then they would be more likely to fight to the death in future encounters, making it significantly more difficult to take their other strongholds.

While this chapter will necessarily focus on times when people broke their word, there is also evidence of individuals sacrificing a tactical or strategic advantage in the name

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[16] LE, pp. 123–125: 'Ensi come le rei de France sot que le roi d'Engleterre assailleit la cité sur la fiance que il lor aveit donee, mout li ennuya. Il dona congié as Sarazins et les fist conduire a la cité, et lor dona congié et comanda que il se deussent deffendre. Et le rei meismes, dou coros que il ot, comanda a ses homes que il se deussent armer por aler assaillir le roi d'Engleterre. Et li meismes avoit ja laciees ses chauces, se les proudeshomes de l'ost nen i fussent survenus, qui le rapaisserent de sa ire'.

[17] GV, II, 200: 'Cum il les voltrent assaillir, quisent plait qu'il se rendroient. Endementiers que il queroient plait d'une part, cil de l'ost entroient de l'autre part; si que Henris li balz de l'empire et cil qui parloient del plait n'en sorent mot, ainz lor en pesa mult. Et li Franc comencent a occire les Griex, et a gaignier les avoirs de la ville, et a prendre tot: si en i ot mult de morz et de pris. Et en ceste maniere fu prise Naples'.

of honour. In 1296, Edward I of England laid siege to Edinburgh Castle. According to the Lanercost chronicler, a certain Welshman named Lewyn was given letters to deliver to London but instead brought them to the (unnamed) Scottish constable, hoping to be rewarded:

> But whereas others wanted the mysteries contained within the letters to be disclosed, he who was in charge prevented it and immediately, standing in a high place, he cried loudly to those passing by that they should make it known in the king's court that there was a traitor who was inciting those within [the castle] to perform an act of deceit, which he would not agree to for any reason contrary to *fides*.[18]

The constable returned both the letters and the unfortunate Lewyn, who was drawn and hanged as a traitor. Edward was reportedly so moved by the constable's gesture that he ordered that there should be no further bombardment of the castle and agreed to allow the garrison to seek aid from John Balliol, king of Scotland.

It is not clear in what sense the chronicler is using *fides* in the above passage. It may mean something like 'good faith' or 'trustworthiness', suggesting that the constable considered cooperating with the traitor to be unworthy of a man of honour, or it may literally mean 'faith', suggesting he regarded it as an impious act, or both together. The use of *sacramenta* to describe the letters, which the other defenders wanted to 'disclose', does suggest that the chronicler saw Lewyn's actions as sacreligious. He appears to have seen the incident as instructive, introducing it with, 'On the Feast of St. Barnabas, a memorable thing happened concerning the treacherous character of those called Welshmen', and concluding with: 'I inserted this story here so that the wise may avoid friendship with the dishonest'.[19]

Another incident in which a commander explicitly refused to break a promise occurred at Apamea, Syria in 1106. A man, whom Albert of Aachen named Botherus, murdered the city's ruler, Kahalf ibn Mulā'īb, and invited Ridwan, ruler of Aleppo, to take possession of the town.[20] The Christian citizens of Apamea, together with the sons of Ibn

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[18] Lanercost, p. 178: 'Cum vero caeteri vellent igitur sacramenta detegi inhibuit qui praeerat, et statim in eminenti loco stans acclamavit fortiter transeuntes quatinus notum facerent in curia regis proditorem suum eos qui deintus erant sollicitare de fraude, cui nulla ratione contra fidem vellet assensum praebere'.

[19] Lanercost, pp. 177–79: 'In festo Sancti Barabae apostli accidit memorabile pro Walensium tergiversatione nominandum [...] Hoc exemplum hic inserui ut sapiens subterfugiat familiaritatem fraudaulenti'.

[20] This 'Botherus' may have been Abū Tāhir al-Saïgh, the leader of the Assassins of Aleppo, or a Persian goldsmith named Abū Tāhir: AA p. 735 n. 21.

Mulā'ib, appealed to Tancred (at that time regent of Antioch) for protection. After a long siege, Tancred negotiated a surrender, together with an agreement to spare Botherus. Ibn Mulā'ib's sons were, understandably, furious:

> However the sons of the prince who had been killed by trickery met with Tancred, begging him vociferously, saying that he ought not to receive such a nefarious man and such a vile traitor from the others, or spare his life, but that he ought to be wiped from the earth entirely. Tancred answered them thus, in all mildness: 'I made a pledge to this man, whom I know well-enough is perverse and false. It is not the custom of Christians to violate faith and truth but to keep them with all people, and we grant this man his life, together with the safety of his limbs'.[21]

Tancred consoled them by explaining he had only guaranteed Botherus's safety: his fellow conspirators were not protected and the sons could take their revenge on them as they wished. This speech may be intended to be ironic, given Tancred's reputation for ruthlessness and sharp practice. There is evidence to suggest that his treatment of Botherus was not a display of pure magnanimity: according to the Damascene chronicler Ibn al-Qalānisī, he was required to pay Tancred a substantial ransom for his safety.[22]

Periods of negotiation were regarded as part of the truce: military activity was to be suspended and messengers were free to go between the belligerent parties unharmed. This was not always adhered to. On 23 July 1195, Philip II of France and Richard I of England agreed to a truce, during which Philip would hold all the lands in Normandy he occupied at that time, while the two sides attempted to negotiate a lasting peace. Philip, realising that he would be unable to hold many of the castles if the fighting should resume, preferred to demolish them rather than allow them to return to Richard intact.[23] The Anglo-Normans considered this to be a violation of the truce, at least according to the *History of William Marshal*. Philip and Richard had met for another round of negotiations at the castle of Vaudreuil:

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[21] AA, p. 740: 'Filii autem principis in dolo occisi hec indignantes Tancradum obnixe precati conuenerunt, dicentes non tam nefarium hominem et tam nequam traditorem debere ab aliquo recipi, aut uite reseruari, sed omnino de terra deleri. Quibus Tancradus in omni mansuetudine sic respondit: "Fidem quam promisimus isti, quem satis peruersum scio ac periurum, non Christiani moris est uiolare, sed nostrum est omni populo fidem et ueritatem seruare, et ideo huic concedimus uitam cum salute membrorum".

[22] Damascus Chronicle, p. 73.

[23] John Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*, 2nd edn (London: Weidenfeld, 1989), pp. 253–54.

> They held talks but the French behaved wickedly: while the kings were talking about peace, they continuously undermined the castle until it fell down; they performed an act of cowardly treason. And when King Richard heard it fall, he was not overjoyed, but rather he swore by God's legs: 'Now saddle-cloths will be overturned and some will suffer loss. This is very clearly treason!'[24]

Henry III of England was accused of employing a similar strategy at Northampton, which was held against him by supporters of Simon de Montfort in April 1264. Walter of Guisborough reported that, while the two sides were negotiating on one side of the town, a royalist force led by one Philip Basset was secretly breaking down another section of wall:

> But while various and diverse treaties were being considered between the king and the barons, the lord Philip Basset, who had arranged this seditious act, having prepared tools and iron instruments and men, undermined the city walls near St. Andrew's monastery, and he easily broke down the walls and made a great level surface so that forty horsemen could enter in one line. This trick was ascribed to the foreign monks themselves because they prepared an entrance for the invaders.[25]

The accusations levelled at the foreign Cluniacs of St. Andrew's priory is in keeping with the nativist sentiments of the period and the barons' complaints about foreign influence at the royal court. Thomas Wykes, one of the few royalist chroniclers of the Second Barons' War, records that the royalists breached the wall but makes no mention of the negotiations, focusing instead on the foolish actions of Simon de Montfort the younger, who was thrown from his horse while riding to oppose the attackers.[26]

One way combatants could exploit the custom of the truce was by deliberately delaying or drawing out the negotiations to their own advantage. In September 1097, a crusading army under Tancred laid siege to the Cilician city of Tarsos. The Turkish garrison

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[24] HWM, lines 10537–48: 'Tant firent qu'un parlement pristrent, / Mes Franceis laidement mespristrent: / Dementiers que de pais parloent / Li rei, e il toz dis minoent / Le chastel tant qu'il l'abatirent; / Coarde traïson i firent. / E quant li resi chaïr l'oï, / Ricart, pas ne s'en esjoï, / Einz jura par les jambes Dé: "Ja i seront panel torné / Si qu'as uns en torra la perte. Trop a ci traïson aperte!".

[25] WG, pp. 189–90: 'Interim vero dum inter regem et barones varii haberentur tractatus et diuersi, dominus Philippus Baseth, qui ad hanc sedicionem fuerat preordinatus, cum ligonibus et instrumentis ferreis et viris preparatis iuxta monasterium sancti Andree murum suffodit ciuitatis, corruitque murus de facili et facta est planicies magna ita quod in vno fronte ingredi possent equestres .xl. Imputatus est etiam dolus ipsis monachis alienigenis quod introeuntibus introitum preparabant'.

[26] TW, p. 144.

initially agreed to receive Tancred's banner, which they flew over their walls as a sign that they had submitted to his authority and that they should not be attacked by other crusaders. While Tancred remained encamped before the city, Baldwin of Boulogne approached with his army. The garrison, thinking that it was a Turkish force coming to their relief, began to taunt Tancred and his men from the walls:

> See! Our troops are hastening to aid us. We are not in your power, as you thought, but our hand and our power shall surely crush you today. This is the reason we came to this agreement with you for no purpose. Now you can be sure that you were deceived. We did this for no other reason than to keep you in your camps, as we were waiting for help from the divisions you now see, to destroy you and your men.[27]

When the Turks realised their error, they quickly threw down Tancred's banner and accepted Baldwin's protection instead, as he possessed the stronger force. Tancred, who was unwilling to fight Baldwin, withdrew to Adana.

In 1152 John Marshal, a partisan of the Empress Matilda, was besieged at Newbury by Stephen, king of England. John negotiated a truce with the king, giving his son William to him as a hostage (see Chapter 2). John had told Stephen that he would use the truce to request relief from Matilda but instead used the time to strengthen his defences:

> It happened in this way, that the besiegers withdrew and [Marshal] refortified his castle; for it was very much defenceless. He placed good knights, good serjeants and good archers in there, who intended to defend it well and would not surrender the castle. He had no desire for peace. The child was in danger; the king knew very well that he had been deceived but he waited until the set time when [Marshal] would have to surrender the castle; he would surrender nothing: he would have to take it with the troops he had assembled.[28]

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[27] AA, p. 146: 'Ecce manus nobis auxiliari properantium. Nos non in tua ut estimabas, sed tu tuique in manu et uirtute nostra hodie conterendi estis. Quapropter te hoc in foedere quod frustra pepigimus, iam deceptum credas. Nec aliam ob causam te morari in castris fecimus, nisi quia spem auxilii in hiis quas uides aciebus in tuam tuorumque perditionem prestolabamur'.

[28] HWM, lines 493–508: 'Si fu feit en tele maniere / Ke le sieges se traist ariere, / E cil son chastel regarni; / Si l'out trové trop desgarni, / E mist enz de boens chevalers / E boens serjanz e bons archiers, / Qui ben se pensent defendre, / K'il n'ont talant del chastel rendre, / Ne de la pais n'aveit il cure. / Li emfes fu an aventure; / Bien s'ert li reis aperceü / K'il aveit esté deceü, / Mais li terme fu atenduz / Que li deveit estre renduz / Li chastels; naien fu del rendre: / A ce ku'il out l'en convint prendre'.

Stephen's behaviour may seem naïve but it is in keeping with his depiction in other sources as generous and honourable, even when it ran contrary to his own immediate interests.[29] It is not clear whether the poet expected his audience to approve of John's deceitful behaviour here or to condemn it. It may be that we are simply meant to worry about the consequences for the young Marshal, caught in a conflict between two ruthless adults.

Jordan Fantosme presented an incident in which a combatant negotiated with intent to deceive in an unambiguously positive light. In September 1173, Robert III, earl of Leicester, landed in Norfolk with an army of Flemings in support of Henry the Young King's rebellion against his father. Humphrey III de Bohun, the royal constable, was at that time in Northumbria campaigning against William I of Scotland, who had invaded England earlier that year. It was Richard de Lucy, the justiciar of England, who suggested that the English barons negotiate a truce with the Scots to allow themselves time to march south and confront Leicester. Here is Bohun's response, according to Fantosme:

> Sir Richard de Lucy, now your age will be apparent. Be swift, if you are the wise man it is said you are. Go to the king of Scotland and conceal this danger from him. If he hears this news, he will be much emboldened that the earl has arrived and crossed the Channel. He will not grant your truce, unless he has madness in his heart. I will go back; it will be to their danger. If God wills it, I will put an end to this outrage.[30]

Fantosme concludes by stating that Lucy 'acted with good sense' (*sené*), acquiring everything he wanted from William of Scotland. Rather than being criticised, this piece of shrewd diplomacy is praised by the poet as a demonstration of the positive qualities *sage* and *sens*.

Roger of Howden recorded an illuminating example of how an unscrupulous commander could adhere to the letter of an agreement while disregarding its spirit. In July 1173, Louis VII of France and the Young King Henry laid siege to the Norman town of Verneuil, as part of their campaign against Henry II of England. After a month, the town had run out of supplies and the citizens asked that they be allowed to send for help. Louis

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[29] For example, his gift of funds to Henry of Anjou in 1147, after he found himself unable to pay his retinue: GS p. 206.

[30] JF, lines 818–25: 'Sire Richard de Luci, or parra voste age / E vus seiez en haste, si cum l'um dit, tant sage. / Alez al rei d'Escoce, celez lui cest damage. / S'il set ceste novele, mult iert de fier curage / Ke li cuens seit arivez e venuz a passage, / Ne vus durrad sa triewe, s'il n'ad el cuer la rage. / Jo m'en irrai ariere; ço iert pur sun damage. / Si Deus le volt e gree, jo desfrai l'utrage'.

agreed, swearing that, if no relief had arrived by St. Lawrence's Day (10 August), he would enter the town without doing any violence to the inhabitants. The citizens gave hostages as sureties for their surrender, then sent word to Henry II. Henry arrived in the vicinity of Verneuil on 9 August and drew up his army for battle:

> And Louis, king of the French, sent William, archbishop of Sens, count Henry [I of Troyes], and count Theobald [V of Blois] to the king of England, the father, and they agreed to have a conference between them in the morning. And the king of England believed this to his misfortune, for he was deceived. For in the morning the king of France did not come to a conference nor send a messenger.[31]

Instead, Louis had entered the town that same evening, seized the burgesses and their cattle, fired the buildings and then retreated with his booty. Howden is very clear that Louis, and the other magnates with him, had sworn an oath to the townsfolk: '*juraverunt eis*'.[32] He also made sure to frame his description of the sack of Verneuil within the language of sacred law: 'But this did not prevent his outrage, he transgressed the sacred oaths which he had made to the burgesses. For he did not return their hostages, nor keep the peace, as he promised'.[33]

Louis may have felt justified in his actions, however. He had agreed to allow the town to summon help, which had arrived, meaning that his oath had been fulfilled and, with the resumption of hostilities, he was no longer bound to spare the burgesses or their possessions. He did break his agreement to meet with Henry the next morning but this does not appear to have been affirmed with an oath, so he may not have felt bound to observe it in the same way: Howden uses the generic verb *capere* for the agreement relating to the *colloquium*, rather than the specific *jurare,* which was used for the agreement made between Louis and the town.

The above examples are all somewhat ambiguous: one party entered into an agreement with ulterior motives but they at least made a show of adhering to the agreed terms. There are numerous other incidents in which combatants simply disregarded

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[31] How Chr, II, 50: 'Et Lodowicus rex Francorum misit Willemum Senonensem archiepiscopum, et comitem Henricum, et comitem Theobaldum ad regem Angliae patrem, et ceperunt colloquium inter eos crastino. Et credidit illis rex Angliae malo suo quia deceptus est. Rex namque Franciae in crastino, nec ad colloquium venit, nec nuncium misit'.

[32] How Chr, II, 49.

[33] How Chr, II, 50: 'Sed ipse non ausus eam retinere, transgressus est sacramenta quae ipse burgensibus fecerat. Ipse namque obsides eorum non reddidit, nec pacem, quam promiserat, servavit'.

agreements in order to surprise or otherwise gain an advantage over their opponent. Following his victory over the Latins at Adrianople (14–15 April 1205), Kalojan, king of Bulgaria and Vlachia, laid siege to their castle at Serres in Macedonia. The garrison agreed to surrender and Kalojan 'had twenty five of his most noble men who were present swear an oath that he would escort them safely, with all their horses and arms, to Salonika or Constantinople or into Hungary, wherever they wanted'.[34] According to Villehardouin, the garrison camped before the castle for three days, waiting to depart, before Kalojan's men suddenly fell upon them, despoiled them and carried them off to Vlachia: 'The poor and the weak who were of no value he sent into Hungary and he cut off the heads of the others, who were of some value'.[35] While it is possible to interpret this as an instance in which Western European culture came into conflict with a culture that did not necessarily hold oaths and agreements in the same reverence (see Chapter 9), there are also examples of Westerners willing to violate sworn agreements. Roger of Wendover recorded that, in 1233, Henry III of England laid siege to a certain castle in Wales ('whose name I do not remember') belonging to the rebel earl of Pembroke, Richard Marshal. The king, allegedly lacking sufficient supplies to maintain the siege, sent a delegation to Richard:

> Having sent certain bishops to the earl Marshal, he acquired from him an agreement that he would surrender [the castle] to him, on account of the king's honour, lest it seem that he had besieged the castle in vain, with the agreement that he would return it entire to the Marshal in less than fifteen days, and that meanwhile he would emend all that ought to be set right in the kingdom, through the counsel of the bishops, who were his guarantors for this.[36]

We see here again the importance of shame as a motivation in political and military decision making. Wendover says that Henry was 'ashamed that he had come there [to the siege]' ('puduit regem illuc venisse') and appealed to Richard on the grounds of honour, lest he appear to have acted in vain or foolishly (*inaniter*) and lose face before his subjects. Richard agreed but, perhaps unsurprisingly, Henry refused to return the castle after the

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[34] GV, p. 202: 'Et Johannis lot fist jurer a .xxv. des plus halz homes que il avoit que il les conduroit salvement a toz lor chevaus et a totes lor armes a Salenique ou en Costantinople ou en Hongrie, lequel que il voldroient des trois'.

[35] GV, p. 204: 'Les povres et les menuz qui ne valoient gaires fist mener en Hungrie, et les autres qui auques valoient fist les testes colper'.

[36] RW, IV, 273: 'unde, missis quibusdam episcopis ad comitem Marescallum, exegit ab eo, quatenus propter honorem ipsius regis, ne videretur castellum inaniter obsedisse, illud sibi tali conventione redderet, ut infra dies quindecim illud integrum ipsi restitueret Marescallo, atque omnia, quae in regno erant corrigenda, interim per consilium episcoporum, qui super his fidejussores fuerant, emendaret'.

agreed time had elapsed and he was forced to lay siege to his own castle to retake it. Presumably Henry calculated that the shame of failing to take a castle would have been more damaging than that of breaking an agreement with a rebel.

Gerald of Wales produced an elaborate, if not entirely trustworthy, account of the surrender of Wexford castle in 1171, claiming that it was achieved through deceit. The men of Wexford and Uí Chennselaig had joined forces to assault the Cambro-Norman garrison there, while a force of Dubliners and Norwegians attacked Dublin. According to Gerald, as the Irish could not take the castle by force, 'they rushed to their customary weapons of deceit and crafty fictions'.[37] A delegation of clerics, led by the bishops of Kildare and Ferns, processed into the castle ditch, where its members swore on relics that Dublin had fallen, the other Cambro-Normans were dead and that armies from Connaught and Leinster were approaching to join the siege.[38] They also promised to allow the garrison to go free and return safely to Wales. The garrison believed them but were immediately killed or captured when they left the castle.[39] As previously stated, this incident is of dubious historicity. Sources for the invasion of Ireland are scarce but the other major narrative text, *The Song of Dermot,* says only that fitz Gilbert's 'men were all betrayed'.[40] Furthermore, Gerald's prejudices against the Irish and especially their bishops are well-documented in his *Topography*. While he acknowledged that the Irish clergy were chaste and faithful, he criticised their bishops for their idleness, failure to preach and to correct their people's errors.[41] Nevertheless, his description of the siege is useful as an example of the kind of action that Gerald and his contemporaries found despicable: a deliberate falsehood, sworn under oath on holy relics.

Walter of Guisborough records an unusual agreement that occurred prior to the battle of Methven (19 June 1306). Robert Bruce's army was drawn up before Perth and challenged the English garrison to fight or surrender: 'But, seeing that they were fewer in number [than the Scots], they answered him cautiously that they ought not to come out at that time but would gladly fight with him at dawn tomorrow, since today was a feast day.

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[37] EH, p. 84: 'ad consueta fallacie tela figmentaque dolosa concurrunt'.

[38] The bishop of Kildare was Malachias Ua Briain. The identity of the bishop of Ferns at this time is uncertain but he may have been Joseph Ua hAedha [sic]. Regardless, they were both native Irish: EH, p. 308 n. 130.

[39] EH, p. 84.

[40] Dermot, line 1776: 'Sa gent unt trestut traïz'

[41] Gerald of Wales, 'Topographia Hibernica', in *Opera,* ed. by J. S. Brewer, RS, 21, 8 vols (London: Longman, 1861–1891), V, 3–206 (here 172–77).

For it was the first Sunday after the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed John the Baptist'.[42] Bruce, whom Guisborough describes as 'too credulous' (*nimis credulus*), withdrew and made camp at nearby Methven. The garrison then sallied out in the evening and slaughtered the unarmed and unsuspecting Scots. Both Nicholas of Trivet and John Barbour refer to the English agreeing to give battle the next morning before attacking at dusk but neither claim that they used a feast day as an excuse.[43] It is unusual for an English chronicler to include a detail that cast his fellow countrymen in such a negative light when the fiercely patriotic Barbour did not. Guisborough may have had access to different sources to Trivet and Barbour or he may have felt special partiality to Bruce, whose ancestor and namesake had founded his priory, St. Mary's of Guisborough, and whose family had remained its patrons.[44]

One of the most explicit examples of a combatant breaking a truce is recorded in William of Newburgh's *Historia rerum Anglicarum.* In July 1174, having decided against invading England via Boulogne, Philip I of Flanders and Henry the Young King joined with Louis VII of France to lay siege to the Norman city of Rouen. Due to the city's location on the Seine, the besiegers were unable to blockade it effectively, so instead kept up a continuous assault, day and night, in an attempt to breach the walls. After nineteen days of fighting, Louis granted the citizens a day's truce to honour the Feast of St. Lawrence (10 August): 'The king of the French, on account of his especial reverence for the martyr, whom he was accustomed to particularly and devoutly venerate, solemnly decreed a rest be granted to the citizens on his day'.[45] Note how William's language emphasises the sacred character of the truce: *reuerentia, deuotius, sollemniter.* The citizens used the day's truce to sing and dance upon the walls, while their young knights went and jousted on the far river bank in sight of Louis's army 'to irritate the enemy' ('ad irritandum hostem').[46] This proved too much for Louis's counsellors (witness again the importance of shame) who came to him, led by Philip of Flanders, and advised him to attack while the citizens were unprepared. Louis initially rejected the plan but was persuaded:

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[42] WG, p. 367: 'At illi videntes se numero pauciores responderunt ei caute quod non egrederentur tunc sed die crastina pugnarent cum eo libenter quia dies festus erat. Erat enim dies dominica proxima post festum Natiuitatis beati Johannis baptiste'.

[43] Bruc, lines 301–04; NT, pp. 409–10.

[44] G. W. S. Barrow, *Robert Bruce and the Community of the Realm of Scotland,* 4th edn (London: Eyre & Spottisdwoode, 2005), pp. 29–30.

[45] WN, II, 146: 'Rex autem Francorum pro eiusdem praecipui martyris reuerentia, quem specialiter et deuotius consueuerat uenerari, requiem ipso die ciuitati indultam iussit sollemniter praeconari'.

[46] WN, II, 146.

> 'God forbid!' said the king, 'God forbid the royal honour be blackened by me with this stain; for you know this rest was granted to the citizens by me out of reverence for this day of the most blessed Lawrence'. Then all the noblemen who were present reproached him for his softness with bold familiarity, saying: 'Trickery or force, who would ask which in the case of an enemy?'[47]

The last phrase is a quotation from the *Aeneid,* where it is spoken by the Trojan warrior Coroebus, who instructs his men to strip the dead Greeks of their armour and put it on as a disguise.[48] It was well-known in the Central Middle Ages and appears in a number of chronicles, where it is attached to incidents of military deception (See Chapter 9). While it is highly unlikely that the French and Flemish nobles were quoting classical verse at the siege of Rouen, its appearance here suggests the kind of arguments that William of Newburgh thought were plausible for people to make in these circumstances: a medieval equivalent to 'All is fair in love and war'.

The plan was put into effect: an assault party was arranged in whispers, without the usual trumpets or proclamations. This unusual silence and activity in the camp was noticed by a Norman cleric who was taking the sun on a church tower and who raised the alarm before the besiegers could scale the wall. After some hard fighting, the attackers were driven back.[49] William reports that Louis subsequently attempted to blame Philip of Flanders for breaking the truce: 'The king poured the blame back onto the count of Flanders, but nevertheless the stain of such a disgraceful transgression stuck more to the king's character'.[50] This is an evocative metaphor, picturing shame as something smelly and sticky that Louis attempted to pour away, only for it to splash back and cling to him instead.

It is a dramatic, colourful story but there are good reasons to question its historicity. Firstly, while the siege of Rouen is attested by numerous contemporary chroniclers, William of Newburgh is the only one to mention the truce.[51] More significant are the striking parallels between this incident and Roger of Howden's account of the siege of Verneuil in 1173 (see above). Both involve Louis making a truce with the citizens of a

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[47] WN, II, 148: "Absit", inquit rex, "absit a me honestatem regiam hac macula denigrare; nosti enim me pro reuerentia beatissimi Laurentii diei huius requiem indulsisse ciuitati". Tunc universis qui aderat proceribus familiari ausu mollitiem improperantibus et dicentibus "dolus an virtus, quis in hoste requirat?".
[48] P. Vergilius Maro, *Aeneid,* ed. by Gian Biagio Conte (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 2, lines 386-91.
[49] WN, II, 150.
[50] WN, II, 150: 'Rex in Flandrensem comitem culpam refudit, sed personae regiae tam foedae praeuaricationis macula plus adhaesit'.
[51] HowChr, II, 64–66; RD, II, 386–87; RT, p. 265.

Norman town that he subsequently broke. Crucially, Roger says that Louis's truce with the citizens ended on St. Lawrence's Day. It seems highly implausible that he would make and break a truce on the same day, two years in a row. William does describe the siege of Verneuil but makes no reference to a truce, saying only that Louis fled in the night rather than give battle with Henry II.[52] While it is always problematic to argue for one chronicler's version of events over another, Roger's account should probably be preferred as he was closer to the events he described, having been a clerk in Henry II's household.[53] At the very least, it is clear that stories were circulating about Louis's shameful conduct during the Great Rebellion of 1173–74, which were somehow connected to St. Lawrence's Day.

One of the unusual features of William of Newburgh's account is that it presents the combatants' rationale for breaking an agreement. Such descriptions are rare but do offer a possible insight into what contemporaries thought about such breaches. The Gesta Stephani presents one such incident that occurred at Bath in 1138. Bath had remained loyal to King Stephen but the citizens of Bristol had joined Robert, earl of Gloucester, in rebellion against him. Gilbert de Lacy, one of Robert's household, and Geoffrey Talbot, Gilbert's cousin, were leading a force of Bristolians to reconnoitre Bath for a possible attack when they unexpectedly encountered an enemy patrol. Lacy escaped but Talbot was captured and imprisoned within Bath:

> Nevertheless they did not despair because of this but, having been resolutely revived, and rousing one another, and plotting together to liberate [Talbot], they made for Bath, and, when the bishop [of Bath, Robert Lewes] had been summoned under a pledge and oath, they promised to let him come out and go back, free and unharmed. At length the bishop, like 'an innocent who believes every word' [Proverbs 14. 15], like another Jacob 'who lived simply in the house' [Genesis 25. 27], was joyfully (yet cunningly) received by the impious.[54]

The description of the bishop as an *innocens* was not a compliment: the author of the *Gesta* would have expected his readers to know the complete quotation from Proverbs: 'The innocent man believes every word; the astute man considers his steps'.[55] As soon as he left

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[52] WN, II, 125.

[53] Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 2 vols (London: Routledge, 1974–82), I, 226–28.

[54] GS, p. 60: 'Nec tamen illi ob hoc desperati, sed constantius animati, seque in inuicem cohortantes, et ad eum liberandum unanimiter conspirantes Battam petierunt, accersitoque praesule sub fide et iureiurando, liberam ei et indemnem egressionem saluamque reditionem spoponderunt. Episcopus tandem, ut innocens qui credit omni uerbo, ut alter Iacob qui simpliciter habitabat in domo, dolose ab impiis laetanter suscipitur'.

[55] *Bible,* Proverbs 14.15: 'Innocens credit omni verbo; astutus considerat gressus suos'.

the safety of the city, the bishop was captured, forcing the citizens to exchange Talbot for his safe release. Once this had been arranged, the bishop began to berate the Bristolians for breaking their oath: 'the bishop then at last began to employ his authority to demand that they fulfill the pledge which they had undertaken, to ask where on earth was their oath, and to charge them with having profaned both, nor would they prosper in their other deeds, since reverence and decency had been let slip, they appeared to have offended God by this act'.[56] Once again the sacred dimension of an oath is emphasised through the choice of vocabulary: the Bristolians did not merely break their word, they 'profaned it', and in doing so had offended God. The Bristolians' response is illuminating, as it appears to agree with the author's own opinion of the too-credulous bishop:

> When the bishop presented these things to them, they asserted that they had neither made an oath to him nor agreed a pledge, since it was surely reckoned by all wise people that perjurers ought to not swear oaths nor could those without faith give a pledge to anybody. They said this to him to accuse the bishop of ignorance, who too readily believed men who were very great perjurers and liars.[57]

The author of the *Gesta* did not intend to justify the deception but he clearly believed the bishop should have been more prudent. The Bristolians were known perjurers (surely a reference to their rebellion against the king, to whom the author of the *Gesta* was generally sympathetic) and apparently quite unashamed about it. The bishop should have taken this into account and not trusted their offer of safe conduct. This is particularly noteworthy because Ralph Davis has argued that the author of the *Gesta* may have been Robert Lewes himself.[58] This would suggest that this incident was intended to be self-deprecatory, acknowledging that he had been too naïve, or even a subtle demonstration of piety, contrasting his unworldly conduct with the vicious bandits who plagued his city.

A similar rationale for breaking a promise is presented in Galbert of Bruges's chronicle, a text contemporary with the *Gesta*. In his account of how the Erembalds were

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[56] GS, pp. 60–62: 'coepit episcopus pastorali tunc demum utens auctoritate fidem repromissam reposcere, iuramenti sacramentum ubinam esset requirere, utrorumque uiolatores eos astruere, nec prospere eis aliis in factis succedere, qui, reuerentia et pudore amisso, Deum uidebantur propter hoc offendisse'.

[57] GS, pp. 60–62: 'Haec episcopo prosequente, asserebant nec iuramentum ei fecisse, nec fidem pepigisse, cum omni sane sapienti ratum sit, nec periuros iurarer debere, nec qui fide carent fidem alicui posse donare. Quae ideo dicebant, ut episcopum de ignorantia notarent, qui nimium nimiumque periuris et perfidis plus iusto credebat'.

[58] GS, pp. xviii–xxxviii.

besieged in Bruges castle in March 1127, Galbert described the negotiations that took place between the two sides:

> But the princes did not care what they promised to the besieged or how many oaths they swore as long as they could extort money and the good count's treasure from them. And it was right for them to act in this way, accepting the count's treasure and many more gifts from the besieged, seeing that they were not obliged to respect any faith or any oath to those most impious serfs who had betrayed their legitimate and natural lord.[59]

While he does not explicitly condemn them, it is likely that Galbert is mocking the besiegers and their justifications here. He was certainly not naive enough to believe that they were all fighting out of devotion to the memory of 'the good count'. He was very frank elsewhere in his chronicle about the mixture of motives that brought people to the siege. See, for example, his description of the final assault on the keep:

> [the attackers] revived their spirits, holding before their heart's eyes how they might die an excellent death for their lord and land and how, when they had conquered, they might win an honourable victory, and how those wicked and criminal traitors had made Christ's temple into a den of thieves, and (which seems more likely), how they might throw themselves upon the besieged to greedily and eagerly plunder the lord count's treasure and money and for that reason alone they hastened there.[60]

That the besiegers received treasure from the castle garrison is confirmed by the proceedings of an inquest, held after the siege by William Clito, the titular count of Flanders: 'The castellan of Ghent [Wenemar II] was attainted because he had divided the count's wealth with Robert the Boy, who was recognised for the same thing before the

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[59] GB, pp. 72–73: 'At principes non curabant quid obsessis promitterent et quanta juramenta facerent, solummodo ut pecuniam et thesaurum boni comitis ab eis extorquerent. Et jure quidem sic fecerunt, accipientes ab obsessis thesaurum comitis et insuper donaria multa, quandoquidem nulla fides et juramenta nulla illis debebant observare qui legitimum et naturalem dominum suum impiissimi servi tradiderant'.

[60] GB, p. 116: 'jam animos revocaverant suos, prae oculis cordis habentes quam egregie pro patre et patria moriendum foret et quam honesta victoria vincentibus praeposita esset, quamque scelesti et facinorosi fuissent traditores illi qui de templo Christi speluncam sibi fecissent, et, quod magis videbantur, quam avide et cupide propter thesauri et pecuniae domini consulis rapinam irruerent super obsessos ipsi et idcirco solummodo festinabant'.

count and all the barons of the land of Flanders'.[61] Robert the Boy was the nephew of Haket, the castellan of Bruges, and was executed after the siege on the orders of Louis VI of France. Although he was attainted, Wenemar appears to have escaped any punishment for his behaviour: he remained castellan of Ghent throughout the civil war and beyond, attending the court of the eventual victor, Thierry of Alsace, in 1128.[62]

Returning to Galbert's text, it is notable that the besiegers used a similar justification to the Bristolians who captured the bishop of Bath in the *Gesta Stephani*: a known oath-breaker could not be expected to abide by an agreement, so the besiegers were not bound to observe any agreement made with the garrison. The Erembalds' rebellion and murder of their lord had violated legal and social norms to such an extent that it placed them outside the customs that governed social interaction. The *Gesta* says that the Bristolians used this as a defence, justifying their deceit by shifting the blame onto the bishop, who should have known better than to trust them, whereas Wenemar and his allies seem to have regarded the usual compulsions of honour to have been suspended for the purpose of this conflict. Consider also how the surviving members of the garrison were executed: 'When this had been arranged, the king and the count sent guards to the prison who cunningly called out first Wulfic Cnop, the brother of the provost Bertulf, and those who had been sent under this pretence lied to the prisoners, saying that the king would act mercifully towards them. So, in the hope of mercy, they came out from the prison without delay'.[63] One by one the prisoners were called out, expecting clemency, only to be thrown to their death from the top of the keep.

The author of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum* presented two different examples of this rationale. First, in the story of a duel that took place between a Turk and a Welsh archer during the siege of Acre. The Turk proposed that they take it in turn to stand and shoot arrows at one another. The Welshman agreed. The Turk took the first shot and missed. He then insisted that he be allowed to shoot a second arrow, after which the Welshman would be able to shoot two in return. The Welshman agreed to this, only to shoot the Turk dead

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[61] Walter of Thérouanne, *Vita Karoli comitis Flandrie et Vita domi Ioannis Morinensis episcopi,* ed. by Jeff Rider (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), p. 442: 'Li chastelains de Gant fu atains que il ot partie de la pechune le conte par Robiert l'Enfant, laquel chose il meismes reconnut pardevant le conte et auchuns des barons de la terre de Flandres'.

[62] E. Warlop, *The Flemish Nobility before 1300*, 2 vols (Kortrijk: Desmet-Huysman, 1975), I, 829.

[63] GB, p. 132: 'Quo praeordinato, misit rex et comes speculatores ad carcerem qui callide evocarent primum Wulfricum Cnop, fratrem praepositi Bertulfi, et sub dissimulatione qui missi fuerant mentiebantur carceratis quod rex misericorditer acturus foret cum ipsis. Sub illa ergo misericordiae spe, sine dilatione e carcere egressi sunt'.

before he could draw his bow, declaring: 'You did not hold to the agreement, so nor did I, by Saint Denis!'.[64]

When Saladin released Guy of Lusignan in May 1188, over a year after his capture at the battle of Hattin, it was on the condition that Guy swear an oath that he would abdicate the throne of Jerusalem and not lead any armies against Saladin. Guy went to Tripoli where, according to the *Itinerarium,* the assembled clergy declared that the oath was invalid because Guy had been forced to swear it under duress. The author then adds the following reflection: 'This was certainly a worthy decision because craft deceived craft, because the tyrant's perfidy was cheated by his own example; for one who is slippery in making promises invites equal inconstancy in giving promises'.[65] Although the phrasing is different, the sentiment is the same: Saladin's past behaviour had removed the Christians' obligation to observe their promises to him. It is possible that a similar rationale lay behind the other breaches of faith analysed elsewhere in this chapter: the deceivers considered themselves no longer bound to keep their word with an enemy because of their actual or alleged crimes.

To conclude, the conduct of medieval combatants was governed by a complex and imprecise series of customs that were enforced, not by legal courts, but by the court of public opinion. Honour and shame were powerful motivators for the proud warrior aristocracy who typically led the armies of the medieval West, albeit ones that could conflict with the dictates of military necessity. While there are examples of individuals holding to their word even at personal cost, there are many more examples of people breaking or bending customary practice in order to gain an advantage over their enemy. It is difficult to tell what motivated this behaviour. Some individuals probably had few scruples and did not much care about their reputation or reprisals. Others may have agonised over their decision, feeling that they were in an impossible situation where necessity conflicted with their conscience. They may have even consoled themselves with the sort of excuses that we find in the chronicles, justifying their behaviour by appealing to the faithlessness of the enemy or the need to achieve victory at all costs.

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[64] Amb, lines 3763–64: 'Covenant ne tenis / Ne jo a tei, par Sein Denis'. See also IP, pp. 108–09.

[65] IP, p. 59: 'Dignum sane quod ars artem deluderet, quod tyranni perfidia suo fraudaretur exemplo; nam promissor lubricus parem promittentis levitatem invitat'.

Chapter 8
The Language of Deceit

It can be very difficult to identify the beliefs and attitudes of a long-dead society. The writings of moralists and law-makers may only represent an ideal; a prescriptive view of morality had little relation to how the majority actually thought and behaved. Even more difficult is discovering the attitudes of medieval combatants, as most of our sources were written by non-combatants with, at best, a second-hand experience of war. The closest we can get is to declare that this was how our authors *thought* combatants should behave and that, perhaps, those responsible for waging warfare agreed with them.

8.1 Astute Heroes and Deceitful Villains: Case Studes in the Language of Deception

To determine whether medieval chroniclers viewed military deception as licit or illicit, is is necessary to conduct a close analysis of the vocabulary they used to describe acts of deception. Just as modern English possesses numerous synonyms for deception and trickery, such as craft, cunning, subtlety, ingenuity and guile, each with their own connotations, medieval chroniclers employed a range of words related to deception: *callidus, ingenium, ars, uafer, dolus, fraus*. The following section consists of three case studies based on chronicles that are rich in the language of deception and representative of the wider corpus employed in this thesis. Each study analyses the terms that the chronicler used for tricks, stratagems and other deceitful acts and how these terms helped to present these acts as licit or illicit. I have chosen to take this approach in order to keep this section concise and readable. While it is feasible to write an analysis of individual word use across the whole corpus, such a study would not present these terms in their proper context and would be tedious to read.

i. Orderic Vitalis

Orderic Vitalis's *Historia* is replete with accounts of warfare, from the greatest campaigns of his day to highly localised conflicts fought in the neighbourhood of his monastic house,

Saint-Evroul. The breadth and the variety of the military narratives contained within the *Historia* make it an ideal case study for the language of military deception in the central Middle Ages.

One of the great villains of Orderic's narrative is Robert of Bellême (*c.* 1057 – *c.* 1131), son and heir to Roger of Montgomery, the first earl of Shrewsbury (d. 1094). Robert's principal continental holdings were in the Hiémois region of north-eastern France, just north of Saint-Evroul. He held land from no less than three major princes: the counts of Maine, the dukes of Normandy and the kings of France. Robert's career was spent fighting to both expand and to 'preserve the integrity of his farflung family lands' against his neighbours' encroachments, alternatively siding with and against the dukes of Normandy as seemed expedient.[1] Although he was an active and talented soldier, he proved to be a poor politician and ended his days as a prisoner of Henry I of England, having backed Henry's elder brother, Robert Curthose, in their conflict for the duchy of Normandy. In the course of his various wars in and around the Hiémois, Robert annexed church lands, constructed castles on church property and compelled local monasteries, including Saint-Evroul, to provide him with both manpower and financial support, all of which earned him the ire of Orderic, Saint-Evroul's resident historian.[2] While Kathleen Thompson has done much to rehabilitate Robert's reputation by placing his career in its historical context, Orderic presents him as nothing less than evil incarnate: a sadistic, treacherous blasphemer, intent on stirring up rebellion against the dukes of Normandy purely for personal gain. According to Thompson, Robert's function in the *Historia*'s narrative is to serve as 'the opposition, the negative force with which the ruler [of Normandy] must contend'.[3]

One of Robert of Bellême's defining characteristics, in Orderic's account, was his propensity for treachery and his mastery of deceitful tactics in warfare. Consider Orderic's initial description of Robert and his character:

> He turned many from helping and serving [Robert Curthose] by cunningly hanging back from aiding him; and he diminished the duke's domain, that his ancestors had held and who had greatly enlarged it. For he was subtle in character, cunning and shifty, great and strong in body, bold and powerful in

[1] Kathleen Thompson, 'Robert of Bellême Reconsidered', in *Anglo-Norman Studies XIII: Proceedings of the Battle Conference, 1990*, ed. by Marjorie Chibnall (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991), pp. 263–86 (here 266).
[2] Kathleen Thompson, 'Orderic Vitalis and Robert of Bellême', *Journal of Medieval History*, 20 (1994), 133–41 (here 135).
[3] Thompson, 'Orderic Vitalis', p. 140.

> arms, eloquent and excessively cruel, greedy and insatiable in lust. A perceptive deviser of savage works, an inventor of structures, and suffered the heaviest labours in the exertions of the world. An ingenious artificier in raising up structures, machines and other tall works and an inexorable butcher in torturing men.[4]

Orderic uses a variety of epithets related to Robert's deceitful nature: *subtilis, dolosus, versipellis*. His plan to draw support away from Robert Curthose was *callidus* (cunning), a term that will be particularly important in the following discussion. Orderic also connects Robert's cunning personality with his talent for building and utilising war machines: he is *perspicax* and *ingeniosus,* both adjectives with associations of cleverness and mental acuity.[5] Compare Orderic's description of Robert's actions at the siege of Courcy, in Normandy in January 1091: 'But Robert assailed the enemies with every possible trick and act of violence for three weeks; and he harassed the town with diverse machines'.[6] Robert's attacks on the garrison consisted of both *doli* (tricks) and *machinationes* (machines), although the latter could also be a synonym for tricks and devices, further illustrating the close link between Robert's cunning and his siegecraft.[7]

Orderic employed further negative adjectives for Robert when describing his attempt to capture the castle at Saint-Céneri by surprise. This took place shortly after the siege of Bréval in 1092: Philip I of France and Robert Curthose had joined with William of Breteuil to subjugate William's vassal, Ascelin Goel. Ascelin surrendered but, according to Orderic, Robert of Bellême, who had been in command of the siege engines, was angered that he had not been invited to participate in the negotiations. Consequently, he sought to use the confused poltiical situation to seize Saint-Céneri, which had previously belonged to his family but had been given to one Robert Giroie by Robert Curthose in 1088:

> And then the aforesaid knight [i.e. Robert of Bellême] learned that an agreement had been made between the warring parties; he assembled his

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[4] OV, IV, 158: 'Multos ab auxilio eius et famulatu callidis tergiuersationibus auertit; et dominium ducis quod antecessores eius possederant et copiose auxerant imminuit. Erat enim ingenio subtilis, dolosus et uersipellis, corpore magnus et fortis, audax et potens in armis, eloquens nimiumque crudelis, auaricia et libidine inexplebilis. Perspicax seuorum commentor operum, et in exercitiis mundi grauissimorum patiens laborum. In extruendis aedificis et machinis aliisque arduis operibus ingeniosus artifex; et in torquendis hominibus inexorabilis carnifex'.

[5] Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary*, p. 950, p. 1356.

[6] OV, IV, 232: 'Robertus uero per tres septimanas dolis et uiribus in hostes omnimodis surrexit; et diuersis machinationibus municipium infestauit'.

[7] Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary*, p. 1092.

> troops at once. Not revealing to anybody the deceit that was in his heart, he swiftly returned, rushing to fall upon Robert Giroie at Saint-Céneri while he was unprepared. But the citizens had come out, believing Robert [of Bellême] was with the duke in the general expedition; and they were wandering here and there through the fields, untroubled, as it pleased them. And when the sly deceiver suddenly rushed up with his forces, he was pressing hard to enter the town and to place the occupants under his rule.[8]

In the event, Robert of Bellême's surprise attack failed, as Robert of Giroie was able to rush ahead and shut the castle gates in his face. Once again, Orderic uses clearly negative language to describe Robert of Bellême's actions: his scheme was a *fraus* and Robert was a *vafer insidiator*.

When describing other incidents of deception, however, Orderic was capable of expressing admiration and would even employ the same vocabulary that he used for the villainous Robert of Bellême. Consider his description of Bernard the Dane, one of the co-regents of Normandy during the minority of Duke Richard I. Following the death of Richard's father, William Longsword, in 942, Louis IV of France had ceded Exmes, Bayeux and the Cotentin to Hugh, count of Orléans. In 946, Louis and Hugh invaded the duchy in response to a rebellion, centred on Bayeux. Orderic describes how Bernard, realising that the Normans were too weak to resist by force of arms, sought to turn the king against Hugh: 'He was anxious because he cunningly observed that he alone, with the forces of Normandy, would be unable to hold back such strong princes by fighting and so, having a sharp-sighted nature, he cleverly busied himself as to how he might drive the crisis that was set before him away from himself and his people'.[9] Orderic employs the same vocabulary, *perspicax* (sharp-sighted) and *callide* (cunningly), that he would later apply to Robert of Bellême, to describe Bernard's assessment of his situation. In this context, we might prefer to read *callide* in its broader sense of 'skilfully' or 'with expertise' but it is surely significant that Orderic could use the same word to describe both an act of rebellion and a patriotic

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[8] OV, IV, 292: 'Denique prefatus miles ut concordiam inter discordes factam cognouit; cuneos suos protinus conuocauit, nullique fraudem sui cordis detegens festinanter remeauit, ac ad sactum Serenicum super Robertum Geroianum ex improuiso conuolauit. Municipes autem Robertum in expeditione generali cum duce putantes exierant; et sparsim per agros securi pro libitu suo discurrebant. Cumque uafer insidiator cum copiis suis repente irrueret, et oppidum ingredi castellanosque sibi subire satageret'.

[9] OV, III, 310: 'anxius quod tam robustos principes solus cum Normannicis uiribus bellando sustinere non posset callide perspexit, et perspicax ingenium qualiter anceps discrimen a se et a suis abigeret sollerter apponens exercuit'.

defence of the duchy.[10] Orderic uses the adverb again to describe how Bernard persuaded Louis to change his mind by spreading insinuations that Hugh of Orléans was unworthy to possess Norman land: 'And when one day, after lunch, the king sat in the main hall, so that he could cheerfully discuss the business of the kingdom with those sitting with him, the clever Bernard cunningly [*callide*] put forward two-faced words to many'.[11]

Orderic also used *callidus* in its positive sense in a military context. The earlier section of the *Historia* includes a history of Saint-Évroul's foundation and of its benefactors, the Giroie family, named for their patriarch, Giroie, son of Arnold the Fat of Courceraut.[12] Here is Orderic's summary of the character of Giroie's seven sons: 'For all these brothers were active and bountiful, cunning [*callidi*] and nimble in war; terrible towards enemies yet pleasant and courteous to friends'.[13] The sons of Giroie were no paragons of virtue: they murdered Gilbert, count of Brionne, in c. 1041, although Orderic did not criticise them for this action in the *Historia*.[14] Since we know that Orderic was consciously presenting the Giroie brothers in a positive way here, it is signficant that he chose to list *callidus* as one of their defining qualities, alongside their vigour, generosity and courtesy.

Orderic was also happy to depict his heroes employing deceitful tactics. We have already discussed Orderic's description of the valiant Ralph the Breton changing his arms to avoid being recognised while defending Breteuil against the French in 1119 (see chapter 5). In a brief character sketch of Herbert I, count of Maine (1015–1032), Orderic wrote admiringly of his raids into Anjou:

> Herbert, count of Maine, was descended, it is said, from the line of Charlemagne, and earned from the common people (but not in Latin) the nickname of 'Wake-Dog' on account of his remarkable valour. For, after the death of his father, Hugh [III], whom the elder Fulk [III of Anjou] had violently conquered, raising arms against the same man, he often conducted nocturnal expeditions and terrified the men and dogs of Anjou in that city or in

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[10] Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary*, p. 270.

[11] OV, III, 310: 'Cumque rex quadam die post prandium in aula principali resedisset, et cum assidentibus sibi letus negotia regni tractasset; sollers Bernardus ambiguam plurimis locutionem callide promouet'.

[12] OV, I, 6–8;

[13] OV, II, 24: 'Omnes enim isti fratres fuerunt strenui et dapsiles, in militia callidi et agiles; hostibus terribiles, sociisque blandi et affabiles'.

[14] He did, however, call it an 'evil and cruel deed' when making interpolations in William of Jumièges's *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*: OV, II, 24 n. 3.

> their fortified towns and compelled the terror-struck [citizens] to keep watch for his dreadful assaults.[15]

Instead of regarding Herbert's night raids as evidence that he was unwilling or unable to fight openly against the Angevins, Orderic claims that they were a manifestation of Herbert's *ingens probitas* (remarkable valour). It appears to have amused Orderic to picture the Angevins, inveterate enemies of the Norman dukes, sitting in the dark, quaking with fear at Herbert's approach.

Orderic uses a rich and varied vocabulary to decribe incidents of deception in his *Historia* but it is the intersection of 'positive' and 'negative' incidents that is most illuminating. In particular, Orderic's use of *callidus* and its derivatives suggest that he (and presumably his audience) did not consider 'cunning' to be an inherently negative quality. When it was employed for evil ends, as in the case of Robert of Bellême, then it was contemptible but it could also be used in a worthy cause, as in the cases of Herbert Wake-Dog or Bernard the Dane.

ii. Walter the Chancellor

While Orderic's *Historia* is valuable for the breadth and diversity of the conflicts it records, Walter the Chancellor's *Bella Antiochena* is useful precisely because it focuses on a single conflict: the wars between the principality of Antioch and the neighbouring Turkish powers, in particular Roger of Salerno's disastrous campaign of 1119 that led to his death at the Field of Blood. As chancellor of the principality, Walter was an eyewitness to many of the events he recorded and was probably present at the Field of Blood. While he portrays the Turkish ruler Īlghāzī as a bloodthirsty tyrant, Walter's general attitude towards the Turks is more equivocal and seems to reflect a grudging admiration among the Franks for their martial ability (see below). Nonetheless, he typically uses negative epithets for incidents involving Turkish deceit, reserving more positive terminology for descriptions of Frankish tactics.

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[15] OV, II, 304: 'Herbertus Cenomannorum comes ex prosapia ut fertur Karoli Magni originem duxit; et uulgo sed parum latine cognominari Euigilans-canem pro ingenti probitate promeruit. Nam post mortem Hugonis patris sui quem Fulco senior sibi uiolenter subiugarat, in eundem arma leuans nocturnas expeditiones crebro agebat; et Andegauenses homines et canes in ipsa urbe uel in munitioribus oppidis terrebat, et horrendis assultibus pauidos uigilare cogebat'.

In February 1115, Bursuq ibn Bursuq of Hamadān, a general in the service of the Saljūq sultan Muhammad Tapar (1105–1118), crossed the Euphrates with an army and moved to occupy Aleppo. A hasty alliance was formed between the Frankish settlers and the independent Turkish warlords of Syria to oppose him.[16] Following an unsuccessful attack on Roger of Salerno's camp at Apamea, Bursuq withdrew and pretended to disband his forces:

> So Bursuq, a commander of deceitful cunning, withdrawing, pretended to flee and, as if wishing to return to his homeland, concealed his wickedness for the moment by dividing [his troops] throughout the lands of Shaizar [south of Apamea, on the Orontes river], so that, when our men withdrew and separated, he would be better able to destroy our coastal cities in safety.[17]

Walter calls Bursuq a man of *dolosa calliditas* (deceitful cunning) and his stratagem an act of *nequitia* (wickedness). His description of the Turks' reconnaissance of the Frankish camp at the Field of Blood in 1119 is similar:

> And so those men of deceitful cunning, to conceal what they were planning, namely to attack us unexpectedly, their divisions having been arranged and those who were better prepared having been sent forward, came as if intending to besiege Cerepus [al-Atharib, ten miles to the south east], which had been observed, so that they would see and be seen [by the Franks].[18]

Once again, he characterises the Turks as *dolosa callditas,* whose 'cunning' is manifested in a strategic maneouvre, intended to conceal their true intentions from the Franks.

Walter the Chancellor was not entirely against deceitful or cunning tactics, however. He is at pains to defend Roger of Salerno's decision to remain in camp and delay fighting against Bursuq at Apamea in 1115, when many of his army wanted to sally out and fight immediately:

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[16] For an account of the campaign, see Nicholas Morton, *The Field of Blood: The Battle for Aleppo and the Remaking of the Medieval Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2018), pp. 64–67.

[17] WC, p. 70: 'Burso igitur, dux dolosae calliditatis, retrocedens fugam simulat et quasi repatriare uolens per partes Sisarae diuortia faciendo ad tempus suam occultauit nequitiam, ut nostris retrocessis ac separatris nostra ualerent tutius diruere maritima municipia'.

[18] WC, p. 81: 'Ipsi itaque dolosae calliditatis uiri, ut dissimularent quod moliebantur, uidelicet ex insperato nos inuadere, palam ordinatis aciebus habilioribusque praeludio iam praemissis, quasi obsessuri Cerepum spectatum ueniunt, ab hoc utique ut spectent et spectentur'.

> And some of our people reckoned that this was done because of cowardice, but several people of greater ingenuity concluded that this was done according to the prince's design, that, when a suitable time had been identified, they would be stronger to attack [the Turks], not when their enemies suggested nor because of [our] presumed strength but because of the provident direction and proven ingenuity of [Roger] and the king [Baldwin I of Jerusalem], who was very close. For, as had been proven, a small number of fighters with boldness and ingenuity are often stronger in battle than a senseless and vacillating multitude of armed men.[19]

Walter emphasises Roger's prudence and generalship, which were a product of his *ingenium*. This word has connotations of innate cleverness, talent and genius, and is the root of the modern English 'ingenuity'.[20] According to Walter, this quality, when employed in conjunction with *audacia,* could enable a smaller army to defeat a larger but less astute enemy. Roger of Salerno's strategy at Apamea was a product of *ingenium* but Bursuq's counter-manoeuvre received the more negative labels *dolosus* and *callidus*, a noteworthy example of a Christian chronicler's double-standard when depicting Frankish-Muslim conflicts.

In the aftermath of the massacre at the Field of Blood, Rainald Mazoir, lord of Marqab and constable of Antioch, retreated to the nearby tower of Sarmada, where he was briefly besieged by Īlghāzī. Walter describes Rainald as acting with *astutia,* a synonym for cleverness or cunning with both positive and negative connotations, for negotiating a surrender with Īlghāzī:

> But the weakness of the tower and the poor provisions, but most of all the arrival of Īlghāzī, were the reason he came out, as he would have been unable to remain there and he had to hand himself over, a captive for the triumphant [Īlghāzī]. Nevertheless, protected by astuteness, he spoke cautiously, as if he was able to defend himself in the tower. For he said to the triumphant [Īlghāzī]: 'I will by no means hand myself over to you, unless you first promise

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[19] WC, p. 69: 'Quidam etiam nostrorum id facti timiditati reputant, nonnulli autem capacioris ingenii hoc fieri de principis industria coniiciunt, ut, explorato congrui temporis articulo, non admonitione hostium nec praesumptione uirium, sed sui regisque in proximo aduenientis dispositione prouida ingenioque experienti eos inpetere praeualeant. Saepius enim, ut expertum est, praualet in bello cum audacia et ingenio pugnatorum paucitas, quam infrunita et uacillans armatorum multitudo'.
[20] Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary,* p. 950.

> me, with a pledge and a scared oath according to your law, the safety of your protection and help to escape'.[21]

This was clearly a deception: Rainald was unable to hold the tower yet negotiated 'as if' (*quasi*) he was able. Yet Walter does not criticise Rainald for deceiving Īlghāzī or for surrendering: his ire is reserved for those who fled the field entirely. Rainald's decision proved very shrewd, as Īlghāzī accepted his surrender and kept his promise to release Rainald after a month's imprisonment. Rainald remained a major figure at the Antiochene court and was appointed regent of the principality by Fulk of Jerusalem in 1132, following the deposition of Alice of Jerusalem, widow of the former prince Bohemond II. This may indicate why Walter credited him with *astutia* for his actions after the Field of Blood. It would have been impolitic to accuse such a senior official of cowardice or treachery.

Like Orderic, Walter the Chancellor describes acts of cunning and deceit in both positive and negative ways. He uses *callidus* exclusively to describe the Turks while using more general terms such as *ingenium* and *astutia* for Christian stratagems. As will be discussed below, however, Walter was more nuanced in his attitudes than this survey may suggest and also credited the Turks with employing *ingenium*.

iii. William of Apulia

William of Apulia's verse biography of Robert Guiscard is particularly rich in vocabulary of trickery and deceit, as befits the story of a man whose cognomen means 'the Wily'. William's preferred term when describing Guiscard's 'wiliness' is *ars,* a word with denotations of skill, artifice and the practical application of knowledge.[22] Describing Guiscard's character, William wrote: 'He seized the palm of victory either by craft [*ars*] or by arms, he considered both in the same manner, because a cunning mind often accomplishes what violence cannot'.[23] Regarding Guiscard's attempt to bribe the keeper of Montepeloso in 1064, he wrote: 'because the duke did not prevail through arms, he took

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[21] WC, p. 89: 'Sed debilitas turris et uictus indigentia, maxime autem Algazi illuc adueniens, efficiens causa exstitit, ut ibi remanere non posset et se captiuum triumphanti redderet. Astutia tamen praemunitus, quasi se in turre defendere posset, caute locutus est; ait enim triumphanti: me nequaquam tibi reddam, nisi te prius fide et sacramento tuae legis mihi adseras praesentis tutelae patrocinium et euadendi subsidium'.

[22] Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary,* p. 166.

[23] WA, p. 148: 'Si contingebat sibi palma vel arte vel armis, / Aeque ducebat, quia quod violentia saepe / Non explere potest, explet versutia mentis'.

the *castrum* through craft [*ars*]'.[24] The capture of Dyracchion through bribery and his infilitration of an unnamed castrum using the 'fake corpse' ruse were both described as products of *ars*.[25] As discussed in Chapter 6, Guiscard's suppression of a revolt in his Italian lands in 1079 was summarised with the phrase: 'he overcame them all, either by craft [*ars*] or arms'.[26]

William of Apulia also uses *ars* in its broader sense, for skillfulness or craft in other matters. In a curious story, set just after the capture of Bari in 1071, William describes how Guiscard organised the capture of a 'great fish' (presumably a species of whale) that had come near to shore, using weighted nets: 'The prudence of the duke captured this [fish] through various *artes*'.[27] In a similar incident, he described how Guiscard constructed a dam to raise the level of the river Glykys in western Greece and refloat his fleet in the winter of 1084–1085: 'The duke, who made the difficult task easy through craft [*ars*], when he learned the river needed its usual flow, for a small amount of water flowed through a narrow channel, he directed that many posts be brought and set up on either bank, joined together with branches, and he made fascines from many branches which he had cut, and filled them with sand from above'.[28] As with Orderic Vitalis's description of Robert of Bellême, William of Apulia's use of *ars* in different contexts indicates an intellectual connection between 'cunning' and more general skillfuness or intelligence, a connection also reflected in the various meanings of the modern English 'craft'.

William used other terms for Guiscard's 'cunning', albeit less frequently. For example, here is William's explanation for Guiscard's cognomen: 'He was nicknamed "Guiscard" because neither Cicero nor the wily Ulysses were of such cunning [*calliditas*]'.[29] The comparison with Ulysses, the man who devised the Trojan Horse, seems fitting but the connection with Cicero is more puzzling. It may indicate a connection between 'craft' and eloquence: Guiscard's *ars* was manifested in 'sweet words'.[30] Compare Ralph of Caen's description of his teacher and patron, Arnulf of Chocques, who challenged Tancred concerning his plundering of the Temple Mount after the sack of Jerusalem in 1099: 'Since he had been stung by Arnulf's darts, as of a second Ulysses, eloquence provoked him [to

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[24] WA, p. 156: 'dux quod non evalet armis / Arte capit castrum'.
[25] WA, pp. 150, 230.
[26] WA, p. 194: 'vel arte vel armis / Omnes exsuperat'.
[27] WA, p. 172: 'Per varias artes ducis hunc prudentia cepit'.
[28] WA, p. 248: 'Dux, qui difficilem facilem facit arte laborem, / dum fluvium solitis cognovit egere fluentis, / namque meatus aquae brevis arta fauce fluebat, / multos afferri palos et ab amnis utraque / Margine configi connexos vimine iussit, / Et multis multa praecisis arbore ramis / Composuit crates, et arenis desuper implet'.
[29] WA, p. 138: 'Cognomen Guiscardus erat, quia calliditatis / Non Cicero tantae fuit aut versutus Ulixes'.
[30] WA, pp. 194–96.

take action]'.[31] Geoffrey Malaterra also connected a propensity for deceit with rhetoric in his description of the Norman people:

> They are a most astute people, vengeful of injuries, despising their ancestral fields in the hope of winning more elsewhere, greedy for profit and domination, pretenders and dissemblers in everything, holding a certain balance between liberality and avarice [...] These people know how to flatter, being so devoted to the study of eloquence that you should even attend to their boys as if they were rhetoricians.[32]

Describing how the the Byzantine emperor Constantine IX dispatched Argyros, the Lombard ruler of Bari and ally of the Byzantines, to try and persuade the Normans to leave Italy and go to fight for the empire in the East, William depicted the Norman 'cunning' (*callidus*) outwitting that of the Greeks:

> [Argyros] summoned the Frankish counts and promised to give them lots of money if, having left Latius [Italy], they would cross over to Argos [Greece], which was engaged in grave struggles with the Persians and, swearing an oath, he promised that they would be joyfully received by him who rules the empire, and promised that they would be enriched with great wealth. The Greeks' cunning promise was not hidden from the [Norman] people's cunning, who wished to conquer Italy and said that they would not forsake their lands in Apulia until they had conquered it, unless perchance some stronger group, coming upon them, should displace and overthrow them.[33]

William describes non-Norman trickery in both positive and negative ways. He generally portrayed Alexios Komnenos as a 'worthy foe' of Robert Guiscard, including in matters of cunning. Describing how Alexios made his name as a general under Michael VII and Nikephoros III, he wrote: 'In this way the victorious Alexios, active and careful, overcame

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[31] GT, p. 111: 'Quibus armata iaculis Arnulfi, quasi alterius Vlixis, facundia uirum prouocat'.

[32] GM, p. 10: 'Est quippe gens astutissima, injuriarum ultrix, spe alias plus lucrandi patrios agros vilipendens, quaestus et dominationis avida, cuiuslibet rei simulatrix ac dissimulatrix, inter largitatem et avaritiam quoddam medium habens [...] Gens adulari sciens, eloquentiae studiis inserviens in tantum, ut etiam et ipsos pueros quasi rhetores attendas'.

[33] WA, p. 134: 'Francorum comites vocat, et se magna daturum / Munera promittit, / si transgrediantur ad Argos, / Dimisso Latio, grave qui certamen habebant / Cum Persis, et eos iurans promittit ab illo / Qui regit imperium gratanter suscipiendos, / Et magnis opibus ditandos affore spondit. / Callida Graecorum promissio calliditatem / Non latuit gentis Latium superare volentis, / Et dimissuros loca se non Apulia dicunt / Dum conquirantur, nisi forte potentior illis / Turba superveniens depellat et opprimat illos'.

the empire's many enemies by arms and craft [*ars*]'.[34] He also used negative language for Greek deceit. When Guiscard launched his first campaign in the Balkans, William claimed that he had cultivated a friendship with the governor of Dyrrachion, George Monomachatos.[35] Unfortunately for Guiscard, Alexios removed Monomachatos following his seizure of the throne and replaced him with his own brother-in-law, George Palaiologos, forcing Guiscard to lay siege to a city that he had hoped would be open to him.[36] William claimed Monomachatos's fall was accomplished through 'trickery' (*fraus*) but gives no further details: 'Palaiologos led many Greeks to Dyracchion and George was driven out through trickery'.[37]

One of William of Apulia's strangest references to deception occurred just before Gusicard's battle with Alexios Komnenos outside Dyracchion (18 October 1081). Alexios's army had been spotted and some of Guiscard's men advocated leaving their siege camp before the city to give battle. Guiscard's response is surprising, to say the least: 'The duke replied that it was better not to leave the well-supplied camps until the imperial [army] was closer and he announced that it was unecessary for a trick [*ars*] to be sought in order to gain victory, since victory is given to nobody unless [it comes] from heaven'.[38] It is striking indeed to find Guiscard, a man renowned for his stratagems, piously advising his men that they should trust in heaven alone, especially in a chronicle that records how useful *ars* had been to Guiscard throughout his career. Emily Albu has suggested that this statement is deliberately ironic, either by Guiscard himself or William of Apulia.[39] This appears to be reflected in the passage which follows, in which William emphasises Guiscard's prudent and circumspect preparations for the battle:

> Although he knew that he had excellent horsemen with him, nevertheless he did not want to be reckless in any undertaking. He had been told that an innumerable people were approaching but it had not yet been made known to him what kind of men they were; for which reason the clever [duke] wisely

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[34] WA, p. 20: 'Impiger et cautus sic victor Alexius hostes / Imperii multos armis superavit et arte'.
[35] Komnene also said that Monomachatus had received bribes from Guiscard: Komnene, *Alexiad,* pp. 125–6.
[36] Theotokis, *Norman Campaigns,* p. 146.
[37] WA, p. 216: 'multos Paliologus Argos / Diarchium duxit, pulsusque Georgius urbe / Fraude fuit'.
[38] WA, p. 222: 'Esse refert melius dux, non abscedere castris, / Copia dum propius conspecta sit imperialis, / Et frustra quaeri vincendi praedicat artem, / Cum nisi de coelo nulli victoria detur'.
[39] Emily Albu, *The Normans in Their Histories: Propaganda, Myth, and Subversion* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001), p. 143.

> arrayed all his men in advance, and arranged everything that had to be prepared.[40]

William Apulia's *Gesta* is an illuminating example of how a medieval author could use language to frame deceptive behaviour in a positive manner. Rather than employing explicit terms such as *dolus* or *callidus* William preferred to speak of Guiscard's wiles in terms of *ars,* with its associations of skill and craft. This 'craftiness' was demonstrated not only in his clever stratagems, but also in his prudent generalship and engineering skill, a theme shared by other medieval chronicles (see below).

iv. Conclusion

Medieval chroniclers drew up a wide range of vocabulary when discussing acts of military deception. While some terms, such as *fraus* and *dolus,* appear to have had largely negative connotations, many were more ambiguous, like *callidus* or *ars*. These terms, associated with ideas of skillfulness and practical knowledge, suggest that trickery and ruses were not seen as inherently illicit but could be viewed positively, as demonstrations of intelligence and good generalship. The close relationship between terms for cunning and the language of siege warfare reinforces this idea.

8.2 The Language of Trickery and Siege Craft

While certain elements of medieval siege warfare have been studied in considerable depth, such as the evolution of counter-weight artillery, the role played by specialists such as engineers and sappers, and the development of gunpowder, modern scholars have yet to adequately analyse the connection between the language of 'siege craft' and the language of deception in contemporary narratives.[41] In many instances, the vocabulary is identical and it can be difficult to tell whether an author is referring to combatants assaulting a stronghold with stratagems or siege-engines. The modern English 'engineer' is derived from the Anglo-Norman *engin* (itself ultimately derived from the Latin *ingenium*), which could mean a

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[40] WA, pp. 222–24: 'Is licet egregios equites sibi sciret adesse, / Nil ineundo tamen temerarius esse volebat. / Congressura quidem gens innumerabilis esse / Dicebatur ei, nec adhuc natura virorum / Nota sibi fuerat; catus unde sagaciter omnes / Ordinat ante suos, et quaeque paranda coaptat'.

[41] Purton acknowledges this link but does not explore its implications: Peter Purton, *The Medieval Military Engineer: From the Roman Empire to the Sixteenth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2018), pp. 16–19.

machine, a ruse or any general skill: an engineer was one who created *engin*.[42] While there is insufficient space within the scope of this thesis to treat this topic as fully as it deserves, a brief chronlogical survey of representative examples will demonstrate the linguistic connection between siege warfare and stratagems in medieval narratives. This is indicative of more general attitudes towards military deceptions: they could be viewed as products of intelligence and skill, without any particular ethical connotations.

Consider Orderic Vitalis's description of Robert Curthose's siege of Brionne in June 1090: 'The cunning besiegers heated the iron [heads] of their missiles in a smith's furnace, which had been hurriedly built', which they proceeded to shoot into the castle's wooden roof. As it had been a very hot and dry summer, 'a great fire was quickly kindled; and it grew exceedingly strong, since the defenders of the castle were fighting vigorously and were unaware of the trick, until the fire had advanced directly over their heads'.[43] It is curious that Orderic should call this a trick (*dolus*): there is no deception here, unless it is that the garrison were unaware that their roof had been set on fire. It is likely that he is using *dolus* in a sense closer to 'stratagem', a product of the attackers' cunning (*callidi*), which was employed instead of a direct attack.

Robert the Monk describes the leaders of the First Crusade making a similar decision when they arrived before Antioch in October 1097: 'But because the city of Antioch was foritfied, not only by its natural site, but also with high walls, towers that stretched up high and the thickest ramparts on top of the walls, the princes devised a plan, for they would fight against [the city] with ingenuity, not force; with craft, not force of arms; with machines, not warlike combats'. [44] A coherent English translation cannot accurately convey Robert's wordplay here, particularly the contrast between *ars* and *Mars* in the final phrase. Note that this passage does not refer to Bohemond's act of bribery or any other act of deception. It is followed by this sentence, clearly connected to the previous by the conjunction *igitur*: 'So first they built a bridge over the river, so that they could cross the river easily, as often as they needed'. The consequence of the princes choosing *ingenium, ars* and *machinamentum* over brute force was a feat of engineering, not a ruse.

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[42] 'engine, n.', *OED Online,* <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/62223> [accessed 18 October 2018].

[43] OV, IV, 208: 'Callidi enim obsessores in fabrili fornace quae in promptu structa fuerat ferrum missilium calefaciebant [...] Inde magnus ignis celeriter confotus est; et defensoribus oppidi ualide pugnantibus dolumque nescientibus nimis confortatus est, donec flamma super capita eorum extimplo progressa est'.

[44] RM, p. 775: 'Quia vero urbs Antiochena, non solum naturali situ, verum etiam moenibus excelsis turribusque in altum porrectis, densissimisque in cacuminibus murorum propugnaculis praemunita erat, consilium inierunt principes quod contra eam pugnarent non virtute, sed ingenio; arte, non Marte; machinamento, non conflictu bellico. Prius igitur pontem supra flumen statuerunt, ut expeditius flumen transirent, quotiens transeundi necesse haberent'.

The *Gesta Stephani,* with its numerous accounts of sieges, is particularly rich in examples of this kind of language. Describing Stephen of England's siege of Exeter castle in 1136, the anonymous chronicler wrote: '[The garrison], from their side, strongly and unhesitatingly opposed all his machines, which the ingenuity of many craftsmen had laboured upon, caring for nothing: so, as both sides were fighting vigorously and ingeniously, their great struggle became one of prudence and speed'.[45] Later, when the castle well dried up, the chronicler describes the dire straits members of the garrison were reduced to: 'Also, they always ran to extinguish with wine the fire and torches that the king's craftsmen were prudently and craftily throwing inside, which were intended to scorch their machines or burn down their buildings'.[46] Describing the Empress Matilda's assault upon Henry, bishop of Winchester's castle in 1141, the chronicler wrote: 'Because, while they were pressing to obtain the bishop's castle by craft and ingenuity, those who were shut up inside, since they had thrown out fires, reduced the greater part of the city to ashes, including two abbeys'.[47]

In the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum,* the anonymous author describes Richard I of England contemplating how to assault Acre in the following terms: 'Then king Richard, withdrawing into the tent which had been prepared for him, arranged what needed to be done concerning the business at hand. He considered many things with careful attention: by what attack, by what craft [*ars*], with what machines the city might be captured more easily'.[48]

The vernacular chronicles do not provide as many examples of this topos as the Latin but there does appear to have been a similar connection between ideas of engineering, skillfulness and trickery. For instance, in his *Roman de Brut,* Wace described Brutus and his followers retreating to their castle at Sparatin, where they were besieged by Pandrasus, king of Greece: 'When the king saw that it was no use, that he could not take it

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[45] GS, p. 34: 'Illi e contra fortiter et promptissime refragantes, omnia eius machinamenta, in quibus plurimum artificum desuderat ingenium, nihili pendebant: ita ut strenue et ingeniose utrisque decertantibus, magnum eorum fieret prudentiae et uelocitatis certamen'.

[46] GS, p. 40: 'Igni quoque et facibus, quos ad machinas eorum ustulandas, uel ad domos consumendas, regis artifices prudenter et artice immittebant, cum uino semper extincturi occurrebant'.

[47] GS, p. 130: 'quia dum illi ad episcopi obtinendum castellum arte et ingenio contendebant, qui intus recludebantur ignibus foras emissis maiorem ciutatis partem, sed et duas abbatias, in fauillas penitus redegerunt'.

[48] IP, p. 211: 'Deinde rex Ricardus in tentoria sibi praeparata se recipiens, de gerendis negotiis disponebat. Multa quidem meditabatur sollicitudine, qua instantia, quo artificio, quibus machinis civitas expeditiori comprehenderetur compendio'. The chronicler has expanded on Ambroise here, who does not specify what methods Richard considered when planning the siege: Amb, lines 2347–50: 'Le rei Richart vint a ses tentes / E mist paine e granz ententes / Coment Acre sereit comquise / E com el sereit plus tost prise'.

by assault nor by any *engine* that he could fashion, he withdrew and menaced them'.[49] Geoffrey de Villehardouin, recalling the siege of Constantinople in July 1203, described how the besiegers 'thought of a very good *engin*: they surrounded the whole host with a fine palisade and fine timberwork and a fine barrier; and so they were much stronger and more secure inside'.[50] The connection also appears in Old Scots. In Barbour's *Bruce, sutelté* is used to describe the specialist skills of John Crab, a Flemish engineer recruited by the Scots for the siege of Berwick in 1319, and the skills of the silversmith who made the casket that held Robert Bruce's embalmed heart.[51] It is also applied to stealthy and deceitful tactics, such as James Douglas's night attack on Roxburgh castle in February 1315 and Thomas Randolph's seizure of Edinburgh castle in March 1314.[52]

The fact that chroniclers could use the same vocabulary to describe a ruse and a siege-engine indicates that, not only were both considered products of intelligence and skill, but that terms such as *ars* and *ingenium* in a military context did not necessarily carry any ethical overtones. Nobody would argue that catapults or siege towers were an illicit or dishonourable method of fighting: they were simply practical alternatives to brute force and hand-to-hand assaults. This disjunction between force and trickery, strength and shrewdness, was a common Latin topos and one that can be observed throughout chronicle narratives of this period.

8.3 The Disjunction of Force and Trickery

The grammatical term 'disjunction' refers to 'a statement or condition of affairs involving a choice between two or more statements or courses; an alternative'.[53] For example, one might say: 'You can get to London by car or by train'. Here, the two modes of transport are in disjunction with one aother: they are offered as equally valid alternative methods for reaching London. In Latin this idea is commonly expressed through the use of the conjuctions *an* and *vel*.[54] A number of medieval chroniclers present the ideas of force and trickery in disjunction with one another: as two means of achieving a military objective.

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[49] RdB, lines 337–340: 'Kant veit li reis que ne li valt / Que nes puet prendre par assalt / Ne par nul engine ke li face, / Trait sei en sus e sis menace'.
[50] GV, I, 168: 'Lors se porpenserent de un mult bon engin: qui il fermerent tote l'ost de bones lices et de bons merriens et bones barres; et si en furent mult plus fort et plus seür'.
[51] *Bruce*, 17, line 240; 20, line 315.
[52] *Bruce,* 10, lines 357–62; 10, lines 538–42.
[53] 'disjunction, adj. and n.', *OED Online* <www.oed.com/view/Entry/54659> [accessed 19 October 2018].
[54] Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary,* p. 1963.

One of the most famous occurrences of this topos can be found Vergil's *Aeneid,* in which the Trojan warrior Coroebus declares: 'Trickery or strength, who asks which in the case of an enemy?' when urging his fellow warriors to dress in Greek armour as a disguise.[55] We have already examined how William of Newburgh placed this quotation into the mouths of Louis VII's advisors in his account of the siege of Rouen in 1174 (see Chapter 7). It was also employed by Ralph of Caen when he described how Raymond of Saint-Gilles sought to revenge himself upon Bohemond. Bohemond had insulted Raymond by suggesting that the Holy Lance, which had been discovered by one of Raymond's followers during the siege of Antioch, was a fake:

> Therefore Raymond searches for vengeance in a thousand arts, in a thousand ways, having been wounded by the sharp darts of Bohemond's arguments; so he is clearly separating himself from the Guiscardian's insults without delay. 'May I avenge myself or die first! If opposing him openly will not suffice, I must oppose him secretly. Where the lance does not prevail, the dagger may. "'Trickery or force, who asks which in the case of an enemy?"'[56]

Gerald of Wales employed the quote in his *Topography* as part of a lengthy diatribe on the treacherous character of the Irish (see below):

> So their craft is to be feared more than their strength in arms; their peace more than their strife; their sweetness more than their gall; their malice more than their military; their treachery more than their expeditions; their counterfeit friendship more than their contemptible enmity. For this is their opinion: 'Trickery or strength, who asks which in the case of an enemy?' and this is their custom: 'Neither strong in battle nor faithful in peace'.[57]

None of these authors employed the quote to praise their subjects. William attributed it to dishonourable counsellors, Gerald to a faithless people and Ralph to a crusader whom he

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[55] Vergil, *Aeneid,* 2, line 390: 'dolus an uirtus, quis in hoste requirat?'.

[56] GT, p. 88: 'Igitur Raimundus, acutis Boamundi argumentorum spiculis sauciatus, mille artibus, mille semitis uindictam inuestigat; ita secum sine medio disiungens Wiscardidae contumelias: "Aut premoriar aut ulciscar! Si palam occursus non suppetit, suppetat occultus; ubi non ualet lancea, ualeat sica: 'Dolus an uirtus, quis in hoste requirat?'.

[57] Gerald of Wales, 'Topographia Hibernica', pp. 165–66: 'Est igitur longe fortius timenda eorum ars, quam Mars; eorum pax, quam fax; eorum mel, quam fel; malitia quam militia; proditio quam expeditio; amicitia defucata, quam inimicitia despicata. Haec enim horum sententia; "Dolus, an virtus; quis in hoste requirat?" Hi mores: "Nec in bello fortes, nec in pace fideles"'.

portrayed as avaricious and an enemy of Bohemond. This does not reflect the original context of the quote (Coroebus is a heroic figure in the *Aeneid*) nor the more general use of disjunction between force and trickery in medieval narratives.

For instance, Geoffrey Malaterra used a similar quote (taken from fourth-century poet Prudentius's *Psychomachia*) to describe how Roger I of Sicily formulated a stratagem to evade the Muslim fleet that was guarding the straits of Messina in May 1061: 'And so count Roger, seeing the enemy was opposing his army on the far side of the straits and not moving, turned to cunning devices, as he was accustomed to do. It was as if he had read: "What does it matter whether the palm of victory is won by arms or tricks?".[58] Even Gerald of Wales was capable of giving the topos a positive connotation. Describing how the forces of Diarmait Mac Murchada and Robert fitz Stephen advanced to make a second assault on Wexford in May 1169 (the first had been driven back by the garrison), he wrote: 'But in the morning, when Masses had been solemnly heard throughout the army, they advanced to the assault more prudently and better prepared, and supported by ingenuity as much as by the aid of force, relying upon craft as much as force of arms'.[59] Gerald does not elaborate what form their *ingenium* or *ars* took: he simply relates that the garrison negotiated a surrender when they saw the army approaching. Regardless, this passage is indicative of Gerald's attitude towards deception: when describing his relatives, the Cambro-Normans, employing *ars,* it was prudent and virtuous. When it was used by the Irish, it was treacherous.

The topos of presenting the disjunction between force and trickery was often used to emphasise the strength of a particular stronghold. For example, William of Poitiers's description of the castle at Mayenne in Normandy, which was held against William the Conqueror in 1063: 'The castle could not be assailed by any force, any ingenuity or any human craft on one side because a rapid and rocky river flowed past, for it was sited upon the bank of the Mayenne upon a steep mountain cliff'.[60] It was used in the description of London in the *Carmen de Hastingae*: 'It is an exceedingly large city, full of perverse inhabitants, and richer in wealth than the rest of the kingdom. Protected on the left by

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[58] GM, p. 32: 'Comes itaque Rogerius, videns hostes ex altera ripa contra suum exercitum adjacere et nusquam promoveri, ad callida argumenta, ut solitus erat ac si legisset: "Quid refert? Armis contingat palma dolisve"'. For the original, see Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, *Carmina,* ed. by Maurice P. Cunningham (Turnholt: Brepols, 1966), p. 169.

[59] EH, p. 34: 'In crastino vero, missis per exercitum sollemniter auditis, consultius et instructius ad insultum procedentes, et tam ingenii quam virium ope suffulti, tam arte scilicet quam marte confisi'.

[60] WP, pp. 65–6: 'Huius castri latus alterum, quod alluitur scopuloso rapidoque flumine (nam supra Meduanae ripam in praerupta montis rupe situm est) id nulla ui, nullo ingenio uel arte humana attentari potest'.

walls, on the right by the river, it does not fear enemies nor is it afraid to be captured by craft'.[61] Albert of Aachen wrote that Antioch, 'sited upon the mountains, can be conquered by neither craft nor force'.[62]

It could also be employed as a general summary of military strategy. Fulcher of Chartres used the topos to describe Baldwin of Boulogne's conquests in Upper Mesopotamia during the crusade: 'Therefore trusting in the Lord and in his own valour, he gathered a few knights with him and set out to the river Euphrates and there seized many castles, as much by force as ingenuity'.[63] The twelfth-century courtier Walter Map, recalling the story of an anonymous monk of Cluny who resumed his former life as a knight in order to defend his family's lands, used the topos to describe the monk's success:

> So, when he had assembled his men and whatever foreigners he could find, he attacked whoever he could find hiding and waiting. He raged upon his enemies in swift assaults, he frequently assailed them and bravely pursued them for a long time, whence it happened that he often defeated them, whom he found were unequal [to him] in cleverness or strength.[64]

Walter the Chancellor, imagining a council between Īlghāzī and his nobles following the Field of Blood, depicted Īlghāzī using the topos to persuade his men that they should ransom their prisoners back to Baldwin II of Jerusalem in exchange for the strategically vital castle at 'Azaz: 'For surely, believe my words, while [the king] lives, we will be unable to reclaim this castle or the land which has been under his authority, either by force or ingenuity'.[65] William of Malmesbury used the topos to describe the Normans:

> But the Normans, as we should say something about them, were, and still are, well-dressed to a fault, and delicate regarding their food, but on this side of any excess. Since they are a people accustomed to war, and almost unable to live

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[61] CdH, p. 38: 'Vrbs est ampla nimis, peruersis plena colonis, / Et regni reliquis dicior est opibus. / A leua muris, a dextra flumine tuta, / Hostes nec metuit nec pauet arte capi'.
[62] AA, p. 284: 'Hec enim arx et palatium in montanis situm nulla arte, nulla ui superari potest'.
[63] FC, p. 208: 'Itaque confidens in Domino et in valore suo, collegit secum milites paucos profectusque est versus Euphraten fluvium et comprehendit ibi plurima castra tam vi quam ingenio'.
[64] Walter Map, *De nugis curialium: Courtiers trifles,* ed. and trans. by M. R. James, rev. by C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors, rev edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 340: 'Conuocatis ergo suis et alienis quoscunque potuit, in latentes et prestolantes quid fiat, insurgit rapidisque furit in hostes irrupcionibus, frequenter assilit et in instancia perdurat fortiter, unde fit ut sepe conficiat quos impares inuenit astucie uel fortitudinis'.
[65] WC, p. 109: 'Eo etenim uiuente, puta dictum, nos nullatenus illud castrum, sed nec quidquam terrae suae dominationi subditae, nisi ui aut ingenio posse rehabere'.

> without battle, they actively run to engage their enemy, and where strength has not succeeded, they corrupt them with trickery and wealth.[66]

As with the language of siege craft, there are fewer examples of this topos in the vernacular chronicles but it is nevertheless present. Describing Robert Bruce's night escalade against Perth in 1313, John Barbour declared that since the town could not be taken by 'strenth or mycht / [...] he tocht to wyrk with slycht [cunning]'.[67] Similarly, when describing James Douglas's return to Douglasdale in 1307 to reclaim his heritage, Barbour noted: 'he wes wys / And saw he mycht on nakyn wys / Werray his fa with evyn mycht / Tharfor he thocht to wyrk with slycht'.[68]

In the *Roman de Brut,* King Vortigern is advised by his counsellors to construct an impregnable tower: 'His counsellors advised him to build such a tower that it could never be taken by force nor conquered by an *engine* of man'.[69] Earlier in the narrative, Wace described Brutus planning to relieve his garrison at Sparatin, which was under siege by Pandrasus of Greece (see above). His description elaborates on the topos: 'Brutus was much preoccupied with how he might rescue his men; he considered what he might do, by what *engine* he might deliver them; he needed to find an *engine,* for he did not have the strength to oppose such a host. One must use trickery and *engine* to destroy one's enemy, and to rescue one's friends one must enter great danger'.[70] Brutus lures the guards away from Pandrasus's camp with false reports that Pandrasus's brother was stranded in the woods, in need of rescue, before proceeding to assault the unguarded camp under cover of darkness.

As the previous two sections have demonstrated, medieval chroniclers often presented trickery and deceit as legitimate methods for obtaining a military objective. The choice was presented as one between force and straight-forward violence on the one hand and more circuitous methods, such as stratagems or siege engines, on the other. The recurring use of disjunction, indicating the validity of either method, indicates that the

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[66] GRA, p. 461: 'Porro Normanni, ut de eis quoque dicamus, erant tunc, et sunt adhuc, uestibus ad inuidiam culti, cibis citra ullam nimietatem delicati. Gens militiae assueta et sine bello pene uiuere nescia, in hostem impigre procurrere, et ubi uires non successissent, non minus dolo et pecunia corrumpere'.

[67] *Bruce,* 9, lines 351–2.

[68] *Bruce,* 5, lines 267–70.

[69] RdB, lines 7319–22: 'Loé li unt si cunseilier / Que tel tur face edifier / Que ja par force ne seit prise / Ne par engine d'ome conquise'.

[70] RdB, lines 357–66: 'Brutus fu forment curius / Coment li suen fussent rescus; / Purpensa sei que il fereit, / Par quell engine les secoreit; / Engieng quere li estuveit, / Kar vers tel ost force n'aveit. / Boisdie e engine deit l'en faire / Pur destrure son adversaire, / E pur ses amis delivrer / Deit l'en en grant peril entrer'.

deceitful way was not necessarily regarded as a lesser way of fighting. In certain circumstances, it was the most appropriate means to an end.

Chapter 9
The Morality of Deception

The previous chapter has demonstrated how a close reading of vocabulary can reveal chroniclers' attitudes towards military deceptions. Explicit discussion of the morality of deception in warfare is relatively rare. Chroniclers seem to have assumed that their audience would know what was and was not licit. Outside of legal texts attempting to establish a theological framework for warfare, discussions about the legitimacy of deception usually occur when an author wishes to justify his subject's actions. The other context in which this topic is discussed is in relation to the culturally or religiously 'other': those groups that were perceived to fight and behave contrary to Western European norms and were often labelled as habitually treacherous. By studying what Western chroniclers considered abnormal in 'the other', we can discern what they believed to be normative, licit behaviour.

9.1 Jus in Bello: Military Deception in Theology and Canon Law

The classic Western definition of a 'just war' is typically divided into two parts. First, *jus ad bellum:* a just war must be declared by the proper authorities and for legitimate reasons. Second, *jus in bello*: a just war must be conducted in the right way, for example by refraining from doing harm to non-combatants or by showing clemency to enemy prisoners.[1] Until the fourteenth century, medieval theologians and canonists had remarkably little to say about *jus in bello* and practically nothing about the legitimacy of particular tactics. Their primary concern was to demonstrate that it was legitimate for Christians to wage war and to determine who had the authority to declare war.[2] This should not surprise us. The authors discussed below were clerics and lawyers, not fighting men. They had little experience of how wars were actually fought and were not overly concerned with the niceties of military tactics.

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[1] James Turner Johnson, *Ideology, Reason, and the Limitation of War: Religious and Secular Concepts 1200-1740* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 26.
[2] James Turner Johnson, *Just War Tradition and the Restraint of War: A Moral and Historical Inquiry* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 123.

The basis for all theological and canonical writing on stratagems in the Middle Ages was Augustine's *Quaestionum in Heptateuchum libri VII,* specifically his reflections on Joshua 7. In this passage, God commands Joshua and the Israelites to lay an ambush for the Canaanite citizens of Ai (as discussed in Chapter 4). Augustine attempted to resolve the seeming paradox of a righteous God and His people employing a deception:

> Because God, speaking to Joshua, bids him set ambushes in their rear (that is, warriors lying in wait to ambush the enemies), we are cautioned that this is not done unjustly by those who are waging a just war, as no just person ought to think chiefly on these things unless he is undertaking a just war, which it is right to fight in, for it is not right to do so in all [wars]. But when [a just person] has undertaken a just war, whether he conquers in open battle or by ambushes, it is no concern to justice.[3]

Although he is talking about a specific incident, Augustine is clearly using *insidia* here in its broad sense to cover all kinds of stratagem (see Chapter 3). Augustine's conclusion would be adopted by future thinkers: so long as the war is just, then it does not matter how it is fought. The real problem is establishing what constitutes a just war. The Israelites were clearly fighting a just war against Ai because they had been commanded to fight by God but what were Christians to do in the absence of a clear divine mandate? Augustine offered what he considered to be the common definition of a just war: 'just wars are accustomed to be defined as those which avenge wrongs, if any people or city has failed either to punish what was wickedly done by its own people or to return that which was stolen through said wrongs, it ought to be assailed in war'.[4] As it does not specify what kind of *injuria* would justify war, this definition could conceivably be adopted by any aggrieved party to claim that their cause was just.

Augustine's writings on just war were hugely influential. Gratian, the twelfth-century Bolognese canonist, whom James Turner Johnson described as undertaking the first 'comprehensive and continuing inquiry initiated into just moral and legal limits to war'

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[3] Augustine, *Quaestionum in Heptateuchum,* p. 428: 'Quod deus iubet loquens ad Iesum, ut constituat sibi retrorsus insidias, id est insidiantes bellatores ad insidiandum hostibus, hinc admonemur non iniuste fieri ab his qui iustum bellum gerunt, ut nihil homo iustus praecipue cogitare debeat in his rebus, nisi ut iustum bellum suscipiat, cui bellare fas est; non enim omnibus fas est. cum autem iustum bellum susceperit, utrum aperta pugna, utrum insidiis uincat, nihil ad iustitiam interest'.

[4] Augustine, *Quaestionum,* p. 429: 'Iusta autem bella ea definiri solent quae ulciscuntur iniurias, si qua gens uel ciuitas, quae bello petenda est, uel uindicare neglexerit quod a suis inprobe factum est uel reddere quod per iniurias ablatum est'.

in the West, repeated Augustine verbatim on the subject of stratagems.[5] The passage in question appears in Part 2, *Causa* 23 of the *Decretum,* which is presented as a series of questions discussing whether it was licit for a group of (hypothetical) bishops to wage war against heretics in defence of the faithful: 'the bishops, having received these apostolic commands, when knights had been assembled, began to fight against the heretics openly and through ambushes'.[6] *Questio* 1 establishes whether it was a sin for the bishops to fight. *Questio* 2 discusses what constitutes a 'just war' ('Quid sit justum bellum?') and whether one may employ ambushes in such a conflict. Gratian's answer is to quote Augustine:

> The Lord our God commands Joshua Nave to place ambushes in the rear (that is, warriors lying in wait to ambush enemies). Hence we are cautioned this is not wrongfully done by those who are waging a just war, as a just person ought to think chiefly nothing about these things unless he undertakes a war in which it is right to fight. For is not right to fight in all [wars]. But when [a just person] has undertaken a just war, it is of no interest to justice whether he fights openly or from ambushes.[7]

Gratian goes on to quote Augustine's definition of a just war as one 'that avenges wrongs', which is followed by a discussion that establishes what 'wrongs' heretics commit against Catholics, confirming that the hypothetical bishops were indeed fighting a just war.

Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274) offered a fuller discussion of the morality of stratagems in his *Summa Theologia,* although he still deferred to Augustine. Aquinas's writings reveal an interest in both the morality and conduct of war, perhaps because, as Gregory Reichberg has suggested, he was the son of a minor Italian nobleman and was conscious of his family's knightly background.[8]

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[5] J. T. Johnson, *Just War*, p. 121.

[6] Gratian, 'Decretum', in *Corpus iuris canonici,* ed. by Emil Ludwig Richter, rev. by Emil Friedberg, 2 vols (Graz: Akademische Druck, 1955), I, 1–1467 (here 889): 'Episcopi, hec mandata Apostolica accipientes, conuocatis militibus aperte et per insidias contra hereticos pugnare ceperunt'.

[7] Gratian, 'Decretum', p. 894: 'Dominus Deus noster iubet ad Iesum Naue, ut constituat sibi retrorsum insidias, id est insidiantes bellatores ad insidiandum hostibus. Hinc admonemur, hoc non iniuste fieri ab his, qui iustum bellum gerunt, ut nichil iustus precipue cogitet in his rebus, nisi ut bellum suscipiat cui bellare fas est. Non enim fas est omnibus. Cum autem iustum bellum susceperit, utrum aperte pugnet, an ex insidiis, nichil ad iusticiam interest'.

[8] Gregory M. Reichberg, *Thomas Aquinas on War and Peace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 11–12.

The discussion on ambushes is found in Question 40, Article 3 of the *Summa,* under the heading: 'Whether it is licit to use ambushes in warfare'.[9] Aquinas begins by presenting three possible objections to the use of *insidia*. First, that deception appears to violate God's command in Deuteronomy 16: 'seek what is just in a just way'.[10] Second, that one ought to keep faith with enemies, as Augustine wrote in his *Letters to Boniface.* Third, that Christ had commanded, 'Do to others as you would have them do to you', and, 'since nobody would want to have ambushes or deceptions prepared for them, it appears that nobody should conduct wars from ambushes'.[11]

Aquinas then presents the counter-arguments to these points. First, he repeats Augustine's conclusion, based on Joshua 7: 'When one has undertaken a just war, whether one fights openly or from ambush, it is of no interest to justice'.[12] He then breaks with Gratian by differentiating between two kinds of deception: 'One way [a person may be deceived], in which a person is told a falsehood or a promise is not kept. And that is always illicit. And nobody should deceive enemies in this way: for there are certain laws of war and agreements ought to be kept even between enemies, as Ambrose says'.[13] This is a reference to *De officiis,* a text on Christian duty and morality by Ambrose (c. 340–397), archbishop of Milan, which was based on Cicero's work of the same title. Discussing the importance of justice, Ambrose wrote: 'How great justice is can be understood from this: it is never without relevance, regardless of places, persons or times. It is even preserved with enemies as, if a place or day has been agreed upon for battle with an enemy, it is thought to be against justice to arrive early at either the place or the time'.[14] This appears to derive from Cicero's discussion on just warfare.[15] The ideal that agreements should be honoured even between enemies was clearly current in the Middle Ages, as detailed in Chapter 7, although not necessarily because contemporaries were familiar with Ambrose and Cicero.

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[9] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae,* ed. and trans. by Thomas Gilby and others, 61 vols (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964–1981), XXXV, 88: 'Utrum sit licitum in bellis uti insidiis'.

[10] Aquinas, *Summa*, XXXV, 88: 'juste quod justum est exequeris'.

[11] Aquinas, *Summa,* XXXV, 90: '*Quae vultis ut faciant vobis homines, et vos facite illis*: et hoc est observandum ad omnes proximos. Inimici autem sunt proximi. Cum ergo nullus sibi velit insidias vel fraudes parari, videtur quod nullus ex insidiis debeat gerere bella'.

[12] Aquinas, Summa, XXXV, 90: 'Cum justum bellum suscipitur, utrum aperte pugnet aliquis an ex insidiis, nihil ad justitiam interest [sic]'.

[13] Aquinas, *Summa,* XXXV, 90: 'Uno modo, ex eo quod ei dicitur falsum, vel non servatur promissum. Et istud semper est illicitum. Et hoc modo nullus debet hostes fallere: sunt enim quaedam jura bellorum et foedera etiam inter ipsos hostes servanda, ut Ambrosius dicit'.

[14] Ambrose, *De officiis,* ed. and trans. by Ivor J. Davidson, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), I, 196: 'Quanta autem iustitia sit ex hoc intellegi potest quod nec locis nec personis nec temporibus excipitur, quae etiam hostibus reservatur, ut, si constitutus sit cum hoste aut locus aut dies proelio, adversus iustitiam putetur aut loco praevenire aut tempore'.

[15] Cicero, *De officiis,* ed. by C. Atzert (Leipzig: Teubner, 1932) p. 19.

Aquinas argues that there exists a second, licit, form of deception, in which a person conceals their plans or intentions from another. He justifies this using Scripture, saying: 'many things in holy teaching ought to be hidden, most of all from infidels, lest they ridicule them, according to this saying, "Do not give what is holy to dogs" [Matthew 7. 6]'.[16] He also appeals to classical authority, citing Frontinus: 'it is set down in all other writings on military matters concerning the need to conceal one's plans so that they do not reach enemies; as it is revealed in Frontinus's book, *Strategemata.* And such concealment relates to the planning of ambushes, which it is licit to use in just wars'.[17] Finally, he states that it is simply unreasonable to expect others not to conceal things from you: 'Nor should ambushes properly be called deceptions [*fraudes*]; they are neither incompatible with justice, nor an orderly will: for the will would be disordered indeed if somebody wanted nothing to be concealed from them by others'.[18] This last point is particularly relevant to the discussion below on the vocabulary used in chronicles to describe acts of trickery. Aquinas acknowledges that an *insidia* is an act of deception but he carefully distinguishes it from other, illicit forms of deception that would fall under the category *fraus.* As we shall see, chroniclers could use similar semantic tricks to distinguish admirable instances of deceit (craft, prudence, skillfulness) from contemptible ones (treachery, treason, fraud).

While it is highly unlikely that many (if any) medieval combatants were familiar with Augustine or Aquinas's views on the ethics of stratagems, clerical and monastic chroniclers may have read their work. Even if canonists' pronouncements had little bearing on *how* war was fought, they may have influenced how contemporaries wrote *about* war. As will become clear below, chroniclers' descriptions of military ruses were influenced by their attitude towards the combatants and their cause, more than by the actual acts of deception committed. If the chronicler considered the cause to be just then they would (usually) portray the ruse as legitimate. If they did not, they were more likely to portray a similar act as illegitimate or immoral.

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16 Aquinas, *Summa,* XXXV, 90: 'quia etiam in doctrina sacra multa sunt occultanda, maxime infidelibus, ne irrideant, secundum illud, *Nolite sanctum dare canibus'.*

17 Aquinas, *Summa,* XXXV, 90: 'inter cetera documenta rei militaris hoc praecipue ponitur de occultandis consiliis ne ad hostes perveniant; ut patet in libro Strategematum Frontini. Et talis occultatio pertinet ad rationem insidiarum quibus licitum est uti in bellis justis'.

18 Aquinas, *Summa,* XXXV, 90: 'Nec proprie hujusmodi insidiae vocantur fraudes; nec justitiae repugnant, nec ordinatae voluntati: esset enim inordinata voluntas si aliquis vellet nihil sibi ab aliis occultari'.

9.2 Justifying Trickery

Explicit discussion of the morality of employing deception in warfare is rare in chronicle narratives. Authors seem to have assumed that their readers would share their assumptions about what constituted acceptable behaviour and reflected these assumptions, perhaps unconsciously, in their choice of vocabulary. This is why it is so important to analyse the language of medieval military narratives. There are, however, a handful of incidents in the corpus of material under consideration in which chroniclers explicitly justified the use of trickery in war. The tone is generally defensive, suggesting that the authors felt some unease about the subject. This reflects a more general ambiguity surrounding attitudes to trickery in medieval narratives: neither inherently licit or illicit, it could be portrayed as either, depending on the context.

The French chronicler William the Breton, chaplain to Philip II of France, recorded a colourful anecdote involving a military ruse in his *Gesta Philippi.* In February 1214, King John of England landed at La Rochelle to begin his reconquest of Poitou, which he had lost to Philip of France in 1204. After some initial successes, on 19 June he laid siege to the castle at Roche-au-Moine, which was sited on the Loire. William the Breton introduced his story as follows: 'And so, when the siege had been laid, and the petrariae and other war machines erected, John began to attack the castle in a remarkable fashion. But those who were besieged defended themselves no less strenuously. I cannot keep silent about what happened there among their valiant deeds'.[19] William recalled that a crossbowman from John's army had taken to walking about in front of the castle walls, protected by a large shield that was carried by a servant, and shooting at the defenders. 'So one day a crossbowman from the castle, who was infuriated, used an admirable new trick and between enemies it should not to be reproached, as it is said: "trickery or strength, who asks which in regards to the enemy?".[20] The crossbowman from the castle attached a rope to a bolt, shot it into his enemy's shield then pulled it so that the servant fell into a ditch, leaving his master exposed. William called this a *nova fraus admirabilis* (an admirable new trick). Although *fraus* generally has negative connotations, and could be translated here as 'deceit', there is nothing deceptive in the defender's actions: he simply found an ingenious way to circumvent his enemy's defences. This, combined with the quotation from Vergil

[19] GPA, p. 261: 'Facta itaque obsidione, erectis petrariis et aliis machinis bellicis, cepit rex Johannes castrum mirabiliter expugnare. Obsessi autem non minus strenue se defendebant, inter quorum probitates illud quod ibidem contigit reticere non possum'.

[20] GPA, pp. 261–2: 'Quidam ergo arcubalistarius de castro indignatus, quadam die, nova fraude admirabili et inter hostes non culpanda usus est, juxta illud: "dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirat?".

that refers to *doli,* suggests William used *fraus* here in a sense that is more akin to 'trick' than 'fraud'. Whether this incident occurred exactly as written is less important than the fact that William chose to record it at all. He clearly thought it was an interesting tale that his readers would want to hear. Moreover, he called it *admirabilis,* a specific example of the garrison's *probitas* (valour, prowess). If some of his readers wished to criticise the crossbowman, then William could present a fine classical justification from the *Aeneid* for the use of trickery against enemies.

The anonymous author of the *Annales Gandenses* (a Franciscan friar from Ghent) explicitly defends an accusation of treachery levelled against the citizens of Bruges.[21] In 1302 the citizens of Bruges came out in rebellion against French rule at the instigation of Willem van Jülich, a relative and representative of Guy de Namur, son and heir to the last count of Flanders, Guy de Dampierre. James of Saint-Pol, the French governor of Flanders, moved against Bruges with an army. Willem fled, leading to widespread panic in the city. On 16 May James agreed that offenders from the city commune were free to leave before he arrived. Many did and James entered Bruges the following day. The citizens who had remained in the city then sent word to those who had left that they could now return and take the French by surprise. This was particularly easy because the French had slighted the city's fortifications following a riot the previous year. The Flemings attacked at the dawn on the morning of 18 May.[22] The chronicler records that they used a password, a literal shibboleth, to distinguish themselves from the French in the confusion. The Flemings shouted *scilt*, which they pronounced with an aspiration (/sxilt/) and which the chronicler says the French were incapable of pronouncing.[23] The attack was so successful that James of Saint Pol was forced to flee the city, abandoning all his possessions. Fifteen hundred French were slain, while a further hundred were taken captive. It is at this point in his narrative that the chronicler defends the Flemings for their actions:

> The French say that their men were treacherously defeated and killed in this fight; but I myself was able to carefully investigate [the incident]. If there was any betrayal there, few were aware of it, yet I did not find this to be true. Indeed, it is these people [i.e. the French] who should rather be blamed, those who entered a poorly-fortified town with little caution and prudence, with so

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[21] AG, p. xi.
[22] Verbruggen, *Battle of the Golden Spurs*, pp. 22–25.
[23] AG, p. 24.

> many of their deadly enemies around and nearby, strengthened and well-armed and almost desperate.[24]

This passage captures the essence of the Franco-Flemish conflict. To the French, the Flemings were subjects of Philip IV of France and James of Saint Pol the royal governor. To attack him and his men in this manner constituted treason (*proditio*): the Flemings were rebels against their rightful lord and king. To the Flemings, however, the French were a foreign force who had invaded Flanders and imposed their rule on a free people. They were not rebels but patriots, fighting for their independence. This view is clearly shared by the author of the *Annales,* as he criticises the French for their complacency and lack of prudence. It was the responsibility of the French to protect themselves appropriately, as they were surrounded by their enemies (*inimici*).

The legitimacy of using trickery in war is discussed by John Barbour in several passage of *The Bruce,* suggesting a certain anxiety about the guerrilla-style tactics employed by the Scots during the First War of Independence (1296–1328). In the spring of 1306, Robert Bruce attacked the forces of Henry Percy, one of the senior English commanders in Scotland, by night while they were billeted in a village near Turnberry in Ayrshire. Barbour places a speech into Bruce's mouth that justifies the attack: 'Repruff tharoff na man sall / For werrayour na fors suld ma / Quhether he mycht ourcum his fa / Throu strenth or throu sutelté, / Bot that guy faith ay haldyn be'.[25] This statement is notable for a number of reasons. Its sentiment, that a combatant could fight with either force or cunning so long as he does not break 'good faith' with anybody, is very close to Aquinas's conclusions on the use of *insidia* in war (see above). As a cleric, Barbour would likely have been familiar with the *Summa Theologiae* and may have deliberately inserted this scholarly justification of 'sutelté' into his text to excuse Bruce's morally-suspect behaviour. That being said, the *Bruce* is significant for being the first surviving work of literature written in Old Scots. It was commissioned by Robert II of Scotland, Bruce's grandson, who paid Barbour an annual pension for its composition.[26] It was a work of vernacular literature, intended to be declaimed in a royal court. The sentiments expressed here may owe less to canon law than

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[24] AG, p. 24: 'Dicunt Franci, suos in hac pugna proditiose fuisse victos et occisos; sed certe, sicut ego diligentius potui investigare, si aliqua ibi proditio fuit, tunc pauci ipsius erant conscii, non tamen hoc certitudinaliter inveni; imo potius debent hoc suis imputare, qui minus caute et prudenter villam non bene munitam intraverunt, tot existentibus circa et juxta eam inimicis suis capitalibus, fortibus et bene armatis et quasi desperatis'.

[25] *Bruce,* 5, lines 84–88.

[26] *Bruce,* p. 3.

to the social mores and conventions of a late-fourteenth-century court, populated by fighting men who appreciated the value of a wily stratagem.

Twice in the poem, Bruce is upbraided by others for his use of stealthy tactics. The first such incident occurs in 1307 when Barbour depicts Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, challenging Bruce to a pitched battle at Loudon Hill on 10 May: 'And giff that he wald mey him that / He said his worschip suld be mar, / And mar be turnyt in nobillay, / To wyn him in the playne away / With hard dintis in evyn fechtyng / Then to do fer mar with skulking'.[27] Barbour declares that Aymer 'spak [...] heyley' in issuing this challenge. Bruce reacts angrily and accepts at once. At Loudon Hill, Bruce defeated Aymer, marking his first major victory since being driven into exile after the battle of Methven in June the previous year. This haughty challenge, followed by a crushing defeat at the hands of the Scottish patriots, suggests that Barbour did not expect his audience to agree with Aymer's suggestion that Bruce had been merely 'skulking'.

In the second incident Bruce is criticised by his own nephew, Thomas Randolph, earl of Moray. Randolph had initially supported Bruce's claim to the throne but shifted his alleigance to Edward I of England after being captured at Methven. In the summer of 1308 Randolph was captured again, this time by James Douglas, and sent to Bruce. According to Barbour, Bruce demanded Randolph be reconciled with him. Randolph answered: 'Ye chasty me, bot ye / Aucht bettre chastyt for to be, / For sense ye werrayit the king / Off Ingland, in playne fechtyng / Ye suld pres to derenyhe rycht / And nocht with cowardy na with slycht'.[28] Bruce responds that it might come to 'playne fechtyng' soon enough. He does not explicitly defend his use of 'slycht' but he rebukes Randolph for the tone of his address: 'Bot sen thou spekys sa rudly / It is gret skyll men chasty / Thai proud wordis till that thou knaw / The rycht and bow as thou aw'.[29] As with Aymer de Valence, the accusation against Bruce is attributed to pride and arrogance, not wisdom or chivalrous virtue. It is telling that, later in the poem, when Randolph is given the task of seizing Edinburgh castle for Bruce, Barbour says he considered how to achieve it through 'sum sutelte or wile'.[30] Even if Randolph is expressing a contemporary opinion that 'slycht' was a cowardly way to fight, he changed his mind after returning to Bruce's party: he took Edinburgh by climbing the castle rock by night with scaling ladders in March 1314.

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[27] *Bruce,* 8, lines 135–40.
[28] *Bruce,* 9, lines 747–52.
[29] *Bruce,* 9, lines 755–58.
[30] *Bruce,* 10, line 540.

Walter the Chancellor presents a particularly revealing description of trickery. Recounting Īlghāzī's feigned march on al-Atharib in 1119, which Walter interpreted as a cover for a reconnaissance of Roger of Salerno's camp at the Field of Blood (see above), Walter described the Turks employing a feigned flight when confronted:

> But [the Turks' strength] was deliberately hidden in order that, by these signs, they might be able to draw our men far from the camps. This action is often considered by many warriors since, for the sake of the dishonest [action], the observers are kept safe, though it may often be heartily approved because of the cleverness of the *ingenium*.[31]

The Latin here is somewhat opaque, especially in the crucial final sentence.[32] Walter had previously stated that this Turkish force had been sent towards al-Atharib 'ut spectent et spectentur' (in order to see and be seen) i.e. so that they could observe the Franks and, in doing so, deceive them by appearing to move away from the Field of Blood.[33] This helps to explain the otherwise confusing reference to *inspectores* (observers) in the last sentence. Walter is commenting on whether feigning flight should be considered a licit tactic. Fighters often consider using it, despite being an act of *inprobitas* (dishonesty, wickedness), because it keeps the decoy force, the *inspectores* who were sent out 'to see and be seen' (*spectare*), safe from harm. Walter then opines that, in fact, such a stratagem (*ingenium*) should be 'heartily recommended' (*comprobetur*) because it demonstrates cleverness (*astutia*). This is a rare insight into what must have been a current debate among Walter's contemporaries, as evidenced by his use of the present tense. The act of feigning flight was dishonest. Some would even call it wicked. Others, however, defended it, not only because it was useful but because it was an admirable display of intelligence.

As stated at the beginning, explicit justifications for acts of trickery are unusual in medieval chronicles. Scholars are left to judge whether or not the author approved of a certain tactic by examining the vocabulary they employed to describe it. On the rare occasions when we do see explicit discussions on the morality of trickery, they concur with other evidence already cited. Deception could be portrayed as something negative, cowardly or immoral, hence the defensive tone in some of the passages discussed above.

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[31] WC, p. 81: 'Sed res erat tecta fraude ex industria, ut his indiciis remotius a castris nostros extrahere potuissent. Quod factum saepe a pluribus bellatorum cautis inspectoribus pro inprobitate reputatur, licet multotiens ex astutiae ingenio id fieri comprobetur'.

[32] My sincere thanks to Dr. Willaim Flynn for his help with the translation.

[33] WC, p. 81.

On the other hand, a clever deception, employed against an enemy in a time of open war, could be admirable: a demonstration of the valour and cleverness that society lauded in their fighting men. As Walter the Chancellor demonstrates, this admiration was not necessarily confined to Western Europeans but could even extend to the cultural or religious 'other'.

9.3 The Treacherous 'Other': Trickery as Practiced by Non-Normative Enemies

Western authors often identified a group's conduct in warfare, and how it differed from Western norms, as a key signifier of their 'otherness'. Some were thought to be more violent, others more cowardly. Some fought in unconventional ways that confounded or impressed chroniclers. Whether or not these differences were as pronounced as our sources claim is less important (for this present study) than what they reveal about Westerners' self-image and their attitudes towards trickery in warfare.

The groups under discussion here differed either linguistically, culturally, religiously or politically from the Francophone West. It is tempting to label these as ethnic or national differences but modern concepts of ethnicity and nationhood do not map easily onto the Middle Ages.[34] The most common Latin terms for a cultural-ethnic group in this period were *gens* and *natio*. What was believed to unite a *gens* could vary from place to place. Some, such as the Normans or the Lombards, claimed common descent from a single kin group who were believed to have emigrated from the remote east or north (Troy was a popular genesis point) and settled in Europe.[35] In other cases, religion was the unifying factor. Authors could talk of a Catholic *gens* or a pagan *natio*. Hirokazu Tsurushima has described how Bede conceived of the English, the *gens Anglorum*, as united, not by a common language or political allegiance, encompassing as it did Saxons, Jutes and Angles, but by a shared religious identity: they were all Christians under the authority of the archbishop of

[34] See Patrick J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002); Lesley Johnson, 'Imagining Communities: Medieval and Modern', in *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson, and Alan V. Murray (Leeds: Leeds Studies in English, 1995), pp. 1–20; Alan V. Murray, 'Ethnic Identity in the Crusader States: The Frankish Race and the Settlement of Outremer', in *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages*, pp. 59–74; Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900–1300*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 253–56.

[35] Peter Hoppenbrouwers, 'Such Stuff as Peoples Are Made On: Ethnogenesis and the Construction of Nationhood in Medieval Europe', *The Medieval History Journal*, 9 (2006), 195–242.

Canterbury, observing the Roman rite.[36] In other circumstances, a *natio* could be made up of different *gens* whose unity was expressed in alleigance to a common ruler, as in the case of Scotland (see below) or Anglo-Norman England, where kings would address charters to their French, English and Flemish subjects.[37]

To be a member of a *gens* was to share certain common features. These could include language, customs, laws and traditions. Particularly important for this study was the idea of shared characteristics: that members of a *gens* shared inheret personality traits and behaviours. Some authors ascribed these to geographical determinism: the belief, inhereted from ancient Greek and Roman theories, that a region's climate could affect the humoral balance of its inhabitants and therefore their essential character.[38] Some authors, such as Gerald of Wales (see below) portrayed the social customs of a group as actually influencing the biological and mental characteristics of its members: children born into a culture with certain (usually bad) customs would inheret the associated qualities.[39] The character of a particular *gens* was also thought to influence, and be reflected in, its military culture: how they fought, whether they were brave or hardy or cunning in the face of danger.

Stephen Morillo has done important work in highlighting the unique challenges faced when two distinct military cultures encounter one another on the battlefield. In his typology of 'transcultural wars', Morillo identified three types of war. 'Intracultural wars' are those fought between two parties who live and operate within the same cultural framework, such as the Anglo-Normans and the French in twelfth-century Europe.[40] Next is 'intercultural war', conflicts between two distinct cultures, leading to what Morillo terms 'mutual incomprehension', such as the first encounters between Western Europeans and the Mongols.[41] When a military culture, such as Western Europe, that customarily took prisoners, for example, came into conflict with a head-taking culture, such as the Galwegians of south-western Scotland, then the 'mutual incomprehension' could lead the former to view the latter as a savage, barbaric or morally depraved. Finally there are

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[36] Hirokazu Tsurushima, 'What Do We Mean by "Nations" in Early Medieval Britain?', in *Nations in Medieval Britain*, ed. by Hirokazu Tsurushima (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2010), pp. 1–18 (here 8).

[37] Robert Bartlett, 'Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 3 (2001), 39–56 (here 47–49).

[38] Bartlett, 'Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race', p. 46.

[39] Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales: A Voice of the Middle Ages* (Stroud: Tempus, 2006), pp. 156–57; Owain Nash, 'Elements of Identity: Gerald, the Humours and National Characteristics', in *Gerald of Wales: New Perspectives on a Medieval Writer*, ed. by Georgia Henley and A. Joseph McMullen (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2018), pp. 203–20 (here 210–11).

[40] Stephen Morillo, 'A General Typology of Transcultural Wars - The Early Middle Ages and Beyond', in *Transcultural Wars from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006), pp. 29–42 (here 31–33).

[41] Morillo, 'Transcultural Wars', pp. 33–36.

'subcultural wars', in which a dominant social or political group wages war against a minority group who, although existing within the same broader culture, is nevertheless perceived to be 'other' for some reason. An example would be medieval noblemen waging war against a peasants' revolt: although all the participants are Latin Christians, the nobility would not consider the commoners to be part of the same cultural group as themselves.[42] Morillo's typology is very helpful for analysing the following conflicts, although he does overstate the cultural distinction between Franks and Turks when he states that the Franks considered the feigned flight 'cowardly'.[43] Western Europeans knew and employed the feigned flight before the crusades and occasionally employed it *against* Muslim forces (see Chapter 4). Like any typology, the boundaries between the categories are somewhat fluid. In some of the instances discussed below, the conflicts could be understood as both intercultural and subcultural, as the politically dominant Anglo-Normans fought against *gentes* who may have perceived the conflict as a legitimate war of independence.

i. Welsh

The Welsh were distinguished from their Anglo-Norman neighbours by their language, dress, culture and method of fighting. This, at least, was how Gerald of Wales depicted them in his *Descriptio Kambriae*:

> For you see, the Flemings, Normans, *cotoreaux* and Brabanters, although they may be excellent knights in their own lands, and highly trained in arms, nevertheless warfare in Wales, just as in Ireland, is recognized to be different to that in Gaul. For there they seek level places, here rough terrain; there open fields, here woodland; there arms are honourable, here they are onerous; there one conquers through steadiness, here through agility; there knights are captured, here they are decapitated; there they are ransomed, here they are run through.[44]

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[42] Morillo, 'Transcultural Wars', pp. 36–41.

[43] Morillo, 'Transcultural Wars', p. 31.

[44] DK, p. 220: 'Flandrenses quippe, Normanni, Coterelli, et Bragmanni, quanquam suis in terris milites egregii sint, et armis instructissimi, Gallica tmane militia multum a Kambrica, sicut ab Hybernica, distare dignoscitur. Ibi namque plana petuntur, hic aspera; ibi campestria, hic silvestria; ibi arma honori, hic oneri; ibi stabilitate vincitur, hic agilitate; ibi capiuntur milites, hic decapitantur; ibi redimuntur, hic perimuntur'.

This description has formed the basis of many modern descriptions of Anglo-Welsh conflict in the central Middle Ages. The Welsh, unable to confront the more heavily-armoured invaders in the open, resorted to guerilla-style tactics, operating in wooded and mountainous terrain where heavy cavalry could not operate.[45] This picture is somewhat misleading, however. Sean Davies, drawing on contemporary Welsh language sources, has demonstrated that the Welsh social elite, at least, fought in a very similar manner to the Anglo-Normans: mounted, in heavy armour and carrying a lance and shield.[46] Nor were the Welsh incapable of fighting pitched battles: in the right circumstances, Welsh armies could and did defeat Anglo-Norman armies in the open, for example at Cardigan in 1136 and Radnor in 1196.[47]

Gerald's description of Welsh military tactics was intended to strengthen his argument that the Angevin kings of England should favour Cambro-Norman marcher lords and his own relatives in particular. Gerald argued that only the marchers (whom he described as a *gens,* distinct from both the English and the Welsh) had the requisite character and experience necessary to continue the conquest of Ireland and subjugate the Welsh.[48] In his *Descriptio,* he argued:

> However on this expedition, whether into Ireland or Wales, those raised in the Welsh March, a *gens* skilled in the hostile conflicts of their region, are most suitable; pure, their customs having been formed from long association, bold and lightly armed; when the hazards of Mars require it, they will be found to be both skillful on horsesback and agile on foot; they are not delicate about food and drink, as content with Ceres as with Bacchus, when matters are pressing, they are prepared to fast. They began the invasions into both Ireland and Wales with great force: and only with such men can the conquests be completed, or not at all.[49]

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[45] John Gillingham, 'Conquering the Barbarians: War and Chivalry in Twelfth-Century Britain', *Haskins Society Journal*, 4 (1992), 67–84 (here 75); William Randolph Jones, 'England against the Celtic Fringe: A Study in Cultural Stereotypes', *Journal of World History*, 13 (1971), 155–71 (here 162).

[46] Sean Davies, *War and Society in Medieval Wales 633–1283: Welsh Military Institutions* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004), pp. 157–76.

[47] Davies, *War and Society*, pp. 125–35.

[48] Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p. 153.

[49] Ceres was the Roman goddess of grain and the harvest, Bacchus the god of wine and wine-making. DK p. 220: 'In hac autem expeditione sicut et in alia qualibet sive Hybernica sive Kambrica, gens in Kambriae marchia nutrita, gens hostilibus partium illarum conflictibus exercitata, competentissima; puta, formatis a convictu moribus, audax et expedita; cum alea Martis exegerit, nunc equis habilis, nunc pedibus agilis inventa; cibo potuque non delicata, tam Cerere quam Baccho, causis urgentibus, abstinere parata. Talibus tam

This is not to say that Gerald's claims were entirely baseless. Other contemporary chronicles refer to the Welsh retreating into difficult terrain to escape the Anglo-Normans, or using their knowledge of the landscape to launch ambushes.[50] John of Salisbury complained that England was at the mercy of raiding parties based in Snowdonia because Anglo-Norman knights were unwilling and unable to pursue them into the mountains in their heavy armour.[51] Gerald remains our most detailed source for Welsh warfare in this period but scholars must use him with caution and an awareness that his descriptions are likely exaggerated for political and rhetorical effect.

When discussing the native Welsh use of trickery in war, Gerald expresses appreciation, even admiration for their abilities: 'And if perhaps they do not prevail in open encounters and appointed battle, at least they weary their enemy with ambushes and nocturnal assaults'.[52] He dignifies their tactics with comparison to the ancient Parthians: 'Without a doubt, their courageous virility is more apparent in fleeing and weakening [their enemies], frequently turning back, and fighting back like Parthians, shooting arrows backwards while fleeing'.[53]

Gerald certainly enjoyed recounting stories of particularly daring stratagems. In the *Itinerarium Kambriae* he described how in 1182 the sons of Seisyll ap Dynfnwall took revenge on the garrison of Abergavenny castle for their father's murder by scaling the walls at night. One of the Welshmen, Seisyll, son of Eudas, even went so far as to tell the castle constable where they would enter the day before the attack, 'as if he were warning him, nevertheless more as a joke and as laughter than seriously'.[54] The Welsh seized the constable and his family before burning the castle to the ground, leading Gerald to conclude: 'according to the just judgement of God, the offence was punished in the same place where it was committed'.[55]

When describing the death of Anglo-Norman nobleman Richard de Clare in an ambush near Cardigan in 1136, Gerald offered no criticism of the Welsh but instead blamed Richard for being imprudent. Not only did he ignore the advice of Brian de

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Hybernia quam Kambria viris initium habuit expugnationis: talibus quoque, vel nullis, consummabilis finem habitura conquisitionis'.

[50] See GRH, pp. 74–5; GS, pp. 15–17; RdB, lines 7719–22; RT, p. 265; RW, IV, 222; WN, II, 25, 153.

[51] John of Salisbury, *Policraticus,* ed. by Clemens C. I. Webb, 2 vols (New York: Arno, 1979), II, 598.

[52] DK, p. 210: 'Et si apertis congressibus, belloque indicto forte non praevalet, insidiis saltem et nocturnis irruptionibus hostem gravat'.

[53] DK, p. 210: 'In fuga nimirum et confectione crebro revertens, et tanquam Parthicis a tergo sagittis fugiendo repugnans, animosa virilitas magis apparet'.

[54] IK, p. 49: 'quasi praemuniendo, sub risu tamen et ludicro magis quam serio'.

[55] IK, p. 51: 'justo Dei judicio, eo quo delictum est loco perpetratum, poena delicti ex parte secuta'.

Wallingford, who knew the territory, not to enter the forest, 'from an excessive presumption of safety, he had a minstrel go before him, and a singer, answering to a refrain with notes on a harp'.[56] Gerald used the story of Richard's folly to offer a moral lesson for his readers:

> Therefore from various events it is well known that the incautious person is always too stubborn, and ignores his men. For fear teaches [you] to provide for the future and directs the diligent [person] into success: but recklessness assuredly approaches unawares to cast [you] down, and thoughtless temerity is unwilling to await the counsel of a guide.[57]

Gerald barely comments on the role played by the Welsh in this anecdote. He seems to have regarded it as almost inevitable that they wouild be lying in ambush in a forest. It was Richard de Clare's responsiblity as a leader to listen to good advice and demonstrate sufficient foresight to avoid them.

When describing the character of the Welsh *gens,* Gerald claimed that they were a 'treacherous' people. This does not appear to be related to their conduct in warfare, however, but to the keeping of oaths and promises:

> An oath is nothing to them; they have reverence for neither faith nor truth. For indeed they are accustomed to give little weight to a promise of good faith and, confirming nearly everything with a word, their right hand extended, as is the custom, since this is the usual sign that is given, they do not consider that which is invioable to other peoples a solemn or necessary matter but a joke. They are accustomed to freely discard a pledge.[58]

This disregard for oaths would have been particularly offensive to Anglo-Norman aristocrats. Whether the Welsh really did regard all promises so lightly is another matter. Part of this may be attributable to the fragmented political geography of Wales. Even if the

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[56] IK, p. 47: 'ex nimia quoque securitatis praesumptione, fidicinem praevium habens, et praecentorem, cantilenae notulis alternatim in fidicula respondentem'.
[57] IK, p. 48: 'Ex variis itaque patet rerum eventibus, quoniam incauta est semper nimia praesumptio, et sui negligens. Timor enim prospicere futuris admonet, et diligentiam docet in prosperis: audacia vero praecipitanter obrepit, et inconsulta temeritas nescit consilium ducis exspectare'.
[58] DK, p. 206: 'Nullum eis jusjurandum; nulla fidei, nulla veritatis reverentia. Adeo namque fidei foedus, aliis inviolabile gentibus, parvipendere solent, ut non in seriis solum et necessariis, verum in ludicris, omnique fere verbo firmando, dextrae manus ut mos est porrectione, signo usuali dato, fidem gratis effundere consueverint'.

conquerors made an agreement with a particular prince or princes, these princes may not have actually had authority to speak for other rulers or groups, giving the impression that they had negotiated in bad faith.[59] There is also the possibility that, because they thought of themselves as fighting for their independence against a foreign enemy, they felt that they were not obliged to keep promises made to their oppressors. Contemporaries were unanimous in the belief that an oath made under duress was not valid. It is likely that the Welshmen who swore fidelity or to keep the peace at the point of an Anglo-Norman lance considered themselves under significant duress. As Davies has observed in relation to the apparently-excessive violence employed in Anglo-Welsh conflicts, in comparison to Continental warfare: 'Wales remained a land of conquest. War was more brutal here than in Anglo-French clashes because there was more to fight for'.[60]

ii. Irish

Studies of Anglo-Norman attitudes to the Irish in this period are inevitably bound up with attitudes to the Welsh because Gerald of Wales is our best source for both. While Gerald was capable of nuance in his attitude to the native Welsh, acknowledging both their virtues and their vices, he was almost unequivocally hostile to the Irish and every aspect of their culture, including their manner of waging war. This was not a prejudice of Gerald's alone. There was growing hostility towards the Irish in clerical circles in Western Europe throughout the twelfth century, as Ireland had not been affected by ongoing reform movement that was reshaping the rest of the Latin church. In his biography of his friend Malachy of Armagh (d. 1148), Bernard of Clairvaux portrayed Ireland as a barbarous and semi-pagan land that had resisted the saintly Malachy's attempts at reform.[61] In 1155, John of Salisbury, later bishop of Chartres, helped to sway papal opinion against the Irish Church during a mission to the papal curia at Benevento. This led to the publication of the bull *Laudibiliter,* which granted the entirety of Ireland to Henry II of England as a hereditary fief.[62] Although Gerald of Wales did visit Ireland in 1183 and 1185, his depiction

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[59] Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p. 137.
[60] Davies, *War and Society*, p. 238.
[61] F. X. Martin, 'Diarmait Mac Murchada and the Coming of the Anglo-Normans', in *A New History of Ireland: II Medieval Ireland 1169-1534*, ed. by Art Cosgrove (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 43–66 (here 60).
[62] Martin, 'Diarmait', pp. 57–59.

of the Irish in the *Expugnatio Hibernica* and *Topographia Hibernica* was influenced by an established tradition that depicted the Irish as savages in need of moral reform.[63]

According to Gerald's *Topographia*, the Irish demonstrated their want of civilisation in their long hair and beards, their custom of riding without stirrups and the fact they did not cultivate crops but lived as pastoralists. They were characterised as 'backward', a common topos among contemporary writers for a variety of 'barbarian' *gentes* who were perceived as having failed to evolve into a sophisticated, civilised society.[64] Asa Mittman has identified how Gerald's description of Ireland as a land of miracles, akin to the marvelous and mysterious East, contributed to the idea of the Irish as the 'other'.[65] All of this added further weight to Gerald's argument for the need to continue the conquest of Ireland, to civilise the barbaric Irish and bring them into line with the rest of Christendom.

When describing Irish warfare, Gerald wrote that 'they go to battle naked and unarmed. For they hold arms to be a burden; indeed, they regard those who fight unarmed as brave and honourable'.[66] It is not certain whether 'naked' should be understood literally or figuratively here. Gerald may be drawing on the classical stereotype of the naked barbarian or he may be using *nudus* as a synonym for *inermus*: a man who goes into battle without armour is effectively (but not literally) naked.[67] Like his descriptions of the Welsh, Gerald may have been exaggerating for effect. As Marie Therese Flanagan has shown, the pre-Norman Irish kingdoms were capable of sophisticated military operations, fielding substantial armies, conducting siege warfare and their nobility, at least, fought as armoured cavalry.[68] This would seem to discredit Gerald's assertion that the Irish learned the art of war from their encounters with the Anglo-Normans:

> And indeed this people, who at first were rendered confused and senseless by our arrival, by such a novel event, and greatly terrified by the sudden wounds

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[63] See also Anthony Perron, 'The Face of the "Pagan": Portraits of Religious Deviance on the Medieval Periphery', *Journal of the Historical Society*, 9 (2009), 467–92 (here 470–76).

[64] Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, pp. 131–39; W. R. Jones, 'England against the Celtic Fringe', pp. 163–65; W. R. Jones, 'The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 13 (1971), 376–407 (here 394–97).

[65] Asa Simon Mittman, 'The Other Close at Hand: Gerald of Wales and the "Marvels of the West"', in *The Monstrous Middle Ages*, ed. by Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), pp. 97–112.

[66] TH, p. 150: 'Praeterea, nudi et inermes ad bella procedunt. Habent enim arma pro onere; inermes vero dimicare pro audacia reputant et honore'.

[67] See Chapter 3 for an analysis of the meaning of 'armed/unarmed' in the Middle Ages.

[68] Marie Therese Flanagan, 'Irish and Anglo-Norman Warfare in Twelfth-Century Ireland', in *A Military History of Ireland*, ed. by Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 52–75.

> from arrows and the armoured might of our knights [...] were gradually taught and accustomed to be equally proficient with arrows and arms, and also through mutual and frequent warlike conflicts with our men, and many successes, were instructed in both martial stratagems and devices, that those who could be easily confounded in the beginning, after their spirits and strength had been revived, were then able to resist more forcefully.[69]

This passage, part of the concluding remarks of the *Expugnatio,* is very similar to Gerald's description of the difference between continental and Welsh warfare (which he reproduced five years later in the *Descriptio Kambriae*). Gerald castigated those who had been left responsible for completing the conquest, begun so successfully by Gerald's relatives, and had allowed the Irish time to develop a more effective art of war. He declared that the Irish would only be completely subdued if the crown was to appoint Welsh marchers to key lordships.[70] As such, it probably tells us more about Gerald's ambitions for his relatives than the development of Irish military practice. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that he chose to include the use of 'stratagems' (*insidia*e) and 'devices' (*cautelae*) alongside 'arrows and arms' as fundamental aspects of warfare, yet another example of the disjunction between cunning and force in medieval thought.

Gerald claimed that the Irish, like the Welsh, were habitually unfaithful and treacherous: 'In addition, they always pursue treachery, more so than all other peoples; they never keep a pledge they have given. They feel neither shame nor fear to violate continually a sacred pledge and oath, offered to them by others, which they wish very much to be observed in regards to themsevles'.[71] This propensity for treachery was particularly evident, according to Gerald, in the Irish custom of using an axe in place of a walking stick: 'So, when [the Irishman] sees the opportunity, and seizes the moment, no sword is drawn, no bow is bent, no lance is held out. Without any preparation, having raised that deadly instrument, he inflicts a wound'.[72] Once again, the treacherous character manifests itself in

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[69] EH, p. 230: 'Gens etenim, que in primis nostrorum adventibus tante novitatis eventu stupida fuerat et consternata, subitaque sagittarum vulnera et armate milicie robur vehementer exhorrens [...] usu pariter et exercicio sagittis et armis paulatim edocta et assueta, necnon et marciis tam insidiis quam cautelis per mutuos et crebros cum nostris belli conflictus et successus plurimos instructa, que de facili primo confundi poterat, resumptis animis et viribus iam forcior ad resistendum est effecta'.

[70] EH, pp. 244–52.

[71] EH, p. 165: 'Praeterea, prae omni alia gente proditionibus semper insistunt; fidem datam nemini servant. Fidei et sacramenti religionem, quam sibi observari summopere volunt, aliis praestitam quotidie violare nec verecundantur nec verentur'.

[72] EH, p. 165: 'Visa igitur opportunitate, et occasione captata, non haec ut gladius evaginatur, non ut arcus tenditur, non ut lancea protenditur. Citra omnem praeparatum parum elevata letale vulnus infligit'.

the breaking of oaths and unprovoked assaults rather than employing stratagems. The use of false oaths, sworn on relics, to persuade the garrison of Wexford to surrender in 1171 is the most prominent example in the *Expugnatio* (see Chapter 7) but, beyond this, Gerald rarely credits the Irish with employing ruses in warfare. Considering his obvious interest in such stories, as demonstrated in his Welsh texts, we can reasonably conclude that this was a deliberate choice on Gerald's part, perhaps to emphasise the Cambro-Normans' superior intelligence and prowess.

iii. Scots

Discussing English attitudes towards the Scots in the central Middle Ages is complicated by the fact that the very meaning of the term 'Scot' changed over this period. While the office 'king of Scots' was of considerable antiquity, up until the end of the thirteenth century, 'Scotland' referred almost exclusively to the lands north of the Forth. Those who lived between Stirling and Berwick, although ruled by the king of Scots, identified variously as English, Cumbrian or Galwegian. Twelfth-century Scottish royal charters were addressed to 'French, English, Scots and Galwegians and very occasionally Welsh and Flemings'.[73] Over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as royal judicial power extended both north and south of the Forth, so the disparate *gentes* of the kingdom all came to identify themselves as 'Scots', members of a single country and owing fealty to a single king. It is notable that it is precisely during this period, as the southerners began to self-identify as 'Scots', that we find the first recorded distinction between savage 'highlanders' and civilised 'lowlanders'.[74] With this in mind, it is necessary to treat attitudes towards the Scots during the two major Anglo-Scottish conflicts that fall within the scope of this thesis separately. When describing David I of Scotland's invasion of England in 1138, it was David's Galwegian troops who were specifically identified by the Anglo-Norman chroniclers as culturally 'other'. By the First War of Independence at the end of the thirteenth century,

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[73] Dauvit Broun, 'Becoming a Nation: Scotland in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', in *Nations in Medieval Britain*, ed. by Hirokazu Tsurushima (Donington: Tyas, 2010), pp. 86–103 (here 91).

[74] Broun, 'Becoming a Nation', p. 101. See also David Ditchburn and Alastair MacDonald, 'Medieval Scotland, 1100–1560', in *The New Penguin History of Scotland: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, ed. by R. A. Houston and W. W. J. Knox (London: Penguin, 2001), pp. 96–181 (here 150–54); Alexander Grant, 'Aspects of National Consciousness in Medieval Scotland', in *Nations, Nationalism and Patriotism in the European Past*, ed. by Claus Bjørn, Alexander Grant, and Keith J. Stringer (Copenhagen: Academic Press, 1994), pp. 68–95; Murray G. H. Pittock, *Scottish Nationality* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 29–34.

however, no distinction is drawn between the different regions: they are all 'Scots' and they are all 'other'.

According to the Anglo-Norman chroniclers, the Galwegians were distinguished from other *gentes* by their extreme violence and their primitive manner of fighting. Richard of Hexham's chronicle contains particularly lurid descriptions of the atrocities the Galwegians committed in northern England in 1138: sacking churches, ripping unborn babies from the womb, drinking children's blood and enslaving the surviving populace.[75] Whether any of these incidents actually occurred is debatable but they do conform to a general Anglo-Norman stereotype that the 'Celts' were excessively brutal: similar accusations were made against the Welsh and Irish. This brutality was manifested in their indiscriminate slaughter of prisoners, whether commoner or nobleman, and the taking of slaves. While there appear to have been both cultural (the Galwegians measured martial prowess in the number of heads taken in battle) and practical reasons for this (lacking strong fortifications to dominate territory, the only effective way of resolving military conflict was to kill one's opponents outright) the Anglo-Norman nobility, who expected to be captured for ransom if defeated, considered them illicit and a further demonstration that the 'Celts' were uncivilised barbarians.[76]

Connected to this idea of Galwegian barbarity was their use of primitive equipment and tactics. Anglo-Norman accounts of the battle of the Standard (22 August 1138) depict the Galwegians charging into battle naked, to be slaughtered by archers and mail-clad knights: 'The archers, who were intermingled with the knights, darkening the sky [with arrows] pierced them, for they were evidently unarmed'.[77] Ailred of Rievaulx depicted Walter Espec, one of the Anglo-Norman commanders, declaring to his troops: 'So who would not laugh, rather than fear, that such a worthless Scot comes to fight us with half-naked buttocks? [...] They oppose our lances, swords and darts with naked skin; they are using calf's hide for a shield; they are inspired by an irrational contempt for death more than strength'.[78] Ronan Toolis has presented a compelling argument that such descriptions misrepresent the actual role played by the Galwegians, who were employed as skirmishers to disrupt the Anglo-Norman formation, and that it was the failure of David I's knights to break said formation, rather than Galwegian ineptitude, that was the decisive factor in the

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[75] RH, pp. 151–53.

[76] Gillingham, 'Conquering the Barbarians', p. 79; Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, pp. 304–19.

[77] HH, p. 716: 'Viri uero sagittarii equitibus inmixti obnubilantes eos nimirum inermes penetrabant'.

[78] BoS, p. 186: 'Quis igitur non rideat, potius quam timeat, quod adversus tales vilis Scottus seminudis natibus pugnaturus occurit? [...] lanceis nostris, gladiis et telis nostris nudum obiciunt corium; pelle vitulina pro scuto utentes; irrationabili mortis contemptu, magis quam viribus animati'.

battle.[79] Nevertheless, it is significant that Ailred of Rievaulx credited Henry, son of David I, who commanded the Scottish cavalry, with employing a ruse to escape when his troop found itself cut off behind enemy lines (see Chapter 5): 'Now wisdom is needed, no less than strength [...] when you cannot overcome an enemy with force [you must do so] with wisdom'.[80] Henry, who was raised at the English royal court and who fought at the Standard in the manner of an Anglo-Norman knight, is the one credited with the *consilium* to devise a stratagem, rather than the primitive and irrational Galwegians. As with Gerald of Wales and the Irish, the ability to employ ruses is regarded as a mark of civilisation rather than barbarism.

Accounts of the First War of Independence offer more scope for analysing English attitudes towards Scottish trickery, as the Scots employed guerrila-style tactics, retreating into the mountains and woods and rarely confronting the English in pitched battle. It is easy, however, to overstate the differences between the English and Scottish strategies. As previously established, pitched battles were rare during the Middle Ages and most warfare consisted of raiding and swift manoeuvres, regardless of where it was fought. Although Alastair Macdonald has claimed that 'trickery was an unusually pronounced characteristic of the Scottish method of waging war', the evidence he cites for English condemnation of the Scots is very slight: a single fourteenth-century poem, a parliamentary record and Shakespeare's *Henry V*.[81] Contemporary histories generally do not remark on the Scottish use of trickery, either positively or negatively. When they do condem the Scots for treachery, it appears to be connected to the act of rebellion itself rather than their method of fighting. The anonymous author of the *Vita Edwardi Secundi* even expressed admiration for the Robert Bruce's tactics. Describing how the Scots killed English foragers in an ambush in September 1310, he wrote:

> With such ambushes they frequently managed to do much harm to our men. For Robert Bruce, knowing that he was unequal to the king of England in strength as much as fortune, declared to his men that it would be better to move in arms against our king secretly than to contend for his right in open battle. In fact, I desired to extol the lord Robert Bruce with praises, except that

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[79] Ronan Toolis, '"Naked and unarmoured": A Reassessment of the Role of the Galwegians at the Battle of the Standard', *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 78 (2004), 79–92.

[80] BoS, pp. 197–98: 'Nunc consilio non minus opus est quam virtute [...] quando non potes viribus, consilio superes inimicum'.

[81] Alastair Macdonald, 'Trickery, Mockery and the Scottish Way of War', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 143 (2014), 319–38 (here 325).

> the accusation of murder and the mark of treason compelled me to keep silent; however the accusation removes all honour.[82]

It was not the use of ambushes or the decision to fight 'secretly' that prevented the chronicler praising Bruce: it was the murder of John Comyn, his rival for the throne, before the high altar in Greyfriars Church in Dumfries. This was the most frequent charge laid against Bruce. By contrast, his period in the wilderness, or his supporters' preference for attacking strongholds under cover of darkness, attracted little condemnation.

English historians were more willing to criticise William Wallace. The Lanercost chronicler introduced him as 'a bloody man [...] who had been a chief of robbers in Scotland'.[83] Later, following his account of the English victory at Falkirk, the chronicler composed a verse in which he accused Wallace of 'treason, slaughters, burnings, deceits and robberies'.[84] This is accompanied by another verse under the heading: 'On the impiety of the Scots'.[85] Peter Langtoft, one of the most virulently anti-Scottish chroniclers of the period, wrote: 'May Scotland be cursed by the mother of God and Wales sunk deep to the Devil! In neither one was there any truth'.[86] Wallace is called a *feloun* and a 'master of thieves' ('mestre de larouns').[87] Langtoft accuses the Scots of attempting to unexpectedly attack the English army besieging Dunbar during a period of truce (27 April 1296), which he describes as a *descait* ('deceit').[88] Similarly, Marmeduke Thweng, the English commander of Stirling castle, was persuaded to come out and treat with the Scots in 1297 under safe conduct, only for the Scots to break the agreement and capture him.[89] Even Robert Bruce does not escape censure. The continuator of Langtoft's chronicle described his retreat to the wilderness following the battle of Methven not as a daring exploit but as a fit of madness, similar to the Biblical king Nebuchadnezzar: 'Their king Robert, who lost cities

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[82] VES, p. 24: 'Ex talibus insidiis frequenter inuenerunt homines nostri multa mala. Robertus enim de Brutz, sciens se tam ex uiribus quam ex fortuna sua regis Anglie imparem, decreuit sibi magis expedire contra regem nostrum arma latenter mouere quam in bello campestri de iure suo contendere. Reuera dominum Robertum de Brutz affectarem laudibus extollere nisi reatus homicidii et nota prodicionis cogerent me tacere; reatus autem excludit omnem honorem'.

[83] The Latin is ambiguous here: it is unclear whether the chronicler wished to say that Wallace was the chief of *all* the robbers or simply one chief among many. Lanercost, p. 190: 'virum sanguineum, Willelmum Waleis, qui prius fuerat in Soctia princeps latronum'.

[84] Lanercost, p. 193: 'proditio, caedes, incendia, frasque rapniae'.

[85] Lanercost, p. 192: 'De impietate Scottorum'.

[86] PL, p. 220: 'Escoce sait maudite de la mere Dé, / Et paround ad deable Gales efoundré! / En l'un ne l'autre fu unkes verité'.

[87] PL, p. 350. 362.

[88] PL, pp. 240–42.

[89] PL, p. 304.

and towns by his shield, has drunk of the drink of Sir Warren. Afterwards he grazes on raw grass in the forest with the beasts, mad and naked'.[90]

Wallace may have attracted more censure than Bruce because he was relatively low-born and could be dismissed as a bandit, whereas Bruce was a nobleman of established lineage. Additionally, as with other conflicts discussed above, there is the problem of perception. To the English, the kings of England were the rightful rulers of Scotland. Wallace and Bruce's campaigns constituted treason. For the Scots, however, it was a war of independence against a foreign invader and, later, a war to establish Bruce's claim to the throne. When Wallace was put on trial, he strongly rejected the charge that he had committed treason, saying that he had never done homage nor sworn fealty to Edward I.[91] This also explains the English policy of executing noble Scots, such as Herbert de Morham, Simon, earl of Atholl and Nigel Bruce: they were not chivalrous opponents in a licit war but foresworn traitors.[92] If the Scots were condemned during the Wars of Independence for treachery, it was because they were perceived to be rebels fighting an illicit war, not because they employed stratagems more frequently than the English.[93]

iv. Greeks

In contrast to the stereotypically bellicose Celts, Western chroniclers portrayed the subjects of the Byzantine empire (usually referred to by the catch-all term 'Greeks' or the pejorative 'Grifons') as unmanly and cowardly in warfare. This was already an established prejudice at the turn of the millennium. Liudprand, bishop of Cremona (c. 920–972), described the courtiers whom he encountered on an embassy to Constantinople on behalf of Otto I of Germany as 'soft, effeminate, long-sleeved, tiara-wearing, hooded, lying, unsexed, idle

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[90] 'Sir Warren' is Fulk Fitzwarren, a twelfth-century English baron who later became the subject of a romance which depicted him fleeing to the greenwood to live as an outlaw. PL p. 372: 'Du boyvere dam Waryn luy rey Robyn ad bu, / Ke citez et viles perdist par l'escu, / Après en la forest, forsenez et nu, / Se pesceit ove la beste de cel herbe cru'.

[91] Michael Prestwich, 'England and Scotland during the Wars of Independence', in *England and Her Neighbours, 1066–1453: Essays in Honour of Pierre Chaplais*, ed. by Michael Jones and Malcolm Vale (London: Hambledon, 1989), pp. 181–98 (here 192–93).

[92] M. Prestwich, 'England and Scotland', pp. 193–94.

[93] See Matthew Strickland, 'Treason, Feud and the Growth of State Violence: Edward I and the "War of the Earl of Carrick", 1306–7', in *War, Government and Aristocracy in the British Isles, c. 1150–1500. Essays in Honour of Michael Prestwich,* ed. by Chris Given-Wilson, Ann Kettle and Len Scales (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2008), pp. 84–113; Matthew Strickland, 'The Law of Arms or the Law of Treason? Conduct in War in Edward I's Campaigns in Scotland, 1296–1307', in *Violence in Medieval Society,* ed. by Richard Kaeuper (Woobridge: Boydell, 2000), pp. 317–43.

people'.[94] The twelfth-century Anglo-Norman courtier Walter Map described Greeks as 'soft and feminine, talkative and deceitful, neither faithful nor strong against enemies'.[95] This prejudice had its roots in the profound cultural difference between Latin and Byzantine nobility. While Latin noble culture prized martial ability and linked masculine honour to physical violence, the Byzantine nobility measured worth according to a man's place in the imperial bureaucracy. Advancement was more likely to be achieved through political manoeuvring than military service.[96]

One aspect of this 'unmanliness' was their fickle, unreliable character and propensity for treachery.[97] There was some truth to this, as the Byzantine courtiers did not consider it immoral to lie to 'barbarians', just as a parent might lie to a child for its own good.[98] The Greek reputation for treachery was further strengthened in Western minds following the First Crusade, aided in particular by Bohemond's campaign to recruit men for an expedition against Alexios Komnenos and the propaganda that accompanied it.[99] Many of the chronicles of the First Crusade claim that Alexios attempted to sabotage the crusade, blaming him for attacks on the crusaders' camps before Constantinople in 1097 and accusing him of passing information about the crusaders to the Turks.[100] By the time Orderic Vitalis wrote his narrative of the crusade (based substantially on the account of Baldric of Bourgueil), Alexios is portrayed as a Byzantine Bond villain, distributing coins among the crusaders simply to learn their numbers and unleashing tame leopards on the innocent Franks.[101]

While the Greeks are frequently portrayed as treacherous, chroniclers rarely criticise them for employing stratagems. Their treachery does not appear to have been understood in terms of cunning in battle but in a willingness to betray allies and break sworn promises.

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[94] Liudprand of Cremona, *The Complete Works,* ed. and trans. by Paolo Squatriti (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000), p. 272.
[95] Walter Map, *De nugis,* p. 174: 'molles et femineos, loquaces et dolosos, nulliusque contra hostes fidei uel virtutis'.
[96] Marc Carrier, 'Perfidious and Effeminate Greeks: The Representation of Byzantine Ceremonial in the Western Chronicles of the Crusades, 1096-1204', *Annuario*, 4 (2002), 47–68 (here 48–50).
[97] Matthew Bennett, 'Virile Latins, Effeminate Greeks and Strong Women: Gender Definitions on Crusade?', in *Gendering the Crusades*, ed. by Susan B. Edgington and Sarah Lambert (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), pp. 16–30 (here 18); Léan Ní Chléirigh, 'The Impact of the First Crusade on Western Opinion towards the Byzantine Empire: The *Dei gesta per Francos* of Guibert of Nogent and the *Historia Hierosolymitana* of Fulcher of Chartres', in *The Crusades and the Near East*, ed. by Conor Kostick (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 161–88; Lindsay Diggelmann, 'Of Grifons and Tyrants: Anglo-Norman Views of the Mediterranean World during the Third Crusade', in *Old Worlds, New Worlds: European Cultural Encounters, c. 1000 – c. 1750*, ed. by Lisa Bailey, Lindsay Diggelmann, and Kim M. Philips (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), pp. 11–30 (here 21).
[98] Carrier, 'Perfidious and Effeminate', pp. 55–56.
[99] Jonathan Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 2nd edn (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 94–97.
[100] See BB, p. 17; FC, p. 519; GF, p. 6, 11; GN, p. 130; GT, pp. 8–9, 15; RA, p. 236.
[101] OV, V, 331, 335.

For example, Amatus of Montecassino described them as follows: 'And since the Greeks often defeated their enemies through malicious arguments and subtle treachery [...] the Greeks more often conquered through malice and treason than valour'.[102] Odo of Deuil, describing the difficulties Louis VII of France faced negotiating with Emperor Manuel I Komnenos for support for his crusading army in 1147, wrote: 'And then the Greeks were thoroughly diminished into women; casting off all manly vigor of words and mind, they swore lightly to whatever they thought we wanted but neither kept their pledge to us nor respect for themselves'.[103] Robert of Clari, writing a generation later, repeated an apocryphal story that Manuel Komnenos had been urged by his Greek courtiers to expel the Frankish knights in his service. Manuel pretended to do so, then arranged for the supposedly-banished Franks to return and stage an attack on him. The Greeks in his entourage promptly fled, exposing their cowardice and proving the Franks' superiority.[104]

When discussing specific stratagems, Western chroniclers did not commonly use negative vocabulary to describe the Greeks who carried them out. Returning to Orderic Vitalis's account of a night attack supposedly carried out by Raymond of Poitiers on John II Komnenos outside Antioch in 1137 (see Chapter 3), Raymond is characterised as acting 'manfully' (*viriliter*) and 'boldly' (*audacter*) against the Greeks who 'lack boldness and fortitude in difficult things'.[105] Orderic's implication is that it takes courage to attempt a bold and risky stratagem, such as a night attack on an enemy camp, something that the effeminate Greeks would never be able to accomplish.

An unusual example of a Western chronicler criticising the Greek use of stratagems can be found in the first book of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum.* Discussing the Greeks' alleged attempts to sabotage Frederick Barbarossa's crusade in 1189, the anonymous chronicler lamented that the once-valiant Greeks no longer possessed their ancestors' prowess: 'There is no successor to their [ancestors'] *virtus,* yet all hold fast to their [ancestors'] crimes: the lies of Sinon, the deceits of Ulysses, the cruelty of Atreus. But if the Greek's warlike spirit is sought, he fights by craft, not arms: if his faith [is sought], he injures as a friend the one whom he cannot injure as a foe'.[106] The three 'criminals' named here are all exemplars of

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[102] AM, p. 248: 'Et que li Grex molt de foiz maliciouz argument et o subtil tradement […] li Grex ont plus sovent vainchut per malice et par traïson que par vaillantize'.

[103] OD, p. 56: 'et tunc Graeci penitus frangebantur in feminas; omne virile robur et verborum et animi deponentes, leviter iurabant quicquid nos velle putabant, sed nec nobis fidem nec sibi verecundiam conservabant'.

[104] RC, pp. 16–18.

[105] OV, VI, 504: 'in arduis rebus audacia et fortitudine carent'.

[106] *Virtus* may mean courage, power, virtue, manliness or any combination of these qualities, so I have left it untranslated here. IP, p. 46: 'Virtutum siquidem nullus successor, scelerum omnes; nam Sinonis figmenta,

deceit and treachery. Sinon is the Greek who, in the *Aeneid,* pretends to desert the besiegers and convinces the Trojans to bring the wooden horse into the city. Ulysses, who devised said horse, is a famous trickster (see above). Atreus murdered his nephews, then tricked his brother, Thysetes, into eating their flesh.

It is noteworthy that, while the author of Book 1 of the *Itinerarium* used Ulysses as an example of illicit deception, the author of Book 2 used him as an example of the virtue of prudence: 'and, remarkable in such a famous knight, [Richard I of England possessed] the speech of Nestor [and] the prudence of Ulysees, which deservedly rendered him more distinguished than others in all activities, whether making speeches or deeds'.[107] Once again we find an ambiguity surrounding deceitful behaviour. When an author wished to criticise deceit Ulysees could be employed as an example of a famous liar but when they wished to praise it, he became an example of cleverness and skill.

v. Muslims

Western attitudes to the Muslim enemies they encountered in Sicily and Outremer were complicated. Not only were they clearly racially and culturally distinct from Europeans, they were not Christian. The literature of the crusades regularly portrayed them as monstrous enemies of Christ, who must be destroyed in order to reclaim His patrimony in the Holy Land. At the same time, however, encounters with Muslims generated a more nuanced understanding of Islam and the diversity of its adherents.

The confused attitude towards Muslims in the chronicles is reflected in the variety of words used to describe them. In the *chansons de geste*, and in a number of crusader chronicles, they are pagans (*pagani*), polytheists who worship idols. John V. Tolan interpreted this depiction, which appears to have originated in the twelfth-century, not as mere ignorance of Islam but a conscious effort to situate the crusades within a tradition of defending Christendom against pagans, such as the Vikings or Magyars. [108] The term 'gentile' was also employed for Muslims, linking the crusades to the Israelite conquest of

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Ulixis fallaciam. Atrei atrocitatem retinent. Quod si Graeci militia quaeritur; arte, non armis dimicat: si fides; amicus obest, inimicus obesse non potest'.

[107] Nestor was the wise old king of Pylos, famous for giving good advice. IP, p. 143: 'et quod in tam famoso milite perrarum esse solet, lingua Nestoris, prudentia Ulixis, in omnibus negotiis vel perorandis, vel gerendis, aliis merito reddebant excellentiorem'.

[108] Matthew Bennett, 'First Crusaders' Images of Muslims: The Influence of Vernacular Poetry?', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 22 (1986), 101–22.

Canaan.[109] Another common catch-all for Muslims was 'Saracen'. Initially a Roman term for inhabitants of the eastern part of the Arabian penninsula, over the Middle Ages it grew to encompass all Arabs, then all Muslims and finally non-Christians in general.[110]

Nicholas Morton has demonstrated that, prior to the First Crusade, the crusaders had little knowledge of the peoples of the Near East, as evidenced by the very general references to 'barbarians', 'pagans' and 'Saracens' in crusader letters and charters.[111] This appears to have changed radically by the time that the first crusader chronicles came to be written. These chroniclers were aware that their foremost enemies were Turks, a *gens* distinct from both the native Christian *gentes* and other Muslims. Chroniclers continued to use 'Saracen' for Arabs and Egyptians but (usually) described the Turks as a distinct *gens*.[112]

From the very earliest accounts, chroniclers characterised the Turks as skilled in war. This is understandable as Turkish horsemen, whether tribal mercenaries or *mamluk* slave-soldiers, made up the core of Muslim armies throughout the crusading period. The anonymous author of the *Gesta Francorum* praised the Turks' valour and skill:

> Who is so wise or learned to ever venture to describe the prudence, courage in battle and strength of the Turks? They thought to terrify the *gens* of the Franks with the threat of their arrows, as they terrified the Arabs, Saracens and Armenians, the Syrians and the Greeks. But, if it pleases God, they will never be as strong as our men. Nevertheless, they say that they are of the same lineage as the Franks and, because of this, no man is born to be a knight except the Franks and themselves.[113]

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[109] John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 106–11.

[110] Sini Kangas, '*Inimicus Dei et sanctae Christianitatis*? Saracens and their Prophet in Twelfth-Century Crusade Propaganda and Western Travesties of Muhammad's Life', in *The Crusades and the Near East*, ed. by Conor Kostick (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 131–60 (here 138–39).

[111] Nicholas Morton, 'Encountering the Turks: The First Crusaders' Foreknowledge of their Enemy, Some Preliminary Findings', in *Crusading and Warfare in the Middle Ages: Realities and Representations, Essays in Honour of John France*, ed. by Simon John and Nicholas Morton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 47–68 (here 49–52).

[112] Thomas S. Asbridge, 'Knowing the Enemy: Latin Relations with Islam at the Time of the First Crusade', in *Knighthoods of Christ: Essays on the History of the Crusades and the Knights Templar, Presented to Malcolm Barber*, ed. by Norman Housley (Farnham: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 17–26 (here 19); Rosalind Hill, 'The Christian View of the Muslims at the Time of the First Crusade', in *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades*, ed. by P. M. Holt (Warminster: Aris, 1977), pp. 1–8 (here 2); Alan V. Murray, 'From the Bosphorus to Kurasan: The Turkish Domination of Asia in the Perception of the Chroniclers of the First Crusade', *Selçuk University Journal of Seljuk Studies*, 8 (2018), 82–98.

[113] GF, p. 21: 'Quis unquam tam sapiens aut doctus audebit descrbiere prudentiam militiamque et fortitudinem Turcorum? Qui putabant terrere gentem Francorum minis suarum sagittarum, sicut terruerunt Arabes, Saracenos, et Hermenios, Suranios et Grecos. Sed, si Deo placet, nunquam tantum valebunt quantum

This passage occurs just after the crusaders' victory at Dorylaeum and serves to make the Franks look even stronger for having defeated this mighty *gens*. It is also noteworthy that *prudentia* is listed as one of the Turks' virtues. Guibert of Nogent, adapting the *Gesta* for his own chronicle, described the Turks as 'acute in mind and active in arms'.[114]

While Turkish rulers such as Karbogha and Īlghāzī were typically portrayed as wicked and monstrously cruel, some of the later chroniclers expressed admiration for individual Muslim rulers. William of Tyre, who was born in Outremer and intimately involved in the kingdom of Jerusalem's diplomatic relations with neighbouring Muslim powers, described the death of Nūr al-Dīn in 1174 as follows: 'In that time, when scarcely one month had elapsed, Nūr al-Dīn, the greatest persecutor of the Christian name and faith, yet still a just prince, crafty and provident and religious according to the traditions of his *gens,* died in the month of May, in the twenty-ninth year of his reign'.[115] Towards the end of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum,* the compiler imagined an interview between Saladin and Hubert Walter, bishop of Salisbury. When Saladin asked Hubert to described the character of Richard I of England, he replied: 'I judge that if anybody could join the well-ordered virtues with which you are endowed (your sins excepted) with those of king Richard, that each might be provided with the gifts of the other, two such princes would not be found in the whole world'.[116] Saladin agreed with the assessment, stating that Richard, although courageous, was too reckless in battle. The chronicler appears to be suggesting here that Saladin possessed the virtues of moderation and prudence that Richard would have done well to emulate.

Even in visual art, Muslim rulers were set apart from the rest of their *gens*. In her study of illustrations of William of Tyre's chronicle, Svetlana Luchitskaya identified that Muslim rulers were usually presented as fair skinned and dressed in the style of Western kings, distinguishing them from the stereotypical depiction of dark skinned, turban-wearing 'Saracens'.[117]

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nostri. Verumtamen dicunt se esse de Francorum generatione, et quia nullus homo naturaliter debet esse miles nisi Franci et illi'.

[114] GN, p. 158: 'adeo argutos animis ac strenuos armis'.

[115] WT, p. 956: 'Eodem quoque tempore, vix unius mensis elapso spacio, Noradinus, maximus nominis et fidei christiane persequutor, princeps tamen iustus, vafer et providus et secundum gentis sue traditiones religiosus, regni eius anno vicesimo nono, mense Maio, defunctus est'.

[116] IP, pp. 437–38: 'Si quis, me judice, exceptis peccatis tuis, tuarum dotes virtutum simul cum regis Ricardi communicaret compositas, ut uterque vestrum utriusque dotaretur praeditus potentiis tales in orbe terrarum duo principes non invenirentur'.

[117] Svetlana Luchitskaya, 'Muslims in Christian Imagery of the Thirteenth Century: The Visual Code of Otherness', *Al-Masāq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean*, 12 (2000), 37–67 (here 54).

This admiration for Turkish prowess and the virtues of certain rulers sat side-by-side. Robert the Monk depicted the Turks as bestial, gnashing their teeth and howling like dogs.[118] Albert of Aachen called them 'wicked and impious men'.[119] According to Geoffrey Malaterra, when the Muslim Benthumen agreed to betray the city of Catania to the emir of Syracuse in 1081 in return for money, he was acting according to his 'pagan name'.[120] To Ambroise, Turks were *la gente haïe* (the hateful men) or *li poeples al diable* (the devil's people).[121] They were depicted lustful, greedy and treacherous, in implicit contrast to the ideal virtuous crusader.[122] We have already examined how the Turks garrisoning Tarsos were alleged to have negotiated with Tancred in bad faith in September 1097 (see Chapter 7) and how Kilij Arslan, following his defeat at Dorylaeum, lied to the Christian towns he came to as he retreated through Cilicia in order to gain entry and plunder them (see Chapter 2). According to Walter the Chancellor, in August 1113 Īlghāzī swore an oath to spare the Christian citizens of Zardana if he was admitted, only to massacre them all once they had surrendered.[123] The Lyon Eracles contains a fanciful variation on the story of Saphadin, Saladin's brother, sending a horse to Richard I of England so that he would not be dishonoured by fighting on foot.[124] The author of the Eracles claimed that the horse was mad and was given to Richard in the hope that it would throw him if he tried to mount it.[125]

With regard to military stratagems, the Turks appear to have frequently employed ambushes, if the chronicle evidence is to be relied upon: of the 132 ambushes recorded in the appendix to this thesis, 32 (24.2%) were set by Turkish or Muslim troops. This might be explained by the fact that they were operating in familiar terrain, whereas the Franks initially had very little knowledge of the region, making them easy to ambush.

The other key ruse attributed to the Turks was the feigned flight. Although Morillo has claimed that this manoeuvre ran contrary to Western military norms and was regarded as cowardly, the truth seems to have been more complex. Some chroniclers did express

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[118] Carol Sweetenham, 'Crusaders in a Hall of Mirrors: The Portrayal of Saracens in Robert the Monk's *Historia Iherosolimitana*', in *Languages of Love and Hate: Conflict, Communication, and Identity in the Medieval Mediterranean*, ed. by Sarah Lambert and Helen Nicholson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), pp. 49–64 (here 55).
[119] AA, p. 37: 'impiis et sceleratis hominibus'.
[120] GM, p 75: 'Paganus vero nominis sui competens imitator'.
[121] Amb, lines 3490, 6354.
[122] Marianne J. Ailes, 'The Admirable Enemy? Saladin and Saphadin in Ambroise's *Estoire de la guerre sainte*', in *Knighthoods of Christ: Essays on the History of the Crusades and the Knights Templar Presented to Malcolm Barber*, ed. by Norman Housley (Farnham: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 51–64 (here 53); Sweetenham, 'Hall of Mirrors', p. 55.
[123] WC, p. 101.
[124] For a more plausible variation of the story, in which the horse is simply a gift, see Amb, lines 11512–33; IP p. 419.
[125] LE, p. 147.

disdain for this habit of fighting on the run. In his account of Urban II's sermon to the Council of Clermont in 1095, William of Malmesbury drew on ancient theories of climate and its impact on physiology, preserved in Vegetius's *De rei militari*, to claim that the Turks were physically incapable of fighting any other way: 'is a fact well known that every nation born in an Eastern clime is dried up by the great heat of the sun; they may have more good sense, but they have less blood in their veins, and that is why they flee from battle at close quarters: they know that they have no blood to spare'.[126] Other chroniclers, however, were more equivocal about this ruse. The compiler of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum* described the experience of fighting Turkish horse archers as follows:

> For it is the Turks' custom that when they are fleeing and they see that those pursuing them have stopped, then they themselves stop fleeing, like a wearisome fly which will fly away when you drive it off but which returns when you stop, it will flee for as long you chase but is there when you cease. It is no different with the Turks: when you stop pursuing him, the Turk follows you, if you chase him, he flees.[127]

While it is not precisely flattering to describe the Turks as a 'wearisome fly', the chronicler did not describe the tactic as dishonourable or cowardly. Rather, he criticised the crusaders who pursued them recklessly and were captured: 'And what ought by rights to have been reckoned glorious is adjudged to be foolishness'.[128] The leaders of the First Crusade, in a letter addressed to Pope Urban II dated September 1098, wrote that they had learned to recognise the ruse and to prevent the Muslims dispersing.[129]

As discussed in Chapter 4, these tactics would have been unfamiliar to Western Europeans, who would probably have presumed that a force moving away from them was in flight and would give chase. Experience taught them to modify their tactics, holding their formation until they could launch a single, devastating charge. We can see the value of this experience in Odo of Deuil's account of Louis VII's crusade. Having suffered repeated

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[126] GRA, I, 602: 'Constat profecto quod omnis natio quae in Eoa plaga nascitur, nimio solis ardore siccata, amplius quidem sapit, sed minus habet sanguinis; ideoque uicinam pugnam fugiunt, quia parum sanguinis se habere norunt'.

[127] IP, p. 247: 'Turcorum etiam moris est, ut quando persenserint se fugantes a persequendo cessare, tunc et ipsi fugere cessabunt, more muscae fastidiosae, quam si abegeris avolabit, cum cessaveris redibit, quamdiu fugaveris fugiet, cum desieries praesto est'. See also Amb, line 5629–66.

[128] IP, p. 246: 'et quod jure debuerat ascribi gloriae, addictum est insipientiae'.

[129] FC, p. 263.

losses from Turkish attacks on the march through Anatolia, Louis took the remarkable step of placing the entire army under the authority of Gerald, master of the Knights Templar:

> Those who had vexed us because they had readily fled from our enemies were ordered to be patient until they received an order and that they should have returned when commanded. They were warned to return immidately when recalled. When this law had been learned, they were also taught an order of march, that those at the front should not go to the rear, nor should those guarding the flanks disorder themselves.[130]

Louis's force appears to have faced problems similar to those encountered by Richard I of England at the battle of Arsuf (7 September 1191), when he struggled to prevent the Hospitallers, who were acting as the rearguard, from charging Saladin's horsemen before they were given an order.[131]

To conclude, Western attitudes towards Muslim stratagems were influenced by a variety of factors. Racially, culturally and, above all, religiously, they were perceived as 'other' and their actions were interpreted through the twin lenses of prejudice and religious ideology. While some chroniclers were willing to acknowledge that Turks were effective soldiers or generals, the need to portray them as the wicked opponents of a holy cause inevitably coloured their depiction in the narratives. The 'wickedness' of their tactics did not necessarily stem from the tactics themselves (after all, crusaders and other Westerners were willing to employ similar tactics) but the purpose for which they were employed: to frustrate God's purpose and prevent the recovery of Christ's patrimony.

vi. Conclusion

It was common for Western literature to stereotype the 'other' as treacherous and deceitful. This seems to have had little relation to military conduct, however. The warlike Irish and Scots were stigmatised for their treachery as much as the cowardly Greeks. A treacherous nature does not appear to have been understood as a preference for employing military ruses. Rather, it was a general untrustworthiness and willingness to betray one's given

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[130] OD, p. 124: 'Iubentur pati usque ad praeceptum (eos) qui nos vexant, quia cito refugiunt inimicos, et, cum iussi restituerint, ilico regredi praemonent revocatos. Cognita lege docentur et gradum, ne qui de primo est vadat ad ultimum vel ne se confundant custodes laterum'.
[131] IP, pp. 267–68.

word: a trait almost universally condemned in Western sources. Employing stratagems was often portrayed as a sign of courage and prudence, qualities that did not necessarily match the stereotype of an ignorant or cowardly *gens*. Western chroniclers could and did express admiration when the 'other' employed trickery in warfare, particularly if it made the Westerners appear more valiant by overcoming a dangerous enemy. They were also capable of brazen hypocrisy, condemning the 'other' for employing ruses that were objectively very similar to those employed by Western combatants.

Conclusion

The chronicles studied in this thesis reveal an ambiguous attitude towards military deception. Classic martial virtues such as courage and fortitude are universally praised but depictions of trickery and cunning are much more complex. The same basic trick, such as a feigned flight or night attack, could be portrayed as a nefarious fraud or a sound tactical decision. Deceitful behaviour could be ascribed to treachery or prudence. The quality of 'cunning' could be attributed to both heroes and villains. As Chapter 8 demonstrates, even the language used inhabits a grey zone of moral meaning, as the same terminology was applied to works of skill, engineering and rhetoric. Modern English retains this ambiguity in certain words. Consider the subtle difference between craft, craftsman and crafty, or the range of meanings that be attached to words such as 'artifice' or 'subtle'.

When medieval chroniclers did make a moral judgement about an act of military deception it was usually the ends, not the means, that they judged. If deception was employed in a good cause (invariably meaning a cause of which the chronicler approved), then they tended to approve of the deceit as well. If it was employed in a bad cause, such as an unwarranted rebellion or in opposition to a holy crusade, then they would disapprove of it. Consider the two radically different portrayals of the attack on Gasny in 1116 which were analysed in Chapter 5. For the Norman Orderic it was an act of sacrilege but for the Frenchman Suger it was evidence of his subject's valour and intelligence. We may wish to ascribe their interpretations to hypocrisy or political bias but there was clearly no universal consensus on the legitimacy of such tactics, despite the pronouncements of Augustine and Aquinas analysed in Chapter 9. The only form of deceit that appears to have been universally condemned was the breaking of a sacred oath. This was the charge most frequently laid against the culturally 'other', who were stereotyped as inherently untrustworthy. There are even exceptions to this, however, and we can find examples of chroniclers offering excuses for violating oaths, as outlined in Chapter 7.

For all the ambiguity surrounding the subject, it is clear that chroniclers were capable of admiring cunning in a warrior. Biographers of notable individuals, such as the Marshal poet (see Chapter 2) and William of Apulia (see Chapter 8) included incidents of trickery in their narratives, actively celebrating them as displays of good sense and martial

skill. When we consider how carefully chroniclers chose their material in order to bend history to their narrative, the fact that they chose to retain stories of guile and cunning shows that these qualities could be appreciated by their intended audience. There must have been considerable variation in individual opinion, of course, but the frequent appearance of such stories demonstrates that deception was a recognised aspect of warfare and that contemporaries were interested in hearing about it. Indeed, it would be surprising if the culture that produced Renart the Fox and assiduously copied the works of Frontinus and Valerius Maximus (see Chapter 1) did not also celebrate the clever tricks used on the battlefield.

There is, however, an inherent limitation in using Latin chronicles if we want to understand the attitudes of medieval fighting men. Most chronicles were written by churchmen for a predominantly clerical audience. There are sufficient parallels between the Latin and the vernacular chronicles of this period to demonstrate that admiration of *engin* or *slycht* was not confined to Latinate churchmen but the depiction of military deception in vernacular literature, of the kind written and performed for knightly audiences, remains understudied. My research has been confined mostly to chronicles and biographies but there is a wealth of material that might fruitfully be analysed among contemporary romances and the *chansons de geste*. The anonymous red or black knight, the secret love affair and the various wiles of Tristan all indicate that deceit was a well-known topos in vernacular literature. A study of the 'trickster' hero in romance or cunning in the *chansons* would complement the work of this thesis by delving further into vernacular culture and perhaps bring us closer to the mindset of the Francophone knights who listened to such tales.

There is also the issue of transcultural warfare. In Chapter 9, I considered Western perceptions of deception as practiced by the culturally 'other' but there remains the potential for a genuinely comparative study that uses non-Francophone, non-Western primary texts to analyse warfare from the 'other's perspective.[1] To what extent did the Greek or Turkish or Celtic way of making war differ from that of Western Europeans and is this reflected in their portrayal of warfare and the cunning warrior? Did they in turn stereotype the Latin Christians as faithless and untrustworthy or did they instead see them as simple, naïve souls who were too easily duped by smooth words?

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[1] Theotokis has already performed a study of this nature on the perception of trickery in both Byzantine and Latin sources. I am very grateful to him for having sent me an advanced copy of the relevant chapter: Georgios Theotokis, *Byzantine Military Tactics in Syria and Mesopotamia: A Comparative Study* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), pp. 29–41.

The issue is not whether medieval combatants employed deception in war but how they justified it. Victory through trickery may not have been as glorious as that won through a pitched battle but it could be highly effective and was ubiquitous in contemporary warfare. Whether it was misdirecting an enemy by planting false intelligence (Chapter 2), laying ambushes (Chapter 3), pretending to flee (Chapter 4), disguising their identity or numbers (Chapter 5) or soliciting treachery with promises of wealth (Chapter 6), combatants could deploy a wide variety of stratagems to gain an advantage over their enemies. Just as importantly, they were aware that their enemy was capable of employing the same range of tricks. Chroniclers may have been equivocal about those who practiced deception but they had nothing but scorn for those who heedlessly blundered into ambushes or pursued a feigned flight too incautiously.

Contemporaries seem to have generally accepted that war was a ruthless business and combatants would do whatever they could to secure the victory. It is often much harder to determine where they drew the line between licit and illicit behaviour, between honourable and dishonourable conduct in war. Some of the tricks, particularly those that violated important cultural taboos, seem to have been regarded as illicit. It may be that commanders who broke these taboos were motivated by a sense of 'desperate pragmatism', judging that the ends were more important than the means.[2]

[2] My thanks to Matthew Strickland for this splendid phrase.

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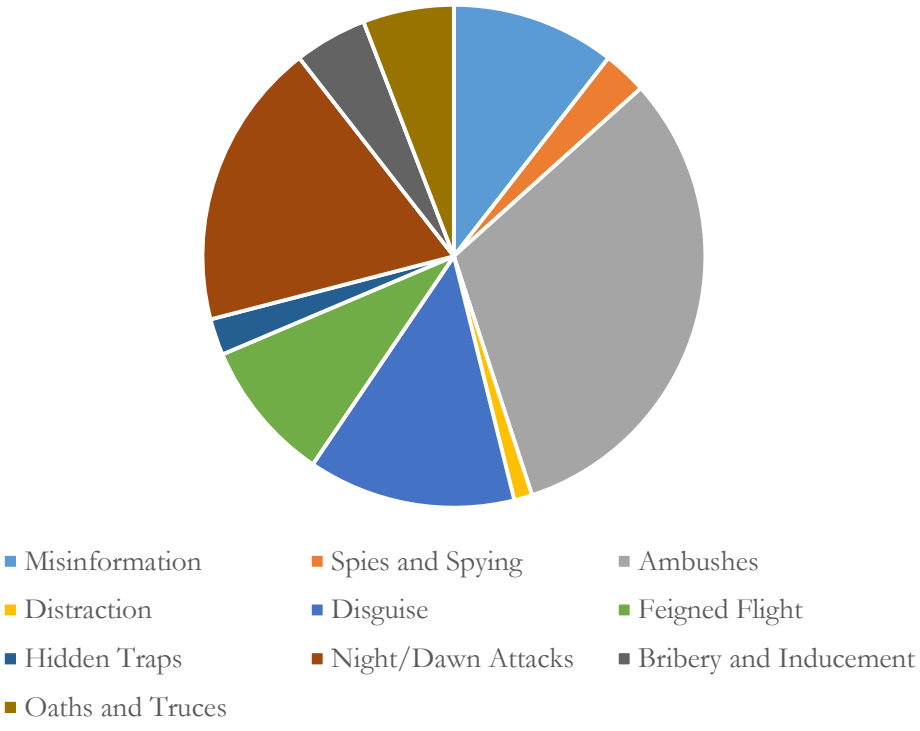
Appendix

Taxonomy of Military Deceptions in Medieval Chronicles c. 1000–1320

Summary

Category	Number of Incidents	Percentage of total
Misinformation	45	10.5%
Spies and Spying	12	2.8%
Ambushes	135	31.6%
Distraction	5	1.2%
Disguise	57	13.3%
Feigned Flight	39	9.1%
Hidden Traps	10	2.3%
Night/Dawn Attacks	79	18.5
Bribery and Inducement	20	4.7%
Oaths and Truces	25	5.8%
Total	427	



Strategic Deceptions

Misinformation

Misinformation – Misleading an Enemy Regarding One's Intentions

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1070	England, Teesdale	Malcolm III of Scotland sends part of his army home with booty to convince the English that he has departed, then attacks with a concealed force when they return from hiding	HowChr, I, 145
c. 1071	Calabria, Sujo	Jordan, son of Richard I of Aversa, leaves the siege as if going to Capua but instead goes raiding in Aquino	AM, 162
1098 Feb	Syria, Antioch	Crusaders secretly leave their camp and hide in mountains to surprise Turks	RA, 246
1098	Syria, Orontes Valley	Raymond of Saint-Gilles launches a feigned attack to save his foot soldiers from an unexpected sally by a Turkish garrison	RA, 274
1105 Aug	Palestine, Jaffa	Muslims used a diversionary attack on Ramla while their main force attacks Jaffa	FC, 497; WT, 548–50
1112	Île-de-France, Toury	Hugh of Le Puiset convinces monks of St. Denis to go and petition the king on his behalf. While they are away, he takes their fortress	SSD, 96
1115 Aug-Sept	Syria, near Antioch	Bursuq of Hamadām pretends to retreat, waits for the Franks to disband their army, then returns	WC, 93–94; WT, 532
1119 June	Syria, Ruz Valley	Īlghāzī sends a force as if to besiege al-Atharib while they actually performing reconnaissance on Roger of Salerno's camp	WC, 115
1138	England, Somerset, Harptree	Stephen of England pretends to march on Bristol to lure the garrison out	GS, 45–46
1138	England, Northumbria	David I of Scotland leaves town unburned to take the English army by surprise	JW, 253
1141	England, Lincoln	Robert, earl of Gloucester, does not tell his troops their destination on his march to Lincoln to 'conceal his purpose'	HN, 85
1169	Languedoc, Béziers	William of Trencavel pretends to bring Aragonese troops into the city of make war on the count of Saint Gilles but instead uses them to attack the citizens who murdered his father	RT, 243; WN, II, 53–55

1183	Limousin, Limoges	Geoffrey of Brittany promises to go to the town to negotiate with his brother, Henry, only to loot the shrine of St. Martial instead	HowChr, II, 25
1188 Aug	Normandy, Gisors	William Marshal advices Henry II of England to disband his army to deceive Philip II of France	HWM, lines 7787–7801
1189	Maine, Le Mans	Philip II of France pretends to travel to Tours but suddenly attack Le Mans	HowChr, II, 107
1189 Oct 4	Palestine, Acre	Garrison attacks the crusaders by advancing 'with twists and turns' to conceal their intended target	IP, 67–71
1197	Palestine, Acre	Henry of Brunswick and Hugh of Tiberias launch a feigned charge to intimidate a Muslim force	LE, 189–91
1197 May	Normandy, Gerberoy	Richard I of England secretly assembles an army to attack Milly	HWM, lines 11107–11
1210	Languedoc, Termes	Crusaders feign an attack on the town walls to save William of Ecureuil, who had become isolated	HA, I, 183
1221	England, Northamptonshire, Fotheringay	William de Foret pretends to travel to Westminster to answer a summons only to take Fotheringay castle by surprise	RW, II, 429
1265 Aug	England, Winchester	Edward, prince of Wales, marches north to deceive rebels then turns south for Evesham by night	TW, 171–72

Misinformation – Deceiving One's Allies

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1138 Aug 22	England, Thirsk	The English commoners rally when somebody holds up a severed head, claiming to have killed David I of Scotland	BoS, 196–97
1189	Palestine, Acre	Saladin tells his troops that the crusaders are not receiving many supply ships but are sailing the same ships back and forth across the horizon	IP, 67
1250 Feb 9	Egypt, Mansurah	Baybars displays Robert of Artois's coat to his troops, claiming that Louis IX of France is dead	VSL, 128–30
1314 Jun 24	Scotland, Bannockburn	Robert Bruce spreads false news that the English are approaching in poor order	Bruce, 11, 461–504

Misinformation – Providing the Enemy with False Information

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1009	England, near Sandwich	Eadric, earl of Mercia, uses false reports to persuade Aethelred of England not to give battle with the Danes	HH, 347
1016 Oct 18	England, Ashingdon	Eadric, earl of Mercia, causes a rout by falsely announcing that Edmund Ironside has been killed	HH, 359
1079	Apulia, Giovinazzo	William fitz Ivo sends false warning that Roger Borsa is approaching, causing the besiegers to retreat	WA, 41
1092	Wales, Pembroke	The castellan, Gerald of Windsor, persuades besiegers he is very well-supplied, causing them to break the siege	IK, 89–90
1097 July	Syria	Following his defeat at Dorylaeum, Kilij Arslan tells Christian towns that the crusaders were defeated in order to gain access	BB, 34–35; GN, 69; GF, 23; OV, v. 65; RM, 114–15
1099 March	Syria, Jabala	Raymond of Saint-Gilles is bribed to send a false report about an approaching army to lure the crusader away	AA, 380–82; WT, 364–65
1099 May	Syria, 'Arqah	Muslim garrison spreads false rumours that the 'pope of the Turks' is approaching with a relief force, causing the crusaders to retreat	RA, 277–78
1102	Palestine, Jaffa	Besiegers dismember a captive and display the body to the garrison, claiming to have killed Baldwin I of Jerusalem	AA, 646
1106	Normandy, Dive	Robert Curthose sends false report to Henry I of England that the garrison wishes to surrender in order to trap him	OV, VI, 81–83
1106	Palestine, Tiberias	A group of Turks give false reports to the atabeg of Damascus that Baldwin I of Jerusalem was on hand with a very large army	AA, 742
1106	Palestine, Valley of Moses	A Syrian priest gives an army of Damascene Turks false reports about Baldwin I of Jerusalem's strength, prompting them to flee	AA, 747
1118	Normandy, Livet	William of Tancarville persuades Henry I of England to withdraw from siege of Laigle by false reports of William Clito's movements	OV, VI, 198–201
1127 Apr 13	Flanders, Bruges	Garrison spreads a rumour that one of their commanders, Borsiard, has been killed in the hope of placating the besiegers	GB, 106

1147 Oct-Nov	Cappadocia	Conrad III of Germany's army is deliberately mislead by Greek guides	WT, 744–45
1148 Jan	Pamphylia, Adalia	Louis VII of France hides his army's remaining warhorses and uses them to launch a surprise attack on the Turks, to make them think he is well-supplied	OD, 135
1163	Wales, Pencader	A deacon from Cantref Mawr deceives Henry II of England into thinking the approach to Dinevor is very difficult	IK, 81–82
1187	Palestine, Tyre	Conrad of Montferrat traps five Muslim ships in the harbour by sending false letters to Saladin	LE, 76–78
1194	England, Nottingham	The garrison believe the trumpets announcing Richard I of England's presence to be a deception	HowChr, 314
1211	Languedoc	Raymond-Roger, count of Foix, convinces many strongholds to surrender by spreading the rumour that Simon de Montfort had been killed	HA, I, 274
1231 July	Wales, Montgomery	Llewellyn ap Iorweth sends a Cistercian monk to convince the garrison to sally out and fight by giving them false information	RW, II, 540–41

Spies and Spying

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
c. 1068	Sicily, Palermo	Robert Guiscard sends 'Peter the Deacon', who spoke Arabic, as an emissary to spy on Palermo	AM, 142
1070–71	England, Ely	Hereward the Wake disguises himself as a potter to infiltrate William I of England's court	GH, 384–88
c. 1070s	England, Northamptonshire	Leofric the Deacon pretends to be stupid in order to spy on Robert de Horepol	GH, 402
1097 May	Bithynia, Nicaea	Qilij Ar8slan sends two spies, posing as Christians, to spy on the crusaders	AA, 104
1097 Oct – 1098 June	Syria, Antioch	Turkish garrison use Armenian and Syrian Christians, posing as refugees, to spy on crusaders	AA, 220; BB, 39; GF, 29; GN, 75–6; OV, V, 71; RM, 121; WT, 265–66

1099 autumn	Palestine, Arsuf	Local chieftains send gifts of food to the crusaders to learn their numbers	WT, 446–47
1101	Constantinople	Alexios Komnenos distributes coins in order to learn crusaders' numbers	OV, V, 335
1119 June	Syria, Ruz Valley	Īlghāzī sends spies disguised as bird sellers to Roger of Salerno's camp	WC, 115
1138	England, Bath	Geoffrey Talbot reconnoitres Bath by pretending to assist a 'straggler'	JW, 249
1152	England, Newbury	William Marshal accidentally betrays a spy sent into the royal siege camp	HWM, lines 623–34
1192	Palestine, Betenoble	Richard I of England sends spies into Egypt	IP, 384
1319	England, York	A Scottish spy betrays James Douglas's plan to kidnap Isabella, queen of England	VES, 162–66

Tactical Deceptions

Ambushes

Ambushes – Forest/Undergrowth

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
c. 1070s	England, Northamptionshire	Hereward the Wake rescued in forest	GH, 402–03
1079	Sicily, Taormina	Roger I of Sicily ambushed by Slavs in myrtle thicket	GM, 146
c. 1085	Maine, Saint Suzanne	Richer, son of Engenulf of Langle, shot in ambush	OV, IV, 49–51
1095	England, Northumberland	Plan to ambush William II of England in forest	OV, IV, 281
1098	Maine, near Dangeul	Helias, count of Maine, ambushed in forest	OV, V, 239
1098, April	Syria, Antioch	Adelbero, archdeacon of Metz, and a knight are ambushed in a pleasure garden	AA, 208–12
1123 April 18	Cilicia, Samosata	Baldwin II of Jerusalem ambushed and captured in a wood	OV, VI, 111; WT, 566-8
1130	Picardy, Coucy	Rebel garrison lay ambush for Louis VI of France	SSD, 143
1136 April 15	Wales, near Abergavenny	Iorweth of Caerleon kills Richard fitz Giblert in an ambush	GS, 17; IK, 47-48; JW, 221
1148	Syria, Damascus	Citizens ambush crusaders in orchards	WT, 764–65

1157	Wales, near Hawarden	Henry II of England ambushed in wooded and marshy terrain	WN, II, 23–25
1169	Ireland, Leinster	MacDonnchadh of Ossory ambushed in a thicket by Maurice de Prendergast	Dermot, 49-53
1174 August	Normandy, Rouen	Henry II of England employs Welsh troops to ambush French supplies in forest	GRH, I, 74–75; RT, 265; WN, II, 153
1190 May	Cyprus, near Nicosia	Isaac Komnenos ambushes Richard I of England in forest	IP, 192-94
1192 Jan 3	Palestine, near Casal of the Plains	Richard I of England attacks a Turkish force lying in ambush	IP, 303-04
1194 July 4	Loire Valley, Fréteval Forest	Richard I of England ambushes Philip II of France	GPA, 197; HPA, 330
1195 Nov	Normandy, near Dieppe	Richard I of England ambushes Philip II of France	GPA, 198; HPA, 334
1203	Thrace, near Philia	Mourtzouphlus ambushes Henry of Flanders	Clari, 65–68; GV, II, 26
1225	Gascony, near La Réole	Richard, earl of Cornwall, ambushes the count of Marche	RW, II, 457–58
1233, Dec 26	Wales, possibly Monmouthshire	John of Monmouth ambushed by Richard Marshal	RW, II, 580
1303 April	Flanders, near Bruges	William of Jülich ambushed by French troops	AG, 40
1314 June 24	Scotland, Bannockburn	Henry de Bohun ambushed by Robert Bruce from woodland	VES, 88

Ambushes – Swamp/Fenland

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1070–71	England, Ely	Hereward the Wake ambushes William, earl of Warenne in the fens	GH, 374–77
1099	Syria, near Antioch	Godfrey of Bouillon ambushes Turkish force in a 'marshy place'	AA, 370–2
1138 Feb 2	Scotland, Roxburgh	David I of Scotland attempts to ambush Stephen of England in a marsh	JH, 8; RH, 44
c. 1307	Scotland, Edirford	James Douglas ambushes Philip Mowbray in a marsh	Bruce, 8, 25–73

Ambushes – Mountains/Hills

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1077	Sicily, Trapani	Jordan of Sicily ambushes citizens from a 'hollow' outside the town	GM, 142

1096	Bucinat, Pelagonia	Raymond of Saint-Gilles ambushes a force of Pechenegs in the mountains	RA, 237
1098 Feb 9	Syria, near Antioch	Armenians and Syrians ambush Turks fleeing from the battle of the Lake	GF 37; OV, V, 81
1113	Palestine, near Tyre	Baldwin I of Jerusalem ambushes garrison of Tyre in mountains	AA, 838
1115 Sept 4	Syria, near Sarmin	Bursuq of Hamadān deploys force behind a hill to attack Roger of Salerno	WC, 101-02
c. 1141	England, Wiltshire, Ludgershall	John Marshal ambushes Patrick, earl of Salisbury, in a valley	HWM, lines 302–06
1172	Ireland, Kildare	O'Dempsey, lord of Offaly, ambushes Richard Fitzgilbert in a pass	Dermot, 179–81
1179 Mar 21	Palestine, Zebulon Valley	Baldwin IV of Jerusalem lays ambushes for bandits	WT, 996–98
1190 May 3	Phrygia, near Iconium	Frederick Barbarossa ambushed by Turks while ascending 'steep cliffs'	IP, 50–1
1192 June 12	Palestine, near Jerusalem	Richard I surprises a Muslim ambush party in the mountains	IP, 369
1295	Aquitaine, near Belgarde	John of St. John is led into a French ambush by a treacherous spy	PL, II, 280–82

Ambushes – Urban/Siege

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
946	Normandy, Rouen	Norman garrison ambushes Otto I of Germany	GND, I, 119
987-992	Anjou, Angers	Fulk Nerra ambushes the sons of Conan of Brittany	GCA, I, 92
1062 May	Campania, Capua	Ricahrd of Aversa ambushes boats bringing supplies to the city	AM, 121
1071	Sicily, Palermo	Normans lure the besiegers into an ambush with loaves of bread	AM, 157
1096 Sept	Bithynia, Xerigordon	Participants in the Peoples' Crusade unsuccessfully lay ambush for Turks	BB, 14; GF, 3; GN, 124; RM, 85
1097 Oct 29	Syria, Antioch	Bohemond ambushes the garrison	BB, 39
1098	Syria, Antioch	Turks lay ambushes for crusaders	OV, V, 81
1098 March	Syria, Antioch	Garrison ambushes workmen constructing a siege castle	RM, 131
1098 April	Syria, Antioch	Tancred ambushes a Turkish supply train	RM, 139
1098	Syria, Talamania	Syrian Christians are ambushed by Turks	RM, 177
1099	Syria, Tripoli	Garrison lays an ambush for the crusaders	BB, 98–99

1099 June	Palestine, Jerusalem	Garrison lays ambushes for crusaders around water sources	AA, 410; BB, 105–06; GF, 89; GN, 128; OV, V, 163
1099 June	Palestine, Jerusalem	Crusaders set ambushes for messengers travelling between Egypt and Jerusalem	AA, 420
1099 June	Palestine, Ramla	Citizens of Ascalon ambush foragers from crusading army	AA, 408
1099 June	Palestine, Jerusalem	Garrisons attacks crusaders from 'hidden caves'	GT, 109
1099	Palestine, Arsuf	Godfrey of Bouillon ambushes garrison	AA, 494–502
1103	Syria, Laodicea	Tancred lures garrison into an ambush with a giant tent	GT, 122–23
1107	Île-de-France, Goumay	Garrison attempt to ambush Louis VI of France from 'holes in the ground'	SSD, 57
1108 June	Syria, Tripoli	Egyptian soldiers placed in a cave to ambush Franks	AA, 784–86
1109	Palestine, Ascalon	William Jordan is killed in a night time ambush while besieging the city	FC, 531–32
1110	Syria, Tyre	Baldwin I of Jerusalem ambushes treasure bound for the city	AA, 826-28
1112	Chartres, Toury	Ralph of Beaugency ambushes Louis VI of France's assault force	SSD, 99
1123	Normandy, Gisors	Baudry of Bray attempts to ambush Robert of Candos inside the town during market day	OV, VI, 343–45
1127 Nov 11	Campania, Benevento	Rao of Fragento ambushes the garrison when they sally out to attack Roger II of Sicily	FB, 176
1136	England, Oxfordshire, Bampton	Stephen captures a member of the garrison in an ambush	GS, 29–30
1127 March	Flanders, Bruges	Both sides of siege lay ambushes for one another	GB, 57
1128 April	Flanders, Oostburg	Lambert of Aardenburg's besieging force is ambushed	GB, 165
1130	Anjou, l'Île-Bouchard	Geoffrey V of Anjou ambushes garrison as they sally out	HG, 267–68
1137	Campania, Benevento	Henry of Bavaria ambushes garrison as they sally out	FB, 218
1140	England, Bath	Stephen of England lays ambushes for garrison	JW, 291
1146-7	England, Coventry	Ranulf, earl of Chester, lays ambushes for Stephen of England on his approach to castle	GS, 199–201
1187	Palestine, Tyre	Conrad de Montferrat ambushes Muslim army from caves and houses	GRH, II, 25–26

1189	Maine, Le Mans	Geoffrey, count of Vendôme, ambushed by the viscount of Mont Double	GRH, II, 68; HowChr, II, 108
1211	Languedoc, Montgey	Raymond-Roger, count of Foix, ambushes a force of crusaders travelling to Lavaur	HA, I, 217–18
1216 Aug 15	Languedoc, Beaucaire	Crusaders attempt to ambush garrison by attacking during a diversionary assault	CCA, II, 178–192
1217	England, Lincoln	John Marshal ambushed by French while scouting the town	HWM, line 16437–43
1233 Nov	Welsh Marches	Richard Marshal ambushes garrisons of the royal castles	RW, II, 576
c. 1306	Scotland, Cupar	Alexander Fraser ambushes Thomas Gray	TG, 68

Ambushes – Location Unspecified

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1035	England, Southampton	Edward the Confessor ambushed by followers of Harold Harefoot	GG, 3
1053	Normandy, Arques	Garrison ambushes Henry I of France	GG, 39–41; GRA, 433
c. 1060s	Flanders, Saint-Omer	Hereward the Wake ambushed by a knight of St. Valery	GH, 357
1063	Sicily, Agrigento	Roger I of Sicily's men ambushed by Muslims	GM, 113
1067 March	England, Northumbria	Copsi, earl of Northumberland, ambushed by 'men of his district'	OV, II, 209
c. 1070s	Wales, near Rhuddlan	Robert of Rhuddlan ambushes Bleddyn, king of Gwynedd and Powys	OV, IV, 145
1071	Flanders, Cassel	Robert the Frisian ambushes William fitz Osbern and Arnulf III of Flanders	GRA, 475
1071	Sicily, Castrogiovanni	Serlo, nephew of Roger I of Sicily, ambushed by his brother Brachiem	GM, 12627
c. 1073	Calabria, Santa Severina	Gerard of Buonalbergo ambushes Richard of Capua	AM, 176
1096	Scalvonia	Raymond of Saint Gilles ambushed by locals	RA, 235–36; WT, 182–84
c. 1097	Syria, Antioch	Pakrad, an Armenian warlord, ambushes Nicusus of Turbessel's men	AA, 262
1097 Feb 18	Macedonia, River Vardar	Byzantine Turcopoles ambush Norman crusaders	GT, 8–9
1097	Constantinople	Baldwin of Bouillon ambushes Byzantine troops attacking crusader foraging parties	GF, 6; BB 17; GN, 130; RM, 94
1097	Cappadocia, Heraclea Cybistra	Turks lay an ambush for crusaders	GF, 23–24

1097 Feb	Cilicia, Samosata	Garrison ambush Baldwin of Bouillon's cattle	FC, 51; WT, 234–36
1098	Syria, Antioch	Crusaders bringing supplies from St. Symeon ambushed by Turks	AA, 238–43; BB, 49–50; WT, 309–11
1098 Feb 8	Syria, Antioch	Crusaders ambush an army of Damascene Muslims	RM, 129; WT, 306–07
1098 June	Syria, Antioch	Turks ambush Roger of Barneville	RM, 151
1098 July	Bithynia, near Nicaea	Turcopoles ambush Baldwin, count of Hainault	AA, 340–42
1098 *c.* July	Syria, Azaz	Crusaders are ambushed by Turks while travelling from Antioch to Azaz	WT, 349–50
1099	Syria, near Damascus	Raymond of Saint-Gilles ambushes Damascene Turks	RA, 273; WT, 359–60
1100 Aug 15	Cappadocia, Melitene	Danishmend of Sivas ambushes and captures Bohemond	FC, 346–47
1101	Paphlagonia, near Merzifon	Stragglers from Raymond of Saint Gilles's army are ambushed by Turks	AA, 598
1101	Lycaonia, near Iconium	William, count of Nevers, ambushed by Turks	AA, 620
1103 July	Palestine, near Caesarea	Baldwin I of Jerusalem wounded in an ambush	AA, 662–64; FC, 460–61; WT, 484–85
1103 Aug	Ireland	Magnus of Norway is ambushed by the local Irish	OV, VI, 49
1106	Palestine, near Ascalon	Arnold II of Oudenaarde is ambushed by Turks	AA, 712–16
1107 Nov	Palestine, near Jerusalem	Men of Ascalon ambush Franks travelling from Jaffa to Jerusalem	FC, 515–18; WT, 501
c. 1111	Wales, Pembrokeshire	Henry I of England shot by a 'stealthy arrow'	GRA, 727–29
1113 June 28	Palestine, Lake Tiberias	Baldwin I of Jerusalem ambushed by Muslims	FC, 567–70
1119	Normandy, Tillières	William of Chaumont ambushed by garrison	OV, VI, 249
1128 June 12	Flanders, Bruges	William Clito lures citizens into ambush by burning a house	GB, 171–72
1128 June 21	Flanders, near Bruges	William Clito ambushes Thierry of Alsace at the battle of Akspoele	GB, 175
1137	Normandy, Cotentin	Reginald of Dunstanville ambushes Roger II, viscount of the Cotentin	OV, VI, 513
1138	England, Bristol	Garrison lays ambushes for the citizens of Bristol	GS, 47

1139	Lazia, Gaullucio	Roger, duke of Apulia, lays ambush for Pope Innocent II	FB, 238
1144	England, Wilshire, Crickdale	William de Dover sets ambushes for King Stephen's supporters	GS, 171
1146	England, Gloucestershire, Miserden	Philip, earl of Gloucester, captures Robert Musard and Reginald, earl of Cornwall in an ambush	GS, 186
1147 Dec	Lydia, Laodicea ad Lycum	Beranrd of Carinthia is led by the town governor into a Turkish ambush	OD, 113
1149	England, between York and Bristol	King Stephen lays ambushes for Henry Curtmantle but he avoids them	GS, 215–17
1150 May 5	Syria, near Aleppo	Joscelin II of Courtenay is captured in an ambush	WT, 774–75
1154 June 7	Between Egypt and Palestine	Abbas, former vizier of Egypt, is killed in an ambush	WT, 822–23
1157	Palestine, Jacob's Ford	Baldwin III of Jerusalem is ambushed by Nūr al-Dīn	RT, 194; WT, 828–30
1168 April	Poitou	Patrick, earl of Salisbury, is killed by Poitevin rebels in an ambush	HWM, lines 1645–51
1173	Normandy, Gournay	Hugh de Gournay is captured by Henry the Young King in ambush	RD, I, 369
1179 May	Syria, Banyas	Turks ambush Baldwin IV of Jerusalem	WT, 998–1000
1192 April	Palestine, near Acre	Christian foragers ambushed by Turks	IP, 344
1192 June 16	Palestine, near Jerusalem	Supply caravan from Jaffa ambushed by Turks	IP, 373–6
1194	Normandy, Fonatines	Robert, earl of Leicester, ambushed and captured by Philip II of France	HowChr, II, 326
1198	Île-de-France, Beauvais	The bishop of Beauvais and William de Mello are captured in an ambush by Angevin troops	HPA, 354
1204	Anatolia	Latin crusaders are captured en route to Antioch by Turks	GV, II, 30
1207	Bithynia, Nicodemia	Theodore of Lascaris, emperor of Nicaea, ambushes crusaders	GV, II, 298
1209	Languedoc, near Cabaret	Garrison captures a crusader, Bouchard de Marly, in an ambush	HA, I, 127–28
1211	Languedoc, near Fanjeaux	Simon and Geoffrey of Neauphle are ambushed by the men of Foix	HA, I, 279–80
1217	England, near Lincoln	French troops are ambushed as they flee to London after the battle of Lincoln	MFW, II, 238
1231 June	Brittany	Henry, count of Brittany, and Ralph, earl of Chester, ambushed Louis IX of France	RW, II, 541

1282	Wales, Snowdonia	Llewelyn ab Gruffudd ambushes Edward I of England's men as they cross a bridge	PL, II, 179; TG 10
c. 1306	Scotland, Brodick	James Douglas ambushes provisions destined for the castle	Bruce, 4, 384–453
1308	Scotland, near Cupar	Walter Bickerton ambushes Thomas Gray	TG, 68
1310	Scotland	English foragers are ambushed by Scots	VES, 22

Distractions

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1071 Aug 26	Upper Mesopotamia, Manzikert	Romanos Diogenes scatters gold and silver around his camp to distract the Turks from pursuing	WA, 29
1099 Jan-Feb	Syria, Hisn al-Akrad	Turkish garrison drive out herds of animals to distract crusaders while they escape	BB, 96–97; GF, 82; OV, V, 145; RM, 188
1099 Aug 12	Palestine, Ascalon	Egyptians drive herds of animals ahead of them to distract crusader army	AA, 458
1147 July 1	Portugal, Lisbon	Moors throw away their gear to distract crusaders as they retreat	DEL, 128
1154	Between Egypt and Palestine	Household of Abbas, vizier of Egypt, drops treasure to distract pursuers	WT, 822–23

Disguises

Disguises – Changing Appearance

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
11th century	Southern Italy	Robert Guiscard pretends that one of his men has died and asks for permission to bury him in a monastery	WA, 23–4
c. 1013	Normandy, Tillières	Hugh, count of Maine, buries his hauberk and flees to Le Man disguised as a shepherd	GND, II, 25
1038 28 Jan	Berry, banks of the River Cher	Army of Aimon, archbishop of Bourges, mounts foot soldiers on asses to resemble cavalry	MSB, 196–97
1051	Calabria, Belvedre	Peasant smuggles himself into the castle inside a pile of logs then sets fire to the building	AM, 82
c. 1070	England, Ely	Wulfric the Black infiltrates a Norman garrison with his face daubed with charcoal	GH, 372

1070–71	England, Cottenham	Hereward the Wake disguises himself as a fisherman to enter a Norman camp	GH, 388–89
1070–71	England, Ely	Two of Hereward's men tonsure themselves to appear as priests	GH, 392
1070–71	England, Northamptonshire	Hereward the Wake's men put their horses' shoes on backwards	GH, 393
1097 April	Constantinople	Tancred crosses the Bosporus dressed as a foot soldier	GT, 15
c. 1097	Cilicia, Adana	Armenian Christians capture the city by hiding troops in hay wagons	GT, 39–41
1098 Feb	Syria, Antioch	Crusaders position troops behind a hill and raise extra banners to appear more numerous	GT, 55
1098 June	Syria, Antioch	Kemal ad-Din, ruler of Antioch, flees disguised as a beggar	RM, 148
1098 Nov-Dec	Syria, Antioch	Tancred moves troops into the citadel disguised under cloaks	GT, 84
1099 Feb 16–17	Syria, Tortosa	Raymond Pilet and Raymond of Turenne light fires by night to make their force appear more numerous	GF, 83–84; RM, 190
1099 June	Palestine, Jaffa	Crusaders raise a great cloud of dust which makes their force appear more numerous	RA, 294–95
1099 Aug 12	Palestine, Ascalon	Egyptians mistake animals marching with the crusaders for extra troops	AA, 462; FC, 81; WT, 434–35
1106–8	Palestine	Gervais de Bazoches has his troops fasten shirts to their lances to resemble banners	GN, 347–48
1109	Île-de-France, Ferté-Baudouin	Castle besieged by Louis VI of France. Hugh of Crécy attempts to pass through the siege lines in various disguises.	SSD, 67
1116	Normandy, Gasny	Louis VI of France disguises his men to attack the town	SSD, 112; OV, VI, 185
1118 March	Sinai, al-Arīsh	Baldwin I of Jerusalem's body is embalmed and mounted on his horse to hide the fact of his death	AA, 869–71
1119	Normandy, Breteuil	Ralph of Gael, frequently changes his 'arms' to avoid being recognised	OV, VI, 247
1119 Aug 20	Île-de-France, Noyon	Peter of Maule and other French knights escape by discarding their 'cognizances'	OV, VI, 243
1123	Cappadocia, Kharput	A group of Armenians go in disguise to rescue Baldwin II of Jerusalem	FC, 678–69; GRA, 691; OV, VI, 115

1123	Cappadocia, Kharput	Geoffrey le Grêle and Joscelin I, count of Edessa disguise themselves as Turkish peasants to reach Antioch unnoticed	OV, VI, 115
1124 March	Normandy, near Rouen	William Lovel cuts his hair to look like a squire and flees, carrying a staff	OV, VI, 353
1136	England, Exeter	Alured, son of Joel, and his men intermingle with Stephen of England's forces, as they were all dressed alike	GS, 34–35
1141	England, Winchester	Empress Matilda's forces discard their 'emblems of knighthood' to escape	GS, 88
1147	England, Kent	Gilbert de Clare escapes Stephen of England by 'hiding his face'	GS, 203
1147	Syria, Bostrum	Baldwin III of Jerusalem orders all the dead and wounded to be carried to hide the Franks' losses	WT, 730
1182 July	Palestine, Forbelet	Saladin orders all the dead and wounded to be carried to hide the Muslims' losses	WT, 1032
1189 Oct 4	Palestine, Acre	A crusader named Ferrand pretends to be dead and allows himself to be despoiled to escape Muslims	IP, 72
1190 Aug-Sept	Palestine, Acre	Muslim ships enter Acre disguised with Christian symbols and 'imitating Christian speech'	IP, 92
1191 June	Cyprus	Richard I of England encounters a Muslim ship flying French banners	GRH, II, 168; HowChr, II, 206; IP, 204–09
1192	Palestine, Galatia	Richard I of England sends out spies disguised as Bedouin	IP, 385–86
1213 Sept 12	Languedoc, Muret	Peter II of Aragon is killed in battle while wearing another knight's arms	HA, II, 153–54
1216 Dec 6	England, Hertfordshire, Berkhamsted	Garrison sallies out under a captured banner	RW, II, 382
1217 May	England, Lincoln	French overestimate size of royalist army due to number of banners	RW, II, 394
1234 Apr 1	Ireland, Kildare, Curragh Plain	Anglo-Irish nobles give their arms to others when planning to murder Richard Marshal at a parley	RW, II, 589
1263	England, Gloucester	John Giffard and John Balun enter the town disguised as wool merchants	RG, II, 740–41
1264	England, Gloucester	Edward, prince of Wales, enters town hidden aboard a ship captured from the abbot of Tewkesbury	RG, II, 744

1264 May 14	England, Lewes	Three citizens of London are placed inside a cart, decorated with Simon de Montfort's arms. Interpreted as a ruse	CM, 193–94; FH, II, 495; TW, 150–51; WG, 195; WR, 25–26
1265 Aug 4	England, Evesham	Edward, prince of Wales, approaches under banners captured at Kenilworth	WG, 200
1265 Aug 4	England, Evesham	Henry III of England is forced to enter battle in another's arms	CM, 200–01; WG 201
1304 Aug 18	Flanders, Mons-en-Pévèle	Philip IV of France's bodyguards strip off his coat armour to disguise him from the Flemings	AG, 71
1306 Apr 7	Scotland, Douglas	James Douglas enters the village church, his arms hidden under a mantle, to attack the English garrison	Bruce, 5, 335–428
1306 Jun 19	Scotland, Methven	Robert Bruce orders his men to wear white shirts over their coat armour	NT, 409–10; TG, 52; WR, 230
c. 1308	Scotland, Linlithgow	Scots take a peel by hiding soldiers in a hay wagon	Bruce, 10, 187–252
1308	Scotland, Cupar	Thomas Gray gives a banner to his grooms to make his force appear more numerous	TG, 68
1314 Jun 24	Scotland, Bannockburn	The Scottish commoners dismay the English by assembling into a company, using sheets as banners	Bruce, 13, 225–64
1317 Nov 11	England, Northallerton	Joseclin Deyville and his men invade a manor disguised as Cistercian lay brothers	JT, 208
1322 Mar 16–17	England, Boroughbridge	Thomas, earl of Lancaster, and his men attempt to flee disguised as beggars	VES, 212

Disguises – Other

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1112	Île-de-France, Toury	Monks of St. Denis pass through enemy siege force by 'pretending to be part of their company'	SSD. 87
1119	Normandy, Andely	French troops enter the citadel by crying the English royal battle cry	OV, VI, 217
1187 July	Palestine, Acre	Conrad de Montferrat speaks Arabic to bypass Muslim blockade of port	IP, 18–19
1191 Sept 29	Palestine, near Jaffa	William de Préaux shouts the Arabic for 'king' to deceive Muslims into thinking he is Richard I of England	IP, 287

1210	Languedoc, Carcassonne	Peter-Roger escapes by shouting the crusaders' battle cry	HA, I, 171–72
1211	Languedoc, Casetlnaudary	'Heretics' attempt to escape crusaders by coping their battle cry	HA, I, 270–71

Feigned Flight

Feigned Flight – Luring an Enemy into an Ambush

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
946	Normandy, Rouen	Normans feign flight into city to lure Germans into range of an unexpected sally	Dudo, 27; GND, I, 39
1052	Normandy, Arques	Normans lure French troops into ambush	GND, II, 105
c. 1057	Calabria, Salerno	Richard I of Aversa lures Guaimr IV of Salerno into ambush by feigning flight	AM, 102–03
c. 1066–77	Apulia, Ortona	Robert of Lortello burns his siege castle and retreats through a pass to lure a relief force into an ambush	AM, 181–82
c. 1097	Cilicia, Adana	Armenian Christians lure Turkish garrison away to allow troops to infiltrate city	GT, 39–41
1097	Cilicia, Tarsus	Tancred lures garrison into an ambush with a fore of Turcopoles	GT, 35–36
1097	Syria, Artah	Garrison lures crusaders into an ambush	AA, 184; WT, 240–41
1097 Dec	Syria, Artah	Bohemond and Robert of Flanders lure garrison of Harim into an ambush	GN, 76; OV, V, 73; RM 122–23
1098 June	Syria, Antioch	Roger of Barneville is killed after being lured into an ambush by Turks	AA, 286–90; WT, 307–08
1098 summer	Cilicia, Sorogia	Folbert of Chartres lures Turks into an ambush	AA, 364; WT, 350–52
1106 Oct	Palestine, Jaffa	Citizens of Ascalon lure garrison into an ambush in the mountains	AA, 728–30
1108 May	Palestine, Tiberias	Damascene Turks lure a knight named Gervase into an ambush	AA, 768
1113 June 28	Palestine, Lake Tiberias	Baldwin I of Jerusalem is lured into an ambush by Turks	WT, 523–24
1123	Palestine, Ascalon	Baldwin II of Jerusalem lures an Egyptian army into an ambush	WT, 607
1129	Anjou, Thouars	Geoffrey V of Anjou lures rebel garrison into an ambush	HG, 262–64
1134 July 17	Aragon, Fraga	Moors lure Christians into an ambush by having their baggage feign flight	OV, V, 415

1137 Aug	Palestine, near Ascalon	Renaud, head of the Order of St. George, is lured into an ambush by Muslims	WT, 666
1191 Sept 29	Palestine, near Jaffa	Richard I of England is lured into an ambush by Muslims	IP, 287
1198	Normandy, Pacy-sur-Eure	Robert, earl of Leicester, lures the garrison into an ambush	HowChr, II, 431–32
1230 July	Ireland, Connaught, near Lough Key	Aedh, son of Rory of Connaught, is lured into an ambush by Geoffrey de Marisco	RW, II, 536
1307 May	Scotland, Douglas	James Douglas uses troops disguised as merchants to lure the castle garrison into an ambush	Bruce, 8, 416–87
c. 1308	Scotland, Douglas	James Douglas uses a herd of cattle to lure the castle garrison into an ambush	Bruce, 6, 375–452

Feigned Flight – To Lure an Enemy onto Unfavourable Ground and then Attack

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1060	Sicily, Messina	Roger I of Sicily lures the garrison out then turns to attack	GM, 30
1066 Oct 14	England, Battle	Norman army feigns flight to draw English off Senlac Hill	CDH, 26; GG, 133; GRA, 453; HH, 393; OV, II, 175
c. 1067	Zeeland	Flemings feign flight to draw Zeelanders away from their camp	GH, 362
1098	Syria, Antioch	Turks withdraw to the mountains, hoping to break up crusaders' formation	OV, V, 113
1098	Syria, Antioch	Robert Curthose feigns flight to lure Turks into unfavourable position	GRA, 703
1100 Oct 24–26	Syria, near Beirut	Baldwin I of Jerusalem feigns flight to draw Turks into a narrow place	AA, 536; GRA, 669; WT, 458–60
1104 May 7	Syria, Raqqa	Turks flee from before Edessa, drawing Bohemond onto unfavourable ground	GT, 124
1111	Syria, Baalbek	Bohemond lures garrison through a narrow pass	GRA, 665
1119 June	Syria, al-Athrab	Turks feign flight to draw Christian army away from their camp	WC, 116–18
1169	Ireland, Osraige	Diarmait Mac Murchada lures the men of Osraige out into the open	EH, 37
1205 April	Thrace, Adrianople	Cumans lure crusaders out of their camp by feigning flight	GV, II, 166

1219 Aug 29	Egypt, near Damietta	Egyptian relief force feigns flight, causing dispute among crusaders about whether to pursue	RW, II, 419
1231 July	Wales, Montgomery	Llewellyn ap Iorwerth feigns flight into a wood, causing the English garrison to become stranded in a marsh	RW, II, 540–41
1304 Aug 18	Flanders, Mons-en-Pévèle	French horsemen feign flight to break up Flemish formations	AG, 66

Feigned Flight – To Confuse/Terrify One's Allies

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
1101–02	Île-de-France, Montmorency and Chambly	The sieges of both castles are broken up when traitors in Louis VI of France's army pretend to panic and flee	SSD, 33; OV, VI, 159
1102	Normandy, Vignants	Robert of Montfort and others set fire to their own tents and pretend to flee Robert Curthose's army	OV, VI, 25
1187 July 4	Palestine, Meskenah	Allegation that Raymond III of Tripoli pretended to flee the battle of Hattin to break of Christian formations	IP, 14–16

Hidden Traps

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
992 July 27	Brittany, Conquereuil	Conan I of Brittany digs hidden pits on the battlefield then feigns flight, luring the Angevins into them	GCA, I, 94–95
c. 1013	Brittany, near Dol	Scandinavian raiders stop a Breton cavalry charge with hidden trenches	GND, II, 25–27
1099 July	Palestine, Jerusalem	Garrison digs hidden trenches before the gates	GN, 279
1107	Île-de-France, Gournay	Garrison places sharpened-stakes, hidden beneath straw, in the castle ditch	SSD, 57
c. 1144	England, Coventry	Robert of Marmion is killed when he falls into a hidden ditch he dug to trap Ranulf, earl of Chester	WN, I, 71–73
1147 Oct	Portugal, Lisbon	Flemings catch three Moors in nets, bated with figs	DEL, 145
1169	Ireland, Ferns	Diarmait Mac Murchada dig pits and create hidden exits to defend their territory	EH, 40
1189	Normandy, near Le Mans	Henry II of England places stakes in the fords on the Huisne and digs trenches to defend the town	HWM, lines 8485–86

1189–90	Palestine, Acre	Crusaders construct 'secret traps' around their camp for the Muslims	IP, 102–03
1219	Egypt, Damietta	Muslims sink ships and drive stakes into the river bed to prevent the crusaders sailing up the Nile	OP, 196; RW, II, 415

Night and/or Dawn Attacks

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
c. 962	Normandy, Ermentrudeville	Richard I of Normandy, crosses the Seine by night to attack Theobald of Chartres	GN, I, 125
c. 1013	Normandy, Tillières	Odo of Chartres attack the castle by night	GND, II, 23
1019	Denmark	Earl Godwine leads a contingent of Englishmen from King Cnut's army to attack the Wends by night	HH, 363–65
1041 March	Apulia, Melfi	Rainulf I of Aversa enters Melfi by night	AM, 70
c. 1061	Normandy, Échauffour	Arnold of Échauffour drives the ducal garrison out by night with only four knights	OV, II, 92
1061 March	Sicily, Messina	Garrison sallies out against Robert Guiscard by night	AM, 137
1061 May	Sicily, Tremestieri	Roger I of Sicily leads an advanced party to Sicily by night ahead of an invasion	AM, 138
1066 Oct 14	England, Battle	Harold Godwinson attempts to attack William II of Normandy by night	CDH, 18; GND, II, 169; OV, II, 173
1067	England, Dover	Eustace of Boulogne attempts to capture the castle by night	GG 185; OV, II, 205
1069	England, Durham	Robert of Commine and five hundred of his men are killed in their sleep by citizens	OV, II, 223
c. 1087	Normandy, Évreux	High Estevel and Ralph Mauvoisin cross the Eure by night to go raiding	OV, IV, 75
1097 April	Constantinople	Raymond of Saint Gilles's camp is attacked at night by Greeks	WT, 187–88
1097 June	Bithynia, Nicaea	A group of Byzantine Turcoples draw boats overland and launch them onto the lake by night	AA, 117; GF, 16; BB, 27; GN, 64; WT, 204–05
1097 Sept	Cilicia, Tarsus	Members of the garrison flee by night, killing some of the crusaders on their way	AA, 157
1097 Dec	Syria, Antioch	Bohemond and Robert Curthose are attacked by night while out foraging	AA, 218

1098 Feb	Phrygia, near Philomelium	Sweyn, son of Sweyn II of Denmark, is killed in a night attack by Turks	WT, 261–62
1098 June	Syria, Antioch	Turks attack the crusaders by scaling the city walls by night	AA, 300; GT, 69; WT, 316–17
1098 Dec 12	Syria, Ma'arrat-an-Nu'mān	The poorer members of the crusaders army attack the city by night	RA, 269–70
1101	Palestine, east of the Jordan	Baldwin I of Jerusalem lead a night raid across the Jordan	WT, 464–65
1105	Upper Mesopotamia, Edessa	Tancred leads a sally against the Turkish besiegers by night	AA, 698
1107 Apr	Palestine, St. Abraham's Castle	Baldwin I of Jerusalem leads a night attack on the Muslims besieging the castle	AA, 749–50
1119	Syria, Hab	Īlghāzī attempts a dawn attack on Baldwin II of Jerusalem	WT, 560–62
1122	Auvergne, Monterraud	William VI of Auvergne attempts a night attack on Louis VI of France	SSD, 136
1127 Mar 19	Flanders, Bruges	Citizens scale the castle walls at dawn and seize the outer defences	GB, 72
c. 1128	Flanders, Ypres	William Clito escapes a night attack by Flemish enemies	OV, VI, 375
c. 1137–41	Flanders, Guines, Amaurvial	Henry of Bourbourg has a wooden tower constructed and erected by night outside the town	LA, 98
1137	Syria, Antioch	Raymond of Antioch attacks John II Komnenos's siege force by night	OV, VI, 505
1138	England, Northumberland, Carham	Walter, son of Duncan, attempts a night attack on the town	RH, 42
1139	England, Devon	Henry de Tracy captures William fitz Odo in a night attack	GS, 83
1139	England, Berkshire, Wallingford	Miles of Gloucester captures the town by night	GS, 93–95
1139	England, Malmesbury	Robert fitz Hubert enters the castle by night then burns the town	HN, 63
1140 Mar 26	England, Devizes	Robert fitz Hubert scales the walls by night and seizes the castle	HN, 77; GS, 105; JW, 287
1141	England, Belvoir	Alan, earl of Richmond, takes the castle by night	JH, 16
1143	England, Nottingham	William Peverel's troops scale the castle rock by night and expel the garrison	JH, 20

1158	Wales, Cardiff	Ivor Bach enters the castle and abducts William, earl of Gloucester, and his family by night	IK, 63–64
1167	Egypt, near CAiro	Amalric of Jerusalem and his Egyptian allies attempt a night attack on the forces of Shīrkūh, encamped on an island in the Nile	WT, 892–94
1173	Ireland, Cashel	Domnall, prince of Limerick, attacks the men of Dublin in a dawn raid	EH, 139
1174	England, Belford	William I of Scotland sends troops to raid Belford by night	JF, 87
1182	Wales, Abergavenny	Welsh take the castle by hiding in the ditch then scaling the walls at night	IK, 49–51
1182	Wales, Llaningad	Men of Gwent killed Ralph Poer in a night raid	IK, 51–52
1184	Portugal, Santarem	Archbishop of Saint James leads night attack on the Muslims besieging the town	RD, II, 29
1189 Sept 14	Palestine, Acre	Garrison launches night attack on Christian camp to allow one of Saladin's sons to escape	IP, 65–67
1191	Cyprus	Richard I of England attacks Isaac Komnenos's camp by night	GRH, II, 164; HowChr, II, 202
1191 July 5	Palestine, Acre	Saladin launches night attack on crusaders' camp in hope that it will allow garrison to escape	GR, II, 174; HowChr, II, 212
1192	Palestine, Jaffa	Saladin's army attacks the crusaders by night	RoC, 44–45
1192 Aug 5	Palestine, Jaffa	A force of Mamluks and Kurds attempt to kidnap Richard I of England in his sleep	IP, 412–24
1194 July	Normandy, Vaudreuil	Philip II of France attacks John Lackland's camp by night	HPA, 330
1203	Normandy, Château-Gaillard	John of England attempts to attack French camp by night in conjunction with an attack on the river	GPA, 213–14
1205 March	Peloponnesos, Corinth	Garrison launches a dawn assault on the Latins' camp	GV, II, 142
1209	Languedoc, Fanjeaux	Raymond-Roger, count of Foix, attempts to take the town by night	HA, I, 138
1210	Languedoc, Carcassonne	Garrison sallies out to burn crusaders' siege engines	CCA, I, 126–28; HA, I, 171–72
1210 June	Languedoc, Minerve	Garrison sallies out to burn crusaders' siege engines	HA, I, 156–57
1211	Languedoc, Lavaur	Garrison sallies out to burn the crusaders' siege engines	HA, I, 223–24
1211	Languedoc, Moissac	Garrison sallies out to burn the crusaders' siege engine	HA, II, 45–46

1213 June	Languedoc, Puycelsi	Garrison sallies out to burn the crusaders' siege engine	HA, II, 121–22
1214 June	Languedoc, Casseneuil	Garrison sallies out to attack the crusaders' camp	HA, II, 215
1214 June	Languedoc, Casseneuil	Garrison tries to burn the crusaders' siege tower with a 'fire boat' by night	HA, II, 220
1214 Nov	Languedoc, Séverac-le-Château, near Rodez	Guy de Montfort seizes the town by night	HA, II, 233
1218	Languedoc, Toulouse	Crusaders attack the city at dawn	CCA, III, 72–78
1218 Jun 25	Languedoc, Toulouse	Garrison launches a two-pronged assault on the crusaders' camp	HA, II, 310–12
1218 Oct 26	Egypt, Damietta	Garrison attacks the Templars' camp before dawn	OP, 190–91
1219	Egypt, Damietta	Muslim relief force attacks crusaders' siege camp at dawn	RW, II, 416
1219 Nov 2	Egypt, Damietta	Al-Kāmil, sultan of Egypt, sends a force through a marsh to attack crusaders' camp	OP 224; RW, II, 423
1220 Aug	Egypt, near Mahalech	Crusaders are attack at night by Ethiopian troops	OP, 273
1233 Nov 11	Wales, Grosmont	Welsh attack Henry III of England's army by night and steal its baggage	RW, II, 573
1250 Feb 9	Egypt, Mansurah	Egyptians attack crusaders' camp by night	VSL, 126–28
1264	England, Berkshire, Wallingford	A royalist relief army attempts to storm the castle at dawn	RG, II, 751–52
1265 Aug 2	England, Warwickshire, Kenilworth	Edward, prince of Wales, surprises Simon de Montfort the Younger by night	CM, 198; FH, III, 4; RG, II, 761; TW, 170; WG, 199
1295	Wales	William de Beauchamp, earl of Warwick makes a night attack on Welsh camp	NT, 335–36; WR, 148
1298 Feb	Scotland, Roxburgh	Roger fitz Roger attacks Scottish siege camp at dawn	TG, 40–42
1302 May 18	Flanders, Bruges	Flemings attack French troops in the city at dawn	AG, 24
1303 Feb 24	Scotland, Roslin	John of Seagrave is captured in a Scottish night attack	NT, 400; TG, 44; WR, 214
1306	Scotland, Turnberry	Robert Bruce attacks Henry Percy's men while they are asleep in a nearby village	Bruce, 5, 61–122

1307 June	Scotland, Glen Trool	Aymer de Valence attempts to attack Robert Bruce by night	Bruce, 7, 495–642
1312 Dec 6	England, Berwick	Robert Bruce scales the walls and captures the town by night	Lanercost, 220
1313 Jan 10	Scotland, Perth	Robert Bruce scales the walls and captures the town by night	Bruce, 9, 371–419; Lanercost, 221
1314	Scotland, Edinburgh	Thomas Randolph takes the castle by climbing the rock by night	Bruce, 10, 511–642
1314 Feb 28	Scotland, Roxburgh	James Douglas scales the walls and captures the castle by night	Bruce, 10, 357–472; Lanercost, 223; VES, 84
1316 Jan 15	England, Berwick	Robert Bruce attempts to take the town by night	Lanercost, 232

Lies and Faleshoods

Bribery and Inducements

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
991	Île-de-France, Melun	Odo of Chartres bribes a knight named Walter to betray the town for 'gifts'	GN, II, 33–35
c. 1053	Normandy, Arques	William, count of Arques, uses 'lavish gifts' to persuade the garrison to surrender	GRA, 433
c. 1064	Basilicata, Montepeloso	Robert Guiscard bribes Godfrey, keeper of the *castrum,* with promises of a larger castle	WA, 26
1081	Sicily, Catania	Benarvet of Syracuse bribes one Bethumen to admit his army to the town by night	GM, 160–61
1082 Feb	Nova Epirus, Dyrrachion	Robert Guiscard bribes Dominic, a Venetian, to betray the city	GM, 158–59; WA, 54–55
c. 1087	Calabria, Cosenza	Bohemond persuades the citizens to shift their allegiance with promises to demolish the Norman fortress there	GM, 185–86
1090	Normandy, Saint-Valéry and Aumale	William Rufus gains the castles by bribing the garrisons	GRA, 549; HH, 415
1094	Calabria, Rossano	Roger Borsa bribes the townsfolk with promises to allow them to elect a Greek archbishop	GM, 201

1099 June	Syria, Antioch	Bohemond bribes a member of the garrison to help the crusaders scale the wall by night	AA, 270–78; BB, 53–59; FC, 57–59; GF, 46–47; GN, 90–92; GRA 635–37; HH, 435; OV, V, 87–89; RA, 251; RM, 141–46; WT, 285–89
1105	Normandy, Caen	Henry I of England bribes the garrison	HH, 453
1137	Flanders, County of Guines	Arnold of Ghent seizes the county's fortresses through 'pleas, money and promises'	LA, 94
1167	Syria, Banyas	Nūr al-Dīn bribes the commander, Walter de Quesnoy, to surrender the city	WN, II. 95; WT, 877
c. 1173	Ireland, Wicklow	Muircheratch, prince of Uí Chennselaig bribes Walter the German to surrender the castle	EH, 172
1173	Brittany, Combourg and Dol	Ralph of Fougères bribes the garrisons to surrender	RT, 259
1182 July	Palestine, Cave de Suète	Chronicler suggests fortress may have been surrendered due to briberry	WT, 1028–30
1196	Normandy, Nonancourt	Richard I of England bribes garrisons to surrender	GPA, 200; HPA, 340–42
1211	Lanuedoc, Puylaurens	Garrison allegedly bribed by Sicard de Puylaurens	HA, I, 251
1224	Aquitaine, La Rochelle	Louis VIII of France bribes the citizens to surrender	RW, II, 240
c. 1315	England, Norham	One of the garrison is bribed to kill the porter and open the gate to the Scots	TG, 84
1317 April 2	England, Berwick	One Peter Spalding betrays the town to the Scots for 'promises of riches and land'	Bruce, 17, 1–38; Lanercost, 234–35; TG, 78

Oaths and Truces

Date	Place	Description	Source(s)
c. 1096	Hungary, Pannonhalma	Hungarians trick German crusaders into surrendering their arms and money, then massacre them	AA, 45–46; WT, 154–55

1097 Sept	Cilicia, Tarsus	Turkish garrison claim to have entered into negotiations with Tancred in bad faith, hoping for a relief force to attack him	AA, 149
1101	Palestine, near Ascalon	Baldwin I of Jerusalem lures bandits out of their caves by offering bribes, then having them persuade their fellows to come out and be killed	AA, 544–46
1106 Sept 14	Syria, Apamea	Tancred agrees to let the traitor Botherus live. His allies protest but Tancred refuses to break his word.	AA, 740
1127 March	Flanders, Bruges	Besiegers make false promises of clemency to the garrison in return for treasure	GB, 57
1138	England, Bath	Gilbert de Lacy breaks an oath of safe conduct to the bishop of Bath	GS, 39–41
1152	England, Newbury	John Marshal uses a truce with Stephen of England to refortify and supply his castle	HWM, lines 493–508
1155	Syria, Banyas	Baldwin III of Jerusalem breaks a treaty to raid Turkoman herds	WT, 825
1171	Ireland, Wexford	Irish swear false oaths to garrison to persuade them to surrender	EH, 84–85
1173	England, Northumbria	Richard de Lacy conceals new of Robert of Leicester's invasion in order to persuade William I of Scotland to agree to a truce	JF, 63
1173 Aug	Normandy, Verneuil	Louis VII of France breaks an agreement with the townsfolk when he sacks it	GRH, I, 53; HowChr, I, 371
1174 Aug 10	Normandy, Rouen	Louis VII of France breaks a truce with the garrison and attack the town	WN, II, 147–51
1195 July	Normandy, Vaudreuil	Philip II of France continues to demolish the castle during negotiations with Richard I of England	HWM, lines 10537–48
1205	Macedonia, Serres	Johanitsa of Vlachia breaks agreement with the garrison, whom he attacks and imprisons	GV, II, 202–4
1209	Languedoc, Pamiers	Raymond-Roger, count of Foix, ambushes crusaders during a parley	HA, I, 206–7
1213	Languedoc	Raymond VI of Toulouse raids the crusaders' lands during a truce	HA, II, 67–68
1226	Toulouse, Avignon	Louis VIII of France falsely claims he only wishes to pass through the city	RW, II, 478
1226 Oct	Toulouse, Avignon	Cardinal Romain, papal legate, arranges to enter the city to parley only for the French to storm inside	RW, II, 482

1233	Wales, Pembrokeshire	Henry III of England persuades Richard Marshal to surrender a castle to him on the false promise that he will return it	RW, II, 570–72
1264 Apr 5	England, Northampton	Philip Basset breaks into the city while the garrison are negotiating with Henry III of England	WG, 189–90
1296	Scotland, Stirling	Scots capture the English commander of the castle by breaking their promise of safe conduct	PL, II, 304
1296 Apr 27	Scotland, Dunbar	Garrison secure a three day truce, then encourage their relief force to attack the besiegers unexpectedly	PL, II, 240–42
1304 Aug 13	Flanders, Mons-en-Pévèle	French request a truce in order to wear down the Flemish army	AG, 64–65
1306 June 19	Scotland, Methven	Aymer of Valence requests to postpone a battle with Robert Bruce only to sally out and attack	NT, 409–10
1318 Jan	England, Pontefract	Edward II orders his troops to take up arms near the castle, believing that Thomas of Lancaster intended to break his truce	VES, 140–42