

**'Desperate with hunger': Food, Eating, and Cannibalism in  
Narratives of the First Crusade**

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## Abstract

This thesis examines representations of food, eating, and crusader cannibalism in a range of narrative sources of the First Crusade (1095–1099). While crusade historians have previously noted issues of food supply, hoarding, and foraging in crusade literature, little attention has been paid to the language, imagery, and metaphoric range of hunger in narratives of the campaign. As a result, crusader cannibalism is often examined out of context and isolated from wider themes of hunger and consumption. This thesis redresses this imbalance by situating depictions of crusader cannibalism from first-hand accounts, chronicles, and epic poetry of the First Crusade within the thematic context of hunger. By analysing how medieval crusade commentators engage with the concepts of abundance, dearth, and famine, this thesis demonstrates that discourses surrounding food and consumption have substantial explanatory force in crusade literature. Expressions of hunger are used alongside alimentary metaphors in narratives of the First Crusade to highlight and express the significance of the events of the campaign, including gruesome acts of crusader cannibalism, to their audience. This thesis comprises five chapters that focus on the form and function of hunger – the factor that drives crusaders to consume human flesh – in nine different accounts of the campaign, shedding new light on the role discourses of consumption play in the narrativisation of the First Crusade.

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## List of Abbreviations

- AA Albert of Aachen, *Albert of Aachen's History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, trans. by Susan B. Edgington, 2 vols (London: Routledge, 2016)
- Antioche* *La Chanson d'Antioche*, ed. by Suzanne Duparc-Quioc, 2 vols (Paris: Geuthner, 1976), I: *Édition du texte d'après la version ancienne*
- BB Baldric of Bourgueil, *The Historia Ierosolimitana of Baldric of Bourgueil*, ed. by Steven Biddlecombe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014)
- Chétifs* *Les Chétifs*, ed. by Geoffrey M. Myers, *The Old French Crusade Cycle*, 8 vols (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1981), V, pp. 3–95
- FC Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. by Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1913), pp. 119–351
- GF *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, ed. and trans. by Rosalind Hill (London: Thomas Nelson, 1962)
- GN Guibert de Nogent, '*Dei Gesta per Francos*', in *Dei gesta per Francos et cinq autres textes*, ed. by R. B. C. Huygens, *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 127A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996), pp. 76–352
- Jérusalem* *La Chanson de Jérusalem*, ed. by Nigel R. Thorp, *The Old French Crusade Cycle*, 8 vols (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992), VI, pp. 35–258
- OFCC Old French Crusade Cycle
- PT Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, ed. by John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1977)
- RA Raymond of Aguilers, *Le Liber de Raymond d'Aguilers*, ed. by John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1969)
- RM Robert the Monk, *The Historia Iherosolimitana of Robert the Monk*, ed. by Damien Kempf and Marcus G. Bull (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013)
- WT William of Tyre, *Guillaume de Tyr: Chronique*, ed. by R.B.C Huygens, *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis* 63–63A, 2 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986)



## Notes on Referencing and Styles

Reference has been made to both the edition and translation of key texts in this thesis for the reader's convenience. Any instances in which the author's translation of the edition differs from that of the modern published translation have been clearly noted.

The Latin dictionary consulted for key vocabulary is the *Lewis and Short Latin Dictionary*, ed. by C. Lewis and C. Short (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966) and for Old French the author has used the *Old French-English Dictionary*, ed. by Alan Hindley, Frederick W. Langley, and Brian J. Levy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

For biblical references, the author has used 'The Bible, Douay-Rheims, Complete', in *Project Gutenberg* <<https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1581/pg1581-images.html>> [accessed 17 April 2023]. Biblical quotations in Latin are taken from *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, ed. by Robert Weber and Roger Gryson, 5th edn (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).



## Introduction

[The crusaders] were so desperate with hunger they ended up – a horrible thing to have to describe – cutting up the bodies of the Turks, cooking them and eating them.<sup>1</sup>

In these few lines, Robert the Monk, writing about the events of the First Crusade (1095–1099) in c. 1110, highlights a causal relationship between the experience of extreme hunger and gruesome acts of cannibalism. While he presents cannibalism as a necessary act of survival, Robert is disgusted by the actions of the crusaders, men he repeatedly presents in his account of the campaign as instruments of the divine will. This interpretation of crusader cannibalism is not unique to Robert's text. Ten of the twelve extant Latin narratives of the First Crusade written within two decades of the campaign's conclusion similarly attempt to reconcile images of heroic Christian crusaders with seemingly savage cannibal activity.<sup>2</sup> Each account claims that at some point during the second siege of Antioch (June 1098) and the siege of Ma'arra an-Numan (November to December 1098), provisions were so scarce that, in order to survive, Christian crusaders cut flesh from the bodies of Turkish Muslims and cooked it to eat. At the heart of these episodes of crusader cannibalism is a complex discourse surrounding consumption, in which hunger features as

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<sup>1</sup> RM pp. 87–88; Robert the Monk, *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana*, ed. and trans. by Carol Sweetenham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 185–186.

<sup>2</sup> The following ten Latin chronicles of the First Crusade all reference Christian cannibalism: the *Gesta Francorum* (c. 1101), Peter Tudebode's *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere* (c. 1101–1111), the *Historia belli sacri* (c. 1130), Raymond of Aguiler's *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem* (c. 1101), Fulcher of Chartres' *Historia Hierosolymitana* (1127), Albert of Aachen's *Historia Hierosolymitanae* (c. 1125–1150), Robert the Monk's *Historia Iherosolimitana* (c. 1108/9), Baldric of Bourgueil's *Historia Ierosolimitana* (c. 1105), Ralph of Caen's *Gesta Tancredi in expeditione Hierosolymitana* (c. 1112), and Guibert of Nogent's *Dei gesta per Francos* (c. 1107). The only two near-contemporary accounts of the First Crusade that do not mention crusader cannibalism are Bartolph de Nangis' *Gesta Francorum Iherusalem expugnantium* (c. 1106) and Ekkehard of Aura's *Chronicon Universal* (c. 1101). Jay Rubenstein provides a detailed breakdown of the extant chronicles of the First Crusade in Jay Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', *French Historical Studies*, 31.4 (2011), 525–552 (p. 526).

both a physical need for food and a metaphor for desire that instigates action at key junctures in the narrative. It is these representations of hunger – the factor that ultimately drives men to consume human flesh in narratives of the First Crusade – that differ substantially from text to text. In the hundred years after the campaign's conclusion, hunger remained a central theme in discussions of the experience of crusading and continued to provide an explanatory framework in which crusader cannibalism could be explored.

Crusade historians have noted issues of food supply, hoarding, and foraging in accounts of the First Crusade, but have previously paid little attention to the language, imagery, and metaphoric range of hunger in narratives of the campaign. For this reason, modern scholarship often examines crusader cannibalism out of context, isolating episodes of man-eating from wider themes of hunger, eating, and consumption. I redress this imbalance by situating depictions of crusader cannibalism from a selection of first-hand accounts, chronicles, and epic poetry of the First Crusade within the thematic context of hunger. This investigation recontextualises crusader cannibalism by asking how do food, food preparation, and eating feature in narratives of the campaign? What do crusaders eat when food is scarce? What prevailing discourses surrounding hunger and eating do crusade commentators draw on, and how do these vocabularies of consumption inform the form and function of cannibalism in First Crusade literature?

To answer these questions, this thesis analyses a range of texts which narrate – or tell stories about – the events of the First Crusade. Each of the texts examined in this investigation were composed within a century of the First Crusade's conclusion and all explicitly refer to cannibalism in the context of crusader hunger. In the hundred years after 1099, two more major expeditions left Europe for the near East: the Second Crusade (1145–1149), led by Louis VII of France (1137–1180) and Conrad III of Germany (1138–1152), and the Third Crusade (1189–1192), led by Richard I of England (1189–1199) and

Philip II of France (1180–1223).<sup>3</sup> While there are no references to crusader cannibalism in accounts of the Second Crusade, the late-thirteenth-century Middle English romance *Richard Coer de Lyon* depicts Richard I consuming human flesh in Acre during the Third Crusade. Indeed, *Richard Coer de Lyon* records two episodes of royal anthropophagy; the first depicts Richard unwittingly consuming the flesh of a Muslim prisoner believing it to be pork, and the second describes Richard serving the prepared flesh of dead Muslims to Saladin's emissaries.<sup>4</sup> While the timeframe of this study spans the first three numbered crusades, due to the range and richness of sources, and the very late date of *Richard Coer de Lyon*, I have chosen to confine my investigation to accounts of First Crusade cannibalism to ensure that my analysis is focussed and well contextualised. I do, however, expect my findings to be relevant to any future analyses of representations of food, eating, and cannibalism in other crusading contexts.

Central to this thesis are several chronicles, epic poems, and histories that offer different yet interrelated perspectives on the First Crusade and its significance in human history. While these texts feature various literary characteristics and conform to different genre conventions, they can be examined comparatively because they all construct a

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<sup>3</sup> A wealth of scholarship focuses on these crusade movements. See: Jason Roche and Janus Møller Jensen ed., *The Second Crusade: Holy War on the Periphery of Latin Christendom* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015); and, Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), pp. 243–474.

<sup>4</sup> *Richard Coer de Lyon*, ed. by Peter Larkin (Kalamazoo, MI: Published for TEAMs in Association with the University of Rochester by Medieval Institute Publications, 2015), pp. 89–91, l. 3027–3124, and pp. 98–103, l. 3409–3655. For detailed discussions about the episodes of anthropophagy depicted in *Richard Coer de Lyon* see: Heather Blurton, 'The Fleisch of a Sarazeyn: Cannibalism, Genre, and Nationalism', in *Cannibalism in High Medieval English Literature* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 105–131; Geraldine Heng, 'The Romance of England: Richard Coer de Lyon and the Politics of Race, Religion, Sexuality, and Nation', in *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. 63–113; Nicola McDonald, 'Eating People and the Alimentary Logic of *Richard Coeur de Lion*', in *Pulp Fictions of Medieval England*, ed. by Nicola McDonald (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 124–150; and Emily Leverett, 'Reading the Consumed: Flayed and Cannibalized Bodies in *The Siege of Jerusalem* and *Richard Coer de Lyon*', in *Flaying in the Pre-Modern World: Practice and Representation*, ed. by Larissa Tracy (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2017), pp. 285–307.

narrative out of the events of the First Crusade.<sup>5</sup> This study examines the four first-hand accounts of the campaign: the late-eleventh-century work of the anonymous *Gesta Francorum* (GF) author, and the early-twelfth-century texts of Raymond of Aguilers, Fulcher of Chartres, and Peter Tudebode.<sup>6</sup> These chronicles are presented from the perspective of clerical and secular men who participated in the campaign itself and were thus eyewitnesses to the events they describe in their texts. I also consider the early-twelfth-century chronicles of the French Benedictine monks Robert the Monk, Baldric of Bourgueil, and Guibert of Nogent.<sup>7</sup> These men use the first-hand accounts as their foundational sources but take a more theologically refined approach to narrativising the campaign, more directly apportioning the events of the First Crusade to God's will. My investigation continues with an analysis of the epic poems the *Chanson d'Antioche*, the *Chanson de Chétifs*, and the *Chanson de Jérusalem*, which survive in thirteenth-century versions but were originally composed in the twelfth century based on an oral tradition as well as written sources like the Benedictine chronicles.<sup>8</sup> These poems are composed in Old French and present the events of the campaign in a stylised format designed to be performed. The final text explored in this thesis is the late-twelfth-century history of William of Tyre which offers the perspective of a secular bishop writing in Jerusalem in the wake of the unsuccessful Second Crusade and on the eve of the Third Crusade.<sup>9</sup> William's text uses the narrative precedents of first-hand accounts, second-generation chronicles, and third-generation epic poetry to highlight how the events of the First Crusade and the actions of its participants led to the creation of the Crusader States.

Apart from Raymond, Peter, and Fulcher, who wrote contemporaneously to the anonymous GF-author, all selected crusade commentators examined in this investigation

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<sup>5</sup> Beth C. Spacey, *The Miraculous and the Writing of the Crusade Narrative* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020), p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> GF; RA; FC; and, PT.

<sup>7</sup> RM; BB; and GN.

<sup>8</sup> *Antioche*; *Chétifs*; and *Jérusalem*.

<sup>9</sup> WT.

use aspects of the *GF* narrative to inform or shape their accounts of the First Crusade. These authors contribute to a wider *GF* tradition by incorporating elements of the *GF*'s structure, themes, or motifs into their accounts of the campaign. Analysing texts from within this literary tradition offers the opportunity to examine how the events of the First Crusade and its sources were interpreted and developed by subsequent generations of crusade commentators. This focus has led to the intentional omission of crusade sources that were compiled independently of the *GF* tradition, such as Albert of Aachen's *Historia Hierosolymitanae* and Ralph of Caen's *Gesta Tancredi in expeditione Hierosolymitana*. While these texts engage with the themes of hunger, consumption, and cannibalism addressed in this thesis, Albert's and Ralph's accounts of the First Crusade were not informed by the *GF* tradition and do not, therefore, shed light on how specific alimentary and dietary themes inherited from the *GF* evolved or endured across time and texts.

A close reading of sources from within the *GF* tradition highlights hunger as a narrative 'ingredient' in accounts of the First Crusade, shaped by and dependent on inherited vocabularies of consumption. This investigation demonstrates for the first time that medieval discourses of food, hunger, and eating had substantial explanatory force in crusade literature, helping authors communicate the significance of the events of the First Crusade, including acts of crusader cannibalism, to their audiences.

## Cannibalism

The term 'cannibal' – referring to a human that eats another human – did not exist in the period examined in this thesis. 'Cannibal' has its etymological origins in the Spanish word *Canibales*, which first circulated at the end of the fifteenth century as a mispronunciation of 'Caribes', an indigenous people of the Caribbean whom Christopher Columbus believed to be man-eaters.<sup>10</sup> The term was subsequently used as a descriptive term for human flesh-

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<sup>10</sup> William Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 44. See also, Peter Hulme, 'Columbus and the Cannibals: A Study of the Reports of

eaters in other populations and became a defining feature in colonial encounters in the New World.<sup>11</sup> For scholars of the early modern and modern period, the emergence of the term ‘cannibal’ and its relation to early European encounters with the Americas has created links between the figure of ‘the cannibal’ and the discourse of colonialism.<sup>12</sup> This thesis looks at older ideas of human flesh consumption. To avoid anachronism, therefore, it is necessary to ascertain what eleventh- to thirteenth-century writers understood of human flesh consumption, its related imagery, and its significance.

Prior to the fifteenth century, discussions of human flesh consumption were furnished with Greek terminology: *Anthropofagos*, literally, human-eater, and *androphagos*, man-eater.<sup>13</sup> *Anthrophagi* – which is the Latin version of the Greek term for ‘human-eaters’ – appear most commonly in ancient and medieval ethnography where they are positioned firmly at the periphery of the civilised known world with other monstrous ‘races’.<sup>14</sup> Classical Graeco-Roman accounts of these monstrous races exhibit an ethnocentrism that made the observer’s culture, language, and physical appearance the ‘norm’ to which others were compared.<sup>15</sup> The term ‘man-eater’ conforms to this ethnocentric view because it categorises a group by their unconventional diet, highlighting their alterity from the observer on the basis of their eating habits. This diet-based categorisation was not unusual. Pliny the Elder, whose first-century encyclopaedic catalogue of the monstrous races was widely disseminated throughout the Middle Ages,

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Anthropophagy in the Journal of Christopher Columbus’, *Ibero-amerikanisches Archiv*, 4.2 (1978), 115–139; and Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean 1492–1797* (London: Methuen, 1986), pp. 13–44.

<sup>11</sup> Shirley Lindenbaum, ‘Thinking about Cannibalism’, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 33.1 (2004), 475–498 (p. 477).

<sup>12</sup> Giulia Champion, ‘Introduction: A Severed Head on a Silver Platter: Bloody Banquets, Revenge Cannibalism and Future Foodways’, in *Interdisciplinary Essays on Cannibalism: Bites Here and There*, ed. by Giulia Champion (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), pp. 3–7 (p. 4.).

<sup>13</sup> Champion, ‘Introduction’, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Merrall L. Price, *Consuming Passions: The Use of Cannibalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), p. 26.



characterised many peoples by the dominant food in their diet. In his *Natural History*, Pliny mentions Straw-Drinkers; Raw-Meat-Eaters; dog-milking *Cynomolgi*; *Panphagi*, who, as their name suggests, ate anything; and Apple-Smellers who had no need to eat at all, surviving on the scent of apples and flowers alone.<sup>16</sup> According to Plinian tradition, *Anthropophagi* were human or human-beast hybrids, like the dog-headed *Cynocephali*, who consumed any human flesh they could find, including that of their family members.<sup>17</sup> This distinction highlights the difference between the term ‘anthropophagy’ and the modern definition of ‘cannibalism’. While both terms specifically identify ‘the eaten’ as human, unlike cannibalism, ‘anthropophagy’ does not necessarily imply intraspecies consumption.<sup>18</sup> However, as the word ‘cannibal’ is much more accessible to modern audiences and the sources examined in this thesis exclusively refer to humans eating other humans, the terms ‘anthropophagy’ and ‘cannibalism’ will be used interchangeably in this investigation to refer to the consumption of human flesh by another human being.

Crucially, ancient and medieval ethnographic discourses position encounters with the monstrous races at geographical extremes. *Anthropophagi* are confined to parts of the known world as far away from ‘civilisation’ as possible. This idea is given visual schematization on medieval world maps.<sup>19</sup> The late-thirteenth-century Hereford *mappa mundi*, for instance, positions Jerusalem at the centre of the known world, and relegates twenty monstrous races to its borders.<sup>20</sup> Integral to the development of literary representations of cannibalism in the Middle Ages was, therefore, the *Marvels of the East* tradition. The *Marvels of the East* literature, or *mirabilia*, refers to a wide range of texts that

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<sup>16</sup> Pliny’s description of ‘monstrous races’ can primarily be found in Books VI and VII of his *Natural History*. See: Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. by H. Rackham, 10 vols (London: William Heinemann, 1942), II, pp. 337–651.

<sup>17</sup> Pliny the Elder, p. 377; and, Friedman, p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> Champion, ‘Introduction’, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Friedman, p. 37.

<sup>20</sup> Friedman, p. 37.

describe the wonders of alien places and peoples from the perspective of travellers.<sup>21</sup> This classical genre of travel literature provided the context in which cannibals and other Plinian races were encountered in the medieval period.<sup>22</sup> *Mirabilia* draws their inspiration from the ancient encyclopaedic works of authors like Pliny the Elder, and includes works such as the fourteenth-century – presumably fictitious – travelogue the *Travels of Sir John Mandeville*.<sup>23</sup> Mandeville allegedly travelled for thirty-four years, visiting places from Rome and China, to India and Africa. In his narrative, he presents several descriptions of anthropophagus peoples. Mandeville describes people from Sumatra fattening up children before eating them, people near the Indonesian island of Java drinking the blood of their enemies, *Cynocephali* in Nicobar eating their foe, and, Tibetans leaving the bodies of deceased community members to be eaten by birds, while their heads were cooked and eaten by guests.<sup>24</sup> Mandeville's treatment of the Mongols in particular, whom he describes cooking the ears of their victims in vinegar, provided one part of the conceptual framework with which Columbus interpreted the inhabitants of the New World.<sup>25</sup>

Within the *mirabilia* genre, categories of anthropophagy emerge. In their attempts to interpret literary representations of man-eating, modern scholars have identified two broad categories of cannibalism: exocannibalism and endocannibalism. The former refers to the consumption of a person with the same communal identity as the consumer, and the latter relates to the consumption of a person positioned outside the consumer's communal

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<sup>21</sup> Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travellers and Cosmographers: Studies in the History of Early Modern Travel and Ethnology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> Blurton, *Cannibalism*, p. 4. *Marvels of the East* was originally a title coined by M. R. James for three related Anglo-Saxon manuscripts that document the strange creatures that inhabit the corners of the earth: M. R. James, ed., *Marvels of the East: A Full Reproduction of the Three Known Copies* (Oxford: Roxburghe Club, 1929).

<sup>23</sup> John Mandeville, 'The Book of John Mandeville', in *The Book of John Mandeville with Related Texts*, ed. and trans. by Iain Macleod Higgins (Cambridge: Hackett, 2011), pp. 1–186.

<sup>24</sup> Mandeville, pp. 111, 120, 121, and 182. See also, Vincent Vandenberg, 'Choosing Human Flesh? A Few Medieval Peculiarities and the Debates of Contemporary Research', *Anthropozoologica*, 45.1 (2010), 149–155 (p. 154).

<sup>25</sup> Blurton, *Cannibalism*, pp. 4–5. For Mandeville's description of the Mongols, see, pp. 147–151, especially p. 149 for cannibalism.

identity.<sup>26</sup> In Pliny's description of *Anthropophagi* consuming their parents is an example of endocannibalism; and, in Mandeville's account of *Cynocephali* in Nicobar devouring their enemies, we see an act of exocannibalism. Endo- and exocannibalism usefully identify socio-cultural relationships between consumer and consumed.

These categories are often broken down further into subcategories based on *why* individuals consume human flesh. Anthropologists have analysed funerary or mortuary cannibalism, the ritual consumption of human flesh as part of death rites; survival or famine cannibalism, in which people usually averse to the practice of anthropophagy are driven to eat human flesh to survive; and gastronomic cannibalism, the consumption of human flesh for its taste or nutritional value.<sup>27</sup> Numerous reasons for cannibalism have been cited and discussed in historical and anthropological discourse, and the examples mentioned above merely provide a typographical introduction to the real and imaginary contexts in which human flesh consumption might occur.<sup>28</sup> The categories of cannibalism addressed in this study will be outlined in more detail below. It is enough for now to note that in medieval literary representations of cannibals, anthropophagy draws together ideas of exclusion, inversion, monstrosity, and death.<sup>29</sup>

It is no surprise, therefore, that 'otherness' remains a key theme addressed by modern scholars examining representations of anthropophagy in medieval narratives. The relationship between cannibalism and processes of othering has been scrutinized

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<sup>26</sup> Katy Mortimer, 'Digesting Cannibalism: Revisiting Representations of Man-Eating Crusaders in Narrative Sources for the First Crusade', in *Chronicle, Crusade, and the Latin East: Essays in Honour of Susan B. Edgington*, ed. by Andrew D. Buck and Thomas W. Smith (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022), pp. 109–130 (p. 111).

<sup>27</sup> Mortimer, 'Digesting Cannibalism', p. 111. For anthropological approaches to cannibalism, see Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth*; Beth A. Conklin, "'Thus Are Our Bodies, Thus Was Our Custom': Mortuary Cannibalism in an Amazonian Society', *American Ethnologist*, 22.1 (1995), 75–101; Marshall Sahlins, 'Artificially Maintained Controversies: Global Warming and Fijian Cannibalism', *Anthropology Today*, 19:3 (2003), 3–5; and Lindenbaum, 'Thinking about Cannibalism'.

<sup>28</sup> Mortimer, 'Digesting Cannibalism', p. 111.

<sup>29</sup> Ladan Niayesh, 'The Bloody Banquet (1639) et la tradition du banquet cannibale' in *Food for thought ou les avatars de la nourriture*, ed. by Marie-Claire Rouyer (Université Michel de Montaigne: Bordeaux, 1998), pp. 145–158 (p. 150).

extensively and especially in relation to travel literature and ethnographic accounts of cross-cultural encounters.<sup>30</sup> Medieval depictions of the Mongols for example, who threatened the borders of Europe in the thirteenth century, have been analysed through the lens of ‘otherness’ by modern scholars. The alleged cannibal activity of the Mongols was insisted on in the work of early missionaries to Mongol-held territories such as John of Plano Carpini (c. 1185–1252) and Simon of Saint-Quentin (*fl.* 1245–1248), and also in the work of those who had had no contact with the Mongols at all, such as the *Chronica Majora* by the English Benedictine monk and chronicler, Matthew of Paris (c. 1200–1259).<sup>31</sup> John and Simon suggest that the Mongols ate human flesh to survive, for pleasure, and to strike fear in their enemies, and Matthew depicts the Mongols devouring human flesh – raw and cooked – in an anthropophagical banquet.<sup>32</sup> Noreen Giffney, among others, examines the discourses of alterity that underpin depictions of Mongols in sources from Western Christendom, primarily Matthew Paris’ *Chronica Majora*.<sup>33</sup> Giffney argues that descriptions of Mongol cannibalism, alongside other factors such as their physicality and beast-like behaviour, were part of an ‘othering’ process that rendered Mongol bodies both ‘monstrous’ and dangerous in Western thought.<sup>34</sup> Allegations of cannibalism are, according

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<sup>30</sup> See, for instance: Kim M. Phillips, *Before Orientalism: Asian Peoples and Cultures in European Travel Writing 1245–1510* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), pp. 73–100; and, Price, *Consuming Passions*, pp. 87–117.

<sup>31</sup> Blurton, *Cannibalism*, pp. 82–83. See also, Gregory Guzman, ‘Reports of Mongol Cannibalism in Thirteenth-Century Latin Sources: Oriental Fact or Western Fiction?’, in *Discovering New Worlds: Essays on Medieval Exploration and Imagination*, ed. by Scott Westrem (New York: Garland, 1991), pp. 31–68.

<sup>32</sup> John of Plano Carpini, ‘History of the Mongols’, in *Mission to Asia*, ed. by Christopher Dawson, trans. by a nun of Stanbrook Abbey (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1980), pp. 3–73 (p. 16); Simon de Saint-Quentin, *Histoire des Tartares*, ed. by Jean Richard (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1965), pp. 38, 41, and 45; and Matthew Paris, *Matthaei Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani Chronica majora*, ed. by Henry Richards Luard, *Rerum Britannicarum medii aevi scriptores* LVII, 7 vols (London: Longman, 1872–1883), III, p. 488.

<sup>33</sup> Noreen Giffney, ‘Monstrous Mongols’, *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies*, 3.2 (2012), 227–245 (p. 227). See also, Maurizio Peleggi, ‘Shifting Alterity: The Mongol in the Visual and Literary Culture of the Late Middle Ages’, *The Medieval History Journal*, 4.1 (2001), 15–33.

<sup>34</sup> Giffney, pp. 234–237.

to Giffney, used by authors such as Matthew Paris to highlight the perceived threat the Mongols posed to the physical and spiritual wellbeing of Christendom.

Indeed, defining ‘otherness’ and ‘others’ necessarily calls into question the parameters of the self and collective identities. Maggie Kilgour suggests that, as a marker of alterity, anthropophagy should be understood as part of a self/other binary.<sup>35</sup> In her examination of acts of incorporation, Kilgour suggests that things that exist ‘outside’ of the self are often crudely categorised as bad because they are ‘other’ and ‘external’, and those thought of as ‘inside’ the self are perceived as good precisely because they are not ‘other’.<sup>36</sup> In this case, metaphorical and literal acts of incorporation provide an opportunity to internalise the external, neutralising its otherness and confirming the boundaries between the self and the other.

Heather Blurton and Roberta Marangi acknowledge, however, the innate paradox of viewing cannibalism in this context. While the monstrous and geographically removed cannibal may be characterised by its ‘otherness’, the act of cannibalism itself blurs the line between the internal and external because it is defined by its uncomfortable similitude: ‘the cannibal by definition eats only those who are just like itself’.<sup>37</sup> While binary concepts of opposition such as the self and the ‘other’ can be used effectively to understand historical perceptions of ethnography, conquest, and invasion, these processes of identification do not account for the nuance of anthropophagical representation in crusade literature. As this thesis will demonstrate, these narratives invariably seek to negotiate the fact that crusader cannibals – guilty (or allegedly guilty) of the same savage acts of consumption as those *anthropophagi* in *mirabilia* sources – were still part of the Christian

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<sup>35</sup> Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 4–5.

<sup>36</sup> Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism*, pp. 4–5.

<sup>37</sup> Heather Blurton, *Cannibalism in High Medieval English Literature* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), p. 9; and, Roberta Marangi, ‘Cannibalism and Femininity: From the Old English *Judith* to *Game of Thrones*’ Arya Stark’, in *Interdisciplinary Essays on Cannibalism: Bites Here and There*, ed. by Giulia Champion (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), pp. 24–41 (p. 26).

collective identity, not an external ‘other’. I argue that, in many cases, depictions of crusader cannibalism are less about othering ‘the eater’, and more about othering ‘the eaten’.

Reports of cannibalism within the confines of Christendom were not unusual in the medieval period. Famine was a constant concern. As Blurton has noted, ‘slash and burn military strategies and climatic fluctuations severely impacted crop and livestock production’, with devastating results.<sup>38</sup> Modern approaches to medieval dearth and famine exist as part of wider explorations of medieval food production and consumption, nutrition, and economic geography, aspects of ‘everyday’ medieval life that have received increased scholarly attention over the past thirty years.<sup>39</sup> Medieval depictions of cannibalism are often interpreted by modern scholars as a shorthand that expresses the severity and desperation of famine.<sup>40</sup> Consuming human flesh to prevent starvation was not an unknown phenomenon in medieval Europe: acts of cannibalism are reported by medieval European chroniclers during the famines of 793, 868–69, 1005, 1032, 1069, 1146, 1233, 1241–42, 1277, 128–82, and 1315–17 (the Great Famine).<sup>41</sup> The Benedictine monk Rodulfus Glaber, for example, notes that during the Europe-wide famine in 1032, bands of starving cannibals attacked travellers in forests, dismembering and cooking their flesh to eat.<sup>42</sup> According to Rodulfus, starving children were lured to secluded locations on the promise of

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<sup>38</sup> Blurton, *Cannibalism*, pp. 139–40, n. 2. See also Andrew B. Appleby, ‘Epidemics and Famine in the Little Ice Age’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 10 (1980), 643–663; William Chester Jordan, *The Great Famine: Northern Europe in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Julia Marvin, ‘Cannibalism as an Aspect of Famine in Two English Chronicles’, in *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Martha Carlin and Joel T. Rosenthal (London: The Hambledon Press, 1998), pp. 73–86.

<sup>39</sup> Martha Carlin and Joel T. Rosenthal ed., *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1998), p. ix. On medieval dearth, see, for example: Melitta Weiss Adamson, *Food in Medieval Times* (London: Greenwood Press, 2004); Philip Slavin, ‘Ecology, Famine and Religious Violence: the Case of the Crusading Movement, 1095–1320’, in *Crisis alimentarias en la Edad Media*, ed. by Pere Benito i Monclús (Lleida: Editorial Milenio, 2013), pp. 173–190.

<sup>40</sup> Blurton, *Cannibalism*, p. 139, n. 2.

<sup>41</sup> See Heng, *Empire of Magic*, p. 27; Blurton, *Cannibalism*, pp. 139–40, n. 2.

<sup>42</sup> Rubenstein, ‘Cannibals and Crusaders’, p. 531; Rodulfus Glaber, *The Five Books of the Histories*, ed. and trans. by John France (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 187–189.

an apple or an egg and then killed and eaten, and dead bodies were exhumed and consumed to appease the hungry. Rodulfus concludes that cannibalism became so commonplace in France that human flesh was sold at a market in Tournus ‘like that of some beast’.<sup>43</sup> As Vincent Vandenberg has pointed out in his examination of Rodulfus’ account of famine-induced cannibalism, the survival cannibalism captured in these narratives transforms human flesh into meat for consumption.<sup>44</sup> What emerges is an inversion of the normal state of things, in which disorganised and savage survival strategies become organised food practices.<sup>45</sup> In this context, the concept of hunger has explanatory force. At its most basic level, the human need to eat to survive is at the root of these acts of cannibalism.

In their accounts of the First Crusade, Robert the Monk and his contemporaries ultimately present the crusaders’ cannibalism as an act of survival; but categories of literary anthropophagy often appear simultaneously within episodes, creating a complex representation of cannibalism and of cannibals, and their motives in crusade literature. For this reason, survival cannibalism is just one type of anthropophagy investigated in this thesis. I also consider episodes of gastronomic cannibalism, which positively emphasise the taste and food value of human flesh recorded in later narratives of the First Crusade, and two interrelated subcategories of anthropophagy underrepresented in modern scholarship: strategic cannibalism and staged cannibalism. The former refers to acts of cannibalism that function as part of a military strategy. Richard I’s anthropophagy has been discussed in this light in the last two decades, but little attention has been paid to episodes of strategic cannibalism depicted in narratives of the First Crusade.<sup>46</sup> Staged cannibalism pertains to

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<sup>43</sup> Rodulfus Glaber, p. 189.

<sup>44</sup> Vandenberg, ‘Choosing Human Flesh?’, p. 151.

<sup>45</sup> Vandenberg, ‘Choosing Human Flesh??’, p. 151.

<sup>46</sup> For the strategic implications of cannibalism in *Richard Coer de Lyon*, see: Suzanne Conklin Akbari, ‘The Hunger for National Identity in Richard Coer de Lion’, in *Reading Medieval Culture: Essays in Honor of Robert W. Hanning*, ed. Robert M. Stein and Sandra Pierson Prior (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), pp. 198–227 (pp. 206–214); and L. F. Cordery, ‘Cannibal Diplomacy: Otherness in the Middle English Text

episodes in which human flesh is culinarily prepared as if for consumption, but no actual cannibalism takes place. Survival and gastronomic cannibalism are depicted as inwardly motivated and grounded in the basic human need for sustenance and nourishment. Both strategic and staged cannibalism, on the other hand, are centred on the visibility of consumption for their strategic purposes. They relate less to hunger, but still rely on vocabularies of consumption and literary tropes pertaining to eating and ingestion.

### Crusader Cannibals

In the accounts of the First Crusade addressed in this study, elements of survival, staged, strategic, and gastronomic exocannibalism are uncomfortably woven into narratives of the campaign which simultaneously present the Christian crusaders as heroic instruments of the divine will, yet also as savage cannibals who devour the flesh of their Muslim enemies. Modern crusade historians have traditionally engaged with crusader cannibalism as part of empirical reconstructions of the First Crusade. As a result, anthropophagy often features as one facet in explorations of crusade siege warfare. Cannibalism is identified as an extreme but obscure episode, peripheral to the main chronology of the First Crusade. This interpretation is based predominantly on the Latin narratives of the campaign, composed within twenty years of the expedition's conclusion, but despite each narrative's rich engagement with what the crusaders ate and how they procured provisions, the consumption of human flesh is reduced to a footnote in empirical reconstructions of the campaign.

Jonathan Riley-Smith, for instance, summarises the four first-hand chronicles' accounts of anthropophagy in one line in his description of the siege of Ma'arra, noting 'it was reported that so desperate did the plight of the poor become that some even resorted

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*Richard Coer de Lion'*, in *Meeting the Foreign in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Albrecht Classen (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 153–171 (pp. 160–169).



to cannibalism'.<sup>47</sup> John France and Christopher Tyerman are similarly reserved in their acknowledgment of crusader cannibalism and, relying on the descriptions of man-eating described in the work of Guibert of Nogent and the *Chanson d'Antioche*, attribute anthropophagy at Ma'arra to an impoverished and starving subgroup of the crusading force, the Tafurs.<sup>48</sup> Thomas Asbridge provides a lengthier discussion of crusader cannibalism, dedicating a page and a half to the topic in both his 2005 and 2010 monographs.<sup>49</sup> Asbridge quotes (although does not cite) the *GF*-author's, Fulcher of Chartres', and Raymond of Aguilers' account of anthropophagy in Ma'arra, suggesting that these authors engaged with crusader cannibalism within the context of sanctioned and unsanctioned violence in war. This allows Asbridge to briefly focus on the tactical advantage allegations of anthropophagy had in bolstering the crusaders' reputation for savagery amongst Syrian Muslims.<sup>50</sup>

While emphasised in the Latin sources, the suggestion that rumours of Christian cannibalism actually lent the crusaders a reputation for savagery in the minds of their enemy seems unfounded, especially as no contemporary Arabic chronicler explicitly mentions crusader cannibalism.<sup>51</sup> That is not to say accounts of crusader cannibalism exist only in Latin sources. Two thirteenth-century Arabic sources mention crusader cannibalism in their accounts of the campaign, but suggest these acts were carried out by Christians in Antioch rather than Ma'arra. Ibn al-Athir (c. 1160–1232/3) notes that the crusaders ran out of food thirteen days after they entered Antioch, which forced the rich to feed on beasts of

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<sup>47</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London: Continuum, 1986), p. 66.

<sup>48</sup> John France, *Victory in the East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 22, 139, 315; Tyerman, *God's War*, pp. 149–50.

<sup>49</sup> Thomas S. Asbridge, *The First Crusade: A New History* (London: Free Press, 2005), p. 274–75; Thomas S. Asbridge, *The Crusades: The War for the Holy Land* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2010), pp. 84–85.

<sup>50</sup> Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, p. 274; Asbridge, *The Crusades*, p. 85.

<sup>51</sup> Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', p. 327.

burden and ‘the poor on dead bodies and tree leaves’.<sup>52</sup> Kemal al-Din (c. 1192–1262) similarly notes that the crusaders were reduced to eating ‘the flesh of cadavers and dead animals’ in Antioch.<sup>53</sup> It has been suggested that Ibn al-Qalanisi (c. 1071–1160), who was living in Damascus during the First Crusade, mentions in his *Damascus Chronicle* that poor crusaders were forced to eat ‘carrion’ while they were in Antioch.<sup>54</sup> This has been interpreted as anthropophagy by some scholars, but is just as likely to refer to dead animals.<sup>55</sup>

In their brief assessments of crusader cannibalism, Riley-Smith, France, Tyerman, and Asbridge all regard the consumption of human flesh at Ma’arra as an aberration, illustrating the logistical difficulties of siege warfare. While sieges are important in accounts of the First Crusade, especially the sieges of Antioch (20 October 1097–June 1098) which appears as the narrative climax to most accounts of the campaign in the *GF* tradition, concentrating on them in isolation does not enrich our understanding of medieval interpretations of crusader cannibalism. As this investigation shows, looking more broadly

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<sup>52</sup> The English translations of the following Arabic chronicles are my own from the French translations cited. Ibn al-Athir, ‘Extrait de la chronique intitulée Kamel-Alteverkykh par Ibn-Alatyr’, in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Historiens Orientaux*, 5 vols (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1872–1906), I (1872), 189–744 (p. 194). *The Complete History* by Ibn al-Athir chronicles Islamic history from Creation up until shortly before the author’s death. A large proportion of this work is dedicated to describing Muslim responses to crusading activity in the Levant (1097–1231).

<sup>53</sup> Kemal al-Din’s reference to Christian man-eaters appears in a much broader work that draws together biographies of eminent figures in the region of Aleppo, descriptions of towns and landscapes, pieces of prose and poetry, as well as a history of Islam. Kemal al-Din, ‘Extraits de la chronique d’Alep par Kemal ed-Din’, in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Historiens Orientaux*, 5 vols, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1872–1906), III (1884), 571–690 (p. 583).

<sup>54</sup> Ibn al-Qalanisi, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, ed. and trans. by H. A. R. Gibb (London: Luzac, 1962), p. 46. Ibn al-Qalanisi’s chronicle is one of the few contemporary accounts of the First Crusade written from the Muslim perspective in the immediate aftermath of the campaign. This source was used by subsequent Arabic chronicles to inform their accounts of the First Crusade. Both Ibn al-Athir and Kemal al-Din, mentioned above, quote *The Damascus Chronicle* in their histories. See: H. A. R. Gibb, ‘Introduction’ to *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, ed. and trans. by H. A. R. Gibb (London: Luzac, 1962), pp. 7–40 (pp. 10–11).

<sup>55</sup> See Rubenstein, ‘Cannibals and Crusaders’, pp. 527–528, n. 39; and, Geraldine Heng, ‘Cannibalism, the First Crusade, and the Genesis of Medieval Romance’, *A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 10.1 (1998), 98–174 (p. 146, n. 12).

at food and hunger will help contextualise the significance of anthropophagy in these narratives.

The earliest sustained analysis of crusader cannibalism, by Lewis A. M. Sumberg in 1959, examines depictions of Tafur cannibals in chronicles and epic poems of the First Crusade to reconstruct part of the crusading force's social makeup.<sup>56</sup> Specifically, Sumberg attempts to identify the historical Tafurs, concluding that they were probably a group of impoverished and roguish soldiers from Flanders.<sup>57</sup> Sumberg's argument suggests that historically, all crusader cannibalism was committed by these Tafurs. France and Tyerman similarly cite the Tafurs as the sole perpetrators of anthropophagy, referencing the texts of the *GF*-author and Raymond of Aguilers explicitly, and Guibert of Nogent and the *Chanson d'Antioche* more broadly, to support this conclusion.<sup>58</sup> The Tafurs are not universally held responsible for anthropophagy in narratives of the First Crusade, however. Of the sources examined in this thesis, only Guibert of Nogent and the *Chanson* trilogy explicitly blame crusader cannibalism on the Tafurs. The other sources examined here make no specific reference to *who* committed acts of cannibalism during the expedition; it is merely acknowledged that those consuming human flesh were desperately hungry members of the Christian force. The almost universal blame placed on the Tafurs in modern scholarship of the First Crusade, despite the group's limited presence in extant crusade narratives, misrepresents contemporary perceptions of crusader cannibalism. Unpacking the 'Tafur mythology' that has embedded itself in modern reconstructions of the campaign demands a more focused look at crusader cannibalism and the literary and historical contexts in which it is presented, drawing anthropophagy away from the margins of crusade history.

Jay Rubenstein, who provides the most sustained analysis of crusader cannibalism to date, has begun the process of recontextualising the 'Tafur mythology' in narratives of

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<sup>56</sup> Lewis A. M. Sumberg, 'The Tafurs and the First Crusade', *Mediaeval Studies*, 21 (1959), 224–246.

<sup>57</sup> Sumberg, 'The Tafurs', p. 227.

<sup>58</sup> France, *Victory in the East*, pp. 22, 139, 315; Tyerman, *God's War*, pp. 149–50.

the First Crusade.<sup>59</sup> Rubenstein consolidates 'eye-witness' testimonies, second-generation Benedictine chronicles, and twelfth-century *chansons de geste* (a form of epic poetry), including the *Chanson d'Antioche* trilogy, to provide a plausible reconstruction of cannibalism in the First Crusade. Through a close reading of his selected sources, Rubenstein concludes that crusader cannibalism was probably not confined to a single incident during the First Crusade, nor was it always described as a direct response to hunger.<sup>60</sup> This close reading of primary source material disrupts the neat chronology of anthropophagy at Ma'arra presented in the work of Riley-Smith, France, Tyerman, and Asbridge, and starts to highlight ways in which crusade commentators engaged with the concept of crusader cannibalism in their writing. Rubenstein looks at how the *Tafurs* feature in Guibert of Nogent's text and in a selection of twelfth-century *chansons de geste* and suggests that by blaming acts of cannibalism on an impoverished subset of the Christian army, authors deflected accusations of savage anthropophagy from the crusading force proper.<sup>61</sup> With this argument, Rubenstein refreshingly investigates the representation of, rather than the reality of, crusader cannibalism in narratives of the First Crusade. This thesis follows a similar line of enquiry. I am not interested in the historical reality of crusader cannibalism; rather, I seek to analyse to how anthropophagy is represented and understood in the literature of the First Crusade.

Narratological readings of crusade sources – that is, focussed analyses of the literary construction and implied significance of certain episodes in narratives of the expedition – enrich our understanding of how crusade commentators assigned meaning to events of the campaign. Several recent studies address the narrative form and function of episodes of crusader cannibalism, though each of these focuses more broadly on romance or epic literature from the medieval period.<sup>62</sup> Geraldine Heng, for instance, examines the

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<sup>59</sup> Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', pp. 525–552.

<sup>60</sup> Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', p. 550.

<sup>61</sup> Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', p. 530.

<sup>62</sup> Mortimer, 'Digesting Cannibalism', p. 113.

trajectory of a ‘cultural memory’ surrounding crusader cannibalism by comparing depictions of anthropophagy in three first-hand accounts of the campaign to episodes in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britannie* (c. 1130–1139).<sup>63</sup> Heng posits that the trauma and cultural pollution experienced in western-Europe as a result of crusader cannibalism – captured in ‘eyewitness’ chronicles of the campaign – was processed and strategically transformed into more palatable fantasies of empire some forty years later in Geoffrey’s *Historia*. In Heng’s view, Christian cannibalism became a means of narrating shared cultural identities and literalising the language of military conquest in which the land and possessions of the conquered are ‘swallowed up’ and absorbed by successful conquerors.<sup>64</sup>

Heather Blurton draws on the work of Heng and argues that the episodes of cannibalism in high medieval English chronicles like William of Malmesbury’s *Gesta regum Anglorum* (c. 1125) and Matthew of Paris’ *Chronica Majora* (1239–1259), articulated cultural and national identities, specifically in the context of conquest or invasion.<sup>65</sup> Blurton also dedicates substantial analysis to the two episodes of anthropophagy depicted in *Richard Coer de Lyon* arguing that this romance reconciled uncomfortable discussions of crusader cannibalism with positive representations of Christian triumph, specifically ‘asserting a model of English dominance’ capable of posing a threat to both Christendom and the East.<sup>66</sup> While a detailed comparison between the representations of crusader cannibalism in narratives of the First and Third Crusade is beyond the scope of this investigation, Blurton’s treatment of cannibalism on the Third Crusade fits her broader thesis statement, that cannibalism in medieval narratives can be considered an act of

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<sup>63</sup> Geraldine Heng, *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. 19–113.

<sup>64</sup> Heng, *Empire of Magic*, p. 31.

<sup>65</sup> Heather Blurton, *Cannibalism in High Medieval English Literature* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 59–104.

<sup>66</sup> Blurton, *Cannibalism*, pp. 121–131.

incorporation, concerned with defining and defending the boundaries of individual and collective identity.

Heng continues her analysis of crusader cannibalism in *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages*, crafting links between depictions of anthropophagy and colonialism. Despite its savage nature, cannibalism was, according to Heng, perceived by crusade commentators like the first-hand authors and the Benedictine chroniclers as an aggressive yet legitimate violence against 'the other'.<sup>67</sup> She suggests that by reducing another human community to food, the crusaders confirmed and enhanced their collective Western Christian identity.<sup>68</sup> While Heng offers an interesting examination of cannibalism's use as an interpretive filter for broader discussions of 'race', religion, and power, her analysis decontextualises representations of anthropophagy from their genre, and literary and historical contexts. This limits Heng's contribution to our understanding of how crusade commentators sought to engage with cannibalism in their own work, especially as this engagement related to narrativising the events of the First Crusade.

Both Heng and Blurton survey a broad range of primary source material, using cannibalism as an entry point into explorations of wider ideas of conquest and identity. While this is certainly important for enhancing our understanding of medieval perceptions of these ideas, particularly their expression within specific literary genres, this thesis makes cannibalism less discrete as an object of study by recontextualising it within a wider discourse of hunger, eating, and consumption. My approach takes its lead from the work of Carol Sweetenham and Katy Mortimer, whose discussion of episodes of crusader cannibalism highlights the various exemplars drawn on by crusade commentators to construct episodes of anthropophagy, situating representations of cannibalism within their own literary and cultural contexts.

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<sup>67</sup> Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 118–27.

<sup>68</sup> Heng, *The Invention of Race*, pp. 120–23.

Carol Sweetenham's analysis of the Old French Crusade Cycle, for example, takes a focussed approach to the narrative significance of anthropophagy in epic accounts of the First Crusade.<sup>69</sup> Sweetenham argues that while chronicles and letters of the campaign excused or denied acts of crusader cannibalism, the rhetoric surrounding anthropophagy had evolved by the end of the twelfth century when oral histories captured in the form of *chansons de geste* were being written down. It is suggested that The Old French Crusade Cycle, twelve epic poems of the crusades written down in thirteenth century, used crusader cannibalism to underscore the crusade's central message, that crusading was a salvific process.<sup>70</sup> Sweetenham argues that this cycle of *chansons de geste* gave the Tafurs their own redemptive arc from grotesque, 'barely human' cannibals at the early stages of the expedition, to respected and useful members of the crusading force by the time they reach Jerusalem.<sup>71</sup> Sweetenham convincingly concludes that the subtext of the Tafurs' transformation is that even the most marginal and desperate – indeed, those capable of cannibalism – could be redeemed through the power of crusading.<sup>72</sup>

Katy Mortimer has recently explored the various representations of crusader cannibals in First Crusade histories written in the twenty years after the conclusion of the campaign, demonstrating the importance of situating these episodes within a biblical context.<sup>73</sup> Mortimer argues that, following numerous biblical examples, first-hand and second-generation chroniclers of the campaign interpreted famine and crusader cannibalism as a divine punishment for sin.<sup>74</sup> For this reason, Mortimer concludes that cannibalism was not noteworthy because of the trauma it caused (as Heng argues), but,

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<sup>69</sup> Carol Sweetenham, 'The Count and the Cannibals: The Old French Crusade Cycle as a Drama of Salvation', in *Jerusalem the Golden: The Origins and Impact of the First Crusade*, ed. by Susan B. Edgington and Luis García-Guijarro (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), pp. 307–329.

<sup>70</sup> Sweetenham, 'The Count and the Cannibals', p. 308.

<sup>71</sup> Sweetenham, 'The Count and the Cannibals', p. 320.

<sup>72</sup> Sweetenham, 'The Count and the Cannibals', p. 320.

<sup>73</sup> Mortimer, 'Digesting Cannibalism', pp. 109–130.

<sup>74</sup> Mortimer, 'Digesting Cannibalism', p. 123.

when contextualised biblically, because it complemented the idea that the events of the First Crusade were part of God's will.<sup>75</sup>

Like Mortimer, this thesis also situates episodes of crusader cannibalism within a wider thematic context, and therefore requires an exploration of the literary exemplars used by crusader commentators. This thesis builds on Mortimer's research not only by looking at the use of biblical allusion, but also by examining how each text draws on classical motifs, moral philosophy, and other cultural frames of reference such as hunting imagery to interpret man-eating. The corpus under investigation is rich in descriptions of crusaders 'butchering' Turks on the battlefield, 'growing fat' on the blood of their enemy, and washing down their feast of human flesh with wine from the stores of the future king of Jerusalem.<sup>76</sup> By focussing on the ways crusade commentators engaged with and constructed episodes of hunger and consumption, this thesis provides the necessary context for understanding anthropophagy which, at its core, is about *eating*. Ultimately, this brings cannibalism back to something more mundane although no less imaginatively presented by crusade commentators.

Furthermore, the studies of Heng, Blurton, and Sweetenham have focussed on specific genres of literature, mainly romance and epic poetry, drawing defined lines around genre form and convention. This investigation proposes, however, that medieval categories of genre were not as neat as implied by previous scholarship. Hunger and cannibalism both appear as carefully constructed motifs in texts that claim to be 'eyewitness' accounts of the campaign, in sources that endeavour to offer a more theologically refined narrative of events, and in poems that value the balance between heroism and villainy. In order to ascertain how acts of anthropophagy function in literature of the First Crusade composed in

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<sup>75</sup> Mortimer, 'Digesting Cannibalism', p. 110.

<sup>76</sup> RM, p. 76; GN, p. 190; *Antioche*, p. 220, l. 175.



the century after the campaign's conclusion, this thesis deconstructs a range of texts which narrate the events of the First Crusade with recourse to varying styles and genre.<sup>77</sup>

Beth Spacey provides a useful methodology for this approach. Spacey provides the first far-reaching study of the miraculous in crusade narratives compiled between 1099 – 1250.<sup>78</sup> Spacey focuses not on the lived experienced or beliefs of crusade participants regarding the miraculous, but on depictions of miracles, visions and signs as a rhetorical motif used by medieval authors in their construction of crusade history.<sup>79</sup> This approach sheds light on Latin Christian attitudes towards the miraculous by examining how miracles serve narrative agendas in crusade literature and how authors anticipated what their audiences might find convincing or problematic about the miraculous. Approaching anthropophagy in this way demonstrates the interconnectedness of literary tradition across traditional genre boundaries, highlighting elements of hunger and consumption that were inherited through the cultural memory of the campaign and those drawn from well-established literary tropes.

This thesis is largely organised chronologically, to draw attention to the development and intertextual evocations of crusader hunger and cannibalism. Chapter One focuses on episodes of cannibalism depicted in the *Gesta Francorum*, the early-twelfth century text on which several other sources examined in this thesis base their accounts of the First Crusade. I examine the cultural discourses drawn on by the *GF*-author and three other contemporaneous 'eyewitness' authors to narrativise crusader hunger and survival cannibalism within the context of their own lived experiences. Exploring first-hand accounts of the campaign and their depictions of crusader cannibalism will help to contextualise the second- and third-generation accounts of the First Crusade which take inspiration from

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<sup>77</sup> Spacey, pp. 5–6.

<sup>78</sup> Spacey, p. 4. Elizabeth Lapina has also examined 'the miraculous' in crusade literature but focuses on accounts of the First Crusade: Elizabeth Lapina, *Warfare and the Miraculous in the Chronicles of the First Crusade* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015).

<sup>79</sup> Spacey, pp. 153–156.

these 'eyewitness' testimonies addressed in later chapters. Chapters Two and Three examine the theological refinement of the crusade narrative and how 'hunger' - both a physical need for food and a metaphorical desire for action against the enemy - and food-related analogies are used in the chronicles of three French Benedictine monks writing just twenty years after the conclusion of the First Crusade. Chapter Four examines how hunger is established as a motif and cannibalism is presented as a virtue in a trilogy of epic poems - the *Chanson d'Antioche*, the *Chanson des Chétifs*, and the *Chanson de Jérusalem* - written down in the thirteenth century but based on a crusade *chanson de geste* circulating in the twelfth century. Although these epic poems have the latest date of the narratives under investigation, they display several motifs in common with the Benedictine chronicles so, for ease of comparison, they are addressed after an examination of Guibert of Nogent's text. Finally, Chapter Five explores William of Tyre's *Historia*, an account of the First Crusade written almost one hundred years after the conclusion of the First Crusade and completed at least three years before the start of the Third Crusade. An examination of William's moral assessment of the crusaders' response to food and food provisioning underscores the idea that cannibalism could function as both a strategically beneficial spectacle and a gruesome act of survival.

## Chapter One: Crusader Cannibalism in ‘Eyewitness’ Accounts of the First Crusade

On the 27 November 1095, at the Council of Clermont in the Auvergne, Pope Urban II (1088–1099) called on Latin Christians to help liberate Jerusalem from Islamic occupation. Tens of thousands of people responded to Urban II’s appeal, setting in motion a four-year long, militarily violent, yet spiritually salvific, movement that modern historians call the First Crusade. The First Crusade left Europe for the Middle East in two waves.<sup>1</sup> The first group of crusaders – known as the People’s Crusade – answered Urban II’s call in spring 1096 and gathered in France under the leadership of a preacher named Peter the Hermit. These men, along with some women and children, set off from Cologne for the Holy Land but ultimately failed to reach Jerusalem. Peter’s army was unruly and disorganised and was decimated by the Turks of the sultanate of Rūm in a battle outside of Civetot, a town in modern-day north-western Turkey, in October 1096. The People’s Crusade was followed by a second wave called the Princes’ Crusade, which was led by various nobles from different regions in Europe. Raymond IV, Count of Toulouse, represented the knights of Provence and was accompanied by a papal representative, Adhémar of Le Puy; Bohemund of Taranto commanded the Normans of southern Italy with his nephew Tancred; the brothers Godfrey of Bouillon, Eustace, and Baldwin of Boulogne led crusaders from Lorraine; and Count Robert II of Flanders, Robert of Normandy (the older brother of King William II of England [1087–1100]), Stephen of Blois (the brother-in-law of William II), and Hugh of Vermandois (the younger brother of King Philip I of France [1059–1108]) conducted contingents from the north of France. These armies left Europe separately in the second

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<sup>1</sup> For a comprehensive overview of the contingents’ departure see Christopher Tyerman, *God’s War: A New History of the Crusades* (London: Penguin, 2006), pp. 94–122.

half of 1096 but met in Constantinople between November of that year and May 1097. From Constantinople, these contingents, along with the remnants of Peter the Hermit's army, travelled through Asia Minor, securing several hard-won victories at Nicaea, Dorylaeum, Antioch, and Ma'arra, before achieving their goal of capturing Jerusalem on 15 July 1099.

Since the nineteenth century, scholarship on first-hand accounts of the First Crusade has stressed the importance of establishing whether the authors of these texts were eyewitnesses to the events they describe. Assessments of the 'eyewitness' status of medieval authors have been used to (dis)prove the reliability of these first-hand accounts in relation to other sources from the period such as sermons, letters, and liturgy that make up our understanding of the campaign. In so doing, attempts have been made to identify what elements of the crusade these authors witnessed personally and to what extent additional sources of information supplement their narration of events. Over the last twenty years, however, crusade studies have largely moved away from empirical reconstructions of the First Crusade, and texts that claim to have been written by participants of the campaign have been increasingly examined for what they can reveal about medieval historiographical traditions and perceptions of personal experience in the context of crusading.

This chapter examines four of the earliest Latin narrative histories of the First Crusade composed by authors who claimed to have participated in the campaign: the anonymous *Gesta Francorum* (*GF*) author, Raymond of Aguilers, Fulcher of Chartres, and Peter Tudebode.<sup>2</sup> Each author composed his account within a decade of the crusaders' victory at Jerusalem in 1099 and, to different extents, detailed the events of the crusade

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<sup>2</sup> This chapter makes use of the main editions and modern translations of *GF*, *RA*, *FC*, and *PT*: Raymond of Aguilers, *Historia Francorum Qui Ceperunt Iherusalem*, trans. by John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1968); Fulcher of Chartres, *A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem 1095–1127*, trans. by Frances Rita Ryan and ed. by Harold S. Fink (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1969), pp. 57–304; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano*, trans. by John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1974).

through the lens of personal experience. Among accounts of battles, sieges, and crusader piety and sinfulness, these texts abound with references to the crusaders' access to food, its cost, and the hunger suffered by participants during the campaign. Against this backdrop, each of the four first-hand chroniclers reluctantly report that in the Syrian city of Ma'arra an-Numan, some crusaders, unable to afford or find anything else to eat, were forced to consume human flesh. By focussing on the *GF*-author's, Raymond's, Fulcher's, and Peter's accounts of the sieges of Antioch (October 1097–June 1098) and the siege of Ma'arra an-Numan (November–December 1098) – two instances in which the crusaders faced starvation on their journey to Jerusalem – this chapter explores how first-hand accounts of the campaign communicate personal and collective experiences of hunger and death.

#### Four 'Eyewitness' Accounts of the First Crusade

Of the so-called 'eyewitness' accounts of the First Crusade, the oldest and most-studied is the *GF*, which was likely completed in around 1101.<sup>3</sup> The *GF* text survives in seven known manuscripts and appears to have had the greatest impact in its own time, forming the basis of most of the second-generation histories of the First Crusade composed in the twelfth century.<sup>4</sup> In its ten books, the *GF* preserves almost no autobiographical material about its author, but it is generally believed that the *GF*-author originated from the south of Italy and served in the retinue of Bohemond of Taranto (c. 1050s–1111) until the siege of Antioch when Bohemond abandoned the expedition and the *GF*-author joined the contingent of Raymond IV of Toulouse (c. 1041–1105). This argument is based on the fact that the *GF*'s description of the formation of Bohemond's contingent and its journey to the Holy Land is

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<sup>3</sup> Rosalind Hill, 'Introduction', in *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd, 1962), pp. ix–xlii (p. ix). For a revised dating of the *GF* that questions Hill's assessment but still positions the text's completion at around 1101, see: Conor Kostick, *The Social Structure of the First Crusade* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Kostick, p. 9.

far more detailed than the text's account of the armies led by any other crusade leader. Similarly, the *GF*-author provides the names of many individual knights in Bohemond's retinue but fails in some cases to recall the titles of the other senior princes.<sup>5</sup> The first nine books of the *GF* follow the activities of Bohemond from his recruiting drive for the crusade in 1096 to the capture of Antioch in 1098. The tenth and longest book describes the events that led to the successful capture of Jerusalem by crusaders in 1099, ending with the victory of Christian forces over the Egyptian army near Ascalon on 12 August 1099.

While the *GF* itself recognises the authority of both clerics and laymen to write about their experiences of the expedition – 'there is no one in these parts, either clerk or lay, who could entirely write or narrate as [sic] [the campaign] was done'<sup>6</sup> – the question of the *GF*'s authorship is an important one for determining how the text can be interpreted. In her edition of the *GF*, Rosalind Hill argues that the anonymous *GF*-author was a literate layman, probably a knight, who actively participated in several of the military engagements detailed in his narrative.<sup>7</sup> This stance allows the *GF* to be used as an insight into the perspective of a crusading knight, giving greater weight to his assessment of the military events he describes.<sup>8</sup> This assertion has been disputed by Colin Morris, who, through an assessment of the stylistic details of the text, concludes that the (often underappreciated) use of Latin and biblical references in the *GF* suggests that the author was a cleric.<sup>9</sup> Emily Albu and Conor Kostick qualify this conclusion by suggesting the *GF*-author may have been an active lay participant in the First Crusade with some clerical training or, at the least, a

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<sup>5</sup> For more on the discussion of the *GF*-author's identity see: Hill, 'Introduction', p. xi; Kostick, pp. 9–10; Joshua Birk, 'Imagining the Enemy: Southern Italian Perceptions of Islam at the Time of the First Crusade', in *Just Wars, Holy Wars, and Jihads: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Encounters and Exchanges*, ed. by Sohail H. Hashmi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 91–106 (p. 97).

<sup>6</sup> *GF*, p. 44: 'Omnia quae egimus antequam urbs esset capta nequeo enarrare, quia nemo est in his paribus siue clericus siue laicus qui omnino possit scriber uel narrare, sicut res gesta est [...]'

<sup>7</sup> Hill, 'Introduction', p. xiii.

<sup>8</sup> Kostick, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Colin Morris, 'The *Gesta Francorum* as Narrative History', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 19 (1993), 55–71 (pp. 66–67).

distinctively monastic outlook.<sup>10</sup> Both Albu and Kostick agree, however, that because the *GF*-author appears to be more concerned with the activities of crusading *seniores* and *milites* than with any other social group in the Christian force, it is likely that he was a member of the knightly class.<sup>11</sup> For this reason, this thesis also assumes that the *GF*-author was a knight.

This chapter does examine two texts that can confidently be attributed to clerical participants of the First Crusade, however: the *Historia Francorum Qui Ceperunt Iherusalem* of Raymond of Aguilers, chaplain to Raymond IV of Toulouse, and the *Historia Hierosolymitana* of Fulcher of Chartres, chaplain to Baldwin of Boulogne, later Baldwin I of Jerusalem (1100–1118). Raymond’s narrative parallels that of the *GF* but provides more detailed information about the Provençal army’s journey to Constantinople, reflecting the author’s experience in the contingent led by Raymond IV of Toulouse. This text was undertaken as a joint project with a knight named Pons of Balazun who died at ‘Arqah just before the siege of Jerusalem in 1099, leaving Raymond to complete the account alone sometime before the end of 1101.<sup>12</sup> Raymond’s *Historia* survives in ten manuscripts, two of which are incomplete.<sup>13</sup>

Fulcher of Chartres was the earliest writer to make use of Raymond’s *Historia*. Fulcher deals with the events of the First Crusade in the first instalment of his three-book chronicle, which was begun sometime between 1101 and 1105.<sup>14</sup> This suggests Raymond’s text was available in Jerusalem, where Fulcher wrote his history, in the early-twelfth century. The first book of Fulcher’s *Historia* starts with the preparation for the Council of

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<sup>10</sup> Kostick, p. 15; Emily Albu, ‘Probing the Passions of a Norman Crusader: The *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*’, in *Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2004*, Anglo-Norman Studies 27, ed. by John Gillingham (Woodbridge: The Boydell, 2005), pp. 1–15 (p. 2).

<sup>11</sup> Kostick, p. 16; Albu, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill, ‘Introduction’, in *Historia Francorum Qui Ceperunt Iherusalem* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1968), pp. 1–14 (p. 7). For more on the dating of Raymond’s *Historia* see: Kostick, p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> Hill and Hill, ‘Introduction’, in *Historia Francorum*, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> Kostick, p. 28.

Clermont, at which Fulcher was present, and ends with the capture of Jerusalem and the establishment of the Kingdom of Jerusalem by Godfrey of Bouillon (c. 1060–1100) in 1099. Fulcher left for the Holy Land in the entourage of Count Stephen of Blois (c. 1045–1102) and Robert of Normandy (c. 1051–1134) in 1096, and in 1097 was appointed chaplain to Baldwin of Boulogne.<sup>15</sup> Fulcher followed his new lord to Edessa when Baldwin split from the main body of the crusade in late 1097, and therefore relies on additional first-hand accounts – mainly the *GF* and Raymond’s *Historia* – to supplement his narrative of the events from Antioch in 1098 to Jerusalem in 1099.<sup>16</sup> Fulcher’s *Historia* survives in two versions and fourteen manuscripts altogether.<sup>17</sup>

The final first-hand account examined in this chapter is the *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere* of Peter Tudebode, a Poitevin priest who, like Raymond of Aguilers, journeyed to the Holy Land with the contingent led by Raymond IV of Toulouse. Peter’s text was finished sometime before 1111 and draws heavily on the work of the *GF*-author and Raymond.<sup>18</sup> Peter’s work survives in five manuscripts.<sup>19</sup> As a result of the text’s similarities to other first-hand accounts of the campaign, Peter’s work has sometimes been unfairly demoted to a piece of plagiarism.<sup>20</sup> This assessment fails to consider, however, that compiling, editing, and interpreting existing histories – often without crediting the original

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<sup>15</sup> Edward Peters, *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Material* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), p. 23.

<sup>16</sup> Kostick, p. 41. Fulcher completed his pilgrimage to Jerusalem with Baldwin shortly after the battle of Jerusalem in 1099.

<sup>17</sup> Valentin Portnykh, ‘Exploring the Rebirth of a Chronicle: Why Robert the Monk’s *Historia Iherosolimitana* Gained New Life in the Fifteenth Century’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 74 (2023), 39–67 (p. 45).

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion on a lost common source potentially used by Peter and the *GF*-author in the construction of their accounts, see: Jay Rubenstein, ‘What is the *Gesta Francorum*, and who was Peter Tudebode?’, *Revue Mabillon*, 77 (2005), 179–204 (pp. 190–201); and, Kostick, pp. 23–25.

<sup>19</sup> John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill, ‘Introduction’, in *Peter Tudebode Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1974), pp. 1–12 (p. 5). Hill and Hill identify four manuscripts, but a fifth has recently been identified in the Vatican City (MS Vat. Reg. lat. 554). See, Portnykh, p. 45.

<sup>20</sup> *Anonymi gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolymitanorum*, ed. by Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1889), p. 84, n. 121. See also: Rubenstein, ‘What is the *Gesta*’, p. 182; Hill and Hill, ‘Introduction’, in *Peter Tudebode*, p. 4.



source – were all integral to medieval processes of history-writing.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, Peter offers unique and fuller accounts of the main army’s interactions in Constantinople and the crusaders’ procession at Jerusalem than both the *GF*-author and Raymond.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Peter offers more factual details in his account of the campaign, such as an extended list of food prices, the names and number of crusaders present at different battles, the distance between cities, and how dried animal skins were prepared for consumption during periods of famine.<sup>23</sup> These details appear to have come from the personal experience of the author. Peter’s text is, therefore, included in this discussion of first-hand crusade narratives alongside those of Raymond, Fulcher, and the *GF*-author, for the light they shed on the literary construction of experience in narratives of the campaign, rather than what each author experienced personally.

### The Medieval ‘Eyewitness’

Medieval perceptions of ‘the eyewitness’ are particularly important to these discussions of experience in medieval historiography. One scholar who has scrutinised the concept of ‘eyewitnessing’ in the context of the First Crusade is Yuval Noah Harari. Harari examines three first-hand accounts of the campaign, Fulcher’s *Historia*, Raymond’s *Historia*, and the *GF* and argues that not every text written by an eyewitness can be considered an ‘eyewitness account’.<sup>24</sup> By focussing on each author’s apparent authorial purpose, Harari distinguishes between what he identifies as two distinct literary genres, ‘eyewitness

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<sup>21</sup> Justin Lake, ‘Current Approaches to Medieval Historiography’, *History Compass*, 13.3 (2015), 89–109 (p. 97). For a comprehensive survey of high medieval historical methods see: Peter Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999).

<sup>22</sup> Hill and Hill, ‘Introduction’, in *Peter Tudebode*, pp. 6–7.

<sup>23</sup> Rubenstein, ‘What is the *Gesta*’, p. 189.

<sup>24</sup> Yuval Noah Harari, ‘Eyewitnessing in Accounts of the First Crusade: the *Gesta Francorum* and Other Contemporary Narratives’, in *Crusade: Volume 3*, ed. by Benjamin Z. Kedar, Jonathan Riley-Smith, Helen Nicholson, and Michael Evans (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 77–99.

accounts' and 'histories'.<sup>25</sup> The former – ostensibly written by an eyewitness to at least some of the events they describe – privilege factual accuracy over literary style and interpret events subjectively according to what their authors have seen personally. The latter – which may make use of eyewitness testimony – provide a fuller, more rounded version of events by taking into consideration multiple perspectives from various sources.

This distinction allows Harari to argue that while the *GF*-author witnessed some of the events he describes in his narrative, his work cannot be considered an 'eyewitness account' of the First Crusade because the *GF*-author did not intend his personal experience to authorise his narrative of the campaign.<sup>26</sup> On a superficial level, this line of argument makes sense as nowhere in the *GF* text does the *GF*-author claim eyewitness status.<sup>27</sup> This is one of the reasons historians know so little about the background and profession of the *GF*-author. While the *GF*-author does make use of first-person plurals like *nos* and *nostrum* to denote the crusading army collectively, these pronouns are not necessarily self-referential.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, when the *GF*-author goes beyond first-person plural designations, he uses terms that embrace the entirety of the Christian forces: *populus*, *peregrini*, and *milites Christi*.<sup>29</sup> First-person plurals in this sense may simply be part of a broader vocabulary of belonging, an expression of identification with the whole of Christianity, something expected of laymen, clerics, and medieval audiences alike. We can see, for example, the same first-personal plurals being used to express an affiliation with the crusading force in accounts of the campaign written by authors who did not participate in the First Crusade. Robert the Monk and Guibert of Nogent constantly refer to the exploits of 'our men' in

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<sup>25</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 77.

<sup>26</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 86.

<sup>27</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 87.

<sup>28</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 87; and, Morris, pp. 67–68.

<sup>29</sup> Kostick, p. 16.

their accounts of the campaign, and William of Tyre, writing nearly one hundred years after the end of the venture, writes of the heroic effort of 'our people' in the Holy Land.<sup>30</sup>

Harari argues that the *GF* aligns itself more closely with medieval epic histories by providing a rounded depiction of the events of the campaign that alternates between the perspectives of crusaders, Byzantines, and Muslims.<sup>31</sup> There are, for example, episodes relayed with familiarity and vividness in the *GF*, such as intimate conversations held inside the Turkish camp between Kerbogha, the Atabeg of Mosul, and his mother, that the *GF*-author could not have witnessed personally.<sup>32</sup> These imagined episodes essentially function as a representation of what the *GF*-author believed was probably said or what should have been said. This rhetorical technique makes use of conjecture to fill any gaps in the narrative without breaking its continuity.<sup>33</sup> Harari suggests that these fabricated episodes add 'a touch of epic to the narrative'.<sup>34</sup> Other scholars have identified the rhetorical similarities between the *GF* and medieval epics. Colin Morris, for instance, argues that the *GF*'s dual focus on Christian and non-Christian perspectives, and its deployment of several rhetorical techniques such as alliteration, assonance, and rhyme parallels contemporary *chansons de geste*, vernacular epic histories composed in verse that detail the heroic exploits of knights.<sup>35</sup> Morris also suggests that several features of the *GF*, particularly the presence of set pieces like battle orations and obituary speeches, are not dissimilar from those found in contemporary epic poetry like the *Chanson de Roland* (c. 1100).<sup>36</sup> The *GF*-author's

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<sup>30</sup> There are numerous examples of first-person plurals being used to refer to the Christian force in second- and third-generation accounts of the First Crusade. For a small sample of instances where *nos* and *nostrī* are used in scenes of crusader hunger, see: RM, pp. 17, 30, and 64; GN, pp. 76–352 (pp. 189–190, and 254); and, WT, I, pp. 257, and 306.

<sup>31</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 90.

<sup>32</sup> *GF*, p. 56; Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 87.

<sup>33</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 89.

<sup>34</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 90.

<sup>35</sup> Morris, p. 61. See also, Kostick, pp. 16–17; and, Natasha Hodgson, 'The Role of Kerbogha's Mother in the *Gesta Francorum* and Selected Chronicles of the First Crusade', in *Gendering the Crusades*, ed. by Susan B. Edgington and Sarah Lambert (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), pp. 163–176 (pp. 167–169).

<sup>36</sup> Morris, pp. 61–63. The *Chanson de Roland* follows the exploits of the Frankish military leader Roland at the Battle of Roncevaux in 778 CE and is written in Old French.

willingness to include outside perspectives in his narrative leads Harari to claim that the *GF* is not an ‘eyewitness account’ but a ‘history’. This, however, is an unnecessarily restrictive assessment of the *GF*’s literary construction. The similarities between the *GF* and contemporary *chansons de geste* may simply be indicative of literary influence, not a sign that the *GF*-author intended to privilege the style and content of his narrative over ‘factual accuracy’.<sup>37</sup> Nor does the inclusion of outside perspectives devalue the depictions of personal experience captured in the *GF*-author’s account of the campaign.

Harari continues his analysis of first-hand accounts of the First Crusade by arguing that unlike the *GF*, Fulcher’s and Raymond’s texts can be considered ‘eyewitness accounts’ because they emphasise the fact that they personally witnessed the events they describe.<sup>38</sup> In some cases this involves mentioning themselves as protagonists, but mostly, according to Harari, it involves an attempt to highlight the truthfulness of their narratives.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, Fulcher, Raymond, and Peter (whose text does not feature in Harari’s analysis of ‘eyewitness’ accounts) draw the readers’ attention to their status as participants in the campaign if not directly to their active role in specific episodes detailed in the narrative. Peter, for example, establishes himself as a protagonist in his text when detailing the deaths of his brothers Arvedus, who died at Antioch, and Arnaldus, who died at Ma’arra.<sup>40</sup> Peter attests to his personal participation in the campaign by following the acknowledgement of his brother Arvedus’ death and burial with the confession that he, Peter, along with the other Christians in Antioch, feared being decapitated.<sup>41</sup> This statement directly positions Peter alongside other crusaders who experienced fear on their

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<sup>37</sup> Marcus Bull and Damien Kempf, ‘Introduction’, in *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory*, ed. by Marcus Bull and Damien Kempf (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), pp. 1–8 (p. 3).

<sup>38</sup> Harari, ‘Eyewitnessing’, pp. 79–85.

<sup>39</sup> Harari, ‘Eyewitnessing’, p. 78.

<sup>40</sup> PT, p. 97 and p. 116 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 72 and p. 93).

<sup>41</sup> PT, p. 97 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 72).

journey to the Holy Land and serves to establish his qualifications as an eyewitness to the events he recounts.

Fulcher and Raymond, on the other hand, highlight their eyewitness status by repeatedly assuring their readers that they are telling the truth about the things they have seen. In the prologue to his text, Fulcher immediately draws the audience's attention to the connection between eyewitnessing and truthfulness. He claims that 'I have recounted in a style homely but truthful what I deemed worthy of remembrance as far as I was able or just as I saw things with my own eyes on the journey itself'.<sup>42</sup> The same sentiment is expressed slightly later in the text when he tells the audience: 'I, Fulcher of Chartres, who went with the other pilgrims, afterwards diligently and carefully collected all this in my memory for the sake of posterity, just as I saw it with my own eyes'.<sup>43</sup> The emphasis placed on the sense of sight, indicated by the repeated phrase 'I saw with my own eyes', to assert the truth value of Fulcher's statements, was well established in the historiographical tradition of the Middle Ages. In Book One of *Etymologiae*, an encyclopaedic work written in the seventh century, Isidore of Seville defines history:

A history (*historia*) is a narration of deeds accomplished; through it what occurred in the past is sorted out. History is so called from the Greek term ἱστορεῖν ("inquire, observe"), that is, from 'seeing' or from 'knowing'. Indeed, among the ancients, no one would write history unless he had been present and had seen what was to be written down, for we grasp with our eyes things that occur better than what we gather with our hearing, since what is seen is revealed without falsehood. This discipline has to do with Grammar because whatever is worthy of remembrance is committed to writing. And for this reason, histories are called 'monuments' (*monumentum*), because they grant remembrance (*memoria*) of deeds that have been done.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> FC, p. 116 (trans. by Ryan, pp. 57–58): '[...] stilo rusticano, tamen veraci, Dignum ducens memoriae commendandum, prout value et oculis meis in ipso itinere perspexi, diligenter digessi.'

<sup>43</sup> FC, p. 153 (trans. by Ryan, p. 71): 'Quod ego Fulcherus Carnotensis cum ceteris iens peregrinis, postea, sicut oculis meis perspexi, diligenter et sollicite in memoriam posteris collegi.'

<sup>44</sup> Isidore of Seville, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. and trans. by Stephan A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach, and Oliver Berghof (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 67.

While Harari's argument establishes the truth value of eyewitnessing as an essential component in 'eyewitness accounts', several key elements emerge from Isidore's description of 'a history' that Harari overlooks. First, Isidore notes that by narrativising events, histories (*historiae*) provide structure and give meaning to what has occurred. This is a selective process that establishes 'eyewitnessing' events as the best guarantee of historical truth and allows memories to be articulated and interpreted for posterity. Fulcher refers to each of these elements in the prologue to his work and is keen to confirm that the information that forms the basis of his narrative comes from memories he 'diligently' (*diligenter*) collected on his journey to the near-East, with only those memories 'worthy of remembering' being committed to writing for the edification of future generations. Crucially, Isidore acknowledges that while committing 'what has been seen' or 'what is known' to writing gives expression to personal experience, it also forms part of a collective memory surrounding the events described. This renders history a 'monument' that has both individual and collective dimensions. For this reason, in 'a history', eyewitness observation, recognition, and recollection are implicated in a larger project of narrative construction that is central to a *communal* understanding of the events that have occurred.<sup>45</sup> These two facets of Isidore's 'history', which were formative in medieval perceptions of historiography, combine Harari's definitions of 'eyewitness accounts', which are grounded in objectivity and truth, and 'histories', which cultivate more rounded interpretations of events. Isidore's definition of 'a history' therefore disrupts Harari's neat historiographical categories by suggesting that these strict genre distinctions did not exist in medieval history-writing.

Harari's analysis also fails to consider the theological implications of the medieval concept of eyewitnessing. Like Fulcher, Raymond presents an awareness of the problem of truth value in historical narratives, immediately telling the audience that his purpose was to

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<sup>45</sup> Marcus Bull, *Eyewitness and Crusade Narrative* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018), p. 86.

correct lies spread about the venture by deserters.<sup>46</sup> Raymond's attempts to establish the veracity of his own narrative is more focussed than Fulcher's, however, and lies predominantly in his discussion of miracles. A key example is Raymond's account of the discovery of the Holy Lance in June 1098.<sup>47</sup> Raymond appears as a protagonist alongside his co-author Pons when the Holy Lance was excavated from the cathedral of St Peter in Antioch, claiming: 'I, Raymond, author of this book, kissed the point of the Lance as it barely protruded from the ground'.<sup>48</sup> When the Lance's authenticity is subsequently questioned by an assembly of priests, Raymond testifies before them, repeating the account of his participation in the Lance's excavation almost verbatim, this time directed at the assembled clerics as well as the audience of the text.<sup>49</sup> The priests accept Raymond's testimony and with this double account of the same event, Raymond simultaneously confirms that the Church considered eyewitnessing a basis for truthfulness and, because the priests believed what Raymond claimed to have seen with his own eyes, implies the audience can trust Raymond's account of events without fear of deception.<sup>50</sup>

This example suggests that the importance attributed to eyewitnessing in the early-twelfth century was not purely historiographical: 'witnessing' was also a key concept in medieval theology.<sup>51</sup> As Elizabeth Lapina highlights, the New Testament attributes significance to both literal and figurative interpretations of the concept of witnessing.<sup>52</sup> There are instances in which first-hand observation is not required for witnessing to be considered as inherently truthful. In his *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, Saint Augustine explains that the apostles testified to having seen the deeds of Jesus not because they

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<sup>46</sup> RA, p. 35 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 15).

<sup>47</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 83.

<sup>48</sup> RA, p. 75 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 57): 'Et ego qui scripsi hec cum solus mucro adhuc apparet super terram, osculatus sum eam.'

<sup>49</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 84.

<sup>50</sup> Harari, 'Eyewitnessing', p. 84.

<sup>51</sup> Elizabeth Lapina, "'Nec signis nec testibus creditur...': The Problem of Eyewitnesses in the Chronicles of the First Crusade', *Viator*, 38.1 (2007), 117–139 (p. 119).

<sup>52</sup> Lapina, p. 119.

knew Jesus during his lifetime, but because the Holy Spirit had revealed the truth of those deeds to them.<sup>53</sup> In this case ‘seeing’ was not as essential as ‘understanding’. Augustine further explores this point in relation to the Jews:

Nor, in any case, was it anything much to see Christ with the eyes of flesh; if this had been the thing that matters, the people of the Jews would have been the first to find salvation. I mean, they certainly saw him, and yet they turned him down [...]<sup>54</sup>

Here, Augustine cites ignorance as the reason for the Jews’ rejection of Christ and Christianity. They may have seen Jesus, but because they failed to understand the prophecies of their own Scripture, they did not recognise Jesus as their Messiah.<sup>55</sup> While Raymond draws authority from the fact he personally observed and participated in the Lance’s excavation, by emphasising that members of the Church accepted his testimony afterwards, he also alludes to his ability to successfully understand and interpret the significance of the events he witnessed within the wider framework of sacred history. This is a prominent feature of second-generation chronicles of the First Crusade and will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 3. Harari concludes, however, that Raymond’s and Fulcher’s attempts to highlight their own eyewitness status and trustworthiness show that these authors intended to write ‘eyewitness accounts’ as opposed to ‘histories’. As has been outlined above, these genre distinctions do not take into account how the concept of the ‘eyewitness’ was understood in medieval historiographical and theological tradition, which makes applying Harari’s categories to medieval texts problematic.

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<sup>53</sup> Augustine of Hippo, ‘Tractate 93’, in *Tractates on the Gospel of John 55–111*, trans. by J. W. Rettig (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1994), pp. 173–179 (p. 173).

<sup>54</sup> Augustine of Hippo, ‘Homily 310A’, in *Sermons III/8 (273–305)*, trans. by Edmund Hill and ed. by John E. Rotelle (New York: New York City Press, 1994), pp. 290–299 (p. 290).

<sup>55</sup> Jeremy Cohen, ‘The Jews as the Killers of Christ in the Latin Tradition, from Augustine to the Friars’, *Traditio*, 39 (1983), 1–27 (pp. 3, 24–25). See also, Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (London: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 23–66; and, Steven J. McMichael, ‘Did Isaiah Foretell Jewish Blindness and Suffering for not Accepting Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah? A Medieval Perspective’, *Biblical Theology Bulletin*, 26.4 (1996), 144–151.



Several scholars have proposed alternative approaches to the study of medieval ‘eyewitness’ material in response to Harari’s historiographical categorisations. Marcus Bull, for instance, argues that Harari’s definition of ‘eyewitnessing’ is too narrow and suggests that instead of appraising narrative sources in terms of the relationship between the text’s author and the events he describes, historians should examine how eyewitness material functions in medieval narratives.<sup>56</sup> This approach illuminates the literary and cultural context in which crusade texts were written and received, and places less pressure on applying possibly anachronistic genre boundaries to medieval texts. Lapina, like Bull, thinks that Harari’s definitions of ‘eyewitness’ are too restrictive, failing in any meaningful way to acknowledge that references to eyewitnessing can be a rhetorical trope employed by both those who have seen the events they describe first-hand and those who interpret eyewitness testimony to fit the context of their narratives.<sup>57</sup> As I will demonstrate in Chapter 3, the use of eyewitness testimony is present and often highlighted in the construction of second-generation chronicles of the First Crusade. While in terms of style and content the *GF* might stand apart from the other three first-hand accounts, each crusade commentator examined in this chapter embeds recollections of personal experiences amongst conjectures and alternative perspectives to narrativise the events of the First Crusade. This does not negate the author’s status as an eyewitness, nor does it undermine the intended truth-value of the text. It does, however, indicate that narrativising individual experiences was an important part of communicating and assigning meaning to the events of the campaign. The remainder of this chapter takes up Bull and Lapina’s suggestions and examines the form and function of personal experiences of hunger in the *GF*-author’s, Fulcher’s, Raymond’s, and Peter’s accounts of the First Crusade.

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<sup>56</sup> Bull, *Crusade Narrative*, p. 2.

<sup>57</sup> Lapina, pp. 120–21.

## Narrativising Hunger in Accounts of Lived Experience

One significant aspect of lived experience that Raymond, Fulcher, Peter, and the *GF*-author depict with relative frequency in their accounts of the First Crusade is the scarcity and abundance of food. These texts abound in references to the crusaders' access to food, its cost, and how food provisions might be supplemented by foraging and hunting. The attention paid to food and hunger levels in accounts of the campaign is not necessarily surprising as, in medieval warfare much like today, proper access to food was essential in maintaining morale as well as ensuring armies were physically sustained enough to engage in battle. As a result, food and provisions played a large part in determining levels of success on a battlefield or during a siege.<sup>58</sup> Food, and specifically, proper access to food, was, therefore, a priority in the daily lives of crusade leaders and their dependents. Strategic decisions were made around agricultural seasons to give land-based armies the best chance of travelling through Asia Minor with as many provisions as possible, and routes were planned to allow armies the opportunity to access or arrange for friendly markets and places to forage.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, Jonathan Riley-Smith has speculated about whether the failure of the People's Crusade (April – October 1096), which preceded the Princes' Crusade, was in part due to their having departed Europe before the harvest came in, leaving the army severely under-provisioned.<sup>60</sup> Reports of scarcity and the subsequent hunger experienced by the crusading forces on their journey to the Holy land are predominantly expressed in the first-person plural in the texts examined in this chapter. This simultaneously reaffirms the author's status as eyewitness to the events he describes and establishes a broader vocabulary of belonging that incorporates the author, crusaders, and the audience into the suffering experienced on the Christians' journey to Jerusalem.

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<sup>58</sup> Andrew Holt, *The World of Crusades: A Daily Life Encyclopedia*, 2 vols (Denver: Greenwood, 2019), I (2019), p. 283.

<sup>59</sup> Holt, p. 269.

<sup>60</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History* (London: The Athlone Press, 1987), pp. 13, 18–20.

In the late summer of 1097, the main crusading force arrived in Syria, on the northern borders of the Holy Land. To reach their ultimate goal, Jerusalem, which lay a month's journey to the south, the crusaders had to tackle Antioch, a well-fortified, ancient city of strategic importance in northern Syria.<sup>61</sup> Antioch exercised economic and political influence as a conduit of trade between the East and West and was revered in Christian tradition as the city in which St Peter, the chief of the apostles, founded his first church.<sup>62</sup> Tactically, the crusaders needed to take Antioch from the hands of the Seljuk Turks in order to ensure that their lines of communication, resupply, and reinforcement remained open to the west as they continued their journey to Jerusalem.<sup>63</sup> The crusaders' vanguard, led by Bohemond, laid siege to the city on 20 October 1097 and was joined by the remainder of the main army on the following day. The siege was drawn out and brutal, and the relative abundance of provisions enjoyed by the crusaders on their arrival in Antioch was quickly exhausted, a predicament exacerbated by the onset of winter.<sup>64</sup> Each of the four first-hand writers note that as the siege progressed the crusaders 'suffered great hunger' and claim that many people died not having the means to buy provisions.<sup>65</sup> After eight months of hardship, on 3 June 1098, the crusaders were able to breach Antioch's fortifications. The crusaders took the city, with only the citadel remaining in Muslim hands. Their victory was short lived, however, as on 4 June the forces of Kerbogha surrounded the crusaders, and the besiegers became the besieged.

While the Christians were besieged inside the walls of Antioch in 1098, the *GF*-author notes:

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<sup>61</sup> Thomas Asbridge, *The First Crusade: A New History* (London: Free Press, 2005), pp. 153–157.

<sup>62</sup> Asbridge, pp. 153–154.

<sup>63</sup> Asbridge, pp. 156–157.

<sup>64</sup> Asbridge, p. 169.

<sup>65</sup> FC, pp. 221–223 (trans. by Ryan, p. 94): 'famem maximam sustinere'. *GF*, p. 33: 'Ibi quidem sunt mortui multi ex nostris, non habentes pretium unde tam carum emere potuissent.' See also: PT, p. 68 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 47); and, RA, p. 53 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 35).

[...] many of us died of hunger, for a small loaf cost a bezant, and I cannot tell you the price of wine. Our men ate the flesh of horses and asses, and sold it to one another; a hen cost fifteen shillings, an egg two, and a walnut a penny. All things were very dear.<sup>66</sup>

In his account of the second siege of Antioch, Raymond provides a similar picture in more detail:

During this time food became so scarce that a tongueless head of a horse sold for two or three solidi, a goat's intestines for five solidi, and a hen for eight or nine solidi. What can I report on bread prices when hunger remained after eating five solidi's worth? To those rich in gold, silver, and clothes it was neither unusual nor burdensome to pay exorbitant costs.<sup>67</sup>

Raymond's itemised account of food prices parallels the *GF*, showing either a shared experience or that Raymond borrowed this information from the *GF*-author, but he also provides a specificity not found in the *GF*. Raymond notes that a tongueless head of a horse fetched two or three solidi and a goat's intestine sold for five. We can infer from these extortionate prices that that the 'better' cuts of animals – like the fleshy tongue – had been sold separately or eaten first. Alan V. Murray has demonstrated how extraordinarily expensive these prices were by comparing them to the recommended daily budget for crusaders led by Frederick Barbarossa (1122–1190), the Holy Roman Emperor, during the Third Crusade (1189–1192).<sup>68</sup> Prior to embarking, Frederick Barbarossa and his advisors ordered crusaders take sufficient funds with them for two years, which, according to the

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<sup>66</sup> *GF*, p. 62: '[...] ut multi mortui fuerint fame, quoniam paruus panis uendebatur uno bisantio. De uino non loquar. Equinas namque carne saut asininas manducabant, et uendebant. Vandebant quoque gallinam quindecim solidis, ouum duobus solidis, unam nucem uno denario; omnia enim ualde errant cara.' The bezant referred to by the *GF*-author could mean either a Greek *hyperpyron* which equates to 15 shillings, or a 'Saracen bezant'/*dīnār* which equates to around 8 or 9 shillings. See: Alan V. Murray, 'Money and Logistics in the Forces of the First Crusade: Coinage, Bullion, Service and Supply, 1096–99', in *Logistics of Warfare in the Age of the Crusades: Proceedings of a Workshop held at the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Sydney, 30 September to 4 October 2002*, ed. by John H. Pryor (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 229–250 (p. 245).

<sup>67</sup> *RA*, pp. 76–77 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 59): 'Inter hec autem tanta fames in civitate fuit ut excepta lingua capud equum duobus vel tribus solidis venderetur, intestina vero capree .v. solidis, gallina .viii. vel novem solidis, de pane quid dicam quod .v. solidi non sufficerent ad depellendam famem unius. Nec erat mirum nec grave esse poterat his qui tam care mercabantur cum auro et argento et palliis habundarent.'

<sup>68</sup> Murray, p. 231.

German Benedictine chronicler Otto of St Blasien (*d.* 1223), equated to at least three marks.<sup>69</sup> The implied living cost for a German crusader during the Third Crusade was therefore around 432 pence (*denarii*) for two years, or 18 pence per month and 0.6 pence per day.<sup>70</sup> Spending five shillings (*solidi*) – 60 pence – on goat intestines was one hundred times more expensive than the advised daily food budget one hundred years later on the Third Crusade.

It is important to note that in their itemised accounts of food prices at Antioch both the *GF*-author and Raymond suggest that crusaders starved because they could not afford the inflated cost of supplies, not because there was no food to be found, though there was certainly dearth.<sup>71</sup> It is true that as the siege at Antioch continued food supplies in the surrounding area were gradually exhausted, but the fact that itemised lists of food prices are recorded with consistency across the four first-hand accounts of the First Crusade suggests there was some availability of food in Antioch and that it was being bought and sold.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, Raymond notes that some individuals were prepared to pay high sums to secure the food that was available, claiming that the inflated price of provisions affected the poor more directly because those ‘rich in gold, silver, and clothes’ could afford and were willing to pay the extortionate prices to eat.<sup>73</sup>

Some of the most detailed lists of food prices can be found in Peter’s account of the crusaders’ experience inside the walls of Antioch. While Peter’s work has traditionally been

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<sup>69</sup> Murray, p. 231; Otto of St Blasien, *Ottonis de Sancto Blasio Chronica*, ed. by Adolfus Hofmeister (MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*: Hanover, 1912), p. 45: ‘Quibus omnibus imperator sequentis anni Maio tempus profectionis constituit, pauperioribus ad minus trium marcarum expensam, diioribus pro posse expensis preparari indicens.’

<sup>70</sup> Murray, p. 231. The monetary system in Europe at the time of the Crusades was based on pence, shillings, and pounds. There were 12 pence in a shilling, and 20 shillings in a pound.

<sup>71</sup> The idea that poverty can be the root cause of famine is more fully explored in Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981); and, ‘Ecology, Famine and Religious Violence: the Case of the Crusading Movement ,1095–1320’, in *Crisis alimentarias en la Edad Media*, ed. Pere Benito i Monclús (Lleida: Editorial Milenio, 2013), pp. 173–90.

<sup>72</sup> Murray, pp. 244–245.

<sup>73</sup> RA, pp. 76–77 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 59).

viewed as providing little in the way of new historical information, given how closely it borrows from Raymond and the *GF*, several unique items can be found in his account of food prices in Antioch. In a lengthy section recalling the second siege of the city, Peter notes:

A small loaf of bread cost a bezant of gold, and of the price of wine I shall not speak; there was not even a jug of it. One hen sold for fifteen solidi, an egg cost two solidi, a nut brought one denarius, three or four beans were worth one denarius, and a small goat cost sixty solidi. The belly of one goat was worth two solidi; the tail of a ram varied in price from three to nine denarii. The tongue of a camel, which is small, brought four solidi.<sup>74</sup>

In this passage we see reference to an alimentary triad: bread, wine, and meat. The respective prices of these three items appear together in multiple accounts of the campaign and are used primarily to highlight the inflated cost of provisions caused by circumstances of dearth. In these itemised accounts of available food, we find lists of prices that are used almost verbatim in second-generation accounts of the campaign, and even those third-generation accounts like the core trilogy of the Old French Crusade Cycle that use the Benedictine chronicles to inform their narratives. While some authorial interpolations, like Peter's suggestion that a camel's tongue is small, lend a sense of personal experience to an otherwise formulaic list of prices, the repetition of food and its cost over time and texts somewhat obscures individual experience in favour of communal memory. This narrativisation of lived experience exemplifies Isidore's definition of 'a history': the repeated lists of food prices at the second siege of Antioch contribute to a discourse of dearth, illuminating a common language for expressing this type of hardship. In so doing, crusade commentators emphasise – or make a 'monument' of – the experience of inflated

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<sup>74</sup> PT, pp. 103–104 (trans. by Hill and Hill, pp. 79–81): 'Quoniam parvus panis unum bisantium aureum – et de vino non loquar, *unquen grasin* id est non vinum –, unam gallinam vendebant quindecim solidos; unum ovum, duos solidos; unam nucem, unum denarium; tres fabas vel quatuor, unum denarium; parvam capream, sexaginta solidos; ventrem unius capree, duos solidos, et causam unius arietis, tres solidos et viiii denarios. Et linguam unius cameli, que est parva, quatuor solidos.'

food prices, a process which becomes central to communicating the severity of the hunger suffered by the crusaders in Antioch.

Interestingly, Fulcher does not include any price lists in his account of the First Crusade. He favours generalisations such as '[the Franks] were unable to find even bread to buy' (*panem ad emendum nusquam invenire possent*), choosing to focus on the ravaged state of the surrounding regions to demonstrate the circumstances of dearth endured by the crusaders in Antioch, rather than provide specific inflated prices of available goods.<sup>75</sup> A striking similarity between the four first-hand accounts of the campaign can be seen, however, in the description of what crusaders ate when they could not afford the extortionate prices of goods or when there was no food at all. Again, during the second siege of Antioch, Fulcher tells his readers:

Then the starving people devoured the stalks of beans still growing in the fields, many kinds of herbs unseasoned with salt, and even thistles which because of the lack of firewood were not well cooked and therefore irritated the tongues of those eating them. They also ate horses, asses, camels, dogs, and even rats. The poorer people ate even the hides of animals and the seeds of grain found in manure.<sup>76</sup>

It is worth noting that Fulcher was not present at Antioch during the two sieges. Fulcher left the main army in Marash in October 1097, travelling to Edessa with Baldwin of Boulogne.<sup>77</sup>

Fulcher remained in Edessa until Christmas 1099 when the contingents led by both Bohemond and Baldwin resumed their pilgrimage to Jerusalem; yet, the trajectory of Fulcher's narrative follows the events of the main crusading army from the siege and capture of Antioch to Jerusalem.<sup>78</sup> Baldwin's time in Edessa is ultimately presented as

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<sup>75</sup> FC, p. 222 (trans. by Ryan, p. 94). See also FC, pp. 200–201 (trans. by Ryan, p. 87): '[...] in quibus regionibus saepissime pane cibariisque satis indiguimus.'

<sup>76</sup> FC, pp. 225–226 (trans. by Ryan, p. 96): 'Tunc famelici comedebant surculos fabarum in agris adhuc crescentium, herbasque multimodas et sale inconditas; carduos etiam, qui propter lignorum deficientiam non bene cocti linguas manducantium depungebant; equos, asinos camelosque, canes etiam et mures. Pauperiores etiam bestiarum coria et annonae grana in styreoribus reperta comedebant.'

<sup>77</sup> Susan B. Edgington, *Baldwin I of Jerusalem, 1100–1118* (New York: Routledge, 2019), p. 39.

<sup>78</sup> Edgington, p. 54.

tangential to the events of the main expedition and a version of the events at Antioch and Jerusalem pieced together from other sources is prioritised in the narrative construction of Fulcher's account.

Fulcher's description of what starving crusaders ate during the siege of Antioch appears to be a more detailed version of the *GF*'s. The *GF*-author notes that the famine was so terrible in Antioch that:

[Crusaders] boiled and ate the leaves of figs, vines, thistles, and all kinds of trees. Others stewed the dried skins of horses, camels, asses, oxen or buffaloes, which they ate.<sup>79</sup>

There are several things to unpack from these recollections. First is the suggestion that crusaders were forced to eat vegetation not usually consumed due to its low nutritional value or its spiky exterior. Fulcher points out that this foliage was neither cooked properly to make it edible nor seasoned to make it palatable or to preserve it. This lack of culinary preparation is presented as an inversion of 'normal' cooking practices in which raw vegetables are boiled until cooked and then, potentially, seasoned. Fulcher directly links this culinary inversion to dearth: it is a lack of edible provisions that forces the crusaders to consume foliage, and it is a shortage of firewood that means this vegetation cannot be cooked properly. In this way, the crusaders' failure to sufficiently prepare their food before consuming it confirms the circumstances of dearth experienced in Antioch and highlights the negative impact a shortage of non-alimentary provisions had on the crusaders' ability to perform basic culinary procedures.

Another key feature presented in these accounts of the things eaten inside the walls of Antioch is the suggestion that crusaders consumed the *coria* (skins or hides) of animals. There is some ambiguity as to what exactly the term *coria* refers to in these texts. *Coria* could mean a skin intended for consumption that has been dried as a means of

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<sup>79</sup> *GF*, p. 62: 'Folia fici et uitis et cardui, omniumque arborum coquebant et manducabant, tantam famem immensam habebant. Alii coria caballorum et camelorum et asinorum atque boum seu bufalorum sicca decoquebant, et manducabant.'



preserving it. Alternatively, the term *coria* could refer to dried hides, or leather, used for non-alimentary purposes inside the crusader camp, like the straps and slings for siege weapons.<sup>80</sup> Fulcher briefly mentions that the poorest crusaders were forced to eat the *coria* of beasts.<sup>81</sup> In Fulcher's account, eating animal skins provides a comparison to those men who could afford to eat the flesh of horses, asses, camels, dogs, and rats which were more nutritious and calorie-dense. The *GF*-author, on the other hand, tells the audience that men stewed (*decoquere*) the hides of horses, camels, asses, oxen or buffaloes. Raymond's account, which parallels the *GF*, describes a similar scene:

[Crusaders] gathered, cooked, and sold green figs, and also slowly boiled hides of cattle and horses as well as neglected edibles and sold them at such a high price that anyone could eat an amount costing two solidi.<sup>82</sup>

While these three first-hand accounts mention cooking dried hides, only Peter elaborates on the method for preparing animal skin for consumption. After noting that the crusaders ate the boiled leaves of figs, vines, and trees, Peter says:

Some put the hides of horses, asses, camels, oxen, and wild buffalo, dried for five or six years, into water for two nights and a day; and after mingling them with the water, boiled and ate them.<sup>83</sup>

Peter illuminates the culinary process of making animal hides edible by rehydrating them over a long period of time. Boiling leather in water softens the material and makes it more chewable, but it also breaks down the collagen preserved in the hide into gelatine, which is

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<sup>80</sup> Jeremy Withers, 'The Ecology of Late Medieval Warfare in Lydgate's *Debate of the Horse, Goose, and Sheep*', *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, 18.1 (2011), 104–122 (p. 104). For the use of animal hides in medieval warfare, see also Emilie Ant, 'Besieging Bedford: Military Logistics in 1224', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 1 (2003), 101–124 (p. 111).

<sup>81</sup> FC, p. 226 (trans. by Ryan, p. 96).

<sup>82</sup> RA, p. 77 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 59): '[...] ficus autem in maturas ab aboribus decerpebant, atque costas carissime vendebant. Corio vero boum et equorum et alia neglecta ex longo tempore ille similiter diu cocta carissime vendebantur, adeo ut duas solidatas comedere quislibet posset.'

<sup>83</sup> PT, p. 104 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 80): 'Alii coria equorum, et asinorum, et camelorum, atque boum, sive bufulorum, sicca sex annorum vel quinque, mitebant in aquam duas noctes et unam diem temperare; postea decoquebant et manducabant.'

a water-soluble protein.<sup>84</sup> Chewing the softened leather or consuming the water the hide was boiled in would, therefore, provide some nutritional benefit. The suggestion that crusaders resorted to rehydrating leather highlights the dire circumstance of starvation the crusaders found themselves in whilst besieged inside the city of Antioch. Again, Peter's account appears more openly rooted in personal experience given the level of detail he provides: the claim that the hides consumed had been dried for five or six years prior to rehydration and consumption not only alludes to the desperation of the crusaders but suggests that Peter knew what resources the crusaders had access to at this point on their journey from direct personal experience, or other first-hand testimonies.

It is worth noting that descriptions of leather consumption in the context of famine are not uncommon in siege literature. Precedents can be found in ancient texts such as Herodotus' *Histories* (c. fifth century BCE) which details how the Persian inhabitants of Sestos, besieged by Athenians in 479 BCE during the Greco-Persian War (499–449 BCE), 'reached the final extremes of hardship, such that they were boiling and eating the leather straps from their bed frames'.<sup>85</sup> In the second century BCE, the Greek historian Plutarch relays in an account of the siege of Athens (mid-87 BCE to early-86 BCE), which occurred during the First Mithridatic Wars (89–85 BCE), that the Athenians were so pressed by hunger they 'made food for themselves of the fever-few which grew on the acropolis, and boiled down shoes and leather oil-flasks to eat'.<sup>86</sup> Appian, a contemporary of Plutarch, adds that the inhabitants of Athens 'devoured all their cattle, boiled the hides and skins, and

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<sup>84</sup> Edward Cheshire, 'Cuir bouilli armour', in *Why Leather? The Material and Cultural Dimensions of Leather*, ed. by Susanna Harris and André J. Veldmeijer (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2014), pp. 41–76 (p. 47). Evaporating the liquid used to boil leather leaves gelatine as a hard residue which can be re-dissolved and used in food preparation or as hide glue.

<sup>85</sup> Herodotus, *On the War for Greek Freedom: Selections from the Histories*, trans. by Samuel Shirley and ed. by James Room (Cambridge: Hackett, 2003), p. 186.

<sup>86</sup> Plutarch, *Lives, Volume IV: Alcibiades and Coriolanus. Lysander and Sulla*, trans. by Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916), p. 367. Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*) is native to Asia Minor and the Balkans and can be used in medicine.

licked what they could get therefrom, and had even partaken of human flesh'.<sup>87</sup> In these examples we see the same things consumed during siege-induced famine as are presented in first-hand accounts of the siege of Antioch in 1098: as usual sources of nourishment become scarce, those in siege scenarios turned to eating the flesh of working animals and various edible, then inedible plants before hides and processed leather were considered for consumption. Boiling, too, appears as the most practical way to both rehydrate and preserve whatever flavour and nourishment can be gathered from animal skin and leather.

In his narrative of the first-century CE Jewish rebellion against Rome – *The Wars of the Jews* or *History of the Destruction of Jerusalem* – Flavius Josephus provides another example of siege-time consumption of leather and other foodstuffs usually considered inedible. Josephus' account of the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE notes:

[The besieged Jews'] hunger was so intolerable, that it obliged them to chew everything, while they gathered such things as the most sordid animals would not touch, and endured to eat them; nor did they at length abstain from girdles and shoes; and the very leather which belonged to their shields they pulled off and gnawed: the very wisps of old hay became food to some; and some gathered up fibres, and sold a very small weight of them for four Attic [drachmae].<sup>88</sup>

Josephus' account provides an interesting parallel to narratives of the First Crusade. Indeed, the comparable accounts of two sieges of Jerusalem appears to have been particularly significant in the construction of first-hand and second-generation accounts of the First Crusade. Two of the three second-generation chroniclers examined in subsequent chapters of this study refer directly to Josephus' work, in fact. Guibert of Nogent claims that the events of the First Crusade were worthy of being told in a more dignified style than 'all the histories of Jewish warfare' and Baldric of Bourgueil cites Josephus in the introduction to his chronicle, saying Josephus' history demonstrates the accuracy of Christ's prophecy

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<sup>87</sup> Appian, *Roman History: Volume III*, ed. and trans. by Brian McGing (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), p. 217.

<sup>88</sup> Flavius Josephus, 'The Wars of the Jews', in *The Works of Josephus: New Updated Version*, trans. by William Whiston (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987) pp. 543–772 (p. 737).

about the destruction of the temple.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, the construction of Josephus' description of the hunger suffered during the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE and his account of what the Jews were forced to eat, buy, and sell out of desperation is similar to that of the first-hand accounts of the First Crusade. Josephus includes, for example, that the Jews chewed on girdles, shoes, and the leather from shields to abate hunger, and notes that hay fetched an extortionate price when sold. Aside from the price of animal fodder which is only explicitly relayed in Raymond's account of the campaign, each of these elements are clearly outlined in the first-hand accounts of the First Crusade.<sup>90</sup>

Furthermore, the vocabulary used to describe how the Jews treated items such as leather and hay – chewing and gnawing – finds similar expression in accounts in the *GF* tradition. The *GF* itself uses the Latin verb *mandere* to denote the act of chewing, chomping, and gnawing.<sup>91</sup> In the context of famine and starvation, this verb, which emphasises the role of the mouth and teeth in acts of consumption, lends a sense of desperation and animalism to the crusaders' experience of hunger at Antioch. A more detailed discussion of the vocabulary of consumption is provided in later chapters, but it is important to note that the authors of first-hand accounts of the First Crusade had access to pre-existing frameworks and paradigms for discussing the experience of hunger during siege scenarios. While the stages of consumption from inedible plants and animal by-products outlined demonstrates a practical approach to assuaging hunger during circumstances of famine, the similarities between accounts of extreme famine in historical sieges suggests accounts of the consumption of leather, inedible plants, and parts of

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<sup>89</sup> Jay Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', *French Historical Studies*, 31 (2011), pp. 525–552 (p. 547). GN, p. 81; BB, p. 43.

<sup>90</sup> For the price of horse fodder during the campaign, see RA, p. 53 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 35). For examples of horses and beasts of burden starving, see also FC, pp. 329–330 (trans. by Ryan, p. 130).

<sup>91</sup> For use of the verb *mandere* and its derivatives, see *GF*, pp. 56, 57, 61–62, and 80.

animals were probably somewhere between literary trope and a record of a true experience.<sup>92</sup>

At this juncture, it is worth noting another facet of Harari's discussions of 'the eyewitness' as it relates to the depictions of hunger examined in this chapter: that is, the differentiation between 'eyewitnessing' and 'flesh-witnessing'. Did Raymond, Fulcher, Peter, and the *GF*-author observe crusaders eating vegetation and boiled leather? Or did they experience it personally, 'in the flesh'?

The authority of eyewitnesses, according to Harari, is grounded in knowledge which in turn is rooted in observation: those who *know* with certainty what has happened claim the authority to speak about an event because they have witnessed it with their own eyes.<sup>93</sup> The same connection between observation and knowledge is drawn by Isidore in his *Etymologies*. Flesh-witnesses, as Harari defines them, draw authority from having personally undergone subjective experiences.<sup>94</sup> Harari argues that undergoing an experience – as opposed to observing an experience – provides a certain type of knowledge that is made up of sensory input rather than isolated observations.<sup>95</sup> While Harari's exploration of 'eyewitnessing' and 'flesh-witnessing' has shifted focus from crusade narratives to wartime narratives more generally in the past twenty years, the concept of knowledge transfer is key to understanding how these terms might apply to medieval perceptions of witnessing. Harari claims that once an eyewitness has shared what he knows from his observations, his audience knows it too.<sup>96</sup> Where second parties can learn about events from the knowledge of eyewitnesses, we cannot gain an understanding of an event from the perspective of flesh-witnesses without having undergone the experience itself.

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<sup>92</sup> Joanna Phillips, 'Besieging Bodies: Why Sieges were Hard on your Health', *Medieval Warfare*, 8.1 (2018), 44–47 (p. 46).

<sup>93</sup> Yuval Noah Harari, 'Scholars, Eyewitnesses, and Flesh-Witnesses of War: Tense Relationship', *Partial Answers*, 7.2 (2009), 231–228 (p. 215).

<sup>94</sup> Yuval Noah Harari, 'Armchairs, Coffee, and Authority: Eye-witnesses and Flesh-witnesses Speak about War, 1100–2000', *The Journal of Military History*, 74.1 (2010), 53–78 (p. 67).

<sup>95</sup> Harari, 'Armchairs', p. 67.

<sup>96</sup> Harari, 'Armchairs', p. 62.

This leads Harari to conclude that flesh-witnessing cannot be sufficiently translated into words and is therefore not a transferable form of knowledge.<sup>97</sup>

As participants in the campaign, Raymond, Fulcher, Peter, and the *GF*-author were eyewitness to the First Crusade. According to Harari's definition, however, these men were also flesh-witnesses to the elements of the venture they experienced personally, according to the route they took to the Holy Land, the relationships they had with their respective leaders, and their profession or role within the contingent to which they belonged. These socio-political considerations mean that while they each witnessed the First Crusade 'in the flesh' their experiences of the campaign were unique.

Instances of flesh-witnessing, as defined by Harari, can be found in first-hand accounts of the campaign. Fulcher, for example, draws attention to his personal experience of the expedition by invoking the sense and memory of taste in his narrative. In a first-person anecdote concerning his journey to Jerusalem and the hunger he and the rest of Baldwin's retinue experienced in November 1099, Fulcher notes:

But in those cultivated fields through which we passed during our march there were certain ripe plants which common folk called "honey-cane" and which were very much like reeds. The name is compounded from "cane" and "honey", whence the expression "wood honey" I think, because the latter is skilfully made from these canes. In our hunger we chewed them all day because of the taste of honey. However, this helped but little.<sup>98</sup>

By explaining the taste of sugar-cane and the word's etymology, Fulcher anticipates that audiences will use their own knowledge to fill in any gaps in his narrative with inferences based on their own experience or understanding of the topic.<sup>99</sup> Thus, even though the audience had likely never tasted sugar-cane, they might understand that it tasted like honey – something familiar to them – because of Fulcher's description. The suggestion that

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<sup>97</sup> Harari, 'Armchairs', p. 69.

<sup>98</sup> FC, pp. 329–330 (trans. by Ryan, pp. 130–131): 'Tunc autem errant in ipsis agris cultis, per quos euntes transibamus, messes quaedam, quas vulgus vocat *cannamelles*, harundinibus fere similes. A *canna* et *melle* nomen compositum, unde et *mel silvestre*, ut puto, dicitur, quod de his sapienter conficitur. Has quidem famelici propter mellitum saporem tota die dentibus nostris ruminabamus, parum tamen proficiendo.'

<sup>99</sup> Bull, *Crusade Narrative*, p. 78.

an understanding of events from testimony is a transferable form of knowledge but what individuals felt and personally experienced is not therefore requires further enquiry when applied to medieval narratives. In first-hand accounts of the First Crusade, we see deliberate attempts to translate experiential knowledge into words, to narrativise the events of the crusade as experienced by the authors as well as imagine how they were experienced by others. While what might be considered ‘flesh-witness’ moments are present in first-hand accounts of the First Crusade, these episodes are not necessarily privileged over any other type of authenticating source or literary technique in these texts. The use of eyewitness and flesh-witness episodes in these narratives appears to be less about an exchange of knowledge and more about making sense of the events of the First Crusade within pre-existing models of understanding. Harari’s distinction between the concepts of eyewitnessing and flesh-witnessing with respect to medieval historical narratives does not, therefore, seem workable. It does not matter whether Raymond, Fulcher, Peter, and the *GF*-author were personally reduced to eating animal hides during the second siege of Antioch, what matters to the construction of their narratives is that they ascribe meaning to the experience of famine by describing it in ways that would be understood and accepted as truthful by their audiences.

### Crusader Cannibalism

In late November 1098, the crusading army, led by Raymond IV of Toulouse and Robert of Flanders, left Antioch and travelled to Ma’arra an-Numan, a city in northern Syria. Bohemond and his contingent followed shortly after. Ma’arra was of strategic and economic importance in the region and the crusaders quickly laid siege to the city. As the winter set in, the crusaders once again faced famine conditions as their supply lines were strained and their provisions were exhausted. Instead of trying to starve their enemy into submission with a lengthy siege – which would have exacerbated the crusaders’ own lack of provisions – the crusade leaders took an aggressive, assault-based siege strategy, and

Ma'arra was eventually taken on 12 December 1098 and thoroughly sacked.<sup>100</sup> Once the initial spoils from the sacking of the city had been exhausted, widespread hunger began to infiltrate the crusading army. It is within this context of hunger at Ma'arra that the four first-hand accounts of the First Crusade describe Christians cannibalising the corpses of their enemies.

In his account of the aftermath of the siege of Ma'arra, the *GF*-author notes:

While we were there some of our men could not satisfy their needs, either because of the long stay or because they were so hungry, for there was no plunder to be had outside the walls. So they ripped up the bodies of the dead, because they used to find bezants hidden in their entrails, and others cut the dead flesh into slices and cooked it to eat.<sup>101</sup>

Peter offers a very similar version of events:

Afterward there was such a delay in the city that many were pressed because they did not dare go any distance into Saracen lands, and they could find no booty nearby. As a result the Christians of this land brought back nothing for sale. Consequently, our poor people began to split open the pagan corpses because they found bezants hidden in their bellies. There were others who were so famished that they cut the flesh of the dead into bits, cooked, and ate it.<sup>102</sup>

There are several significant elements in these passages worth exploring. First, it is evident from Peter and the *GF*-author's use of third-person plurals when referring to Christian cannibals that an attempt was made to insert a degree of separation between the author and those who partook in the acts of anthropophagy. It is implied that the *GF*-author and Peter did not personally participate in cannibalism and were instead relaying a horror

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<sup>100</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the events leading up to the siege of Ma'arra, see Asbridge, pp. 263–265.

<sup>101</sup> *GF*, p. 80: 'Fuerunt ibi ex nostris qui illic non inuenerunt sicuti opus eis erat, tantum ex longa mora, quantum ex districtione famis, quia foris neuierant aliquid inuenire ad capiendum, sed scindebant corpora mortuorum, eo quod in uentribus eorum inueniebant bisanteos reconditos; alii uero caedebant carnes eorum per frustra, et coquebant ad manducandum.'

<sup>102</sup> *PT*, pp. 124–125 (trans. by Hill and Hill, pp. 101–102): 'Postea fuit tam longa mora in civitate quia fuerunt multi astricti fame, ideo quod foras non audebant exire in terram Sarracenorum longe; prope nequiverant aliquid invenire ad capiendum. Christiani igitur illius terre nichil feferebant ad vendendum. Nostri quoque pauperes ceperunt scindere corpora paganorum, eo quod in ventribus eorum inueniebant reconditos bisantios. Alii quoque, districti fame, cedebant carnes eorum per frustra, et coquebant, et manducabant.'



allegedly witnessed, enacted, and experienced by others. Similarly, it is explicitly noted that only ‘some of our men’ or ‘others’ separate from the main crusading army committed these acts of cannibalism. Again, this ensures that a clear distinction is made between the identity of cannibals and the rest of the Christian force. This deliberate separation is also evident in the accounts of Fulcher and Raymond. Fulcher alludes to his physical distance from the acts by acknowledging his own absence from Ma’arra at the time of the cannibalism and Raymond refers to the cannibals as ‘the people’ without any first-person plural designations to confirm his association with the group even though he was present in Ma’arra.<sup>103</sup> It is important to note, however, that the *GF*-author and Peter do not condemn crusader cannibalism.<sup>104</sup> They preface their accounts of anthropophagy with a description of dearth, noting that the crusading army faced famine in Ma’arra because of a lack of resources in the surrounding area and a general fear of venturing further afield in hostile territory to gather supplies. The experience of extreme hunger, therefore, features as an explanatory backdrop to descriptions of anthropophagy, framing the cannibalism as a circumstantial act of survival. This is a defensive stance that uses hunger as a justification for anthropophagy.

A letter to Pope Paschal II (1099–1118) from Laodicea, signed by three of the most prominent leaders of the campaign – Godfrey of Bouillon, Raymond IV of Toulouse, and Daimbert, Archbishop of Pisa (*d.* 1105) – and dated to September 1099 confirms that cannibalism at Ma’arra was believed to have been the result of famine: ‘There was so great a famine in the army that the putrid bodies of the Saracens were eaten up by the Christian people’.<sup>105</sup> This is the second reference to cannibalism in the crusade leaders’ letter to Pope

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<sup>103</sup> FC, pp. 328–329 (trans. by Ryan, p. 131); RA, p. 101 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 81).

<sup>104</sup> Pantalea Mazzitello, ‘Eating Enemies, Eating Sins: Anthropophagy in the Eracles Italian Vulgarization’, *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes*, 36 (2018), 357–376 (p. 363).

<sup>105</sup> ‘Letter XVIII: Epistula (Dagoberti) Pisani archiepiscopi et Godefridi ducis et Raimundi de S. Aegidii et uniuersi exercitus in terra Israel ad papam et omnes Christi fideles’, in *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100*, ed. by Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner’schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1901), pp. 167–174 (p. 170): ‘[...] tanta fames in exercitu fuit, ut corpora Saracenorum iam fetentium a populo Christiano comestra sint’. I

Paschal II. It is also noted that the famine at Antioch was so extreme that ‘some [crusaders] might scarcely restrain themselves from eating human flesh’.<sup>106</sup> These references to cannibalism avoid admitting wrongdoing. As Geraldine Heng has noted, in the letter’s first reference to cannibalism, the correspondents switch to the passive voice when confessing to an occurrence of anthropophagy at Ma’arra: the cannibal crusaders are displaced as the grammatical subject of the main clause by the rotting corpses they are forced to consume.<sup>107</sup> This removes the agency of the Christian cannibal subject from the centre of the audience’s attention. In the report of the events at Antioch, the use of the word ‘scarcely’ (*uix*) also intimates a half-admission, raising suspicion as to whether cannibalism might have taken place. Cannibalism is perhaps also alluded to in the *GF*’s account of the Antiochene famine. The *GF*-author ends his assessment of the famine in Antioch by cryptically noting that the crusaders suffered ‘many anxieties and difficulties which I am unable to speak about’ in the city.<sup>108</sup> Peter copies this statement almost verbatim in his account of the crusaders’ time in Antioch.<sup>109</sup> It is possible that the consumption of human flesh was amongst these unspeakable acts as some second- and third-generation accounts explicitly mention acts of anthropophagy at Antioch.<sup>110</sup> Nevertheless, in both instances of alleged Christian cannibalism outlined in the letter to Pope Paschal II, much like in the *GF*-author’s and Peter’s narratives, famine is used to excuse anthropophagical action.

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have used the translation provided in Geraldine Heng, *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), p. 24.

<sup>106</sup> ‘Letter XVIII’, p. 169 (trans. by Heng, *Empire*, p. 24): ‘[...] ut uix ab humanis dapibus se continerent aliqui.’

<sup>107</sup> Heng, *Empire*, p. 24.

<sup>108</sup> *GF*, p. 62: ‘Istas et multas anxietates ac angustias quas nominare nequeo passi sumus pro Christi nomine et Sancti Sepulchri uia deliberanda’. I have used my own translation of ‘nominare’ (to mention, speak about) here to reflect the traumatic nature of the crusaders’ experience of Antioch.

<sup>109</sup> *PT*, p. 104 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 80): ‘Istas anxietates et multas angustias quas nominare nequeo passi sumus pro Christi nomine, et pro Sancti Sepulchri via de liberanda.’

<sup>110</sup> See Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of this study.

Starvation appears to be sufficient grounds to partake in cannibalism and the experience of hunger is therefore used to justify and defend episodes of anthropophagy in Ma'arra.<sup>111</sup>

Furthermore, Peter's and the *GF*-author's description of cannibalism at Ma'arra is presented as one of two acts of bodily desecration performed on corpses found in the city. According to Peter and the *GF*-author, dead bodies were ripped open (*scindere*) in the crusaders' pursuit for bezants before being butchered for flesh to consume. While it is not made explicit in either text, it is implied that the bodies desecrated in these ways were those of enemy soldiers and Ma'arra inhabitants. The term *scindere* is particularly evocative as it not only denotes the action of rending something to pieces, but also refers to the manner in which something is torn apart. *Scindere* can specifically mean 'to tear in rage, grief, or despair'. This translation of the verb seems apt in the context of crusader hunger as it conjures an image of desperation that highlights the circumstances of famine that necessitated the crusaders' violent acts against the bodies of their enemies.

Slicing open the bellies of corpses in search of coins also appears in Josephus' account of the Jewish Wars:

[...] for there was found among the Syrian deserters a certain person who was caught gathering pieces of gold out of the excrements of the Jews' bellies; for the deserters used to swallow such pieces of gold [...] So the multitude of the Arabians, with the Syrians, cut up those that came as supplicants, and searched their bellies. Nor does it seem to me that any misery befell the Jews that was more terrible than this, since in one night's time about two thousand of these deserters were thus dissected.<sup>112</sup>

In his analysis of the Christian's capture of Jerusalem (15 July 1099), Benjamin Z. Kedar recognises that the violent images described in first-hand account of the First Crusade, such as smashing the skulls of infants and searching for gold in the cut-up bellies of the enemy, were likely drawn from Josephus' account of the atrocities committed by Roman

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<sup>111</sup> Mazzitello, p. 362.

<sup>112</sup> Josephus, 'The Wars of the Jews', p. 725.

legionaries.<sup>113</sup> Kedar specifically highlights the parallels between Josephus' account of searching for gold in cadavers after the siege of Jerusalem (70 CE) and Fulcher's description of the same acts after the siege of Jerusalem in 1099. Fulcher claims that crusaders split open (*findere*) the bellies of Muslims after they captured Jerusalem 'in order to extract from the intestines the bezants which the Saracens had gulped down their loathsome throats while alive'.<sup>114</sup> While Kedar acknowledges the similarity between the two accounts, his wider assessment of contemporary and non-contemporary Latin, Judeo-Arabic, and Arabic sources of the First Crusade aims to 'clarify some facets' of the massacre of Jews and Muslims perpetrated by Christian crusaders in Jerusalem upon the city's capture in 1099.<sup>115</sup> Kedar argues that if chroniclers of the First Crusade used literary models such as Josephus' text to help them describe certain events, this does not preclude the possibility that these descriptions were also based on actual observation.<sup>116</sup> For his purposes of empirical reconstruction, Kedar therefore suggests that focussing too heavily on the images and type-scenes offered by earlier texts and repeated in accounts of the First Crusade 'tends to obscure rather than enhance our understanding of the events' under consideration.<sup>117</sup> I would argue that the opposite is true when taking a narratological approach to crusade sources: acknowledging the parallels between first-hand accounts of the First Crusade and earlier literature is highly important because it showcases how narratives of the campaign were shaped by prevailing discourses. This does not obscure our understanding of the events described; rather, it illuminates the rhetorical techniques and literary tropes employed by writers seeking to communicate personal and collective experiences to their audiences. For this reason, it is significant that Josephus mentions the act of searching for

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<sup>113</sup> Benjamin Z. Kedar, 'The Jerusalem Massacre of July 1099 in the Western Historiography of the Crusades', in *Crusade: Volume 3*, ed. by Benjamin Z. Kedar, Jonathan Riley-Smith, Helen Nicholson, and Michael Evans (London: Routledge, 2016) pp. 15–75 (p. 71).

<sup>114</sup> FC, pp. 301–302 (trans. by Ryan, p. 122): '[...] ut de intestinis eorum bisantios exceperent, quos vivi faucibus diris transglutiverant.'

<sup>115</sup> Kedar, p. 15.

<sup>116</sup> Kedar, p. 72.

<sup>117</sup> Kedar, p. 72.

coins in sliced bellies as its repetition in accounts of the First Crusade demonstrates that early-twelfth century crusade commentators were drawing on preestablished tropes to visualise acts of bodily desecration in Ma'arra.

While the *GF*-author and Peter locate acts of cannibalism after the Christian's capture of Ma'arra in late 1098, Fulcher maintains that acts of anthropophagy occurred during the siege of the city. In his account of the siege of Ma'arra, Fulcher claims:

[...] our men suffered from excessive hunger. I shudder to say that many of our men, terribly tormented by the madness of starvation, cut pieces from the buttocks of Saracens lying there dead. These pieces they cooked and ate, savagely devouring the flesh while it was insufficiently roasted.<sup>118</sup>

Fulcher provides a more detailed description of cannibalism than the first-hand accounts of the campaign discussed above. First, he specifies which part of the body the Christians chose to butcher from dead Muslim bodies: the buttocks (*natis*). The inclusion of this detail may have been intended to highlight the practicality of the crusaders' cannibalism as the buttocks are one of the fleshiest parts of the body. Fulcher's specificity may also have been a means of attaching connotations of uncleanness and contamination to these acts of anthropophagy. In either case, Fulcher evokes a sense of savagery in his depiction of crusader cannibalism that is complemented by the claim that, much like the foliage eaten during the siege of Antioch, the human flesh was consumed before it was fully cooked.

In an examination of representations of cannibalism in *Richard Coer de Lyon*, the *Martyrdom of Saint Arethas* – a hagiographic text dating from the sixth century in which a mother drinks the blood of her beheaded daughters – and the fourteenth-century 'geography' *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, Vincent Vandenberg acknowledges the significance of *how* the human body is cannibalised in medieval literature.<sup>119</sup> Vandenberg

<sup>118</sup> FC, pp. 266–267 (trans. by Ryan, pp. 112–113): 'famem nimiam gens nostra pertulit. Dicere perhorreo, quo plerique nostum famis rabie nimis vexati abscidebant de natibus Saracenorum iam ibi mortuorum frusta, quae coquebant et mandebant et parum ad igem Assata ore truci devorabant.'

<sup>119</sup> Vincent Vandenberg, 'Choosing Human Flesh? A Few Medieval Peculiarities and the Debates of Contemporary Research', *Anthropozoologica*, 45.1 (2010), 149–155 (p. 151).

suggests that medieval descriptions of human flesh consumption can be split into two categories: the first mimics ‘normal’ food practice, involving the preparation, preservation, and even the selling of human flesh.<sup>120</sup> The second category maintains connotations of animalism and includes instances in which human flesh is consumed without civilised preparation.<sup>121</sup> Vandenberg’s distinction between acts of civilised and uncivilised cannibalism in medieval literature is significant as it demonstrates the way in which episodes of anthropophagy interact with socio-cultural expectations of food preparation and consumption. Fulcher’s description falls somewhere between Vandenberg’s two categories: the crusaders start by using appropriate culinary processes for cooking meat – butchering the flesh and then roasting it – but fail to complete this process because they were too hungry and impatient to allow the human flesh to roast fully before eating it. It appears that Fulcher tried to mitigate the savagery associated with acts of cannibalism by acknowledging the civilising process of cooking, but this is ultimately undermined by the fact that the crusaders ate the flesh before it was fully cooked.<sup>122</sup>

Raymond’s account of cannibal activity after the siege of Ma’arra is slightly different to the other three first-hand accounts addressed above. Although he starts by acknowledging food scarcity in the ranks of the Christians, he paints a much more gruesome anthropophagical scene:

Now the food shortage became so acute that the Christians eagerly ate many rotten Saracen bodies which they had pitched into the swamps two or three weeks before.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Vandenberg, p. 151.

<sup>121</sup> Vandenberg, p. 151.

<sup>122</sup> For an anthropological perspective on the civilising effects of different modes of cooking, see Claude Lévi-Strauss, ‘The Culinary Triangle’, in *Food and Culture: A Reader*, ed. by Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 36–43.

<sup>123</sup> RA, p. 101 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 81): ‘Interea tanta fames in exercitu fuit, ut multa corpora iam fetentium, que in paludibus civitatis eisdem et amplius ebdomadas iacuerant, populus avidissime comederet.’ I have altered Hill and Hill’s translation of *avidissime* from ‘enthusiastically’ to ‘eagerly’ to better illuminate the hunger and desperation of the crusaders, two factors that act as a backdrop to this scene of crusader cannibalism.

The physical state of the bodies consumed by Christian crusaders in Ma'arra is not mentioned in any other first-hand source. The image of rotting corpses in nearby swamps is first established in Raymond's account of the capture of Ma'arra. He notes that some crusaders had Muslim captives lead them through the streets in hopes of locating spoils of war.<sup>124</sup> The captives led them to wells where they jumped 'headlong to their deaths in preference to revealing goods owned by them or others'.<sup>125</sup> Raymond claims their 'corpses were thrown into swamps and areas beyond the walls, and so Ma'arrat-an-Nu'mān yielded little plunder.'<sup>126</sup> In this way, the image of rotten corpses dragged from the swamp recalls when the crusaders, and by extension the audience, realised that Ma'arra had little in the way of provisions or loot to offer the Christian force. This link is made clearer by Raymond's acknowledgement that the corpses consumed by the crusaders had been thrown into the swamp 'two or three weeks before'.<sup>127</sup>

The timeframe also confirms that the corpses were not fresh. These bodies were presumably rotting and water-logged from their time in the swamp, which makes the fact that they were eaten even more gruesome. Robert's brief acknowledgement that the corpses consumed by the crusaders were pulled from swamps therefore creates a highly graphic image that highlights the crusaders' desperation for food. This desperation is confirmed by the use of the adverb *avidius* (greedily, eagerly, or impatiently) which is the only description of *how* the bodies were consumed in Raymond's account of cannibalism. Crucially, there is no indication that these bodies were cooked. As suggested by Vandenberg's categorisation of cannibal processes, not referring to culinary preparation

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<sup>124</sup> RA, pp. 98–99 (trans. by Hill and Hill, pp. 78–79).

<sup>125</sup> RA, p. 98 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 79): 'Contigit autem quibusdam de nostris ut cum Sarracenos pro spoliis per civitatem ducerent usque ad puteos Sarraceni nostros perducebant, atque se subito intus precipitabant, eligentes magis mortis compendium, quam sua vel aliqua demonstrare vellent.'

<sup>126</sup> RA, p. 98 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 79): 'Quapropter omnes morti subiacuerunt, et proiecti sunt per paludes civitatis et extra muros. Sicque non multa spolia capta fuerunt in civitate.'

<sup>127</sup> RA, p. 101 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 81).

brings a sense of animality and savagery to the forefront of the narrative. While Raymond does not directly condemn these acts of anthropophagy, his construction of crusader cannibalism is not as sympathetic as the *GF*-author's, Peter's, or Fulcher's. Unlike the other three first-hand accounts of the campaign, Raymond does not attempt to excuse or mitigate the crusaders' cannibalism by emphasising their hunger; instead, he draws the audience's attention to the gruesome nature of the crusaders' anthropophagy.

What is particularly significant about this account of crusader cannibalism is that Raymond describes how onlookers perceived these acts of anthropophagy:

This spectacle disgusted as many crusaders as it did strangers, and as a result of it many gave up without hope of Frankish reinforcements and turned back. The Saracens and the Turks reacted thus: "This stubborn and merciless race unmoved by hunger, sword, or other perils for one year at Antioch, now feasts on human flesh; therefore, we ask, 'Who can resist them?'" The infidels spread stories of these and other inhuman acts of the crusaders, but we were unaware that God had made us an object of terror.<sup>128</sup>

Here, Raymond acknowledges that the acts of cannibalism committed by the Christian crusaders were known to other crusaders as well as to their enemy. The emphasis placed on the visibility of the crusaders' cannibalism suggests that these acts were not done in secret. Peter also indicates that the crusaders were not carrying out their cannibalism covertly, noting: 'When the leaders observed this [cannibalism], they ordered the corpses of the pagans dragged out of the gates of the city, piled into heaps, and afterward ordered them burned'.<sup>129</sup> According to Raymond, it was the sight of cannibalism that contributed to low morale in the crusading army, causing desertions. By attributing a feeling of disgust to

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<sup>128</sup> RA, p. 101 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 81): 'Terrebant ista multos tam nostre gentis homines quam extraneos. Revertentur ob ea nostri quam plures desperantes de itinere sine succursu de gente Francorum. Sarraceni vero et Turci econtra dicebant: Et quis poterit sustinere hanc gentem que tam obstinate atque crudelis est, ut per annum non poterit revovari ab obsidione Antiochie, fame, vel gladio, vel aliquibus peiculis, et nunc carnibus humanis vescitur? Hec et alia crudelissima sibi in nobis dicebant esse pagani. Etenim dederat Deus timorem nostrum cuctis gentibus sed nos nesciebamus.'

<sup>129</sup> PT, p. 125 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 102): Postea seniores nostri hoc videntes fecerunt paganos trahere extra civitatem ad portas, ibique faciebant montes ex eis, et postea faciebant eos ardere.'



those Christians who witnessed the cannibalism, Raymond therefore guides the audience's reaction to the vivid and gruesome image of anthropophagy in his account.

Raymond's reference to Muslim and Turkish responses to crusader cannibalism is unique to his narrative of the campaign. No contemporary Arabic sources record episodes of crusader cannibalism, so this outside perspective cannot be corroborated and was likely imagined.<sup>130</sup> Crucially, Raymond uses the voice of the crusaders' enemy to present the Christians as stubborn (*obstinatus*) and merciless (*crudelis*).<sup>131</sup> This is the same language used to describe the crusaders' Muslim enemy not only in Raymond's account of the First Crusade, but in other narrative sources of the campaign. Raymond, for example, highlights the stubborn resistance of the Turks during the siege of Jerusalem and mentions their 'overwhelming defensive skill', and Fulcher describes the Turks as 'despised, degenerate, and enslaved by demons'.<sup>132</sup> This language-mirroring communicates an individual's or group's characteristics by using a series of recognisable markers of identity. By presenting the Christian crusaders in terms usually reserved for describing their enemy, using a Muslim voice, Raymond further passes judgement on the crusaders' actions in Ma'arra.

Furthermore, the suggestion that the Turks believed the crusaders to have been unmoved by the hunger and brutal combat experienced during the siege of Antioch stands at odds with the image of the starving, weak, and demoralised Christians previously created by Raymond in his depiction of the events in and around the city. Here, Raymond uses the anonymous Turkish voice to home in on an image of Christian savagery, brutality, and animality that is complemented by an insistence that the cannibal crusaders ate rotten human flesh 'eagerly'. This dual interpretation of crusader cannibalism, in which the

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<sup>130</sup> Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', pp. 527–528, n. 39; and, Geraldine Heng, 'Cannibalism, the First Crusade, and the Genesis of Medieval Romance', *A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 10.1 (1998), 98–174 (p. 146, n. 12).

<sup>131</sup> RA, p. 101 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 81).

<sup>132</sup> RA, p. 149 (trans. by Hill and Hill, p. 126): '[...] quippe cum unicuique de nostris plures adversarii resisterent, preterea murus firmissimus et altus et multa copia, atque oportunitas que hostibus ad munimen nobis adverse [...]'; FC, pp. 135–136 (trans. by Ryan, p. 66): '[...]spreta, degener et daemonum ancilla [...]']'.

crusaders are at once weak, desperate, and starving, as well as savage, brutal, and merciless, illuminates the strategic benefit of cannibalism. Indeed, Raymond forges a link between cannibalism, military ability, and perseverance by aligning crusader cannibalism with triumphant military invasion. In posing the question “Who can resist them?” Raymond uses the voice of a Turk to establish the cannibals, and by extension the crusading force, as formidable opponents while simultaneously highlighting the inevitability of their victory.<sup>133</sup> The prospect of instilling terror in the crusaders’ enemy mitigates the negative connotations of gruesome savagery attached to crusader cannibalism and transforms anthropophagy into a marker of military prowess.

Raymond further negotiates the horror of crusader cannibalism by highlighting God’s agency in the crusaders’ actions, specifically noting that through rumours of cannibalism ‘God had made us an object of terror’. Attributing the crusaders’ anthropophagical reputation to the divine will redirects the audience’s attention towards the fact that, according to Raymond, the First Crusade was firmly positioned within sacred history: the events of the campaign were ultimately sanctioned and directed by God. Thus, in Raymond’s discussion of Turkish responses to crusader cannibalism we find a complex attempt to transform the savagery and desperation associated with acts of anthropophagy into something strategically beneficial, albeit disgusting for other Christians to behold, that is part of the divine plan.

## Conclusion

A close reading of four first-hand accounts of the First Crusade has demonstrated that these crusade commentators used ancient exemplars and prevailing discourses about siege-induced famine to communicate personal and collective experiences of hunger and death to their audiences. Central to understanding how and why the *GF*-author, Peter,

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<sup>133</sup> Heng, *Empire*, p. 31.

Raymond, and Fulcher assigned meaning to the events they describe is the concept of 'eyewitnessing'. As I have outlined above, Harari's approach to the study of what he considers two separate literary genres – 'eyewitness accounts' and 'histories' – is both too restrictive and anachronistic when applied to narrative accounts of the First Crusade.

Medieval perceptions of eyewitnessing were closely tied to the concepts of knowledge and truth, which were in turn implicated in larger projects of narrative construction that were central to a *communal* understanding of the events that had occurred. For this reason, the presence of eyewitness, and in some instances, flesh-witness, material in the first-hand narratives under investigation in this chapter appears to be less about conforming to specific genre conventions and more about making sense of the events of the First Crusade within pre-existing models of understanding.

Indeed, by describing the crusaders' consumption of 'inedible' foliage, hides, and processed leather during the second siege of Antioch and the siege of Ma'arra, the *GF*-author, Peter, Fulcher, and Raymond were not only relaying lived experience, but were also drawing on ancient literary models to communicate the events they had witnessed in a way that would be recognised, understood, and accepted as truthful by their audiences. The lists of food prices recorded in accounts of the second siege of Antioch similarly contribute to this discourse of dearth as the narrativisation of the price of bread, wine, and meat, amongst other foodstuffs, is central to communicating the severity of the hunger suffered by the crusaders in Antioch. In these episodes the eyewitness aspect is often obscured in favour of a communal memory of the event.

The consumption of human flesh appears in these narrative accounts in the context of famine. While an attempt is made to insert a degree of separation between the author and the crusaders that partook in acts of anthropophagy, first-hand authors are not condemnatory in their descriptions of crusader cannibalism. In all four first-hand accounts, the authors confirm that human flesh was only consumed when all other sources of nourishment were exhausted. Hunger is used to justify and excuse anthropophagical action,

and the consumption of human flesh is ultimately presented as a circumstantial act of survival. Nevertheless, there is some attempt to delimit the savagery associated with acts of cannibalism in first-hand accounts of the First Crusade. Fulcher, for example, attempts to detract from the negative connotations attached to anthropophagy by acknowledging that the crusaders tried to cook human flesh. Raymond, on the other hand, transforms the gruesome act of cannibalism into something strategically beneficial. Not only does Raymond suggest the crusaders' cannibalism contributed to a reputation that instilled fear in the Christians' enemy, but he also brings to the audiences' attention that crusader cannibalism was part of the broader divine plan. In this complex negotiation of crusader cannibalism Raymond conjures an image of crusader savagery and presents it as a marker of divinely sanctioned prowess.

Thus, personal experience was embedded amongst conjectures and alternative perspectives to narrativise and ascribe significance to the events of the First Crusade in first-hand accounts of the campaign. Subsequent chroniclers of the expedition took up the details of these accounts – and with them moments of eyewitness – and reinterpreted them in line with different authorial agendas and in conjunction with other rhetorical and literary conventions. Representations of crusader hunger and dearth remain a central theme in these second-generation accounts of crusading. This is where we shall turn our attention to now.

## Chapter Two: Expressions of Hunger and Alimentary Metaphors in Robert the Monk's and Baldric of Bourgueil's Chronicles of the First Crusade

In the twenty years following the First Crusade, narratives that recounted the Christians' victory in the Holy Land flourished in popularity. Many of these texts used first-hand accounts of the expedition in conjunction with oral testimonies and imaginative reconstructions to craft what might be termed 'second-generation' chronicles of the venture. This chapter focuses on two second-generation accounts of the First Crusade written by French Benedictine monks in the early-twelfth century: the *Historia Iherosolimitana* by Robert the Monk and the *Historia Ierosolimitana* by Baldric of Bourgueil.<sup>1</sup> These men used the *GF* as the basis of their texts but took a decidedly more theological approach to interpret the First Crusade. Both Robert and Baldric viewed the events of the campaign as part of providential history. For them, the First Crusade was designed by God and directed according to his will.

Food, its sourcing, and its preparation in Robert's and Baldric's narratives have been relatively underexplored, which is surprising given the attention each author devotes to describing what, how, and when the crusaders were able to eat. While the construction of hunger as a recurrent theme in these chronicles reflects the realities of starvation and famine during the four-year long expedition to the Holy Land, both authors also use the concept of hunger – the physical need for food and hunger as a metaphor for desire – and food-related analogies to communicate the significance of the campaign to their audiences.

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter uses the main editions and modern translations of RM and BB: Robert the Monk, *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana*, ed. and trans. by Carol Sweetenham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Baldric of Bourgueil, *Baldric of Bourgueil: "History of the Jerusalemmites": A translation of the Historia Ierosolimitana*, trans. by Susan Edgington with an introduction by Steven Biddlecombe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020).

This chapter examines the ways Robert and Baldric present hunger as a divine test and an incentive to action, advancing the narrative at key junctures by contributing to a cycle of scarcity and abundance. It also explores how, by presenting violence and bloodshed in terms of hunger and food-related practices, especially as they relate to the interaction between humans and animals, Robert and Baldric employ a series of alimentary metaphors to confirm the crusaders' role as instruments of the divine will. The final section of this chapter assesses how depictions of crusader cannibalism fit into the expressions of hunger and alimentary metaphors used by these second-generation chronicles of the campaign. In so doing, I illuminate the ways in which Robert and Baldric use the concept of hunger to justify and explain episodes of crusader cannibalism within the broader context of providential history.

### Robert the Monk and Baldric of Bourgueil

Robert the Monk's *Historia Iherosolimitana* survives in some eighty manuscripts from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries.<sup>2</sup> This is almost ten times the number of manuscripts that survive of the other chronicles of the First Crusade written in the decade after the campaign's conclusion.<sup>3</sup> After its completion in the early twelfth century, Robert's *Historia* was adapted numerous times and was used as an authoritative source of the history of the campaign in other chronicles such as the *Historia Nicaena et Antiochena* (c. 1146–7), commissioned by Baldwin III of Jerusalem (1143–1163), and in epic poetry such as the *Chanson d'Antioche* examined in Chapter 4.<sup>4</sup> A copy of the *Historia* was also presented to

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<sup>2</sup> Carol Sweetenham, 'Introduction' to *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana*, ed. and trans. by Carol Sweetenham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 1–71 (pp. 8–9); Damien Kempf and Marcus G. Bull, 'Introduction' to *The Historia Iherosolimitana of Robert the Monk*, ed. by Damien Kempf and Marcus G. Bull (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), pp. ix–lxxiv (pp. lx–x).

<sup>3</sup> Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 9. For a breakdown of the *Historia Nicaena et Antiochena* and the light it might shed on perceptions of royal identity in Outremer, see Deborah Gerish, 'Remembering Kings in Jerusalem: The *Historia Nicaena vel Antiochena* and Royal Identity around the Time of the Second Crusade', in *The Second Crusade: Holy War on the*

Frederick Barbarossa, the Holy Roman Emperor, prior to his departure on the Third Crusade.<sup>5</sup> This, in conjunction with the large geographic spread of the extant manuscripts across modern Europe, suggests the text was a popular interpretation of the events of the First Crusade during the Middle Ages.

What we know of Robert the Monk can be found in the *Historia's Sermo apologeticus* which precedes both the prologue and the main body of the text.<sup>6</sup> Robert states that the *Historia* was composed at the request of an abbot he identifies as *B*.<sup>7</sup> The identity of this abbot is most commonly associated with Bernard of Marmoutier, Burchard of St-Rémi, or Baldric of Bourgueil, although there is not enough internal or external evidence to identify *B* conclusively.<sup>8</sup> At the end of the *Sermo*, Robert notes that the text was composed in a 'cloister of a certain monastery of St-Rémi founded in the bishopric of Reims'.<sup>9</sup> St-Rémi was a dominant abbey in the archdiocese of Reims and was the cult-centre for St Remigius who played a central role in the conversion of the Frankish king Clovis (c. 481–511) to Christianity. Reims itself also held important political as well as theological status as the city in which the kings of France were crowned.

It is generally believed that Robert was the former Abbot of St-Rémi. At the end of the eleventh century there was briefly an Abbot of St-Rémi named Robert and his career can be traced in the historical record. Robert became abbot at St-Rémi in 1096 but was excommunicated and deposed in 1097 after being accused of various administrative misdemeanours.<sup>10</sup> His excommunication was later repealed by Pope Urban II but Robert

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*Periphery of Latin Christendom*, ed. by Jason T. Roche and Janus Møller Jensen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), pp. 51–89.

<sup>5</sup> Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> RM, p. 3 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 75).

<sup>7</sup> RM, p. 3 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 75).

<sup>8</sup> Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xxvii. Sweetenham's translation identifies him as Bernard.

<sup>9</sup> RM, p. 3 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 75): 'Si quis affectat scire locum quo hec istoria composita fuerit, sciat esse claustrum cuiusdam celle sancti Remigii constitute in episcopatu Remensi.'

<sup>10</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and Idea of Crusading* (London: Continuum, 2003), p. 135.

was not permitted to return to his abbey and was instead forced to retire to the priory of Senuc (a dependency of St-Rémi) as prior where he was deposed again for bad administration by Pope Calixtus II (1119–1124) in 1122.<sup>11</sup> This places the former Abbot Robert in a priory of St-Rémi in the years immediately following the conclusion of the First Crusade.

While the identities of Robert-the-author and Robert-the-abbot were already being conflated in late-twelfth-century manuscript tradition, there is no internal evidence in the *Historia* to suggest that its author was once the Abbot of St-Rémi.<sup>12</sup> The only indication of the author's monastic status in the *Sermo* is that he had been compelled (*compulsus*) to write the *Historia* and that in so doing he wrote out of obedience (*per obedientiam*), subject to the authority of Abbot *B*.<sup>13</sup> The following statement, connected to the former by the conjunction 'and indeed' (*etenim*), claims that the abbot had shown Robert a copy of a history of the First Crusade and 'ordered' (*precepit*) him to write a better version.<sup>14</sup> This language of obedience has been used as a central piece of evidence in the identification of Robert, but it cannot tell us definitively who Robert the Monk was. The terms of obedience used by the author could, for example, be read as self-referential, as the defensive position of someone like Abbot Robert, who had been strongly associated with disobedience, proving he could obey orders.<sup>15</sup> Equally, references to obedience could be read both figuratively, as a form of self-deprecation and part of the modesty *topos* common to monastic writing, or literally, indicating that the author was simply following the orders of his abbot. Indeed, the Benedictine Rule, which Robert would have observed regardless of his status, forbade idleness and valued obedience in its monasteries, so the emphasis placed on the author's submission to Abbot *B* may also have been an acknowledgment that

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<sup>11</sup> Riley-Smith, p. 136; and, Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', pp. xxii-xxiii.

<sup>12</sup> Riley-Smith 135-6; and, Sweetenham, 'Introduction', pp. 3–4.

<sup>13</sup> RM, p. 3 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 75).

<sup>14</sup> RM, p. 3 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 75); and, Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', pp. xxv–xxvi.

<sup>15</sup> Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xxvii.



the writing of this history was fulfilling the author's monastic vows. None of these scenarios can be used to argue the identity of Robert-the-author conclusively; but, for the sake of contextualising the text, it is enough to recognise that the author of the *Historia* was a Benedictine monk writing in the archdiocese of Reims at someone else's request.

Robert was instructed by Abbot *B* to improve the style and expression of a pre-existing history of the First Crusade, almost certainly the *GF*. The *Sermo* suggests that Abbot *B* found the construction of the *GF* unsatisfactory because it did not include an account of the Council of Clermont and failed to highlight the theological significance of the events it described. As a witness to the synod of Latin ecclesiastics held in Clermont in 1095, Robert the Abbot would have been well positioned to add a description of the council to the beginning of his history. This is the only event of the campaign that Robert claims to have witnessed personally.

Robert's *Historia* follows the same structure as the *GF* but incorporates a more detailed introduction and several new theologically significant episodes that highlight the role of the Franks (*franci*), especially the French, within a clear framework of the divine will.<sup>16</sup> Robert includes, for example, a sermon given by Adhémar, the Bishop of Le Puy, before the battle of Antioch (28 June 1098) that draws attention to the crusaders' role as implementers of the divine will as well as God's active role in ensuring the campaign's success.<sup>17</sup> Robert's *Historia* is split into nine books, the narrative falling neatly into three sets of three books. The first trilogy covers the period from Urban II's speech at the Council of Clermont to the crusaders' arrival at Antioch. Books Four to Six describe the demoralising events and extreme hunger faced by crusaders in Antioch, and the final three books record the crusaders' success in the battles of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Ascalon. This structure makes the *Historia* much more streamlined and narratively focussed than the *GF* and allows

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<sup>16</sup> Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 16. See also Riley-Smith, pp. 135–152.

<sup>17</sup> RM, p. 74 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 169).

for a sustained epic register that manifests itself in recurrent *topoi* such as animal and bird similes and a narratorial focus on individual heroics in scenes of combat.

There is no internal evidence for dating the text, but it seems likely that Robert wrote as part of a wider wave of interest in the *GF* and crusading ideas in general sparked by Bohemond of Taranto's extensive recruitment trip for a new campaign to the Holy Land around France in 1105–1106.<sup>18</sup> The other texts in the *GF* tradition by Baldric of Bourgueil and Guibert of Nogent, for example, date to 1105–1107 and 1108 respectively.<sup>19</sup> It has been suggested that Robert's reference to obscurantist and philosophising narratives of the First Crusade in his *Sermo* may be a criticism of Guibert of Nogent's chronicle of the campaign which is famously composed in an ornate and complex fashion.<sup>20</sup> Given the close ties between the abbeys in Nogent and St-Rémi, it is possible that Robert had access to Guibert's work while he was composing his own history, suggesting a date of composition after 1108/9 for Robert's *Historia*.<sup>21</sup>

Another potential piece of dating evidence for the *Historia* can be found in Robert's description of Philip I of France's (1060–1108) imperial achievements during the time the First Crusade was being preached. According to Robert, Philip 'at that time [*ipso tempore*] was subjecting *Francia* to his imperial sway'.<sup>22</sup> Philip died in 1108 and the construction *ipso tempore* seems to indicate that the king was already dead in the narrator's present.<sup>23</sup> This interjection is unusual for the *Historia*, which tends to limit authorial knowledge to the

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<sup>18</sup> Sweetenham, 'Introduction', pp. 5–6; and, Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xxxiv. During this trip, Bohemond married Constance, the daughter of Philip I of France, and used his personal exploits on the First Crusade to emphasise his claim to Antioch and raise enthusiasm for a new campaign.

<sup>19</sup> Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 7. For dating Guibert's text, see *Dei gesta per Francos et cinq autres textes*, ed. by R. B. C. Huygens, *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 127A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996), pp. 51–56, and for dating Baldric's *Historia*, see Steven Biddlecombe, 'Introduction' to *The Historia Ierosolimitana of Baldric of Bourgueil*, ed. by Steven Biddlecombe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), pp. xi–cvii (pp. xxiv–xxx).

<sup>20</sup> *RM*, p. 3 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 75); and, Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xli.

<sup>21</sup> Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xli.

<sup>22</sup> *RM*, p. 13: '[...] qui ipso tempore Franciam suo subiugabat imperio.'

<sup>23</sup> For more on this, see Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xxxix.

confines of the narrative and is for the most part free of prolepses.<sup>24</sup> Robert also acknowledges the death of Hugh de Vermandois, Philip I's brother, when speaking of events in 1098.<sup>25</sup> Hugh is generally acknowledged in chronicles of the First Crusade as one of the expedition's heroic leaders, but in reality Hugh was relatively undistinguished. He lost his money and supplies early on in the venture and eventually abandoned the campaign in 1098.<sup>26</sup> After being threatened with excommunication, like his brother Philip, for not completing his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Hugh joined the crusade of 1101 but was wounded in battle and died of his injuries in 1102.<sup>27</sup> The language used to describe Hugh's death in Robert's *Historia* is ambiguous and avoids detailing exactly how and when Hugh died. Robert essentially conflates the expeditions Hugh participated in, enabling him to maintain a positive image of Hugh in his *Historia* despite Hugh's desertion in 1098.<sup>28</sup>

Marcus Bull and Damien Kempf have argued that the favourable light in which Robert portrays Philip and Hugh could be viewed as an attempt to reaffirm the links between Reims and the Capetian dynasty from a cloister of St-Rémi.<sup>29</sup> As previously mentioned, Reims had enjoyed a special relationship with the monarchy as the place in which kings were crowned; yet, after Philip's death in 1108, his successor Louis VI (1108–1137) chose to stage his consecration at Orléans instead of Reims.<sup>30</sup> In response, the clergy at Reims made a formal protest, demonstrating concern for the political and theological status of Reims should future coronations take place elsewhere. It is possible that elements of Robert's *Historia* reflect the desire of the archiepiscopal clergy in Reims to reconsolidate the relationship between the Church in Reims and the rulers of France. A combination of these factors has led Bull and Kempf to suggest that Robert's *Historia* was probably

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<sup>24</sup> Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xxxix.

<sup>25</sup> RM, p. 79 (trans. by Sweetenham, pp. 175–176).

<sup>26</sup> Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xvi.

<sup>27</sup> James L. Naus, 'The French Royal Court and the Memory of the First Crusade', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 55 (2011), 49–78 (p. 73).

<sup>28</sup> Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xl; and, Naus, p. 73.

<sup>29</sup> Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xli.

<sup>30</sup> Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xli.

completed around 1110, although it is possible that it had taken some years to write and may have been through several recensions.<sup>31</sup>

The second chronicle of the First Crusade examined in this chapter is Baldric of Bourgueil's *Historia Ierosolimitana*. The prologue to Baldric's text makes it clear that at the time the prologue was written Baldric was nearly sixty years old and the abbot of the wealthy abbey at Bourgueil, a commune to the south-west of Paris in the Loire Valley.<sup>32</sup> Baldric's monastic career is easier to verify than Robert's. It is likely that Baldric joined the Benedictine community at Bourgueil in the 1060s, becoming the abbot there in 1089.<sup>33</sup> Later, in 1107, Baldric moved away from Bourgueil after becoming the Archbishop of Dol. Baldric is visible in the historical record of medieval France as a witness to charters and Church councils, and as a senior churchman he attended the Council of Clermont in 1095.<sup>34</sup> He also had an extensive literary career, writing poetry, hagiography, and histories for and about lords and ladies of the secular courts, the masters of schools, and bishops.<sup>35</sup>

In their edition of Baldric's *Historia*, Susan Edgington and Steven Biddlecombe demonstrate that the text had a much broader manuscript tradition than previously thought. Their research uncovered a further seventeen complete or near complete medieval manuscripts of Baldric's *Historia* across Europe, making twenty-five in total.<sup>36</sup> While this is far fewer than the number of extant copies of Robert's *Historia*, the fact that Baldric's text was copied from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries across Europe highlights its

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<sup>31</sup> Kempf and Bull, 'Introduction', p. xl.

<sup>32</sup> BB, pp. 3–4 (trans. by Edgington, pp. 39–41).

<sup>33</sup> Steven Biddlecombe, 'Introduction', to *Baldric of Bourgueil: "History of the Jerusalemmites": A translation of the Historia Ierosolimitana*, trans. by Susan Edgington (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020), pp. 1–36 (p. 5). There is some suggestion that Baldric became abbot as early as 1077; see Steven Biddlecombe, 'Introduction', to *The Historia Ierosolimitana of Baldric of Bourgueil*, ed. by Steven Biddlecombe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), pp. xi–cv (pp. xviii–xx).

<sup>34</sup> Biddlecombe, 'Introduction' to BB English trans., p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> Steven Biddlecombe, 'Baldric of Bourgueil and the *Familia Christi*' in *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory*, ed. by Marcus Bull and Damien Kempf (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), pp. 9–23 (p. 11).

<sup>36</sup> Biddlecombe, 'Introduction' to BB English trans., p. 29.

continuing importance as a means of understanding the First Crusade.<sup>37</sup> Baldric's *Historia* is, for example, directly quoted in Book 9 of Orderic Vitalis' mid-twelfth-century *Historia Ecclesiastica* and is cited as one of Vincent of Beauvais' sources in his thirteenth-century *Speculum Historiale*, a text commissioned by the crusading king, Louis IX of France (1226–1270).<sup>38</sup> Evidence from the earliest manuscripts of Baldric's *Historia* suggests that the text could have been written as early as 1105 and that the first recension was definitely completed before he became the Archbishop of Dol in 1107.<sup>39</sup>

Baldric's *Historia* comprises four books and like Robert's text takes the *GF* as its main source. The *Historia* starts with an account of the Council of Clermont then narrates the crusaders' journey to the Holy Land, dedicating two books to the siege and occupation of Antioch before recounting the capture of Jerusalem and the defeat of the Egyptian army at Ascalon in August 1099. In the prologue to his text, Baldric claims he was motivated to write a new version of the *GF* – a history he describes as 'a rustic little book' (*libellum rusticanum*) with an 'uncultivated and crude narrative' (*inculta et incompta lectio*) – to improve its style, emphasise the theological significance of the expedition, and preserve the memory of the venture for future generations.<sup>40</sup> He explains that while his source material tries to tell the truth about the events of the campaign, the style and execution of the text is not commensurate with the status of the subject matter.

Baldric attempts to rectify the style of the *GF* in two ways. First, he makes use of poetic devices (including alliteration, assonance, puns, and rhyming clauses) to enhance the literary quality of the text as well as the audience's experience of the narrative when reading or hearing the text.<sup>41</sup> Secondly, Baldric refers to classical, biblical, and patristic texts

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<sup>37</sup> Biddlecombe, 'Introduction' to BB English trans., pp. 31–35.

<sup>38</sup> Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. by Marjorie Chibnall, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969–1978), V (1975), pp. 4–191; Biddlecombe, 'Introduction' to BB English trans., p. 34, n. 126.

<sup>39</sup> Biddlecombe, 'Introduction' to BB English trans., p. 9.

<sup>40</sup> BB, p. 4 (trans. by Edgington, p. 40).

<sup>41</sup> Biddlecombe, 'Introduction' to BB Latin edn, p. xxx.

and ideas within his narrative to highlight the success of the campaign through direct comparisons to the achievements of classical heroes or the victories of God's chosen people in the Old Testament.<sup>42</sup> The quotations and allusions to pre-existing classical and theological models provide a literary weight and authority to Baldric's text and situate the narrative of the First Crusade within recognised frameworks of success. Indeed, as an experienced churchman and a witness to the Council of Clermont, Baldric was well placed to reinterpret the events described in the *GF* in a more theologically advanced context. As with Robert's *Historia*, however, Baldric was writing at least ten years after the Council of Clermont and at least six years after the end of the expedition. His account of the events of the First Crusade is therefore part remembrance, part interpretation, and part reflection on the outcome of the campaign.<sup>43</sup>

### Food Management and Alimentary Metaphors in Benedictine Culture

Both Robert and Baldric position the events of the First Crusade within a strong theological context. For these authors, the First Crusade was supported and directed by God, making it part of providential history; as Robert notes, the campaign was 'not human work, but divine'.<sup>44</sup> Robert and Baldric's shared theological approach to narrativising the First Crusade is unsurprising given that, as members of the Benedictine community, both authors were similarly trained in biblical exegesis and governed by the same monastic conventions. This section of the chapter examines some facets of Benedictine culture, specifically those relating to food and eating, that likely informed how Robert and Baldric interpreted the events of the First Crusade and subsequently shaped the ways in which these authors explained the significance of the campaign to their audiences.

Benedictine monks were governed by monastic conventions laid out in several rules. These Rules were originally composed in the mid-sixth century but recognised some

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<sup>42</sup> Biddlecombe, 'Introduction' to BB Latin edn, p. xxxix.

<sup>43</sup> Biddlecombe, 'Introduction' to BB English trans., p. 8.

<sup>44</sup> RM, p. 4 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 75): 'Hoc enim non fuit humanum opus sed divinum.'

fifty years later in the *Dialogues* of Pope Gregory the Great (590–604). The advocacy of Gregory as well as the accessible style and language of the text resulted in the Rule of Saint Benedict becoming the monastic code for Western Europe.<sup>45</sup> The Rule itself provides, in its prologues and seventy-three chapters, a detailed plan for the organisation of monastic communities. It highlights the virtues monks should aspire to, notably obedience and humility, and gives detailed instructions for each aspect of the monks' daily routine, including prayers, readings, psalmody, manual work, hours of sleep, and mealtimes. A penitential code also lists penalties for breaching aspects of the Rule.<sup>46</sup> Novices had the Rule read to them three times during their year-long noviciate, making it a familiar text to anyone in the Benedictine order.<sup>47</sup>

For the purposes of this study, it is worth noting the Rule's attention to food and food provision. The Rule creates a sense of community and unity around mealtime ritual and food preparation and provides detailed instructions as to the expected diets of monks in the monastery, varying only according to the liturgical year and season. Gluttony and excess are specifically prohibited, so those who follow the Rule could more easily achieve humility, and a love of fasting and the avoidance of excessive eating and alcohol consumption feature as part of the seventy-five 'tools of good work'.<sup>48</sup> This is in part managed by several regulations regarding what is permissible for Benedictine monks to eat and drink and when. These rules are laid out in chapters thirty-six to forty-one.<sup>49</sup> The allowance of food for each monk was modest, but adequate; while meat from four-footed animals was prohibited to all but the sick, each meal could include two or three dishes of

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<sup>45</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, 4th edn (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 22.

<sup>46</sup> Lawrence, p. 20.

<sup>47</sup> Justin McCann, 'Preface', to *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, trans by Justin McCann (London: Sheed and Ward, 1976) pp. vii–x (p. x).

<sup>48</sup> *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, trans. by Justin McCann (London: Sheed and Ward, 1976), pp. 11–13.

<sup>49</sup> *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, pp. 43–47.

cooked vegetables with bread and a *hemina* of wine (equivalent to about a half pint).<sup>50</sup> In the summer, the Rule permitted two meals per day, one shortly after midday and the second in the early evening, and in the winter one meal was served at around 2.30 p.m. Meals were eaten in silence while a member of the community read to the group. The general rigour of the Rule regarding food and specific mealtimes was not expected to apply to the very old or the very young.

Several chapters of the Rule deal explicitly with the delegation of responsibilities pertaining to food preparation, service, and mealtime routines. Some of the roles outlined here, like that of the cellarer who oversaw provisioning the establishment, were permanent appointments, while others, such as the kitchener (who oversaw the kitchen), were appointed and rotated on a weekly basis. The rotation of these roles was accompanied by a ceremony and a prayer and was enacted to ensure that every member of the monastery had the opportunity to serve his brethren at mealtimes. An examination of the Rule also shows that repeated indiscretions were punished by excluding the guilty party from the communal table, thus severing them from the shared act of eating and praying with their brethren. It is clear from the food management outlined in the Rule that mealtimes, appropriate fasting and moderation in food and wine intake, and the act of serving food (to both brethren and to guests) played an important role in the daily lives of monastic communities, cultivating the virtues of obedience and humility and providing the opportunity for meaningful reflection.

Food, eating, and food provisioning do not just appear in Benedictine culture as practical parts of a monk's daily life. The earliest and chief source about Saint Benedict himself, the *Life of Benedict*, written by Gregory the Great in the late-sixth century, is punctuated with food provision miracles.<sup>51</sup> Chapter 21 of the *Life*, for example, recalls a

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<sup>50</sup> Lawrence, p. 27.

<sup>51</sup> Gregory the Great, *Vita S. Benedicti*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, LXVI (Paris: Garnier, 1866); Gregory the Great, *Saint Benedict*:



time in which Benedict accurately predicts the arrival of food during a period of famine in the region of Campania. During this famine, the monks at Benedict's monastery were distraught to discover that they had fully depleted their resources and only had five loaves of bread left to feed their whole community. In this story, Benedict rebukes his brethren for lacking faith that God would provide for them in their time of need and attempts to raise their spirits by assuring them: 'Why are you depressed by the lack of bread? Even though there isn't much today, tomorrow you will have more than enough.'<sup>52</sup> Benedict's prediction is fulfilled the following day when two hundred bushels of flour were found outside the gates of the monastery, proving that God provides for the faithful.<sup>53</sup> Gregory claims the monks were filled with gratitude to God and learnt never to lose faith in the goodness of the divine. As we shall see later, the notion that God could assuage the hunger of worthy and faithful Christians also appears at several junctures in Robert's and Baldric's narratives of the First Crusade. The appearance of this type of divine benevolence in two Benedictine interpretations of crusader hunger is not necessarily surprising given that food provision miracles were ingrained in the *Life* of the founder of Benedictine monasticism.

Metaphors relating to food, eating, and consumption also punctuate the language of devotion, biblical exegesis, and scriptural commentary, making alimentary analogies well-known to Benedictine monks and lay people alike. One of the most important alimentary metaphors in Christian theology can be found, of course, in imagery relating to the Eucharist. As Caroline Walker Bynum has observed, because Jesus fed the faithful, not just by offering or serving food as he did with the fish and loaves that fed 5,000 near Bethsaida but *as* the bread and wine of the eucharist, 'to eat' was a powerful verb in the

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Dialogues, *Book II*, trans. by Myra L. Uhlfelder (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1967). For food and drink related miracles, see Chapters 8, 12, 13, 18, 21, and 29.

<sup>52</sup> Gregory the Great, *Vita*, p. 172 (trans. by Uhlfelder, p. 30): 'Quare de panis inopia vester animus constrictatur? Hosie quidem minus est, sed die crastina abundanter habebitis.'

<sup>53</sup> Carole Straw, 'The Avenging Abbot: Gregory the Great and His *Life of Saint Benedict*', in *The Middle Ages in Texts and Texture: Reflections on Medieval Sources*, ed. by Jason Glenn (New York, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 2011), pp. 71–84 (p. 81).

language of devotion.<sup>54</sup> In the Gospel of John, Jesus says ‘I am the bread of life’, ‘if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world’.<sup>55</sup> The question of whether the eucharistic elements were transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ at consecration had been much debated by the early-twelfth century.<sup>56</sup> While the concept of transubstantiation was not formally sanctioned by the Church until the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, eleventh- and twelfth-century Christians believed that the sacramental bread was transformed – either literally or symbolically – into the body of Christ and that its consumption was necessary for salvation.<sup>57</sup> This type of eating, performed under specific and sacred circumstances, was, therefore, celebrated for connecting the faithful to the liturgy of heaven.

Food-related metaphors and alimentary motifs outside of eucharistic theology were also well-ingrained in biblical imagery and scriptural commentary in the Middle Ages. In the Genesis narrative, for instance, fruit – specifically the fruit forbidden by God – represents a God-like understanding of good and evil, establishing food metaphor as a way of referring to concepts of knowledge transfer in the Judaeo-Christian tradition.<sup>58</sup> We also see alimentary metaphors used in the Bible and scriptural commentary to discuss a knowledge more appropriately sought by humans: not God-like knowledge, but knowledge of God.<sup>59</sup> Metaphors and allegories that relate spiritual realities and divine precepts to food and processes of consumption abound in the Scriptures. Take, for example:

O taste and see that the Lord is sweet. (Psalm 33. 9)

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<sup>54</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 3.

<sup>55</sup> John 6. 48; John 6. 61–52.

<sup>56</sup> Katy Mortimer, ‘Digesting Cannibalism: Revisiting Representations of Man-Eating Crusaders in Narrative Sources for the First Crusade’, in *Chronicle, Crusade, and the Latin East: Essays in Honour of Susan B. Edgington*, ed. by Andrew D. Buck and Thomas W. Smith (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022), pp. 109–130 (p. 117).

<sup>57</sup> Mortimer, p. 117.

<sup>58</sup> Susan Sleeth Mosedale, ‘Spiritual Nourishment: A Central Christian Metaphor’ (unpublished master’s thesis, Portland State University, 1997), p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> Mosedale, p. 1.

Those who] have tasted so heavenly a gift, [...] have moreover tasted the good word of God. (Hebrews 6. 4–5)

Son of man, eat all that thou shalt find: eat this book, and go speak to the children of Israel. And I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that book: And he said to me: Son of man, thy belly shall eat, and thy bowels shall be filled with this book [...] And I did eat it: and it was sweet as honey in my mouth. (Ezekiel 3. 1–3)

While the contexts for these examples differ, evocations of taste and consumption have explanatory force in these cases. Metaphorically, they are the processes through which faithful Christians gain knowledge of and can start to understand the significance of the word of God.

Early Christian and patristic writers, as well as medieval commentators, engaged with this sort of alimentary discourse to facilitate their exegesis. Gregory the Great, for instance, used an alimentary metaphor to describe the Scriptures in terms of food (*cibus*) and drink (*potus*). For Gregory, the most complex passages of scripture must be chewed before they can be swallowed, while the easier ones can be drunk directly as a liquid.<sup>60</sup> The notion of chewing over complex passages of scripture – also referred to as rumination (*ruminatio*) – was a well-established idea in scriptural commentary. In a literal sense, ‘to ruminate’ refers to the chewing of cud by animals, but metaphorically, rumination is a human habit that involves murmuring, repeating, learning, remembering, and meditating on ideas or concepts, usually from religious texts.<sup>61</sup> Saint Augustine explains rumination:

You can eat the world’s bread for an hour, and you have finished; the bread of the word you chew day and night. For when you hear, or when you read, you are eating; when you reflect on what you have eaten, you are ruminating.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Gregory the Great, *Homilliae in Hiezechielem Prophetam*, ed. by Marcus Adriaen, Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina, 142 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1971), pp. 145–146: ‘Scriptura sacra cibus noster et potus est’. See also, Duncan Robertson, *Lectio Divina: The Medieval Experience of Reading* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2011), p. 63.

<sup>61</sup> Mosedale, p. 5. For more on *ruminatio* and its relation to metaphor and memory in medieval texts, see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 205–215.

<sup>62</sup> Augustine of Hippo, ‘Enarratio in Psalmum XXXVI’, in *Enarrationes in Psalmos I–L*, ed. by D. Eligius Dekkers and Johannes Fraipont, Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina, 38 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1956), pp. 336–382 (p. 371): ‘Panem istum manducas una hora, et dimittis; panem illum uerbi die ac nocte. Quando enim audis, aut quando legis, manducas; quando inde cognitas, ruminas [...]’.

Gregory the Great develops his alimentary allegory beyond the concept of rumination, suggesting that many Christians stay ‘famished’ after reading or hearing the Word because they fail to ‘digest’ what they have consumed.<sup>63</sup> According to Gregory, a full retention and understanding of Scripture – its ‘digestion’ – came from putting divine precepts into daily practice.<sup>64</sup> We can see that this process of meditation was encouraged in Benedictine monasteries through the Rule. The Rule instructs monks to dedicate three to four hours of their day to *lectio divina*, an order ideally fulfilled by ruminating on the Bible and the writings on the Fathers.<sup>65</sup> The rest of the monks’ working day would be committed to putting the principles and practices learnt from these texts into action, both to prevent idleness and promote humility and obedience.

Thus, food and eating played an important role in the lives of Benedictine monks like Robert and Baldric. The Benedictine Rule, for example, cultivated the virtues of obedience, humility, and moderation by presenting mealtimes as an opportunity for both spiritual and physical nourishment, bringing the monks closer to God through serving their brethren and sitting in quiet reflection. Notions of consumption and ingestion also had explanatory force in Benedictine communities as well as Christian society more generally. Indeed, the frequency with which food and food-related analogies appear in the Bible and scriptural commentaries suggests Robert and Baldric would have been familiar with the ways alimentary metaphors could be employed to communicate and explain aspects of theology and salvation history. It is likely that these types of references to food, eating, and consumption informed how Robert and Baldric interpreted the events of the First Crusade and shaped the ways in which these second-generation chroniclers explained the significance of the campaign to their audiences.

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<sup>63</sup> Gregory the Great, *Homilliae in Hiezechihelam Prophetam*, pp. 145–146.

<sup>64</sup> Robertson, p. 64–65.

<sup>65</sup> *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, pp. 53–54. Thomas Hall, ‘Biblical and Patristic Learning’, in *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, ed. by Philip Pulsiano and Elaine Treharne (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), pp. 328–344 (p. 328).

## Eating and Identity

Adherence to the Rule of Saint Benedict and a familiarity with the explanatory force of alimentary metaphors must have shaped Robert and Baldric's perception of food and food management, particularly as it applied to those claiming to be pious. One way in which we can see the influence of the Benedictine Rule on Robert and Baldric's accounts of the First Crusade is in their treatment of Peter the Hermit. Peter the Hermit was the leader of the so-called People's Crusade in 1096, acted as a messenger to Kerbogha, the Atabeg of Mosul, during the siege of Antioch in 1098, and organised processions and prayers in Jerusalem after its capture in 1099.<sup>66</sup> There is little known about Peter's life before 1095, other than that he was born in Amiens, France, and at some point gave up his worldly life to become a hermit.<sup>67</sup> As Ernest O. Blake and Colin Morris have pointed out, although we do not know where or when Peter became a hermit, he must have emphasised his eremitical calling because almost all crusade commentators identify him as *Petrum Heremitam*, without any place- or family-name.<sup>68</sup>

The *GF* presents Peter as brave and committed to the campaign, but Peter is portrayed with a degree of contempt by the second-generation chroniclers of the First Crusade as, within the narrative of God-given success, Peter had led his army to defeat at the battle of Civetot in 1096.<sup>69</sup> Significantly, in Robert the Monk and Guibert of Nogent's narratives, a dislike of Peter the Hermit manifests itself in descriptions of his eating habits.

Robert the Monk notes, for instance:

At that time there was a man called Peter, a famous hermit, who was held in great esteem by the lay people, and in fact venerated above priests and abbots for his religious observance because he ate neither bread nor meat

<sup>66</sup> Tim Weitzel, 'Charisma in Relation: Peter the Hermit and Ecclesiastic Hierarchy', *Journal of Religion in Europe* 12.2 (2019), 115–139 (p. 121).

<sup>67</sup> Ernest O. Blake and Colin Morris, 'A Hermit Goes to War: Peter and the Origins of the First Crusade', *Studies in Church History*, 22 (1985), 79–107 (p. 81).

<sup>68</sup> Blake and Morris, p. 81.

<sup>69</sup> Colin Morris, 'Peter the Hermit and the Chronicles', in *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact*, ed. by Jonathan Phillips (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), pp. 21–34 (pp. 21–30).

(though this did not stop him enjoying wine and all other kinds of food whilst seeking a reputation for abstinence in the midst of pleasures).<sup>70</sup>

Guibert, whose chronicle of the First Crusade will be examined in greater depth in the next chapter, also provides a harsh criticism of Peter the Hermit, presenting him as a runaway monk.<sup>71</sup> On two separate occasions, Guibert mentions that Peter ‘drank wine and ate fish, but scarcely ever ate bread’ and as part of fourteen satirical hexameters on Peter after he attempted to flee Antioch in January 1098, Guibert criticises Peter for not eating food that befits a monk:<sup>72</sup>

For a monk, more pious food would be leeks, cress, turnips, thistles, nuts, filberts, barley, lentils, and herbs, without fish or wine, but with crumbs of bread.<sup>73</sup>

Although Peter was not a Benedictine monk, both Robert and Guibert appear to hold him to the standards of moderation and humility outlined in the Rule. While the Rule allowed monks a modest, yet relatively balanced diet, it is spiritual nourishment – practices that bring an individual closer to God – that are given priority in the Rule’s discussion of eating. Indeed, an emphasis is placed on the importance of serving one’s brethren and sitting in quiet reflection during mealtimes. Within this context, Robert and Guibert seemingly disapprove of the fact that Peter took pleasure in consuming food and wine while cultivating a reputation for abstinence because this fundamentally contradicted the monastic principles of moderation and humility. This deception was made worse by the fact that, according to Robert, the laity held Peter in higher esteem than any other pastoral figures *because* of his alleged eating habits.

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<sup>70</sup> RM, p. 9 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 83): ‘Erat in illis diebus quidam qui heremita extiterat, nomine Petrus, qui apud illos qui terrena sapient magni estimabatur, et super ipsos presules et abbates apice religionis efferebatur, eo quod ne pane nec carne vescebatur, sed tamen vino aliisque cibis omnibus fruebatur, et famam abstinentie in deliciis querebat.’

<sup>71</sup> GN, pp. 76–352; and, Guibert de Nogent, *The Deeds of God through the Franks: A Translation of Guibert de Nogent’s Gesta Dei per Francos*, ed. and trans. by Robert Levine (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997).

<sup>72</sup> GN, p. 48 (trans. by Levine, p. 121): ‘[...] pane vix aut numquam, vino alebatur ac pisce’.

<sup>73</sup> GN, p. 180 (trans. by Levine, p. 80): ‘[...] sanctior esca foret monacho porri, nasturcia, napi, cardamus atque nuces, corili, tisanae, frux lentis et herbi, pisce meroque procul posito, frusto tamen addita panis’.

It is worth noting that Robert and Guibert were writing at a time in which the very nature of monasticism was being questioned and debated. Part of the intellectual renaissance of the eleventh and twelfth centuries saw a growing desire in some monastic communities to revert to a simpler way of life that observed the tenets of the Benedictine Rule more closely.<sup>74</sup> It was within this context, for example, that the Cistercian movement emerged. The Cistercian Order, established in 1098 in Cîteaux, near Dijon in eastern France, criticised the wealth and excess displayed in Benedictine abbeys for its incompatibility with the monastic vow of poverty.<sup>75</sup> It is likely that Robert's and Guibert's condemnation of Peter the Hermit fits more broadly into this twelfth-century discourse of dissatisfaction with contemporary monastic practices. Despite their own Benedictine practices being called into question by monastic reformers, by admonishing Peter for taking pleasure in excess, Robert and Guibert underscore their own purity and adherence to the monastic principles of humility and moderation. In these cases, references to eating are presented as a marker of moral failing and are used by Robert and Guibert to help direct the audience's perception of Peter the Hermit.

It is not just Peter the Hermit who receives moral censure for what he eats in second-generation chronicles of the First Crusade. There is often moral commentary attached to what the crusaders were able, or willing, to eat in these narratives. It has been repeatedly highlighted by modern historians that chronicles in the *GF*-tradition liken crusaders to pilgrims, and in some cases monks, to underscore their devotion to the campaign and justify their role as instruments of the divine will.<sup>76</sup> In his study of the First Crusade, Jonathan Riley-Smith argues that, for crusade commentators, the expedition had

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<sup>74</sup> Janet Burton and Julie Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), pp. 1–5.

<sup>75</sup> Burton and Kerr, p. 4.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London: Continuum, 2003) pp. 85–87, 150–2; Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), pp. 54–56; and Thomas Asbridge, *The First Crusade: A New History* (London: Free Press, 2005), pp. 37–38, 76.

the appearance of ‘a military monastery on the move’ because it followed pilgrim routes and was marked with regular intercessory liturgies.<sup>77</sup>

Pilgrimages to Jerusalem had flourished during the ninth and tenth centuries with encouragement from Cluny, a centre of monastic reform from within Benedictine monasticism in the central Middle Ages, and ecclesiastical protection had been given to those pilgrims travelling to spiritual sites in the East.<sup>78</sup> According to both Robert and Baldric, Urban II extended the definition of ‘pilgrimage’ to the expedition to Jerusalem at the Council of Clermont, presenting participation in the crusade as an act of penance that counted against the individual’s sins.<sup>79</sup> As a result, Robert and Baldric’s interpretation of Urban’s speech ultimately synthesised pre-existing ideas about pilgrimages and indulgences. The use of *peregrini* in these narratives can be somewhat ambiguous, however, as it can mean either ‘pilgrim’ or ‘traveller’, though contextual clues often make one translation more likely than the other. In both Robert’s and Baldric’s narratives, the crusaders are interchangeably referred to as pilgrims, travellers, and soldiers, and the crusaders’ consumption of food fits more broadly into discussions of their multi-faceted literary identity.

Robert notes, for example, that on the journey to the Holy Land, crusaders bought their provisions as pilgrims (*ut peregrini*), rather than, Robert declares, pillaging local villages, as might be expected of a large armed force.<sup>80</sup> This statement highlights the crusaders’ discipline and peacefulness within the context of provisioning while also drawing attention to two facets of the crusaders’ identity: the pilgrim and the soldier. Baldric’s *Historia* provides a more developed example of the pilgrim-as-soldier paradigm in relation to provisioning the crusading force. When the crusaders come to the valley of Adrianopolis,

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<sup>77</sup> Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, pp. 85–87, 150–2.

<sup>78</sup> D. A. Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades (1100-1300)* (Geneva: Droz, 1988), p. 16.

<sup>79</sup> For Urban II’s speech in both chronicles, see: RM, pp. 5–8 and BB, pp. 6–10.

<sup>80</sup> RM, p. 14. (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 92): ‘Et cum sic telis et armis accingantur, tamen ut inermes peregrini necessaria sibi mercantur.’



for instance, Bohemond of Taranto warns the army not to pillage the land for provisions because it belongs to Christians:

“We are pilgrims for God; we are Christ’s soldiers; let us restrain our rapacious hands from laying waste the homes of Christians. [...] The land in which we are belongs to the Christians, for that reason we are not permitted to pillage it; let us only take provisions in it in return for a blessing; let us not filch our brothers’ goods beyond what the needs of living demand.”<sup>81</sup>

Self-restraint and acting in moderation are particularly prevalent themes in Baldric’s chronicle, qualities that often typify his portrayal of successful crusade leaders. This is not necessarily surprising given that the Rule of Saint Benedict, which Baldric lived his life by and worked to uphold as abbot, praised these attributes. What is important here is that Bohemond emphasises that the crusaders were both pilgrims and soldiers, and that behavioural and moral expectations attached to both identities meant that the crusaders should not abuse the land, property, or provisions of their Christian kin.

In the following passage, however, Baldric reports that, as the crusading force approached Castoria, the inhabitants of the city mistook the crusaders for ‘gladiators and despots’, claiming they ‘were not pilgrims at all’.<sup>82</sup> For this reason, the city refused to provide the crusaders with any provisions and as a result, the crusading force ‘were forced, under the compulsion of starvation, to seize cattle, horses and donkeys, and whatever was found that could be eaten.’<sup>83</sup> In this scene, the crusaders temporarily abandon their pilgrim identities and, ironically, behave more like the gladiators and despots they were mistaken for. While Baldric presents a causal relationship between the Castorians’ misidentification of the crusaders and their subsequent pillaging, Baldric suggests that it was ultimately

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<sup>81</sup> BB, p. 18 (trans. by Edgington, p. 58): “Peregrini pro Deo sumus; Christi milites sumus; a Christianorum penetibus diripiendis manus rapaces cohibeamus. [...] Terra in qua sumus Christianorum est, ideo nobis eam depredari non licet; tantummodo in illa benedictione cibaria capiamus; nec ultra quam usus uiuendi postulat fratrum suppellectilem discerpamus.”

<sup>82</sup> BB, p. 19 (trans. by Edgington, p. 59): ‘Pretendebant enim homines cuitatis illius eos nequaquam peregrinos, sed gladiatores et tirannos.’

<sup>83</sup> BB, p. 19 (trans. by Edgington, p. 59): ‘Compulsi sunt ergo, inedia cogente, boues, equos et asinos rapere, et si quid quod mandi posset conuenientius inueniebatur.’

extreme hunger – brought about by the Castorians’ refusal to sell provisions to the crusading force – that was responsible for the crusaders’ unruly actions. Baldric avoids admitting to any Christian wrongdoing in this scene by suggesting starvation (*inedia*) had the agency to incentivise action. Citing starvation as the driving force behind the crusaders’ actions allows Baldric to justify and excuse pillaging, a behaviour that directly contradicted the self-restraint and moderation promoted by Bohemond mere sentences previously, as an act necessary for survival.

Christian eating habits also receive attention through the voices of Turkish leaders in both Robert and Baldric’s narratives. In Robert’s *Historia*, for example, Kerbogha asks his prophesying mother:

“[...] are Hugh the standard-bearer and Bohemond, the Apulian, and the swordsman Godfrey their Gods? They eat earthly food like us, don’t they? Their flesh can be slashed by iron the same as ours, can’t it?”<sup>84</sup>

Describing the Christians through Muslim eyes is a common rhetorical device in Robert’s *Historia* but this query is actually a toned-down version of the same question asked in the *GF*: ‘Are not Bohemond and Tancred the gods of the Franks [...] And do they not eat two thousand cows and four thousand pigs at a single meal?’.<sup>85</sup> Replacing Tancred’s name for Hugh’s in Robert’s imagining of Kerbogha’s conversation is significant as it demonstrates an attempt to highlight the role of members of the Capetian dynasty as potential heroes in the narratives of the campaign;<sup>86</sup> but, ultimately, the Christian leaders’ consumption of earthly foods and the vulnerability of their flesh disqualifies them from the status of gods, making Christian victories during the campaign more miraculous.

This idea is further exemplified in the Emir of Babylon’s – historically, the Fatimid caliph of Egypt, al-Musta’li – lament after the capture of Jerusalem, which highlights the

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<sup>84</sup> RM, p. 62 (trans. by Sweetenham, p.155): “‘[...] Hugo eorum vexillarius, et Apuliensis Boamundus, et gladiator Godefridus, sunt ipsi dii eorum? Nonne sicut et nos aluntur temporali cibo? Nonne eorum caro sicut et nostra potest incidi ferro?’”

<sup>85</sup> *GF*, p. 55.

<sup>86</sup> Naus, p.72.

impossibility of the Muslims' defeat, given that the Christians were starving.<sup>87</sup> In Robert's version of the Emir's speech, which is the longest piece of direct dialogue after Urban II's call for crusade at the Council of Clermont, the Emir notes:

“Why have you [Mahommed] abandoned your people like this to be mercilessly destroyed and dispersed and killed by a wretchedly poor and ragged people [...] These [crusaders] are people, I may say, who used to seek bread from our people when they had nothing but scrip and staff.”<sup>88</sup>

A similar sentiment is expressed by the Emir in Baldric's *Historia*:

“Woe to me, what unspeakable disgrace, what lasting insult has befallen our race? A poverty-stricken people, a puny people has prevailed over our race.”<sup>89</sup>

Here, the Emir's speech – used as a mouthpiece for Robert and Baldric – acknowledges the crusaders' dependency on purchasing and pillaging resources on their journey. The fact that what the crusaders ate and specifically an awareness of the Christians' lack of food throughout the expedition appears in representations of Muslim discussions of Christian victories is significant as it highlights that a lack of food should have resulted in military defeat. That this was not the case helps both Robert and Baldric attribute Christian victories to divine intervention. Indeed, Robert's version of the Emir's speech goes on to acknowledge that ‘the power of the Crucified One is greater than [Mahommed's] because he is powerful on earth and in heaven’.<sup>90</sup> This statement gives pre-eminence to the Christians' God and highlights the role of the divine in directing and supporting human affairs like the crusade, solidifying the expedition's place in providential history.

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<sup>87</sup> RM, p. 106 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 209).

<sup>88</sup> RM, p. 106 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 209): ‘Ut quid sic dereliquisti gentem tuam, quam inmisericorditer destruit, dissipate, interficit gens pauperrima et pannosa, gens aliarum gentium peripsema omniumque prorsus hominum fex, rubigo et scoria? Gens, inquam, que nostra solita erat querere panem, que nichil prorsus habebat nisi baculum et peram.’”

<sup>89</sup> BB, p. 118 (trans. by Edgington, p. 156): “‘‘Ei michi, quam ineffabile dedecus, quam diuturnum improprium genti nostri contigit. Gens mendica, gens modica genti nostre preualuit?’”

<sup>90</sup> RM, p. 107 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 210): “‘[...] maior est virtus Crucifixi quam tua, quoniam ipse potens est in celo et in terra.’”

Furthermore, at several junctures in his narrative, Robert confirms God's intervention in the crusade by illuminating the role of the divine in the crusaders' experience of hunger. It is explicitly noted, for example, that God rewarded the crusading force with an abundance of provisions after successful military engagements with the enemy. When, during the first siege of Antioch, Bohemond and Robert, Count of Flanders, successfully led an army of 30,000 knights to victory against an 'enormous number of Persians, Arabs, and Medes' who had come to defend the city, Robert states that the crusaders were rewarded with much plunder:

What numbers of donkeys and camels and beasts of burden laden with wheat, wine and other foodstuffs were captured, welcome to the hungry army of God! What rejoicing and triumphant spiritual joy there was in the camps that day, receiving such gifts from the supreme Provider! It was a matter of wonder and joy that God had restored his faithful followers through offerings brought from far off by their enemies. He *filled the hungry with good things* plundered from their enemies.<sup>91</sup>

Here, the satiation of the crusaders' hunger is unambiguously attributed to divine intervention. To support this sentiment, Robert references Psalm 107, a psalm of thanksgiving that praises God for delivering the Israelites, his chosen people, from a variety of troubles.<sup>92</sup> Robert quotes Psalm 107. 9 which specifically calls on the faithful to give thanks to God for feeding those ready to perish with hunger (verse 5), but several other verses in this psalm appear relevant to the Robert's interpretation of the events of the First Crusade. Verse 1, for instance, praises God for rescuing the faithful from enemy territory by guiding their actions and verse 4 thanks God for leading lost travellers to safety, ultimately recognising His influence over the faithful and their journeys.<sup>93</sup> This is a prime example in which a reference to God's relationship with his chosen people in the Old Testament

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<sup>91</sup> RM, p. 38 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 125): 'Quot asini et cameli, quotque iumenta frumento, vino ceterisque cibariis onusta ibi capta sunt, que esurienti exercitui Dei grata fuerunt! Quantum gaudium et tripudii exultatio fuit in illa die in castris, cum talia dona viderunt summi procuratoris! Mirandum et gaudendum erat, quod Dominus de mercibus inimicorum suorum de longinquo adductis fideles suos reficiebat. *Esurientes bonis implebat, quibus adversaries suos spoliabat.*'

<sup>92</sup> Psalm 107. 1–43. A similar sentiment is expressed in Luke 1. 53.

<sup>93</sup> Psalm 107. 1–4.

underscores the special relationship between the crusaders and the divine. More significantly for our purposes, this reference also provides a biblical precedent for divine intervention in the experience of hunger.

God's generosity is tempered in Robert's narrative, however, through instances of divinely-induced food scarcity. Katy Mortimer has recently outlined in her study on crusader cannibalism in First Crusade narrative sources several biblical precedents for famine being used as a form of divine punishment.<sup>94</sup> As Mortimer notes, examples of God punishing those who were disobedient to his word and commandments with famine can be found in Leviticus, Isaiah, and Ezekiel.<sup>95</sup> In Leviticus 26. 14–39, for example, the nation of Israel is warned against rejecting God's decrees and violating God's covenant with them through an itemized list of possible divine punishments. Alimentary aspects of these 'curses of disobedience' include – but are certainly not limited to – making it difficult for transgressors to grow and yield crops (verses 16 and 20), cutting off their food supply completely (verse 26), and bringing forth such circumstances of famine and desperation that the unfaithful are forced to turn to cannibalism (verse 29).<sup>96</sup> Similarly, Ezekiel 5 foretells God's judgement on Jerusalem, citing pestilence, famine, and the sword as forms of divine punishment and Isaiah 9 prophesies the doom of all nations that forget God, warning that the unfaithful will be punished to such an extent with great scarcity that they 'shall turn to the right hand and still be hungry; and shall eat on the left hand, and shall not be filled'.<sup>97</sup>

While the contexts and details of these examples differ, they are all part of what Mortimer describes as ongoing 'sin-punishment-suffering-repentance-redemption' cycles that can be found throughout the Old and New Testaments.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, the examples of

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<sup>94</sup> Mortimer, pp. 115–119.

<sup>95</sup> Leviticus 26. 14–39; Isaiah 9. 20; Ezekiel 5. 12. For Mortimer's analysis of these passages, see Mortimer p. 118.

<sup>96</sup> Leviticus 26. 14–39.

<sup>97</sup> Ezekiel 5. 1–17; Isaiah 9. 20.

<sup>98</sup> Mortimer, p. 118.

divine punishment found in Leviticus, Isaiah, and Ezekiel are followed almost immediately by messages of salvation, forgiveness, and hope.<sup>99</sup> Similar sin to redemption cycles appear in accounts of the First Crusade. This is not particularly surprising given that the events of the expedition were understood and recalled within the wider framework of sacred history, as important as those other moments in history when God directly intervened in the affairs of humans. One of the most concise sin to redemption cycles can be seen in Fulcher of Chartres, for instance. Fulcher notes that the severe famine experienced by crusaders in Antioch during the winter of 1098 – in which the Christian forces were compelled to eat uncooked and unseasoned vegetation and the skins of beasts – was ‘long predestined by God’ because of their sins: specifically, the sins of avarice, pride, and rapaciousness which the crusaders had exhibited when they had first arrived in the city.<sup>100</sup> Fulcher notes that the crusaders endured their punishment dutifully, and fastidiously prayed and entreated God for forgiveness.<sup>101</sup> In response to the crusaders’ repentance, God, ‘out of His compassion’, allowed the Christians to take the city of Antioch, an accomplishment that led to the discovery of the Holy Lance.<sup>102</sup> Here we see the full sin to redemption cycle, featuring famine as a divine punishment for sin, completed in a couple of pages.

While Mortimer acknowledges that Robert’s discussion of famine falls into a wider discourse about the divine providence of the expedition, she also notes that the sin to redemption cycle outlined above does not neatly map onto Robert’s explanation of food scarcity. Instead, Mortimer suggests Robert’s description of famine – and resulting cannibalism – in Ma’arra was constructed to highlight the transfer of command and authority from Bohemond, who is preoccupied with possessing Antioch, to Raymond IV,

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<sup>99</sup> Mortimer, p. 118.

<sup>100</sup> FC, pp. 222–227; Fulcher of Chartres, *A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem 1095–1127*, trans. by Frances Rita Ryan and ed. by Harold S. Fink (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1969), pp. 57–304 (p. 95).

<sup>101</sup> FC, pp. 226–231 (trans. by Ryan, pp. 95–97).

<sup>102</sup> FC, pp. 230–231 (trans. by Ryan, p. 99).

who wants to resume the journey to Jerusalem, in the aftermath of the battle of Antioch.<sup>103</sup> While I agree that Robert's depiction of famine at Ma'arra – a scene we shall return to below – illuminates Robert's admiration for Raymond's intention to lead the crusading force to Jerusalem, I would argue that Robert's treatment of famine still represents a narrative cycle in which the relationship between the crusaders and the divine is cemented. This is not so much a sin to redemption framework, but a cycle in which hunger and satiation, or scarcity and abundance, is directed by the crusader's ability to implement the divine will.

Robert, for example, highlights instances in which God allows the crusaders to go hungry to test their resolve. Again, during the first siege of Antioch, Robert recounts the circumstances of famine that plagued the crusading force, explaining:

God allowed this suffering from hunger to come about so that he might test his people and strike terror of himself into all nations. He oppressed his own people with hunger whilst he ravaged their neighbours with the sword [...] It was to ensure that they did not get complacent from so many victories that he made them suffer serious pangs of hunger. In the whole army it was impossible to find 1,000 horses in a condition to fight, and by this God wanted to make them realise that they should trust not in their horses but in Him through Whom they were victorious how and when He wanted.<sup>104</sup>

Not only does this passage highlight the role of the divine in securing the success of the First Crusade, but it also presents the experience of hunger as a test of the crusaders' faith and perseverance. In this case, famine is not necessarily a punishment for sins committed, as Mortimer suggests, but a divine measure taken to prevent complacency and pridefulness in the crusading force. According to Robert, God brought suffering upon the crusaders to remind them that their successes thus far were a direct result of his will. This recurring

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<sup>103</sup> Mortimer, pp. 124–127.

<sup>104</sup> RM, pp. 40–41 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 128): 'Hanc itaque famis acerbitatem ut suos probaret evenire permisit Deus, et ut terror suus fieret in universis nationibus. Nam et suos premebat ieiunio, et vicinas nationes eorum disternabat gladio. [...] Ne illi insolescerent tot victoriis bellorum, opprimebat eos gravi inedia ieiuniorum. In toto namque exercitu mille equi inveniri non poterant ad pugnandum idonei, ut per hoc innotesceret quod *in fortitudine equi non* haberent fiduciam, se in se, per quem et quomodo volebat et quando volebat superabant.'

sentiment once again solidifies the campaign's position within providential history and frames humility – that is to say, a recognition of mankind's dependency on and humble submission to divine power – as a praiseworthy attribute in the soldiers of Christ.

Robert confirms his encouragement of crusader humility with a reference to Psalm 147. 10: specifically, Robert notes that God did not want the crusaders to put their trust in their horses.<sup>105</sup> In verse 10 of Psalm 147, the psalmist states that God does not take pleasure in the strength of horses, even though he created them; instead, God takes pleasure in the reverence and trust of his people.<sup>106</sup> Within the context of Robert's explanation of crusader hunger, this reference underscores the idea the crusaders were the implementors of the divine will, and as such should not place their trust in physical assets but have faith in the power of God.

The notion of implicitly trusting in God is fully realised in Robert's *Historia* two short passages later when the crusaders were afforded an opportunity to engage in battle with Turks at a nearby castle. Robert notes that 'spirits which had fainted from lack of food revived' and the crusaders raised their hands to heaven and praised God, applauding 'as if they had already won the battle'.<sup>107</sup> The crusaders then 'committed themselves to God and begged his aid'.<sup>108</sup> A bloody battle ensued following the crusaders' humble request for divine assistance, and the crusaders eventually emerged victorious. Robert attributes this victory to God and claims that after the battle the crusaders 'returned to the castle rejoicing greatly, bringing with them horses, male and female mules, a great deal of

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<sup>105</sup> Psalm 147. 10: 'he delighteth not in the strength of the horse'. See, RM trans. by Sweetenham, p. 128, n. 32.

<sup>106</sup> Psalm 147. 10.

<sup>107</sup> RM, p. 42 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 129): 'Revixit spiritus illorum quos sopierat indigentia ciborum. Erectis in celum minibus Deum laudant, et quasi iam vicerint bellum minibus applaudunt.' Tunc nostri in quodam clivo positi crucis signo cum armis se premuniunt, et manus in celo protendunt, Deoque se committunt, eiusque flagitant auxilium.'

<sup>108</sup> RM, p. 42 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 129): 'Tunc nostri in quodam clivo positi crucis signo cum armis se premuniunt, et manus in celo protendunt, Deoque se committunt, eiusque flagitant auxilium.'



plunder, and many other things which the starving [crusaders] desperately needed'.<sup>109</sup> This ultimately 'restored happiness to those who had been almost consumed by mere want'.<sup>110</sup> In this scene we see an instance in which placing faith in God proves fruitful for the crusading force: Robert presents a causal relationship between the starving crusaders trusting in the power of God, as opposed to physical assets, and a Christian victory that results in an abundance of provisions. In turn, the presence of these provisions satiates the crusaders' hunger and reinforces the crusaders' belief that their campaign has divine support. This cycle of hunger to satiation is, therefore, presented by Robert as a test of the crusaders' faith and resolve. It is not necessarily perceived as a divine punishment, but this cycle is directed by the crusaders' willingness to adhere to the divine plan and implement God's will.

Thus, there is an interesting dynamic at play in Robert and Baldric's discussion of eating; whereas Peter the Hermit's eating habits confirm his disgrace in the eyes of second-generation chroniclers, the crusaders' eating habits – indeed their very lack of food – establishes their role as the instruments of the divine will and highlights their special relationship with God. In this way, Robert and Baldric use references to eating and provisioning to simultaneously illuminate their own moral expectations of groups and individuals in the narrative and help confirm these characters' identities within the framework of the divine plan.

### Alimentary Metaphors

Hunger, food, and eating also find expression in analogies and metaphors in Robert's and Baldric's accounts of the First Crusade. Indeed, a discourse of consumption is used consistently throughout these narratives as a method of communicating ideas and concepts

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<sup>109</sup> RM, p. 43 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 130): 'Nostri vero cum ingenti gaudio ad castra remearunt, adducentes secum equos, et mulos, et mulas, et spolia plurima, et multa alia que indigentibus sociis valde errant necessaria.'

<sup>110</sup> RM, p. 43: '[...]et eos qui egestatis merore pene consumpti errant refecit.'

to their audiences. For example, in Book Four of Baldric's *Historia*, the crusaders' anticipation for their arrival in Jerusalem is expressed as a metaphorical hunger:

No night on the journey was, so I believe, more tedious or annoying for [the crusaders] than that night when they were to come to Jerusalem on the next day: it was like the provocation of chronic hunger. For when food is shown to someone who has been hungry since the day before yesterday and it is not offered to him, how much desire do you think afflicts him once more, as if it is new? So it was for those who had set out on the way to Jerusalem and had endured so many dismal nights because of this, after they had realised that they would be there the next day, how great a hinderance do you think a night's delay presented?<sup>111</sup>

This description is significant as it introduces the idea that hunger is not only a physiological response to a lack of food. Hunger in the abstract can also relate to a desire. Here, Baldric uses the analogy of physical hunger to convey a communal desire to reach and liberate Jerusalem after years of dangerous travelling. This analogy is particularly poignant given that the crusaders were also purported to be physically hungry at this point in the narrative: 'the food provisions they had brought with them had failed' and there was no bread or grain to purchase.<sup>112</sup> The duality of the crusaders' hunger – as both a need for food and a metaphor for desire – emphasises the importance of reaching and capturing Jerusalem. According to Baldric, the crusaders' arrival in the Holy City would simultaneously provide a chance to reprovision, satisfying physical hunger, and afford the crusaders the opportunity to fulfil an analogous desire to liberate the city, the goal of their crusade.

Robert uses a similar analogy that equates physical hunger with a desire for action in his account of the siege of Nicaea in 1097. In his description of the siege, Robert describes the crusading force as 'more prepared to tear the souls from the bodies of Turks

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<sup>111</sup> BB, p. 103 (trans. by Edgington, p. 141): 'Nocte illa qua in crastinum in Iherusalem uenerunt, nulla nox, ut credo, fuit eis inuia importunior seu tediosior: que inueterate famis quasi quoddam fuit irritamentum. Cum enim esurienti a nudius tertius cibus ostenditur nec porrigitur, quanto censes desiderio, quasi nouo, iterum afficitur? Sic qui uiam in Iherusalem arripuerant, et tot noctes intempestius propter hoc tolerauerant, postquam se die crastin cognouerunt illic adfuturos, quantum impedimentus putas eis nox morosa prestitit?'

<sup>112</sup> BB, 104 (trans. by Edgington, p. 142): 'Victualia uero que secum detulerant interim defecerant; nec iam inueniebatur panis ad emendum, nec ire poterant frumentatum [...]'.

than any starving man going to a wedding feast.<sup>113</sup> In this slightly strange analogy, Robert suggests that a starving man would be prepared (*paratus*) to attend a wedding feast, an occasion where excess was permitted, *because* he was starving.<sup>114</sup> Like Baldric's description of the pillaging crusaders in Castoria, this analogy suggests starvation has the agency to direct behaviour. Specifically, Robert relates starvation – and by extension a desire to eat – to a determination to engage in violence. What is significant in this example is the fact that the crusaders are *more* motivated to kill Turkish soldiers than a starving man is motivated to satiate his hunger, one of the most basic human instincts. This prioritisation of military violence over human need attaches an element of savagery to the crusaders' behaviour, but more precisely highlights their resolve to destroy their enemy through military force.

This analogy features as just one example in Robert's *Historia* in which violence, bloodshed, and military prowess are expressed in terms of hunger or food-related practices. Scholars are quick to highlight the 'gruesome detail' provided in Robert's account of the First Crusade, but previous scholarship has overlooked Robert's use of hunting, harvesting, and slaughterhouse analogies to describe the relationship between Christians and Muslims in scenes of combat. The use of animal imagery is common in medieval accounts of warfare. Indeed, Baldric uses animal similes and metaphors to describe both Christians and Muslims in his narrative. For instance, the forces of Raymond IV of Toulouse and Bohemond are likened to wild beasts (*ferus*) in the battle of Antioch.<sup>115</sup> It is noted that they were roused to action 'by the slaughter of their comrades and fellow soldiers [...] thirsty and panting for Turkish blood'.<sup>116</sup> Equally, Baldric describes the Turks as 'more

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<sup>113</sup> RM, p. 23: 'O quot milia electorum militum illos sunt insecuti, paratiores de Turcorum corporibus extrahere animas, quam quilibet famelicus eundi ad nuptias!'

<sup>114</sup> Wedding feasts have many meanings in biblical exegesis. See, for example, Matthew 22. 1–14 in which a wedding feast is used as a metaphor for the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>115</sup> BB, p. 50 (trans. by Edgington, p. 90).

<sup>116</sup> BB, p. 50 (trans. by Edgington, p. 90): 'Christiani, tamquam singularis ferus, uel canum morsibus irritatus, uel uenabuli cuspide sauciatus, occisione commilitonum et confratrum incitati. Turcorum sanguinem inhianter sitiabant, et ad ulciscendos suos penitus elaborabant'.

bestial than tigers' in Emperor Alexius' speech after the bloodshed in Antioch.<sup>117</sup> Here, Christians and Muslims are described in similar terms, as two wild creatures equal in strength and powers of destruction.

There are two instances in Robert's *Historia* where crusaders are likened to predatory big cats; several crusaders in Ma'arra are described as lionesses in Book Eight and, while taking Jerusalem, the brothers Godfrey, Eustace, and Baldwin are all described as lions as they fight on the city wall.<sup>118</sup> Use of leonine descriptions as markers of identity or military ability is a common trope in medieval literature, yet Robert's narrative of the campaign tends to draw more heavily on metaphors that explore the dominance of one animal over another, specifically within the context of predation. In Robert's account of Soliman's retreat from the battle of Dorylaeum in 1097, for example, it is noted that the Turks fled from the crusading forces 'like timid doves frightened by the appearance of a hawk'.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, in a sermon from the Bishop of Le Puy before the battle of Antioch, the crusaders are called to witness the fear of their enemy: 'See how your enemies are watching you march forward, necks straining forward like terrified stags or does, more inclined to flight than fight'.<sup>120</sup> As Natasha Hodgson has outlined in her analysis of bestial imagery in a crusading context, medieval audiences had practical experience of animal behaviour – either from hunting or simply from day-to-day observations of wildlife – as well as an established body of classical and Christian literature relating to the animal world that

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<sup>117</sup> BB, p. 90 (trans. by Edington, p. 75): 'Ecce enim Turci plus solito insolenciores, et pre sanguine effuse tigrilibus efferaciores [...]'.  
<sup>118</sup> RM p. 87 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 185): 'In crastinum, ut dies lucescere cepit, nostri ad arma currunt, et per vicos et plateas tectaque domorum, ceu leena raptis catulis, seviendo discurrunt.'; RM, p. 98 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 199): 'iuxta quem fratres eius [Godfrey] Eustachius et Balduinus, velut duo iuxta leonem leones [...]'.  
<sup>119</sup> Soliman is the historical Qiliji Arslan I, sultan of Rum. He was called Soliman by the crusaders because of his patronymic name: ibn Suleyman. RM, p. 29 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 113): 'Sed illi sicut trepide columbe a facie accipitris, ita ante faciem eorum fugiebant.'

<sup>120</sup> RM, p. 74 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 169): 'Considerate quomodo adversarii vestri extent collo, sicut cervi aut damule pavescentes, adventum vestrum aspiciunt, paratiores ad fugam quam ad prelium.'

made zoological motifs and their underlying meanings accessible.<sup>121</sup> For this reason, it would be clear to audiences with a familiarity with the natural world that presenting the crusaders' adversaries as birds or deer was intended to undermine the Turks' military prowess by intimating their timidity in battle. These animals are also specifically used within the context of a prey/predator dynamic, although the crusaders are only associated with predatory creatures (such as a hawk) in a secondary capacity. The crusaders' own presence and military reputation, rather than any animal-like characteristics, evokes an animal-like response from their enemy. This goes some way to establishing the superiority of the crusaders over the Turkish forces in these scenarios.

The notion of Christian superiority over their enemy is perhaps best analysed in Robert's use of abattoir imagery which brings to the fore depictions of animal butchery and the slaughter of humans in combat. In his account of the battle of Antioch (28 June 1098), Robert notes how the crusaders 'were free to slice up the bodies of the Turks just as the corpses of beasts are cut apart in the abattoir [*in macello*].'<sup>122</sup> Here, the bodies of Turks are likened to the corpses of beasts: the Turks are depicted as helpless and fully subject to the actions of the crusaders because, like carcasses, they have no agency of their own. Likening the Turks to animal carcasses thus alludes to the inevitability of their annihilation in battle. This metaphor also provides a gruesome image of the battle itself that highlights butchery – the methodical and purposeful dismembering and slicing of flesh – as the crusaders' style of combat.

A similar image of the crusaders' fighting style is drawn in Robert's account of the first siege of Antioch, although in this case the crusaders are likened to harvesters. First,

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<sup>121</sup> Natasha R. Hodgson, 'Lions, Tigers, and Bears: Encounters with Wild Animals and Bestial Imagery in the Context of Crusading to the Latin East', *Viator*, 44 (2013) 65–95 (p. 69).

<sup>122</sup> RM, p. 76 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 172): 'Sicut in macello bestiarum corpora solitum est dilaniare, sic et nostris licitum erat Turcorum corpora macerare.'

Robert notes that the crusaders ‘cut down all those they met in their attack like the harvester cutting the harvest with a scythe’,<sup>123</sup> and then he reports:

[The foot-soldiers] were responsible for more of the carnage than those on horseback, going through systematically cutting off heads like the harvester with his scythe in meadow grass or corn.<sup>124</sup>

In this example, the Turks are only secondarily associated with a crop that requires harvesting as an emphasis is placed on the crusaders’ role, as harvesters, in systematically cutting through the enemy on the battlefield. Like Robert’s abattoir imagery, this example takes agency away from the enemy and points to the inevitability of their destruction. The use of an agricultural analogy to conjure an image of combat is also interesting as it indicates that the Christians’ violence was constructive: harvesting, like butchering, is a positive contribution to food production that allows grains and crops to be processed for consumption. In the same vein, the crusaders’ merciless style of combat is presented as advantageous as it enables them to efficiently deplete the enemy forces, bringing the crusading force closer to capturing the city of Antioch.

Significantly, the abattoir imagery depicted in Robert’s account of the battle of Antioch is prefaced with a section that describes the relative state of both forces in terms of how well-fed they appear:

To pursue [the enemy] more effectively our men mounted the horses of those who were dying and left their own horses – gaunt and suffering from hunger – on the battlefield, reins trailing from their heads. Amazing is the strength of Omnipotent God, and his power is boundless. Your soldier, weakened by long starvation, pursues enemies bulging with fat and flab so assiduously that they do not even dare to look back at the possessions they brought with them. Your benevolent spirit was in their minds, bolstering their physical strength and strengthening their resolve.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>123</sup> RM, p. 38 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 124): ‘Milites armati quotquot in occursum suum obviaverunt ut falcator messem prostraverunt.’

<sup>124</sup> RM, p. 44 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 132): ‘Ibi maiorem stragem pedites egerunt, quam qui equis presidebant, quoniam seriatim, ut falcator prata vel messem, detruncabant.’

<sup>125</sup> RM, p. 76 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 172): ‘Et ut citius persequi valerent, illorum equos qui moriebantur ascendebant, suosque qui erant macilentiores et afflicti fame frenis a capite detractis in campo relinquebant. O mira virtus Dei omnipotentis, et immense potestas! Miles tuus, longo afflicti ieiunio, persequitur tumentes adipe et pinguedine, ita ut etiam nec ad sua bona que attulerant auderent respicere. Spiritus tuus bonus erat in mentibus eorum, qui et vires suggerebat corporum, et audaciam prestabat animorum.’

Here, the crusaders and their horses are described as weakened by starvation while the Turks, in comparison, are portrayed as ‘bulging with fat and flab’ (*tumentes adipe et pinguedine*). The difference between the two armies presented in this scene acts to enhance the role of the divine in physically strengthening and supporting the Christians, giving them spiritual sustenance that eventually led them to victory. The Christians’ victory is presented as miraculous because, despite being starved, they were able to overcome an enemy that was physically more well-provisioned. This description also works as part of the wider butchery metaphor. By describing the Turks as well-fed and fat, Robert pre-empts the abattoir imagery that follows, signalling that, like well-fed animals, the enemy forces were prime targets for slaughter, preparation, and consumption.

In a similar scene at the Battle of Ascalon (12 August 1099), Robert provides an analogy that combines hunting and abattoir imagery:

[Pagans] climbed trees in the hope that they could hide out of sight of our men. However, our men [the crusaders] shot arrows at them like a fowler shooting down birds, and having dislodged them from their perch slaughtered them on the ground like butchers in an abattoir.<sup>126</sup>

This example is especially poignant as the crusaders are presented as both hunters and butchers, two professions in which an animal and the body of an animal are subjugated to humans through violence. These professions also represent two stages of processing animals for consumption: identifying and hunting the animal and preparing the carcass ready to be sold and consumed. The emphasis placed on likening the Turkish forces to animals, if only in a secondary capacity, demonstrates a tactic on Robert’s part to further establish the superiority of the crusaders over the Turkish forces. In many ways this helps rationalise Christian atrocities in the Holy Land as it temporarily dehumanises the Turks within the confines of the analogy. This allows crusader violence to be interpreted as part

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<sup>126</sup> RM, p. 105 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 208): ‘Arbores ascendebant, putantur ut ibi sic tuerentur, ne a nostris intuerentur. Nostri vero sagittabant illos sicut aucupes volatilia, et ad terram demersos trucidabant ut in macello carnifices animalia.’

of the natural order – in which humans have God-given dominion over animals – and as part of recognisable food-production processes that transform animals into meat for consumption.<sup>127</sup>

Baldric's use of abattoir imagery is slightly different to Robert's. Baldric only directly refers to the crusaders as butchers through the voice of Kerbogha's mother. In a speech originally taken from the *GF*, but greatly embellished by Baldric, Kerbogha's mother warns her son not to engage with the Christians in battle at Antioch because he will be defeated:

“[...] I fear more for our men, both because of the savagery of those butchers [*carnificis*] and because of their customary skill in battle [...]”<sup>128</sup>

Without the context of abattoir imagery, the term *carnificis* can be translated as 'executioner', 'murderer', and 'torturer' as well as 'butcher'; yet it is worth noting that Robert uses this same noun in his description of the butcher's role in an abattoir.<sup>129</sup> In this scene, the Turkish forces are presented as victims of the crusaders' butchery, an attribute that is directly related to military prowess and savagery in battle. Through the voice of Kerbogha's prophesying mother, who correctly predicts the Christians' victory, Baldric does not explicitly depict the Turks as animal-like but rather highlights their fearfulness of the crusaders' ability to slaughter them in battle. Like Robert's hunting and butchering analogies, this successfully attaches a timidity to the Turkish forces and establishes the notion of Christian superiority within the context of combat scenarios.

### Extreme Hunger and Crusader Cannibalism

The episodes of cannibalism depicted in both Robert's and Baldric's narratives of the First Crusade fit broadly into the expressions of hunger and alimentary metaphors outlined

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<sup>127</sup> The notion that humans have dominion over the animals of earth is established in Genesis 1. 26–28.

<sup>128</sup> BB, p.65 (trans. by Edgington, p. 106): '[...] nostris tamen magis timeo quoniam et carnificum illorum ferocitas, et usus preliandi eis assuectus, suaque calliditas me uehementer exanimate.'

<sup>129</sup> RM, p. 105 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 208).



above. Accounts of crusader cannibalism in these two second-generation texts literalise butcher analogies and abattoir imagery and highlight the power of hunger to direct actions. Crucially, anthropophagy also – and perhaps contradictorily – features within the broader context of providential history in which the crusaders, despite their consumption of human flesh, maintain their divinely-ordained role as instruments of God’s will. The final section of this chapter will examine the ways Robert and Baldric use the concept of hunger to justify and explain episodes of crusader cannibalism in their narratives of the First Crusade.

Like the first-hand accounts of the campaign, both Robert and Baldric situate their episodes of cannibalism after the siege of Ma’arra in 1098. Baldric notes that the city was taken with such violence that the streets were littered with the bodies of the Christians’ enemies, so much so that it was ‘usual for [the crusaders] to smell and to see or to sleep among the dead without disgust’.<sup>130</sup> Baldric claims that the crusaders, apparently desensitised to the carnage around them, lingered (*mora*) in the city of Ma’arra for a month and three days, in which time the crusading force exhausted their provisions and succumbed to a great famine.<sup>131</sup>

This is not the only occasion in the text where Baldric notes that delays resulted in food shortages. A similar observation is made in Baldric’s account of the siege of Jerusalem. In a speech that is not included in any other chronicle, a group of unspecified crusade leaders question how the remainder of the siege ought to be carried out given that the army was running low on provisions. This speech specifically suggests that the hunger and thirst suffered in Jerusalem was brought about by a delay in capturing the city:

“There are problems everywhere. There is a shortage of bread and no water. We are ourselves under heavy siege, while we think that we have laid siege to this city. We scarcely dare to leave the camp, and even then

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<sup>130</sup> BB, p. 92 (trans. by Edgington, p. 131): ‘Nam sentire et uidere uel inter mortuos dormire sine fastidio iam illis consuētum erat [...]’.

<sup>131</sup> BB, p. 93 (trans. by Edgington, p. 131): ‘Ex illa mora surrepsit exercitui fames ualida, quoniam omnia que in ciuitate inuenerant, equi uel equites consumpserant; nec extra ciuitatem, tota terra depopulate, quantulumcumque repperire poterant, et mercatum nullum habebant.’

we return empty handed. We have brought this penury on ourselves from the long delay, and unless we look out we shall bring a greater.”<sup>132</sup>

Here, the experience of hunger is directly related to inaction. This, first and foremost, is a pragmatic observation as remaining in the same location for extended periods of time would inevitably lead to diminished provisions in the surrounding areas that would require proactivity to rectify. Indeed, Baldric suggests a scarcity of provisions compelled the leaders of the campaign to set in motion a plan to capture the city of Jerusalem: they ordered siege engines to be built so they could breach the city walls, a task that was willingly undertaken by those who were starving and thought that capturing the city would bring them relief.<sup>133</sup> Thus, through a causal relationship that links hunger to inaction, extreme and prolonged hunger is presented as incentivising action. Specifically, hunger outside the walls of Jerusalem incentivised a series of actions that led to the successful capture of the city, the divinely-willed goal of the expedition. It is within the same context of lingering and famine that Baldric frames an episode of crusader cannibalism at Ma’arra.

After establishing that the crusaders’ delay in Ma’arra caused a severe famine, Baldric claims that in order to survive, the starving crusading force was forced to ‘touch with their teeth’ (*dentibus attingere*) and ‘touch with their shameless jaws’ (*inuerecundis morsibus tetigere*) things Baldric describes as disgraceful, unusual, bitter, and forbidden.<sup>134</sup> The vocabulary of consumption used by Baldric in this case differs quite substantially from Robert’s *Historia* which makes use of more common verbs for eating like *comedere* (to consume or eat). Baldric’s more poetic turns of phrase are likely inspired by the *GF*-text which uses the verb *mandere* (to chew, or to crush with the teeth) almost exclusively to

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<sup>132</sup> BB, p. 106 (trans. by Edgington, p. 144): “‘Angustie undique. Panis defecit, aqua deest, nos ipsi grauiter obsidemur, dum ciuitatem istam nos obsedisse putamus. Extra castra egredi uix audemus, et tunc uacui redimus. Ex longa mora penuriam hanc contraximus; et nisi precauebimus, grauiorem contrahemus.’”

<sup>133</sup> BB, p. 106 (trans. by Edgington, p. 144).

<sup>134</sup> BB, p. 93: ‘Compulsi sunt ergo quelibet inhonesta uel inconsueta, uel austere, uel etiam inlicita dentibus infastiditis attingere.’

describe how the crusaders ate.<sup>135</sup> These phrases are highly evocative and draw attention to the crusaders' mouths as they perform the act of eating.

The emphasis placed on teeth and the performance of eating in Baldric's vocabulary of consumption is unique in second-generation accounts of the crusader cannibalism but can be found elsewhere in Baldric's *Historia*. References to teeth, taste, and flavour, for example, also appear in Baldric's account of a famine at Antioch. According to Baldric, the famine at Antioch was so devastating that:

Some [crusaders] were even forced by their very pressing hunger to chew with greedy teeth [*dentibus avidis*] and swallow down foods that had once been disdained. For there was nothing so disgusting, so lacking in taste [*insipidum*] that hunger did not give it flavour [*gustaretur*], that hunger did not take away shame so that it could be enjoyed.<sup>136</sup>

This passage comes directly after an itemised list of the inflated price of provisions such as bread, eggs, wine, and nuts, as well as an account of the 'disdained' (*fastidire*) things eaten by the crusaders when no food could be purchased. Like the *GF*, Baldric suggests the crusaders consumed the leaves from fig trees, vines and thistles, and the cooked skins of horses, donkeys, cattle, and camels in an attempt to satiate their hunger.<sup>137</sup> It is also noted that during the famine at Antioch the leaders of the crusade had no wine to drink and that for them horse and donkey meat became 'imperial delicacies'.<sup>138</sup> Baldric implies that what the leaders ate during this period of dearth was incongruous to their status, demonstrating

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<sup>135</sup> See, *GF*, pp. 56, 57, 61–62, and 80.

<sup>136</sup> *BB*, p. 73 (trans. by Edgington, p.114): 'Coacti sunt etenim cibos olim fastiditos, fame perurgente, dentibus avidis masticare et deglutire. Nichil enim fuit tam fedum, tam insipidum, cui fames saporem non attribuerit, cui uerecundiam ut gustaretur non abstulerit.'

<sup>137</sup> *BB*, p. 73. (trans. by Edgington, p.114): 'Folia ficulnearum, uicium et cardonum, et si que inueniebantur aliarum arborum, auidius decerptas bulliebant et uorabant. Coria caballorum, asinorum et camelorum siue bufalorum sicque coquebant et manducabant; et preterea multas alias passi sunt ibi anxietates et penurias'. Compare, *GF*, p. 62: 'Folia fici et uitis et cardui, omniumque arborum coquebant et manducabant, tantam famem immensam habebant. Alii coria caballorum et camelorum et asinorum atque bouum seu bufalorum sicca decoquebant, et manducabant.'

<sup>138</sup> *BB*, p. 73 (trans. by Edgington, p.114): 'De uino melius puto silere quam dicere, cum uinum ibi uix aliquis ducum libauerit. Equine carnes uel asinine pro imperialibus computabantur deliciis.'

the detrimental effect famine had on all social levels of the crusading force. These factors highlight a well-established social observation; in times of deprivation, hunger can render the most loathsome food palatable to ensure survival. What is significant to our purposes, however, is that Baldric's description of the famine at Antioch establishes a dramatic vocabulary of consumption that accentuates the role played by the teeth, mouth, and jaw in consuming things not necessarily recognised as edible.

Indeed, Baldric notes that the famine at Ma'arra was worse than the devastating famine at Antioch because the crusaders were compelled to eat 'the forbidden' (*inlicita*).

That is to say, their hunger drove them to consume human flesh:

For it has been reported and ascertained that many touched with their shameless jaws Turkish flesh, that is to say, human flesh, spitted and roasted on fires. For they would leave the town stealthily, light fires and cook it, and when they had consumed their wicked feasts and thus taken care of their wretched survival, they would return as if they had done nothing of the sort. Nevertheless, word of it became public in the army, but because the famine was extreme, punishment was withheld. But the leaders were beating their breasts and mouths, they shuddered and kept quiet; yet they did not accuse them of a crime because they were suffering that famine readily for God and they were fighting the enemy with their hands and teeth.<sup>139</sup>

Baldric makes it very clear that he is referring to cannibalism in this passage. First, he claims that cannibalism had been reported and confirmed – potentially from those crusaders returning through Bourgueil as well as in the *GF* – so evidently believes there is truth to these allegations. Then he states that the crusaders ate Turkish flesh that had been spitted and roasted on fires. Baldric clarifies that this is an act of cannibalism by adding that by 'Turkish flesh' he means human flesh. This ensures no mistake can be made; he does not mean animal flesh that once belonged to the Turks, which one might reasonably assume

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<sup>139</sup> BB, p. 93 (trans. by Edgington, p. 131). 'Relatum est enim et compertum quia multi carnes Turcinas, carnes scilicet humanas, uerutatas et ignibus assas, inuerecundis morsibus tetigere. Exhibant enim furtim a ciuitate, et procul ignibus accensis coquebant; et nefandis dapibus sumptis, sic etenim misere consulebant uite, tanquam nichil egerint huiusmodi reuerebantur. Palam tamen uerbum hoc factum est in exercitu; sed quoniam fames preualebat, ulti suspendebantur. Maiores tamen pectus et os percutiebant et horrentes silebant; nec tamen imputabatur eis pro scelere, quoniam famem illam pro Deo alacriter patiebantur, et inimicis manibus et dentibus inimicabantur.'

would have been spitted and roasted for consumption; he means flesh from the bodies of Turks. The fact that Baldric feels the need to clarify what type of flesh was consumed by the famished crusaders implies that his audience may not have anticipated this behaviour from the instruments of the divine will.

Moreover, Baldric notes hunger drove men to perform these acts of cannibalism in secret outside of the city of Ma'arra. Baldric describes the crusader-cannibals as acting stealthily (*furtim*) which implies the crusaders knew to some extent that their actions would be perceived as shameful if witnessed. This adds a sense of premeditation to their actions. Unlike Raymond of Aguilers' description of Christians impatiently consuming the putrid flesh from swamp-corpses out of desperation, Baldric suggests that crusader cannibalism was an organised and strategically clandestine affair. Indeed, he adds that acts of anthropophagy were committed outside the community setting of Ma'arra, even though, according to Baldric, there were dead bodies strewn across the city. The removal of the crusader-cannibals from the community setting of the city is reminiscent of the punishment for monastic infractions which banished monks from the communal table, though in this case the infraction is the act of eating itself.

Significantly, Baldric describes the actual consumption of human flesh as a 'wicked feast' (*nefandis dapibus*).<sup>140</sup> This phrase is especially interesting. The adjective *nefanda* highlights the sinfulness of consuming human flesh, yet Baldric's use of *dapis* (feast, or sacrificial meal), in conjunction with the acknowledgement that the human flesh was spitted and roasted over fires, implies an ironic sense of civility, ritual, and formality. So, even though the act of cannibalism occurs outside the city, the process of cooking and eating the bodies of dead Turks is given a solemn communal setting: the crusader-cannibals are presented as bound together by their wicked act of consumption. This further suggests that the crusaders' consumption of human flesh was a formal, organised feast, not the

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<sup>140</sup> BB, p. 93 (trans. by Edgington, p. 131).

spontaneous actions of men mad with hunger. Nevertheless, Baldric remains steadfast in his assertion that crusader cannibalism at Ma'arra was primarily an act of survival. It is noted, for instance, that after the crusader-cannibals had sated their hunger and had ensured their 'wretched survival' (*misere vite*) they were permitted to return to the Christian camp inside the city.<sup>141</sup> This sentence emphasises that the crusaders' survival was contingent on their consuming whatever they could find to eat, in this case, human flesh.

While Baldric clearly frames anthropophagy as a wicked act, he also confirms that the cannibal-crusaders were able to re-join the main army with no repercussions. Baldric mentions that, despite the campaign leaders' evident repulsion by the acts of anthropophagy, cannibalism at Ma'arra was permitted to continue and went unpunished. From a pragmatic standpoint, permitting cannibalism to continue would have been beneficial to the campaign if, as Baldric claims, it satiated the crusaders' hunger, because starving men are not as efficient in battle. Baldric suggests, however, that the crusader cannibalism went unpunished in Ma'arra because prolonged famine was punishment enough. Indeed, the suffering experienced from extreme hunger at Ma'arra is confirmed in the passage which follows Baldric's account of crusader cannibalism. Here Baldric addresses hunger directly:

For what do you not compel, O cruel hunger? For this pestilence is incurable and when food is withdrawn hunger increases by the day. A man is unable to endure any affliction less than hunger. For this reason it came about many times that certain starving people, as if dreaming, bit themselves with their own teeth. For nothing is more intolerable to a man than hunger.<sup>142</sup>

This is just one of thirteen references to the works of Virgil made in Baldric's *Historia*.<sup>143</sup> The start of this passage references Book Three of the *Aeneid*, in which Aeneas recounts the

<sup>141</sup> BB, p. 93 (trans. by Edgington, p. 131).

<sup>142</sup> BB, p. 93 (trans. by Edgington, p. 131–132): 'Quid enim non cogis seua fames? Hec enim lues incurabilis est, et cibis ablatis fames augmentatur in dies. Qua de re multociens contigit ut quidam famelici, tanquam somniantes, seipsos suis dentibus appetierint. Nichil enim homini fame est intolerabilius.'

<sup>143</sup> Baldric references Virgil's *Eclogues* three times (BB, pp. 53, 100, and 108); *Georgics* two times (BB, pp. 3, and 54), and the *Aeneid* eight times (BB, pp. 22, 28, 43, 56, 58, 67, 93, and

aftermath of the fall of Troy. But where Virgil writes ‘For what do you not compel in the hearts of men, O accursed hunger of gold!’ (*Quid non mortalia pectora cogis, auri sacra fames!*), referring to hunger as a metaphor for a desire, Baldric refers solely to hunger, the physical desire for food: *Quid enim non cogis seua fames?*<sup>144</sup> In this passage, hunger, like Aeneas’ description of greed, is presented as an affliction that seeks out men without discrimination. This is punctuated by the suggestion that hunger made some men so delirious that they ‘bit themselves with their own teeth’ (*seipsos suis dentibus appetierint*). This auto-cannibalism provides a neat comparison to the crusaders’ exocannibalism of the Turks. The former is presented as a pitiable act seemingly induced by madness, and the latter is depicted as a covert yet civilised meal. In both cases, however, hunger is presented as having agency over the actions of men: it is hunger that drives the crusaders to consume themselves and others. Baldric’s address to hunger seemingly confirms, therefore, that starvation brought about such all-encompassing suffering on the crusaders that it can be viewed as a legitimate reason to consume human flesh.

Finally, it is also worth noting that Baldric attempts to further mitigate any wrongdoing in this episode of cannibalism by framing it as part of the penitential process of the crusade. He claims that the leaders of the crusade did not accuse anyone of anthropophagy because the crusaders ‘were suffering that famine readily for God’. In many ways this reaffirmed the crusaders’ pilgrim identity and special relationship with God because suffering offered the crusaders a divinely-ordained opportunity to demonstrate their endurance, worthiness, and faith in divine mercy.<sup>145</sup> By aligning anthropophagy with the suffering caused by famine, Baldric repositions crusader cannibalism firmly within the context of providential history, essentially suggesting that the act was sanctioned by God.

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112). For more on Baldric’s allusions to classical texts see Biddlecombe, ‘Introduction’, to BB Latin edn, pp. xxx–xl.

<sup>144</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid, Books I–III*, ed. by T. L. Papillon and A. E. Haigh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890), p. 63.

<sup>145</sup> Mortimer, pp. 118–119; Andrew Buck, ‘Weighed by Such a Great Calamity, they were Cleansed for their Sins’, *Journal of Religious History, Literature and Culture*, 5.2 (2019), 1–6.

Indeed, Baldric's justification of cannibalism, in conjunction with the emphasis placed on the crusaders' teeth in Baldric's descriptions of famine-induced cannibalism, takes on new meaning, when, in the same paragraph, Baldric suggests that the crusaders were in fact 'fighting the enemy with their hands and teeth [*manibus et dentibus*]'.<sup>146</sup> In this case, I have altered Edgington's translation to reflect a literal use of '*manibus et dentibus*', rather than the idiom 'tooth and nail' she provides.<sup>147</sup> Fighting the enemy 'with their hands and teeth' recalls another, perhaps more traditional, way the crusaders engaged with their enemy during this campaign: physical combat. Positioning combat and cannibalism as approximate, and seemingly legitimate forms of violence against the enemy is particularly interesting as it literalises the butcher analogies used to create a rich imagery of combat scenes. Thus, where suffering might be considered an essential part of the crusaders' pilgrim identity, Baldric's combined military and alimentary allusion transforms crusader cannibalism into a violent, yet sanctioned, demonstration of the Christians' physical domination of Muslim bodies.

Robert's account of crusader cannibalism is much shorter than Baldric's. Like Baldric, Robert situates an episode of cannibalism at the siege of Ma'arra in 1098. The siege itself receives implicit criticism in Robert's *Historia*. Robert appears particularly uncomfortable with the actions of the crusade leaders in Ma'arra, especially Bohemond who betrayed a group of prisoners he promised to save from death.<sup>148</sup> The same passage also criticises the crusaders for killing the elderly, women, and children in the city, and for searching for gold inside the bodies of dead Turks on the Sabbath.<sup>149</sup> Robert's account of Bohemond's transgressions in Ma'arra is directly followed by a description of crusader

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<sup>146</sup> BB, p. 93 (trans. by Edgington, p. 131): '[...] et inimicis manibus et dentibus inimicabantur.'

<sup>147</sup> Jay Rubenstein also uses, and comments on, this literal translation: Jay Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', *French Historical Studies*, 31.4 (2011), 525–552 (p. 542).

<sup>148</sup> RM, pp. 87–8 (trans. by Sweetenham, pp. 185–6).

<sup>149</sup> RM, pp. 87–8 (trans. by Sweetenham, pp. 185–6). See also, Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 55.



cannibalism, although, according to Robert, anthropophagy occurred up to a month after the city was captured. Crucially, Robert, like the other chroniclers addressed in this investigation, situates anthropophagy within the context of famine:

The Frankish army lingered in Ma'arrat-an-Nu'man for a month and four days [...] They overwintered there for a long and dreary period, which meant they were unable to find anything to eat or take by force. They were so desperate with hunger they ended up – a horrible thing to have to describe – cutting up the bodies of the Turks, cooking them and eating them.<sup>150</sup>

Robert describes crusader cannibalism simply, reducing it to a three-stage process: the bodies of Turks were cut up, cooked, and then eaten by crusaders. A similar simplicity can be found in the *GF*'s description of the same episode.<sup>151</sup> While Robert's account of the cannibalism is short in length, he includes a commentary on the episode within the same sentence. Robert maintains that the act of cannibalism is 'a horrible thing to have to describe'.<sup>152</sup> Robert appears fascinated by the gore and horror of violence in his narrative and dedicates time and space to detailing the injury and loss of life sustained by both Christian and Muslims in battle, but these instances rarely receive explicit commentary on their 'horrible' nature. This raises the question, if cannibalism was horrifying to Robert, why was he compelled to recount it? It may have been on account of a genuine desire to remain faithful to his source material, but it is also possible that recounting the act of cannibalism served a further narrative purpose. Indeed, viewing this episode of crusader cannibalism as part of Robert's wider narrative discourse situates crusader cannibalism at the heart of another example in which hunger incentivises action.

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<sup>150</sup> RM, p. 88 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 186): 'Dietavit autem in illa civitate exercitus Francorum per mensem unum et dies IIII [...] Longo quidem tempore nimiumque prolixo hiemaverunt ibi, quia nil quod ederent, quod raperent, poterat inveniri. Sicque famis iniuria compellente, contigit, quod etiam dictu horribile est, quia corpora gentilium in frusta scindebant et coquebant et comedebant.'

<sup>151</sup> *GF*, p. 80: '[...] alii uero caedebant carnes eorum per frusta, et coquebant ad manducandum.'

<sup>152</sup> RM, p. 88 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 186): '[...] quod etiam dictu horribile est [...].'

First, as we have seen, Robert suggests the famine in Ma'arra is brought upon the crusaders by lingering in the city. Indeed, the need to resume the journey to Jerusalem is given narrative urgency in Robert's account by the suggestion that Raymond IV of Toulouse was so 'distraught by such difficulties', such as cannibalism brought about by lingering in Ma'arra, that he called a meeting of the other crusade leaders in order to decide 'how to go forward to the Holy Sepulchre'.<sup>153</sup> This is a phrase repeated several times in Robert's *Historia*, and finds similar expression after the battle of Antioch: '[Bohemond and Raymond] were together debating how they should make their way to the Holy Sepulchre'.<sup>154</sup> Variants of this phrase can also be found in the *GF*, Peter's text, and Guibert of Nogent's *Dei gesta per Francos*, confirming that the need to capture the Holy City was a central theme in the narrative arc of these texts as well as the campaign's main focus.<sup>155</sup> Robert recounts that a meeting was called at Chastel-Rouge that ended up focussing on a disagreement between Bohemond and Raymond IV, Count of Toulouse, over the possession of Antioch. While this quarrel was not settled immediately, and no plan was set in motion to resume the crusaders' march to Jerusalem, Robert notes that this meeting inspired Raymond to put his 'trust in God, not his princely colleagues'.<sup>156</sup> With this renewed submission to the divine will came the realisation that Raymond's dispute with Bohemond over Antioch was the obstacle preventing the army from moving towards the Holy Sepulchre. Robert claims that, as an act of penance for the suffering caused to the crusaders by the delay in Ma'arra, Raymond walked barefoot from Ma'arra to Kafar Tāb before leading the crusaders south, towards Jerusalem.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> RM, p. 88 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 186): 'Hac igitur incommoditate permotus comes sancti Egidii mandavit cunctuis principibus qui erant Antiochie, ut ad Rugiam civitatem convenirent, et de via sancti Sepulchri ibi inter se disponderent.'

<sup>154</sup> RM, p. 83 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 180): 'Cumque ita in unum residerent, et de via sancti Sepulchri, quo dirigerent iter, disponderent [...]

<sup>155</sup> *GF*, pp. 72, 75, 76, 80, and 81; *PT*, pp. 114, and 119; *GN*, pp. 244, 250, and 255. For more on this leitmotif, see Mortimer, pp. 123–124.

<sup>156</sup> RM, p. 88 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 186): 'Ipse igitur plus Domino condifens quam in pricipibus [...].'

<sup>157</sup> RM, pp. 88–89 (trans. by Sweetenham, pp. 186–187).

Crucially, when crusaders in the contingents of Raymond and Robert of Normandy leave Ma'arra they are led directly to a fertile valley where their hunger is satiated. In many ways this reflects the food provision miracles found in the *Life of Benedict* in which God rewards the worthy and the faithful with food. Indeed, in the passages that follow, Robert the Monk provides numerous examples of what resources were available to these crusaders in each city they travelled through. After staying in Masyaf for five days, for example, the crusaders were able to load 'camels and pack animals with corn, flour, barley and cheese and things to eat'.<sup>158</sup> Similarly, in Caphalia, the crusaders found 'the granaries were full of wheat, the presses overflowing with wine and chests filled with nuts, cheese and flour' and that the gardens were 'full of vegetables, beans and other pulses which were reaching their peak already'.<sup>159</sup> The diversity of provisions available to the crusaders hints at God's favour and echoes other moments in the *Historia* where abundance was provided as a divine reward for the crusaders' perseverance and military successes. Considering that Robert also suggests that Raymond IV put his trust in God rather than rely on the decisions of other princely leaders while the crusaders were starving at Ma'arra, I believe that this episode can be read as part of a scarcity to abundance cycle, in which the crusaders are rewarded for their perseverance and faith in God.

Thus, while Robert's initial account of crusader cannibalism in Ma'arra is brief, when read as part of wider cycle of hunger and satiety, this scene simultaneously highlights the extreme hunger suffered by the crusaders and presents anthropophagy as a catalyst that encourages the crusade leaders' decision to continue their journey to Jerusalem. In this case, extreme hunger incentivises action in Robert's narrative, an action that is

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<sup>158</sup> RM, pp. 89–90 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 187: 'Sexto vero die, oneratis camelis et iumentis frumento, farina, ordeo et caseis, rebusque aliis ad edendum idoneis [...].')

<sup>159</sup> RM, p. 90 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 188): 'Pulchros quidem apparatus ibi inveniunt, horrea scilicet frumento plena, torcularia vino redundantia, arcas plenas nucibus, caseis et farina. [...] Ibi invenerunt hortos pleno holeribus et fabis, aliisque leguminibus ad precocitatem maturantibus.'

rewarded in the short term with an abundance of provisions, and in the long term with the successful capture of the Holy City.

## Conclusion

As Benedictine monks familiar with biblical exegesis and scriptural commentary, Robert the Monk and Baldric of Bourgueil would have understood how expressions of hunger and alimentary metaphors could be used to communicate complex ideologies and ideas to medieval audiences. Within a crusading context, references to hunger, eating, and food offer a similar opportunity for these authors to explain the deeper theological significance of the First Crusade and its participants within the framework of providential history.

Robert and Baldric use, for example, references to eating to convey moral judgements on individuals and groups in the crusading force, confirming their role and identity in God's plan for the venture. Peter the Hermit receives moral censure for his enjoyment of food and wine while claiming a reputation for abstinence and the crusaders' lack of food at key junctures in the narrative, notably at Antioch, Ma'arra, and outside the walls of Jerusalem itself, highlights their special relationship with God. Indeed, the starving crusaders' miraculous victory at Antioch is attributed to divine intervention, cementing the First Crusade's position as part of sacred history and the crusaders as implementors of the divine will.

Hunger – the physical need for food – is also employed in these second-generation chronicles as a justification for behaviour that is perceived to be incongruous with the crusaders' identity. Starvation, for example, is presented as a powerful motivator of action in Baldric's *Historia* which allows Baldric to justify and excuse any behaviour that may disrupt the integrity of the crusaders' pilgrim identities. Extreme hunger is also incorporated into a narrative cycle of scarcity and abundance in Robert's *Historia*. Within this cycle, the crusaders' hunger in times of scarcity is presented as an opportunity for the

crusading force to demonstrate their faith in God – as opposed to material assets – and their endurance.

Hunger, food, and eating also find expression in alimentary metaphors in Robert's and Baldric's narratives. Butchering, harvesting, and abattoir analogies are used to create an image of Christian military prowess by undermining the agency of the Turkish forces. This is achieved by likening the crusaders to hunters, butchers, and harvesters, constructive roles in processes of food production, and by reducing the Turks to prey like deer and birds as well as crops. By presenting violence, bloodshed, and military prowess in terms of the relationship between humans and animals, Robert encourages crusader violence to be interpreted as part of the natural order – in which humans have agency over animals – and as part of recognisable food-production processes that transform animals into meat for consumption.

Accounts of crusader cannibalism in these two second-generation texts literalise butcher analogies and abattoir imagery and highlight the power of hunger to direct actions. While these second-generation chroniclers adapt and expand on the account of anthropophagy supplied by the *GF* in different ways, both steadfastly maintain that the crusaders resorted to cannibalism in Ma'arra because they were starving. Nevertheless, depictions of cannibalism also have narrative significance beyond discussions of survival in Robert's and Baldric's texts. Indeed, Baldric presents the crusaders' consumption of human flesh as a formal, ritualised feast held in secret outside the walls of Ma'arra. To delimit the savage connotations of these actions, Baldric also aligns anthropophagy with other divinely-sanctioned forms of violence against the enemy. In this way, 'fighting the enemy with their hands and teeth' not only demonstrates the crusaders' physical domination of Muslim bodies but represents an action – inspired both by hunger and by God – that furthers the cause of the crusade. Similarly, Robert's short episode of cannibalism takes on new meaning when viewed as part of a wider narrative cycle of scarcity and abundance. After realising that lingering in the city of Ma'arra had caused famine and cannibalism, Raymond

IV of Toulouse resubmits himself to God and resumes his journey to Jerusalem, a decision that is divinely rewarded with an abundance of provisions. Thus, this cycle simultaneously highlights the extreme hunger suffered by the crusaders on their mission to implement the divine will and presents anthropophagy as incentivising the crusade leaders to continue their venture to the Holy Land.

## Chapter Three: Re-interpretations of Crusader Cannibalism in Guibert of Nogent's *Dei gesta per Francos*

Guibert of Nogent, like Robert the Monk and Baldric of Bourgueil, was a Benedictine monk and chronicler of the First Crusade writing in France around ten years after the conclusion of the campaign. Like Robert's and Baldric's texts, Guibert's account of the venture, *Dei gesta per Francos*, is based on the *GF* but situates the events of the First Crusade within a more theologically refined context.<sup>1</sup> In his narrative, Guibert underscores the providential nature of the First Crusade and highlights the importance of the campaign and its participants within the framework of sacred history. While these three Benedictine monks take a similar approach to assigning significance to the events of the campaign, for the purposes of this study, Guibert's *Dei gesta* warrants separate investigation. Guibert appears to be the first chronicler of the campaign to suggest that crusader cannibalism was not only an act of survival committed by starving Christians, but also a staged performance carried out by a subgroup of the Christian army called the Tafurs.

This chapter highlights the ways in which Guibert's interpretation of crusader hunger and cannibalism overlaps and diverges from those of his Benedictine contemporaries, Robert the Monk and Baldric of Bourgueil. The first section of this chapter examines how, by framing himself as an interpreter of the history of the First Crusade, Guibert emphasises his authority to write on the events of the campaign. As an interpreter of the expedition, Guibert had the power to accept and reject the testimonies of eyewitnesses while also explaining their meaning to his audience within the framework of providential history. The second section of this chapter explores how the experience of

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter uses Levine's translation of GN in conjunction with the main edition: Guibert de Nogent, *The Deeds of God through the Franks: A Translation of Guibert de Nogent's Gesta Dei per Francos*, ed. and trans. by Robert Levine (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997).

crusader hunger is represented in Guibert's interpretation of the siege and battle of Antioch. In order to compare these representations with those of Robert and Baldric, a specific focus will be placed on Guibert's use of narrative cycles of scarcity and abundance and metaphors of consumption. The final section of this chapter concentrates on two episodes of cannibalism depicted in Guibert's narrative of the First Crusade. The first description of anthropophagy in the *Dei gesta* parallels the episodes of cannibalism depicted in other first-hand and second-generation chronicles of the crusade: the crusaders' consumption of human flesh at Ma'arra is presented as a desperate act of survival. Guibert's second account of crusader cannibalism, however, displaces allegations of anthropophagy from the crusaders and onto a strange subset of Christian force, the Tafurs.

### Guibert of Nogent: An Interpreter of History

Although Guibert of Nogent was relatively obscure in his own time, modern historians know quite a lot about his early life and career from his autobiographical text, *Monodies*.<sup>2</sup> This text was completed in 1115 and was modelled on the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine (c. fifth century CE) which started with an outline of the sins of Augustine's youth before detailing his conversion to Christianity. The autobiographical nature of *Monodies* is relatively rare for the medieval period because writing about the 'self' fundamentally conflicted with the Christian ideal of humility.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, any autobiographical material found in early- and high-medieval literature is usually limited to brief career synopses at the end

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<sup>2</sup> Guibert of Nogent, *Monodies and On the Relics of Saints: The Autobiography and a Manifesto of a French Monk from the Time of the Crusades*, trans. by Joseph McAlhany and Jay Rubenstein (London: Penguin Books, 2011), pp. 3–186. For a comprehensive introduction to Guibert as an abbot, theologian, and historian see Jay Rubenstein, *Guibert of Nogent: Portrait of a Medieval Mind* (London: Routledge, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Ionut Epurescu-Pascovici, 'Conversion and Autobiography: The case of Salimbene of Parma', *The Medieval History Journal*, 17 (2014), 27–55 (p. 34). See also, Jay Rubenstein, 'Biography and Autobiography in the Middle Ages', in *Writing Medieval History*, ed. by Nancy Partner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 22–41.



of the text.<sup>4</sup> According to his memoirs, Guibert was born into the minor nobility in Clermont-en-Beauvaisis on 25 March 1060. Guibert notes that, because he was born breech, his mother had a difficult labour and they both would have lost their lives if she had not made an offering to a shrine of the Virgin Mary, dedicating Guibert to a clerical life if he survived. After briefly considering becoming a knight, Guibert felt compelled to commit to the promise made by his mother and started his monastic career at an abbey near Saint-Germer de Fly in around 1075. Here, Guibert devoted himself to study, taking a particular interest in the secular poets Ovid and Virgil, and, through the influence of Anselm of Bec (later the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1093–1109), theological treatises. Guibert stayed in Saint-Germer de Fly as a monk until 1104 when he was elected abbot of Nogent-sous-Coucy, a small Benedictine abbey situated in the diocese of Soissons. For unknown reasons, Guibert was exiled from his abbey for about a year in 1107 and, during this time, wrote the *Dei gesta per Francos* which he dedicated and presented to Lysiard, Bishop of Soissons, upon his return to Nogent in 1108.<sup>5</sup> The complete text of the *Dei gesta* survives in eight manuscripts, seven of which date to the twelfth century.<sup>6</sup>

The seven books of the *Dei gesta* detail the events following Pope Urban II's call for crusade at the Council of Clermont in 1095 up to the capture of Jerusalem by Christian forces in 1099. Like Robert the Monk and Baldric of Bourgueil, Guibert uses the *GF* as his main source of information and his *Dei gesta* follows the structure of the *GF* relatively closely. Unlike the *GF*, however, Guibert places a more equal emphasis on the events at Antioch and Jerusalem and explores in more detail the socio-religious context in which the First Crusade took place. This is primarily achieved through an extended account of Urban

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<sup>4</sup> Rubenstein, *Portrait*, p. 76.

<sup>5</sup> Jay Rubenstein, 'Guibert of Nogent, Albert of Aachen and Fulcher of Chartres: Three Crusade Chronicles Intersect', in *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory*, ed. by Marcus Bull and Damien Kempf (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), pp. 24–37 (pp. 24–25).

<sup>6</sup> Valentin Portnykh, 'Exploring the Rebirth of a Chronicle: Why Robert the Monk's *Historia Iherosolimitana* Gained New Life in the Fifteenth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 74 (2023), 39–67 (pp. 45–46).

II's call for crusade at Clermont and a digression from the main narrative in Book One that outlines the history of the Eastern Church from the third to late-eleventh centuries.

While the structure of the *Dei gesta* parallels the *GF*, Guibert, like his Benedictine contemporaries Robert and Baldric, ultimately suggests that the *GF*-author paid insufficient attention to God's role in the success of the First Crusade. To rectify this, Guibert reinterprets the events of the First Crusade presented by the *GF*-author in a way that underscores the providential nature and sacred significance of the campaign. For Guibert, the crusaders were the implementors of God's will, not independent agents, a notion exemplified in Guibert's decision to give his work 'a name that lacks arrogance, and brings honour to our people: The Deeds of God through the Franks'.<sup>7</sup> By replacing the genitive plural of 'Franks' (*Francorum*) seen in the title of the *GF* with the genitive singular of God (*Dei*), Guibert firmly situates the events he describes within the framework of providential history: the deeds of the First Crusade were divine and were completed through, not by, the crusaders.

Not only did the *GF* fail to sufficiently acknowledge the theological context of the First Crusade, but Guibert also claims that the anonymous *GF*-author used an unsatisfactory style to record the events of the campaign. While Colin Morris has demonstrated that the *GF*-author was a more sophisticated Latinist than second-generation chroniclers gave him credit for, Guibert states that he was compelled to rewrite the *GF*-narrative to correct the 'style that slithers along the ground of [this] earlier history'.<sup>8</sup> In the preface to the *Dei gesta*, Guibert continues his criticism of the *GF*'s style by suggesting that it was 'woven out of excessively simple words, often violating grammatical rules' and likely exasperated its

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<sup>7</sup> GN, p. 84 (trans. by Levine, p. 26): 'Nomen autem indidi quod arrogantia careat gentisque honori proficiat, scilicet: Dei gesta per Francos.'

<sup>8</sup> Colin Morris, 'The Gesta Francorum as Narrative History', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 19 (1993), 55–71 (pp. 59–60). GN, p. 78 (trans. by Levine, p. 23): '[...] immo illud humi serpens eloquium precedentis corrigebam Historiae [...]']

readers 'with the stale, flat quality of its language'.<sup>9</sup> For Guibert, a monk possessing a wide vocabulary and good knowledge of grammatical structures drawn from the classics and Christian theology, the *GF*'s style was overly simplistic to be appropriate for a history of the First Crusade. According to Guibert:

The style of writers should fit the status of events: martial deeds should be told with harsh words; what pertains to divine matters must be brought along at a more controlled pace. In the course of this work, [...] I should perform in both modes [...]<sup>10</sup>

It was characteristic of the literary ideals of the eleventh and twelfth centuries to suggest that the dignity of the subject matter determined the style of the rhetoric used in narrative sources. This reflected an ancient notion that rhetorical style added a sense of value to literary discourse, an embellishment that enhanced the subject matter.<sup>11</sup> Claiming that the events of the First Crusade ought to be narrativised in a style that complemented both martial and divine matters confirms that Guibert sought to highlight the role of the divine in this military campaign. From Guibert's perspective, the *Dei gesta* needed to adhere to both literary modes in order to rectify the oversimplistic style of the *GF* and do justice to the sacred nature of the expedition.

While Guibert appears confident that he will be able to present his chronicle in a more elevated style than the *GF*, there is some anxiety in the *Dei gesta* over Guibert's authority to provide an account of the First Crusade given that, unlike the *GF*-author, he did

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<sup>9</sup> GN, p. 79 (trans. by Levine, p. 24): 'Erat siquidem eadem Historia, sed verbis contexta plus equo simplicibus et quae multotiens grammaticae naturas excederet lectoremque vapidum insipiditate sermonis sepius exanimare valeret.'

<sup>10</sup> GN, p. 80 (trans. by Levine, p. 24): '[...] pro statu plane casuum sermo coaptari debet orantium, ut verborum acrimonia bellica facta ferantur, quae ad divina pertinent gradu temperatiore ducantur. Qua gemina, si facultas michi suppeteret, forma in huius stadio operis quaquam verbis recitata [...]']

<sup>11</sup> Morris, 'The Gesta' p. 60. See also, Jan M. Ziolkowski, 'Cultures of Authority in the Long Twelfth Century', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 108 (2009), 421–448; 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; and, Alastair J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988).

not participate in the campaign itself. One way that Guibert attempts to authorise his work is by highlighting God's role in the construction of his chronicle. As demonstrated in Chapter One, twelfth-century perceptions of the authenticity of historical narratives were grounded in the concepts of truth and knowledge. For medieval theologians like Guibert, God was the ultimate guarantor of truth because he was the possessor of all power, the author of creation, and the author of the Bible.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, in the preface to the *Dei gesta* Guibert declares:

In trying to compose the present small work, I have placed my faith not in my literary knowledge, of which I have very little, but rather in the spiritual authority of the events themselves [...] I am unable to doubt that He who guided [the crusaders'] steps through so many difficulties, who removed the many military obstacles that lay before them, will implant within me, in whatever manner he pleases, the truth about what happened, nor will he deny to me the ability to choose the correct and fitting words.<sup>13</sup>

Firstly, this passage recognises God's role in securing the success of the First Crusade, cementing the campaign's position within the context of providential history. This statement also suggests that Guibert believed God would guide his interpretation of the crusade by allowing him to see the truth and, by extension, the significance of the events of the campaign. In this way, God had the agency to both direct historical outcomes and inform the manner in which these events were recorded. According to Guibert, these two instances of divine intervention imbued the events of the First Crusade with their own 'spiritual authority' (*spiritualis auctoritas*).<sup>14</sup> The suggestion that Guibert drew on this spiritual authority, rather than his own literary skill, to authenticate his narrative allows Guibert to demonstrate his authorial humility, a common trope in monastic writing; but, it also allows Guibert to claim that the *Dei gesta* is inherently truthful, and therefore worthy

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<sup>12</sup> Ziolkowski, p. 432.

<sup>13</sup> GN, p. 79 (trans. by Levine, p. 24): 'Ad presentis opusculi executionem multum michi prebuilt ausum non scientiae litteralis, cuius apud me constat forma pertenuis, ulla securitas, sed historiae spiritualis auctoritas [...] Qui enim eos per tot difficultates traduxit itinerum, qui succidit ante ipsos tot excrementa bellorum, dubitare non valui quod rei gestae michi quibus sibi placeret modis inderet veritatem nec negaret competentium ordini ornamenta dictorum.'

<sup>14</sup> GN, p. 79 (trans. by Levine, p. 24).

of belief, because both the chronicle and its subject matter were inspired and directed by the authority of God.

Another way Guibert attempts to validate his work is by drawing his audience's attention to the authority of his source material. In the first instance, Guibert claims not to have written anything in his chronicle that was not already being sung in public (*publice cantitatur*).<sup>15</sup> This statement refers to the conventions and language of the vernacular *chanson de geste* genre, epic poems that typically recounted battles between Christian knights and their pagan enemies. Although no extant vernacular crusade-related *chansons de geste* can be dated to the decade after 1099, it is generally believed that by the early-twelfth century there was a recognised body of work that centred on the events at Antioch and made use of the conventions of *chanson de geste* to describe crusading activity in the East.<sup>16</sup> Guibert's reference to these songs 'sung in public' is therefore significant for two reasons. First, it demonstrates the existence of an orally transmitted crusade narrative in France in the decade after the campaign's conclusion. Secondly, it suggests that these *chansons de geste* were believed to be sufficiently grounded in 'truth' that Guibert could draw authority from the fact that his account of the First Crusade aligned with the narrative of events relayed in contemporary crusade poetry.

Furthermore, in a paragraph at the start of both Book Four and Book Six Guibert claims that his understanding of the First Crusade was based on information provided by participants of the campaign, including the eyewitness material captured in the *GF* as well as oral testimonies from crusaders returning to France from the Holy Land.<sup>17</sup> While Guibert did not appreciate the style of the *GF*, he asserts that, above all else, the testimonies he used in the construction of the *Dei gesta* were 'endowed with truth' because they came

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<sup>15</sup> GN, p. 83.

<sup>16</sup> Susan B. Edgington and Carol Sweetenham, 'Introduction', in *The Chanson d'Antioche: An Old French Account of the First Crusade* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 3–97 (p. 15).

<sup>17</sup> GN, pp. 166 and 233.

from eyewitnesses.<sup>18</sup> By claiming that the information provided in the *Dei gesta* was based on first-hand accounts of the campaign, Guibert acknowledges the same historiographical tradition explored in Chapter One that valued eyewitness testimony as one of the best guarantees of historical truth.

Guibert attempts to subvert this tradition, however, and claim authority for his own work by suggesting that eyewitness testimonies become no less truthful when written down by a third party.<sup>19</sup> In response to any potential criticism concerning the authority of the oral evidence collected to supplement the information provided by the *GF*-author, Guibert states:

If anyone objects that I did not see, he cannot object on the grounds that I did not hear, because I believe that, in a way, hearing is almost as good as seeing.<sup>20</sup>

This statement is justified by the suggestion that, as the collator of oral testimonies, Guibert could provide a more accurate picture of the campaign as a whole than those who witnessed it personally. Participants of the campaign, in Guibert's view, could not have 'seen everything that happened everywhere in the city', and could, therefore, only offer a single perspective of multi-dimensional event.<sup>21</sup> This line of argument minimises the importance of single eyewitnesses in the construction of the *Dei gesta* and highlights Guibert's self-proclaimed role as an 'interpreter' (*interpres*) of the history of the First Crusade.<sup>22</sup> This was a role of less significance than that of the divine author of the

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<sup>18</sup> GN, p. 166, l. 5 (trans. by Levine, p. 73): 'si quidem ea quae scripsi vel scripsero a viris Veritatis testimonio [...]'.

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Lapina, *Warfare and the Miraculous in the Chronicles of the First Crusade* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015), p. 31.

<sup>20</sup> GN, p. 166 (trans. by Levine, p. 73): 'si michi plane id obicitur quia non viderim, id obici non potest quod non audierim, cum visui auditum quodammodo supparem profecto crediderim.'

<sup>21</sup> GN, p. 200 (trans. by Levine, p. 90): 'Quae facta sunt in Antiochena obsidione nemini reatu possibilia existimamus, quia inter eos qui ibidem interfuerunt nullus profecto potuit reperiri qui *cuncta*, quae circa eandem urbem agi potuerunt, valisset pervidere vel ita comprehendere ad integrum, sicut se habet ordo gestae rei.'

<sup>22</sup> GN, p. 131 (trans. by Levine, p. 53): 'esse videor interpres Historiam [...]'. See also, Lapina, *Warfare*, p. 4.

campaign, but one that was instrumental in accepting and rejecting eyewitness testimony while also explaining its meaning within the context of providential history.

Thus, by acknowledging his role as an interpreter of history, Guibert emphasised his own authority to write on the subject of the First Crusade. As a man educated in the classics and theology, Guibert felt qualified to reinterpret the *GF*-narrative, presenting the events of the First Crusade within the more theological context of providential history and in a style commensurate to the sacred significance of the campaign. As we shall see in the remainder of this chapter, the authority to interpret and call into question specific details of the First Crusade provided in eyewitness testimonies is clearly exercised in Guibert's treatment of crusader hunger and cannibalism.

### Expressions of Hunger in the Sieges and Battle of Antioch

Guibert's interpretation of the experience of crusader hunger captured in first-hand accounts of the First Crusade is very similar to Robert the Monk's and Baldric of Bourgueil's. This is not necessarily surprising given that all three authors were Benedictine monks, trained in biblical exegesis, and writing in France within a decade of the campaign's conclusion. It is, however, worth highlighting a few examples in which Guibert's expressions of hunger overlap with and diverge from the representations of food and eating used in Robert's and Baldric's accounts of the campaign. For the sake of comparison, this section will focus on Guibert's interpretation of crusader hunger during the sieges and battle of Antioch from 20 October 1097 to 28 June 1098.

### Hunger, suffering, and endurance

On 20 October 1097, the crusaders laid siege to Antioch. According to Guibert, in the beginning, the crusaders had access to an abundance of life-sustaining provisions in and around the city including grapes, wheat, and apples. But, as the siege continued, these supplies were gradually exhausted. Guibert claims that by Christmastime in the winter of

1097 'the grain and other food for the body began to diminish severely, and throughout the army everything that was for sale was expensive'.<sup>23</sup> In eleven stanzas of sapphics, a verse form of four lines, Guibert describes the levels of hunger experienced by the crusaders at Antioch in the winter of 1097:

Great torture had come upon them; lack of food was crushing them; the madness of hunger laid low the highest by exhausting their strength. Bread was far off, and they had neither meat of cattle nor of pig; the hands of the indigent had torn up the grass far and wide. Whatever food they had finally disappeared. Their limbs were weak, and they had lost heart. The skin of those who had nothing to eat was stretched with dreadful swelling. Without nourishment their strength ebbed, and they died. A brief torment delivered to those who were killed in battle, but those who were hungry were tortured at length; therefore protracted death brought them a greater reward [...] Hideous hunger gnawed their weak hearts, and their dried-up stomachs cracked open; suffering racked their bowels, and destroyed their thinking.<sup>24</sup>

These verses, which were likely intended to show off Guibert's own literary ability, highlight the dearth experienced by the crusaders during the first siege of Antioch. Guibert specifically notes the lack of bread and meat and draws attention to the fact that the crusaders had torn up any vegetation they could find, presumably to consume. Indeed, Guibert's verse is preceded by an acknowledgment of the price of grain which had become so expensive that 'an ass-load [...] brought eight besants'.<sup>25</sup> These indicators of dearth reflect the other descriptions of the Antiochene famine found both in first-hand accounts of the campaign and in Robert's and Baldric's texts: all authors underscore the fact that during

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<sup>23</sup> GN, p. 172 (trans. by Levine, p. 76): 'Appropinquabat Natale dominicum, et frumentum ceteraque corporum alimenta ceperant vehementer imminui et caro constiterat in toto exercitu omnia vendi.'

<sup>24</sup> GN, pp. 177–178 (trans. by Levine, p. 78): 'Torserat grandis cruciatus illos, victus artabat tenuis, supremos viribus fuis rabies famei reddidit imos./ Copiae panum fuerant remotae, non boum carnes nec erant suillae, vulserat passim manus indigentum gramina quaeque./ Quicquid escarum poterat fuisse suppetit tandem reperire nulli. Solverant artus, tolerant et ausum, pectora laxi,/ Tenditur dirum cutis in tumorem qui cibi nullum tenuere morem. Esca defecit, periit facultas: dant ea mortem./ Solvit occisos brevis angor omnes, at fame tactos agitant dolores, unde protractae meliora gestant premia mortes [...] Hinc fames atrox cor inane carpit, aridus dudum stomachus fatiscit, viscerum strages, cerebri ruinas passio fecit, [...]'

<sup>25</sup> GN, p. 176 (trans. by Levine, p. 78): 'ut asini unius ex frumento sarcina octo eorum bizanteorum precio distraheretur [...] qui centum viginti nummorum solidis estimabantur.'



the winter of 1097 the crusaders had exhausted all of their provisions and whatever foodstuff was available for sale was unaffordable.

In these verses, Guibert also emphasises the physical effect hunger had on the crusaders' bodies. Starvation caused the crusaders' bellies to swell, it exhausted them, and it destroyed their ability to think with clarity. Such suffering not only distorted the appearance of the crusaders, but also prevented them from being an effective military force. Guibert goes on to claim that the suffering caused by extreme hunger at Antioch was so intense that a quick death in battle was preferable to prolonged starvation. This is not the only time in his account of the siege of Antioch that Guibert compares the deaths of those who succumbed to starvation and those who perished on the battlefield. Later, Guibert makes a concerted effort to explain why those who starved during the campaign, were just as deserving of martyrdom as those who died in combat:

It is undoubtedly true that those who went to their death in defence of the true faith certainly may be numbered among those who are with God; having paid with their blood, they have earned celestial rewards. Those who died of starvation are certainly their equals, and a great number died there in that way. For if, according to the Prophet, speaking historically, "it was better for those killed by the sword than for those killed by hunger" [Lamentations 4. 9], since the latter undoubtedly were tortured to death by daily pain, they will not, it is right to believe, be deprived of the more noble crown of martyrdom.<sup>26</sup>

The idea that a Christian who died in battle against an unbeliever would receive heavenly rewards was a well-established notion in Western thought before the First Crusade.<sup>27</sup>

Rodulfus Glaber, for example, an eleventh-century Benedictine monk, writes of a certain French monk, Wulferius, who had seen in a vision a church full of men dressed in martyrs'

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<sup>26</sup> GN, pp. 152–153 (trans. by Levine, p. 65) : 'De quibus indubie sententia proferetur quod qui mortis exitio sese pro fidei obiecere iusticia, inter eos profecto apud deum censeantur qui, sanguine in precium dato, premia meruere celestia. Nec eos illis impares dixerim, qui famis occubere miseria: hoc enim ibi modo periit multitudo perplurima. Si namque iuxta prophetam, quod historialiter dicere liceat, *melius fuit occisis gladio quam interfectis fame*, qui proculdubio cruciate diuturniore sunt moriendo torti non erunt, ut credi fas est, absque corona nobiliore martirii.'

<sup>27</sup> For a brief overview of the evolution of the language of martyrdom in tenth- and eleventh-century narratives, see Colin Morris, 'Martyrs on the Field of Battle Before and During the First Crusade', *Studies in Church History*, 30 (1993), 93–104.

white robes and purple stoles. These men explained to Wulferius that they were Spanish monks who had died fighting the Moors, confirming that, in Rodulfus' view, Christians who perished in defence of Christianity could be counted as martyrs.<sup>28</sup> In the *Dei gesta*, however, Guibert uses a reference to Lamentations 4. 9 to reiterate the suggestion made in the sapphic verses above, that those who starved during the First Crusade would be revered just as highly as those killed in combat, if not more so, because starving crusaders had endured prolonged suffering.<sup>29</sup> According to Guibert, both forms of crusader death were praiseworthy because both involved suffering in the service of Christ. That those who died of starvation on crusade could also achieve martyrdom is significant because it underscores the importance of suffering – rather than the manner of death – in the attainment of heavenly rewards.

Moreover, like Robert and Baldric, Guibert presents the crusaders' prolonged suffering from starvation as an opportunity for the crusading force to demonstrate their endurance and dedication to implementing the divine will. Indeed, of the second-generation chroniclers of the campaign, Guibert most implicitly emphasises the devotional importance of suffering. He refers to the siege of Antioch as a 'pious siege' (*piae obsidionis*) and an act of 'holy suffering' (*sanctae passionis*) and claims that the diseases brought about by the Antiochene famine 'refreshed the vigour of the soul' (*mentis reparent vigores*).<sup>30</sup> Guibert further suggests that during the famine:

[The crusaders] were driven by hope for something better to rely on God alone, the only true support in such tribulation. Under these circumstances they learned increasingly that the more they watched their supplies

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<sup>28</sup> Rodulfus Glaber, *The Five Books of the Histories*, ed. and trans. by John France (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 83–85.

<sup>29</sup> In the notes of his translation, Levine incorrectly identifies this passage as Lamentations 2. 9.

<sup>30</sup> GN, pp. 178, 180. See also Andrew Buck's analysis of Guibert's treatment of crusader suffering in Antioch: Andrew Buck, 'Weighed by Such a Great Calamity, they were Cleansed for their Sins', *Journal of Religious History, Literature and Culture*, 5.2 (2019), 1–16 (pp. 7–9).

diminish and their strength ebb away, the more they were taught to submit with appropriate humility to God [...]<sup>31</sup>

In this way, Guibert frames suffering as part of the penitential process of the crusade and presents it as an indicator of the crusaders' devotion and willingness to submit themselves to God. For this reason, Guibert's acknowledgement of the crusading force's hunger at the siege of Antioch not only highlights their protracted suffering, but also illuminates the crusaders' spiritual progress towards the remission of their sins and, in the extreme, their possible ascension to martyrdom.

It is also significant that Guibert chose to reference Lamentations in his discussion of crusader suffering and martyrdom. The Book of Lamentations was written soon after the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 587 BCE and details the great suffering endured by the city's inhabitants in its aftermath. In this book, the destruction of Jerusalem is presented as a divine punishment for the sins of God's chosen people. Chapter 4 of the Book of Lamentations, which was quoted in the *Dei gesta*, is an acrostic poem, the verses of which begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Lamentations 4 claims that as a result of widespread famine in Jerusalem, the ancient Jews' skin grew taut from hunger (verse 8), they wasted away (verse 9) and even resorted to eating their own children (verse 10).<sup>32</sup> The end of the chapter also recognises that the end of the ancient Jews' suffering was conditional on the people's repentance and supplication before God. By referencing Lamentations, Guibert underscores the similarities between the suffering of God's chosen people in the Old Testament and the crusaders' experience at Antioch. But whereas the ancient Jews' suffering was a form of divine punishment, Guibert recognises that the crusaders' suffered willingly on their penitential journey to Jerusalem, demonstrating their

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<sup>31</sup> GN, p. 182 (trans. by Levine, p. 80): 'ad dei solius subsidium, sub tanta miseria unice prestolandum, spei instinctu melioris appulsos. Fiebant plane his iam eruditiores eventibus, ut quo magis suas attenderent aut copias extenuari aut fortitudines enervari, eo amplius ad deum [...] docerentur debita humilitate subici.'

<sup>32</sup> Lamentations 4. 1–9.

worthiness and faith in divine compassion. This distinction, according to Guibert, made the crusaders' more worthy of praise than the ancient Jews.<sup>33</sup>

Much like Robert the Monk's treatment of crusader hunger, the crusaders' perseverance and faith during the famine at Antioch fits into a wider narrative cycle of scarcity and abundance in the *Dei gesta*. Guibert suggests that the crusaders at Antioch were rewarded with divine assistance in military scenarios and were provided an abundance of supplies for repenting their sins and placing their trust entirely in God. Indeed, in Guibert's account of the second siege of Antioch from 3–28 June 1098, we see a cycle from scarcity to abundance. First, Guibert highlights that, while they were besieged inside the city of Antioch by Kerbogha's forces, the crusading army 'was in dire straits, suffering on the one hand, from extreme hunger, and, on the other hand, tormented by fear of the pagans who surrounded them'.<sup>34</sup> To illustrate this, Guibert provides a standardised list of the prices of food seen elsewhere in first-hand and second-generation accounts of the campaign. He recalls that the crusaders had no wine nor meat to eat: 'A chicken sold for fifteen sous, an egg for two sous, and a nut for a penny' and the crusaders were forced to eat a 'mixture of figs, thistles, and grape leaves' as substitutes for vegetables.<sup>35</sup> This breakdown of the cost of supplies, predominantly taken from the *GF*-

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<sup>33</sup> For a detailed analysis of second-generation crusade chroniclers' allusions to the ancient Jews see: Elizabeth Lapina, 'Anti-Jewish Rhetoric in Guibert of Nogent's *Dei gesta per Francos*', *Journal of Medieval History*, 35 (2009), 239-253; Penny J. Cole, *The Preaching of the Crusades to the Holy Land, 1095-1270* (Cambridge: The Medieval Academy of America, 1991), pp. 31–32; Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), pp. 30–31 and 86; and, Lapina, *Warfare*, pp. 101–121.

<sup>34</sup> GN, p. 236 (trans. by Levine, p. 108): 'Exercitus itaque in arto admodum fuerat constitutes, dum istinc crudely vexaretur inedia, illinc dira gentilium, qui se prorsus ambierant, formidine roderetur.

<sup>35</sup> GN, p. 226 (trans. by Levine, p. 103): 'De vini potione tacendum, quod ab omnium generaliter ore perierat, et plane malum biberet cui nichil suppetebat ut ederet. Iam deficiente legitimi victus obsonio equinae carnis vix quisquam reverebatur edulium contristabatque plurimos frequentibus quesita macellis et carius empta paucitas asinorum, pullus quindecim solidis vendebatur et duobus ovum nuxque denario [...] Ficorum, carduorum ac vitium frondes in pulmenta transierant iamque in arboribus fructus queri cessaverat, olerum vices quorumlibet foliorum concoctae diversitates agebant.' Compare: *GF*, p. 62; and, *BB*, p. 73.

narrative but embellished by Guibert, functions to highlight the situation of dearth experienced by the crusaders after they had initially breached the walls of Antioch in June 1098.

Guibert notes that the crusaders endured this suffering for three weeks, until the 28 June 1098 when they were forced to relinquish their defensive position and engage in battle with Kerbogha's forces. Crucially, Guibert claims that in the lead up to this battle, the crusaders fasted, confessed their sins, and prayed to God, 'placing their faith in divine assistance'. Only after they had performed these suppliant litanies, 'having derived comfort from these activities', did the crusaders prepare to fight.<sup>36</sup> The crusaders divided into six regiments and advanced on Kerbogha's forces. Guibert describes the crusading force as 'desiccated with famine' as they approached the battle.<sup>37</sup> Their numbers were so depleted by the famine that Guibert claims Kerbogha 'laughed at the small size of the group', believing his victory would be swift.<sup>38</sup> This was not the case, however. Guibert suggests that the crusaders demonstrated such ferocious courage in the battle, despite their physical weakness, that Christ sent them divine assistance in the form of a celestial army led by Saints George, Mercurius, and Demetrius.<sup>39</sup> The *GF* similarly recalls the appearance of saints on the battlefield at Antioch, but while the *GF*-author acknowledges that George, Mercurius, and Demetrius were sent by Christ, he does not recognise that this divine help was inspired by the crusaders' courage in battle.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> GN, p. 236 (trans. by Levine, p. 108–109): 'Denique, sumpta iam ex his securitate, de bello proponitur ac intra civitatem sena ilico acies ordinatur.'

<sup>37</sup> GN, p. 238 (trans. by Levine, p. 109): 'fame diutina fatiscentibus quorumque corpusculis'.

<sup>38</sup> GN, p. 238 (trans. by Levine, pp. 109–110): 'Intrea Curbaran conspicit exeuntes et dum alterum alteri succedere lentis attendit egressibus, eorum paucitate, quam putabat, irrita "Sinite", ait, "egredientes progredi, ut magis valeant, cum fugerint, a regressu civitatis excludi".'

<sup>39</sup> GN, p. 240 (trans. by Levine, p. 110). For the same episode in Robert the Monk and Baldric of Bourgueil see: RM, pp. 76–77; and, BB, p. 81.

<sup>40</sup> *GF*, p. 69: 'Exibant quoque de montaneis innumerabiles exercitus, habentes equos albos, quorum vexilla omnia errant alba. Videntes itque nostri hunc exercitum, ignorabant penitus quid hoc esset et qui essent; donec cognouerunt esse adiutorium Christi, cuius ductores fuerunt sancti, Georgius, Mercurius et Demetrius. Hec uerba credenda sunt, quia plures ex nostris uiderunt.'

As Kerbogha's forces threatened to outflank the stretched crusader regiments, Guibert claims this divine relief force, riding white horses and brandishing glowing standards, descended from the nearby mountains and turned the tide of the battle in the crusaders' favour.<sup>41</sup> According to Guibert, the crusaders won a miraculous victory and returned to Antioch 'joyfully shouting praises to Christ for his help, [entering] the city with the honour of heavenly victory'.<sup>42</sup> In this series of events the crusaders' humble submission to God and their brave perseverance in battle inspires divine intervention that secures the crusading force's triumph against apparently insurmountable odds.

Guibert completes his narrative cycle by highlighting the abundance of provisions the crusaders were able to acquire from the Turkish camp in the aftermath of the battle:

The objects of God's sudden compassion [...] were relieved of the pain of daily hunger; where an egg might have cost two sous, one might now come away with a whole cow for less than twelve cents. To sum up briefly, where hunger had raged like disease, there was now so much meat and other food that great abundance seemed everywhere to pour in a sudden eruption from the earth, and God seems to open the cataracts of heaven. There were so many [Turkish] tents that, after all of our people had plundered one, they were so wealthy and sated with the weight of their booty, that almost no one wanted to take any more.<sup>43</sup>

Here, Guibert credits the victory at Antioch to divine intervention. In this case, God's mercy and compassion facilitated the crusaders' capture of Antioch which, in turn, enabled the crusading force to access life sustaining supplies. The abundance of provisions gathered from the Turkish camp relieved the crusaders of the hunger they had suffered throughout

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<sup>41</sup> For more on the miraculous intervention of saints on the battlefield at Antioch, see Beth C. Spacey, *The Miraculous and the Writing of Crusade Narrative* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020); and Lapina, *Warfare*, pp. 37–96.

<sup>42</sup> GN, p. 241 (trans. by Levine, p. 111): '[...] redeuntes et immense cordis iubilo incomprehensibilia preconia rependentes suo cooperatori Christo, cum triumphis celestis honore civitatem introeunt.'

<sup>43</sup> GN, pp. 242–243 (trans. by Levine, p. 112): 'Repentina ergo dei miseratione respecti diuturnae famis calamitatem celeri felicitate mutarunt, ut ubi duobus pridem solidis ovum vendebatur bos vix denariis duodecim distraheretur, et, ut brevi omnia fine claudam, ubi inediae rabies incesserat, ibi tanta pecuniarum omniumque victualium ubertas accessit, ut subita emersione passim exoriri videretur omnis plenitudo rei et aperuisse putaretur dominus cataractas caeli. Tanta tentoriorum numerositas extitit, ut cum quique nostrorum tabernacula diripuissent, ditatis omnibus iamque predarum sarcinas fastidientibus vix invenirentur qui raperent [...].'

both sieges of the city in 1098. Guibert illustrates this point by recalling to the audience's attention how much an egg cost prior to the battle. By reminding the audience of the crusaders' previous experience of scarcity, Guibert highlights their newfound abundance in stark relief. Furthermore, Guibert's reference to 'the cataracts of heaven' in this episode draws on Malachi 3. 10, a verse from the Old Testament which claims faithful Christians will be blessed by God to such an extent that there will be nowhere to store the bounty.<sup>44</sup> Guibert makes literal Malachi's reference to spiritual blessings by suggesting that the crusaders were blessed with military victory and an abundance of supplies because they had placed their faith entirely in the divine before entering into battle. The invocation of such reward in the aftermath of military victory achieved through divine intervention is significant as it presents physical satiety as an indicator of success and divine support.

Thus, in this example from the second siege and battle of Antioch in June 1098, we see a narrative cycle in which faith and submission to God, in conjunction with an endurance of suffering and courage in battle, is rewarded with divine assistance in military scenarios and an abundance of provisions. The causal relationship between crusader hunger, suffering, submission, and reward is redolent of Robert the Monk's scarcity to abundance cycles examined in Chapter Two. The similarities between these two narrative cycles demonstrates that these Benedictine monks had reached similar conclusions regarding the importance of crusader hunger in attracting divine compassion.

### Bloodthirstiness Metaphors

Another interesting aspect of the crusaders' victory at Antioch is the suggestion that nothing could distract the crusaders from pursuing the Turks as they retreated. Guibert claims not even 'a desire for the spoils lying about' could deter the crusaders from their mission because they would rather 'feed [*pascere*] on the blood [*cruore*] of Christ's

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<sup>44</sup> Malachi 3. 10.

enemies' than stop for material provisions.<sup>45</sup> In this phrase Guibert implies that blood drawn in combat could provide some sort of metaphorical satiety. Another example that conflates consumption with bloodshed can be found in Guibert's treatment of the crusaders' victory over the relief force of Ridwan of Aleppo during the first siege of Antioch in February 1097. Much like Guibert's account of the battle of Antioch, the abundance of supplies gathered by the crusaders from the defeated Turkish army is presented as indicator of success and divine support, but in this case, it is also suggested that the crusaders desired bloodshed over any other material supply. In the aftermath of the battle, Guibert claims:

The painful indigence of our men was somewhat alleviated with what was taken from the conquered enemy; horses and money provided relief, and even more so, our growing triumphs vitiated the Turkish reputation for fierceness. [...] This triumph occurred on the fifth day before the Ides of February, the day before the beginning of the fast. It was right on the day before the Christians were to fast they grew fat on what they most desired, the blood of their evil enemies. The Franks, in their fervent victory celebrations, thanked God for granting them so many of their prayers, and went back to their camp loaded with booty.<sup>46</sup>

Again, it is noted that the crusaders attributed their victory over Ridwan to God and that the resources acquired in the aftermath of military success delivered them from starvation. According to Guibert, the Christians were also satisfied with the fact that their victory had undermined the Turks' fearsome military reputation. However, in this account, the impoverished and starving state of the crusading force was only somewhat alleviated by the provisions they took from the enemy. What truly satiated the crusaders in this episode, if we read *caedis* (slaughter or bloodshed) literally, was 'the blood of their evil enemies'

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<sup>45</sup> GN, p. 241: 'Quos tamen nostri irremissa instantia per castrorum suorum medium prosequuntur, nec spoliolum hinc inde iacentium cupidine raptabantur, Christi inimicorum solo pasci cruore malentes.'

<sup>46</sup>GN, pp. 189–190 (trans. by Levine, p. 84): 'Igitur ex his quae hostibus detracta sunt victis crudelis nostrorum indigentia illa convaluit, equis et sumptibus sublevatur, ab ipsis insuper, eventu triumphorum credrescente secundo, Turcorum feritas contempnitur [...] Dies autem triumphus huius quinto Februarii Idus, pridie ante Ieiunii caput; nec id iniuria, ut qua die ante ipsa Ieiunia debentur Christianis epulae, ea, quam potissimum affectabant, hostium iniquorum saginarentur cede. Franci igitur, victoriae tantae fervente tripudio, votorum multitudine deo cooperatori gratulantes non sine plurimo fructu ad castra recedunt [...]'



(*hostium iniquorum cede*).<sup>47</sup> Here, Guibert equates physical satiation with the military destruction of an enemy by suggesting that the crusaders ‘grew fat’ (*saginarentur*) on the massacre of Ridwan’s forces. This cannibalistic image is unique to Guibert’s account of the First Crusade.

Metaphors conveying bloodthirstiness are relatively common in the *Dei gesta*. Indeed, as part of fourteen dactylic hexameters on the battle against Ridwan, Guibert states that the crusaders’ sword hands were ‘thirsting for the filthy blood’ of their enemies.<sup>48</sup> This conjures an image of sanctioned savagery that conflates the physical need associated with ‘thirst’ with a desire to action and displaces this desire onto the crusaders’ ‘swift right hand[s]’. This is not dissimilar to Baldric of Bourgueil’s suggestion that the crusaders ‘hungered’ for their arrival in Jerusalem:<sup>49</sup> both authors use the experience of hunger or thirst to convey a desire for an action or outcome. The bloodthirstiness of the crusaders in the battle against Ridwan is narratively resolved, therefore, in Guibert’s depiction of their victory celebrations where the crusaders are able to ‘grow fat’ on what they most desired, the blood of their enemies spilt in combat. Crucially, this type of satiation is presented within the context of divinely-granted military success and abundance. Acknowledging that ‘feeding’ on blood was a part of a divine reward for perseverance and courage ratifies bloodshed and violence as good Christian behaviour. In this way, the suggestion that the crusaders grew fat on their enemy’s blood, their greatest desire even in the context of extreme deprivation, acts simultaneously to highlight the crusaders’ military prowess, symbolize the alleviation of the crusaders’ impoverished state, and align their actions with the divine will.

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<sup>47</sup> For literal blood drinking in Guibert’s chronicle see GN, p. 125: ‘Ibi fuit tanta sitis ariditas, ut flebotomo equis suis asinisque illato animalium cogarentur haurire cruorem.’

<sup>48</sup> GN, p. 187 (trans. by Levine, p. 83): ‘[...] molitur vulnera ferro quae sitit obscenum rapidissima dextra cruorem.’

<sup>49</sup> BB, p. 103.

A metaphorical hunger for bloodshed is also presented in Guibert's description of the Christian women of Antioch in Book Four of the *Dei gesta*. After a devastating loss to Turkish forces at the Gate of Saint Simeon in the early days of March 1098, Bohemond returned to Antioch and reengaged in battle with the Turkish forces, forcing the enemy to flee to the Pharpar river.<sup>50</sup> It is noted that the 'signs of carnage were so great that the Pharpar seemed to flow with blood, not with water' and that 'the sounds made by the vanquished and the victors [...] were so terrible that the highest vault of heavens seemed to resound with their shrieks'.<sup>51</sup> The visual and auditory senses invoked here highlight the carnage of combat. This scene appears in greater detail in the *Chanson d'Antioche* and will be explored in depth in Chapter Four. What is important for our purposes is the fact that Guibert uses a metaphor of consumption to describe the women's interaction with the scene. Guibert states:

The women of the city who were Christian stood on the ramparts of the wall, feeding [*pascebantur*] upon the sight; as they watched the Turks perish and submit to calamity they groaned openly, but then turned their faces away and secretly applauded the fortunate course events had taken for the Franks.<sup>52</sup>

The use of *pascere* (to feed or graze) to describe how the women viewed the battle unfold before them evokes the same bloodthirstiness attributed to Christian crusaders in combat scenarios seen previously. Indeed, *pascere* is the same verb used by Guibert to suggest that the crusaders preferred to feed on the blood of their enemies during the battle of Antioch than sate their extreme hunger with the spoils of war. The metaphor of consumption attached to the women of Antioch works outside the immediate context of extreme food

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<sup>50</sup> GN, p.191, l. 681–86 (trans. by Levine, p. 85).

<sup>51</sup> GN, p. 192 (trans. by Levine, p. 86): 'Tanta autem huius reddibitio cedis extitisse dinoscitur, ut Pharparis unda potius cruoris quam laticis putaretur [...] Tantis ibidem victi victoresque concrepuere clamoribus, tanta pereuntium et perire cogentium tamque terribilis vocalitas ferebatur, ut pulsar strepitibus celorum supremitas crederetur [...]'.

<sup>52</sup> GN, p. 192 (trans. by Levine, p. 86): 'Mulieres urbis indigenae, christianae quidem, circa muri propugnacula spectaculo huiusmodi pascebantur et dum Turcos perimi totque erumnis addici conspiciunt, a facie ingemunt, sed aversis vultibus Francorum prosperis eventibus latenter applaudunt.'

deprivation, however, as Guibert gives no indication as to their physical hunger. The women take inward pleasure in the sight of the Turks' mutilated bodies and the blood-filled river: the sight of carnage sustains the women in that it satisfies an internal desire to see the Turkish force destroyed, narratively expressed as a 'hunger' for bloodshed. In a text where an endurance of hunger is used to illuminate the devotion of those involved in the campaign, and the alleviation of hunger is presented as an indication of divine favour, the suggestion that the Christian women of Antioch fed on the sight of carnage inflicted by the crusaders further conflates expressions of 'hunger' with a desire for action against non-Christians in the Holy Land.

An exploration of the representations of hunger and invocations of bloodthirstiness in the *Dei gesta* has demonstrated that Guibert interpreted crusader hunger in a very similar way to his Benedictine contemporaries Robert the Monk and Baldric of Bourgueil. Guibert presents hunger as a salvific exercise of endurance that brings the crusaders closer to God and claims that the alleviation of starvation was ultimately brought about by divine compassion. This is reminiscent of the narrative cycles of scarcity and abundance that Robert the Monk employs in his *Historia* and allows Guibert to present abundance as an indicator of success and divine support within framework of providential history.

Guibert's use of alimentary metaphors is considerably more gruesome than Robert's and Baldric's, however. Whereas Robert and Baldric describe violence against the Turks in terms of the relationship between humans and animals, Guibert presents a desire for bloodshed as a metaphoric hunger and thirst. This conflates basic human needs with a desire for action against the enemy in a way that creates cannibalistic images unique to Guibert's chronicle. Crucially, Guibert uses these metaphors of consumption to ratify bloodshed as good, and even desirable, Christian behaviour, ultimately aligning crusader violence with the divine will.

While Guibert's interpretation of crusader hunger significantly overlaps the representations of food, eating, and consumption depicted in Robert the Monk's and

Baldric of Bourgueil's narratives, his treatment of anthropophagy at Ma'arra differs substantially. This is where our investigation turns next.

### Survival Cannibalism in the *Dei gesta*

Among the second-generation chroniclers of the First Crusade, Guibert alone mentions two counts of crusader exocannibalism in his account of the campaign. The first episode of anthropophagy described by Guibert is very similar to the *GF*'s. According to Book Six of the *Dei gesta*, in late November 1098 Raymond IV, Count of Toulouse, arrived in Ma'arra and besieged the city. In the month that followed the crusaders suffered greatly from a lack of provisions:

Some of our men, entirely without resources, finding nothing in nearby areas to satisfy their needs, desecrated the bellies of dead Saracens, daring to probe their internal organs, because they had heard that pagans in serious danger would try to preserve their gold and silver by eating them. Others, they say, cut pieces of flesh from the corpses, cooked them and ate them, but this was done rarely and in secret, so that no one could be sure whether they actually did this.<sup>53</sup>

The structure of this passage is taken directly from Guibert's primary source material. One important distinction between the *GF*-author's and Guibert's depiction of this scene is the verb chosen to denote consumption. Whereas the *GF* uses the verb *manducare* to describe the eating of human flesh, which has connotations of chewing and gnawing, Guibert uses *comedere* like Robert the Monk. This has less visceral implications and translates as 'to consume, devour, or eat up/away'.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> GN, p. 254 (trans. by Levine, p. 117): 'Ibi quidam ex nostris, dum aliquibus, immo omnibus necessariis indigent, nullis quae direptioni suae forent apta adiacentibus, mortuorum Sarracenorum ventribus temeratis ausi sunt ipsorum intestina rimari, quia audierant aurum argentumque ab eis in arto positum ob custodiam solere glutiri; alii, carni frusta cedentes ex ipsis, coxisse et comedisse feruntur: quod tamen tam rarum adeoque latens extiterit, ut omnibus utrum idem fieri ullo modo potuisset pene dubium sit.'

<sup>54</sup> *GF*, p. 80: '[...]sed scindebant corpora mortuorum, eo quod in uentribus eorum inueniebant bisanteos reconditos; alii uero caedebant carnes eorum per frusta, et coquebant ad manducandum'; and, *RM*, p. 88: 'Sicque famis iniuria compellente, contigit, quod etiam dictu horribile est, quia corpora gentilium in frusta scindebant et coquebant et comedebant.'

Another difference between the *GF's* account of anthropophagy and the *Dei gesta's* is that Guibert seems hesitant to confirm whether the allegations of crusader cannibalism are true. Before relaying his account of anthropophagy, Guibert uses the preposition 'they say' (*feruntur*) to distance his interpretation of the events from that of his source material. Baldric of Bourgueil makes a similar reference to those that reported the anthropophagy, but whereas Baldric claims to have ascertained that these reports of cannibalism were true, Guibert questions them.<sup>55</sup> Indeed, Guibert somewhat rejects the accusations of cannibalism levelled at crusaders by suggesting that acts of anthropophagy happened so rarely and in secret during the campaign that it is doubtful that they ever occurred. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, Baldric similarly describes crusader cannibalism as a secretive act, but this makes the crusaders' 'wicked feast' of human flesh appear premeditated and requires further explanation from Baldric to ensure his audience understands that the anthropophagy was borne of desperation. In contrast, the suggestion in the *Dei gesta* that cannibalism at Ma'arra was committed in secret is beneficial to Guibert as it allows him to present these allegations as hearsay.

Furthermore, it is significant that Guibert's first depiction of cannibalism is prefaced with acts of bodily desecration in which the crusaders cut open the bodies of dead Muslims in search for gold. The same episode is acknowledged in the first-hand accounts of the campaign and appears to have stemmed from classical precedents such as Josephus' *The Wars of the Jews*. Guibert uses this motif no fewer than three times in the *Dei gesta*. In Book Seven, for example, in a section dealing with the aftermath of the battle for Caesarea in 1099, Guibert notes:

Treasure was sought everywhere; [the crusaders] cut open not only chests, but the throats of the silent Saracens. When they were struck by a fist, their jaws yielded the besants that had been poured into them. They found

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<sup>55</sup> BB, p. 93.

pieces of gold in the wombs of the women who had used these areas for purposes other than the ones for which they were intended.<sup>56</sup>

It is not made clear in the context surrounding this episode what motivated the crusading force to mutilate the bodies of Muslims in search for gold, other than the crusaders' greed for material gain. A similar scene is used in Guibert's account of Pope Urban II's call for crusade. As a means of rallying support for Christians in the East, Urban II claims pagans in the Holy Land, suspecting pilgrims of swallowing gold, would 'cut their bellies open with swords, opening their inner organs, revealing with a hideous slashing whatever nature holds secret'.<sup>57</sup> While elsewhere in the text a desire for spoils of war is depicted as the crusaders' right in the aftermath of military successes – indeed it is often presented as a sign of divine favour – these two examples are presented by Guibert as episodes of social deviance. The dynamic between a greed for treasure and the debasement of the human form outside the context of active combat is a transgression seemingly incompatible with the crusaders' divinely ordained mission to liberate the Holy Land. This notion is highlighted by presenting the crusaders' actions in Caesarea as a reflection of the very pagan activity the campaign aimed to suppress.

In Guibert's depiction of the desecration of Turkish bodies at Ma'arra, however, it is made clear that the crusaders' actions were driven by a lack of provisions. These crusaders only 'dared' (*ausi*) – which itself suggests an element of hesitancy – to search for gold inside the bodies of dead Muslims because they were without the means to attain any other resources. Whereas the pagans referred to by Urban II and the Christians at Caesarea acted out of greed for fiscal reward, the crusaders in Ma'arra acted out of desperation. In the context of severe hunger and dearth, the debasement of a non-Christian body in the search

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<sup>56</sup> GN, p. 347 (trans. by Levine, pp. 163–164): 'Passim gaza discutitur et non modo archa, verum Sarraceni tace tis gula discutitur: fauces enim quae glutierant bizantea, pugno subcutiente, reiciunt et, quae officia eis locis indebita usurparant, auri frustra feminarum puerperia fundunt.'

<sup>57</sup> GN, p. 116 (trans. by Levine, p. 45): '[...] quod dici nefas est, discissis ventribus intestinorum quorumque involucra distendentes quicquid habet natura secreti horribili concisione aperiunt.'

for gold is presented as an act of survival. The reference to (alleged) cannibalism that follows these acts is presented as a natural progression in the desecration of Muslim bodies similarly inspired by deprivation, desperation, and a desire to survive.

Significantly, framing crusader survival cannibalism at Ma'arra as another form of bodily desecration draws attention to *who* the Christians were eating. The corpses that the crusaders allegedly cut, cooked, and ate in this episode are presented as the same Muslim bodies probed in the search for gold. Most accounts of the First Crusade imply that Christian crusaders involved in acts of survival cannibalism – whether this be before, during, or after the siege of Ma'arra, secretive or otherwise – only ate the flesh of dead Muslims.<sup>58</sup> The fact that Guibert specifies that the crusaders only ate non-Christians is particularly interesting considering, as Jay Rubenstein points out, there were presumably the corpses of dead Franks and Christian Armenians and Syrians also in the vicinity.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, we are told in the *Dei gesta* that in the aftermath of the siege and battle at Ma'arra bodies of both Christians and Muslims littered the streets making them impassable.<sup>60</sup> The suggestion that the crusading force ate only non-Christians, therefore, inscribes a meaning on acts of cannibalism beyond a need to survive.<sup>61</sup>

Indeed, the language used to describe the preparation of Muslim bodies for consumption in the *Dei gesta* attaches significance to the act of butchering human flesh for consumption. In the case of crusader survival cannibalism, flesh is described as being cut or hacked (*caedere*) from corpses of dead Turks. This verb could easily be applied to animal butchery reflecting the crusaders' intent to prepare human flesh as they would any animal meat intended for consumption. Interestingly, Guibert uses other verbs to describe the

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<sup>58</sup> Jay Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', *French Historical Studies*, 31.4 (2011), 525–552 (p. 538).

<sup>59</sup> Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', p. 529.

<sup>60</sup> GN, p. 254, (trans. by Levine, p. 117).

<sup>61</sup> Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', p. 529.

action of cutting up animal carcasses for consumption elsewhere in the *Dei gesta*. After the battle of Antioch in June 1098, for example, it is noted that:

Wealthy men ate the flesh of horses, camels, donkeys, cows, and deer, but the poor prepared the dried skin of these animals, cut them into slices [*concidere*], boiled them and then ate them.<sup>62</sup>

Where *concidere* (to cut up into slices) is used to describe the preparation of animal skin for consumption in Antioch, *caedere* (to cut or hack to pieces) is used to describe the preparation of a human body. This distinction likely has to do with the size of the pieces of flesh or skin being prepared, but if we consider alternative uses for *caedere*, Guibert's decision to use this verb in a description of human flesh consumption takes on new meaning. In some instances, for example, *caedere* can be translated as 'to strike, smite, or murder' as well as maintain connotations of slaughter and sodomisation. In the context of debasing a human body, these translations would reflect the innate sense of deviance associated with acts of cannibalism. It should be noted, for example, that the verb *caedere* is also used in the *Dei gesta* to describe the physical appearance of Turkish bodies after the siege of Jerusalem in June 1099. On the arrival of Bohemond in Jerusalem, it is noted that his retinue 'found a huge number of stinking bodies, hacked to pieces [*cesorum*], so that they could not breathe without the stench penetrating their noses and mouths'.<sup>63</sup> The same verb *caedere* is used to describe the appearance of the corpses found in Jerusalem as is used to describe the preparation of human flesh for consumption. As Guibert notes that only the crusaders' non-Christian enemies were prepared for consumption, a connection can be drawn between the butchering of the human body in active combat and the butchering of the human body as a strategy for survival.

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<sup>62</sup> GN, p. 226 (trans. by Levine, p. 103): 'Equorum, camelorum, asinorum, boum bubalorumque carnes personarum oplentiorum deferebantur ad esum, sed sicca eaurundem tergora, in morem sepiarum concisa, cum diuturno igne coquerentur, elixa accuratissimam pauperioribus prebuere coquinam.' I corrected Levine's translation here as he omits '*asinorum*' from his list of animal flesh consumed by wealthy crusaders.

<sup>63</sup> GN, p. 336 (trans. by Levine, p. 158): '[...] sed ea adeo fetida recens cesorum cadaverum numerositate repperitur, ut nusquam aura nisi corruptissima narium orisve spiraculo hauriretur.'



### Staged Cannibalism in the *Dei gesta*

Crusader survival cannibalism in the *Dei gesta* is offset by a second interpretation of anthropophagy at Ma'arra in 1098. This scene breaks the chronology of Book Seven, which primarily focusses on events in Jerusalem in 1099, to direct earlier allegations of cannibalism in Ma'arra away from the main body of the crusading army and onto a group called the Tafurs.

In the *Dei gesta*, the Tafurs are described as a strange subgroup of impoverished Christian soldiers and are styled as a microcosmic reflection of the main Christian army with their own king mimicking the leaders of the campaign. For Guibert, a primary marker of the Tafurs' identity is their strange eating habits. Guibert suggests, for example, that the King of the Tafurs marched in front of the crusading army 'dirty, naked, and poor [...], feeding [*victitaret*] on the roots of herbs, and on the most wretched things that grow'.<sup>64</sup> The language used to describe these eating habits is of particular interest as Guibert's version of Urban II's speech at the Council of Clermont conjures a similar image. Urban II suggests that in the Holy Land 'poor people learned to feed (*victitare*) often on the roots of wild plants, since they were compelled by the scarcity of bread to search everywhere for some possible substitute'.<sup>65</sup> Using the verb *victitare* (to live or subsist on) as a means of expressing the consumption of food implies a severe lack of life-sustaining provisions. In the case of the masses of poor people spoken of by Urban II, this deprivation is evidenced by the scarcity of bread (*panis rarissimi*) which gives them no other choice than to survive on roots. The Tafurs are also portrayed as poor, but their eating habits are not contextualised by a period of dearth. This disassociates the King of the Tafurs' consumption of 'wretched' (*vilis*)

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<sup>64</sup> GN, p. 310 (trans. by Levine, p. 146): '[...] sed nuditate ac indigentia omnino squalidum universos prederet, radicibus herbarum et vilibus quibusque nascentiis victitaret.'

<sup>65</sup> GN, p. 118 (trans. by Levine, p. 46): 'Iam inopum greges addicerant herbarum sponte nascentium victitare radicibus, dum panis rarissimi parvitatem quesitarum undecumque escarum edulio propensiore compensant.'

vegetation from his poverty and implies that his eating habits were not dictated by a lack of resources, they were a conscious choice. Where connotations of desperation are attached to Urban II's poor people in Book Two with the verb *victitare* – they are feeding on the roots of plants to survive – without the context of deprivation, the use of *victitare* to describe the King of the Tafurs' eating habits acts to highlight the alterity of the Tafurs themselves and establishes the consumption of roots and other wretched things as a mark of their identity.

According to Guibert, the Tafurs were, however, valuable to the crusading force because 'they were better at carrying heavy burdens than the asses and mules, and they were as good at hurling projectiles as the machines and ballista'.<sup>66</sup> What is more, Guibert claims that the crusade benefited from the involvement of the Tafurs because they were willing to engage in pseudo-cannibal activity. In his second account of crusader cannibalism, Guibert notes:

[...] when pieces of flesh were found among the pagan bodies at Ma'arra, and elsewhere, during a terrible famine, a hideous rumour (based on something that had been done furtively and very rarely) circulated widely among the pagans, that there were some men in the Frankish army who eagerly fed upon [*vescerentur*] the corpses of Saracens. To circulate this rumour among them even more vividly, [the Tafurs] carried the battered corpse of a Turk out in full view of the other Turks, set it afire, and roasted it as if the flesh was going to be eaten [*mandibilem*]. When [the Turks] learned what had happened, thinking the charade was real, they grew even more afraid of the fearlessness of the Tafurs than of our other leaders.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> GN, p. 311 (trans. by Levine, p. 146): 'At vero hi in convehendis victualibus, in stipendiis contrahendis, in obsessione etiam urbium lapidibus in torquendis, dici non potest quam necessarii forent, cum in porandis oneribus asinos ac iumenta prederent, cum balistas et machinas crebris iactibus exequent.' I have altered Levine's translation of '*balistas*' from 'launchers' to 'ballista'.

<sup>67</sup> GN, p. 311 (trans. by Levine, p. 146): 'cum de paganorum corporibus frustra carniū apud Marram, et sicubi alias cum nimia fames urgeret, repperirentur adempta, quod ab his et furtim et quam rarissime factum constat, atrox apud gentiles fama percrebruit quod quidam in Francorum exercitu haberentur qui Sarracenorum carnibus avidissime vescerentur. Unde idem homines, ut potissimum apud illos haec intonisset opinio, Turci cuiusdam vecti corpus intusum ad eorum terrorem palam omnibus, ut dicitur, acsi carnem mandibilem igni apposito torruerunt. Quo illi agnito et verum penitus quod fingitur autumantes, iam magis insolentiam Tafuram quam nostrorum quodammodo principum vehementiam formidabant [...]' I have altered Levine's translation of *avidissime* from

This passage suggests the episode of survival cannibalism originally presented by Guibert in Book Six was the basis for a rumour among the Muslim forces. The rumour, as described by Guibert, is the only instance in the *Dei gesta* where the verb 'to eat' maintains connotations of enjoyment. In English, *vescor* translates 'to feed on', 'to eat', and 'to enjoy eating' if it used with the ablative. Indeed, the allegation that the crusaders 'eagerly' (*avidissime*) ate human flesh adds a sense of barbaric enjoyment to the image conjured by this rumour. A similar imagery is provided in Raymond of Aguilers' chronicle of the campaign which depicts crusaders eagerly eating corpses in public squares, a sight that disgusted other crusaders and frightened their enemies.<sup>68</sup> The adverb 'eagerly' conjures at the same time a sense of desperation and an image of enthusiastic savagery in this scene, a dynamic that starkly contrasts the tentative 'daring' of the crusaders who desecrated Muslim bodies in Guibert's first depiction of crusader cannibalism.

While these allegations were attached to an unspecified group in the Christian army, Guibert suggests it was the Tafurs who took it upon themselves to fuel the rumours of crusader cannibalism. Crucially, by qualifying that the Tafurs' actions were performative only, Guibert frames this episode of Tafur 'cannibalism' as a deception. With this caveat, Guibert shifts the focus of his interpretations of anthropophagy at Ma'arra from alleged survival cannibalism to a successfully staged cannibalism. This shift is complemented by change in the verb used to denote the consumption of human flesh. In the first episode of anthropophagy in Book Six of the *Dei gesta*, Guibert uses the verb *comedere* (to eat up). Here, Guibert uses *mandere* (to chew, chomp, masticate, gnaw) to describe the *faux*-cannibalism. This verb adds to the spectacle of the scene as it relates to both the action of eating and the manner in which something is eaten: the Turk's body was not prepared

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'greedily' to 'eagerly' to better reflect the desperation experienced by the those forced to consume human flesh.

<sup>68</sup> RA, p. 101.

simply to be eaten, it was intended – or intended to be perceived as being intended – to be visibly chewed and gnawed on in a grotesque performance.

Staged cannibalism appears as a military tactic in other accounts of medieval warfare outside of a crusading context, but only rarely. According to Adémar of Chabannes, while fighting for the *Reconquista* of Iberia in around 1020, the Norman Roger de Tosny – nicknamed the ‘Moor Eater’ – would choose one of his Muslim captives every day, cut them up ‘like a pig’ (*quasi porcum*), boil their body parts, and pretend to eat them. He then allowed a handful of terrified captives to escape and spread the word of his brutality.<sup>69</sup> As shall be explored in Chapter Five, William of Tyre’s late twelfth-century account of the First Crusade also presents an episode of staged cannibalism in which Bohemond of Taranto has the bodies of Muslim prisoners cooked ‘as if preparing dinner’ (*quasi ad opus cene*).<sup>70</sup> In these examples staged cannibalism is only successful in instilling fear in the enemy because some sort of culinary preparation is involved in presenting human flesh as meat intended for consumption.

Indeed, it is the culinary preparation of a dead Turk in the *Dei gesta*, as a visual representation of the Tafurs’ intent to consume human flesh, that supposedly inspires fear in the Turkish army. The Tafurs prepare the body of the Turk ‘as if’ (*acsi*) it was going to be eaten, noting specifically that the flesh was roasted. A focus on culinary preparation is similarly depicted in both Fulcher of Chartres’ suggestion that crusaders failed to fully roast the human flesh they had butchered before eating it, and Baldric of Bourgueil’s discussion of ‘wicked feasts’ of roasted human flesh.<sup>71</sup> These descriptions of the culinary preparation of human flesh apply connotations of civility and organised food-based practice to

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<sup>69</sup> Adémar of Chabannes, *Ademarus Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. by P. Bourgain, R. Landes, and G. Pon, *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 129 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), p. 174. See also Rubenstein’s discussion of strategic cannibalism in Rubenstein, ‘Cannibals and Crusaders’, pp. 540–43.

<sup>70</sup> WT, I, p. 266.

<sup>71</sup> FC, pp. 266–267; and BB, p. 93.

depictions of cannibalism which, paradoxically, renders the cannibals more savage to onlookers.

For this reason, the Tafurs' staged cannibalism was particularly valuable, according to Guibert, because their culinary preparation of a Muslim body fuelled rumours of Christian anthropophagy throughout the Turkish army. Much like in Raymond of Aguilers' chronicle, Guibert suggests that these rumours were strategically beneficial to the Christian army as they bolstered the Tafurs', and by extension the crusaders', reputation for ferocity. The Tafurs' role in this deceit is praised by Guibert, but it is the deception itself that serves to distance the crusading force from accusations of actual cannibalism. So, while the Tafurs are presented as a strange subgroup of the Christian army in the *Dei gesta*, they also play a significant role in shifting narrative focus away from cannibalism as an act of survival and onto cannibalism as a strategic act of deceit.

Isolating the two depictions of crusader cannibalism at Ma'arra provided in the *Dei gesta* demonstrates a shift in emphasis from alleged survival cannibalism of Muslims to the staged cannibalism of a Turk. Guibert's role as an interpreter of the history of the First Crusade is visible in this shift as he simultaneously rejects accusations of survival cannibalism as hearsay while explaining how staged cannibalism was successfully misinterpreted as actual cannibalism by the enemy.

## Conclusion

These two interpretations of cannibalism constitute just one element of the crusaders' experience of eating on their journey to Jerusalem. In the *Dei gesta*, extreme hunger is presented as an exercise of endurance and an indicator of the crusaders' devotion and willingness to suffer in the service of Christ. Like Robert the Monk, Guibert suggests the crusaders' endurance of suffering – in conjunction with their penitent submission to God and courage in battle – earned them divine rewards such as military victories and an abundance of provisions. This narrative cycle is used in Guibert's account of the second

siege and battle of Antioch to highlight abundance as an indicator of success, aligning the crusaders' actions with the divine will within the framework of providential history.

Like Robert the Monk's and Baldric of Bourgueil's chronicles, hunger also has metaphorical force in Guibert's narrative of the First Crusade. Unlike his Benedictine contemporaries, however, Guibert's use of metaphors of consumption are especially lurid and bloody. In the *Dei gesta*, Guibert conflates 'hunger' and 'thirst' with a desire to action against non-Christians, ratifying violence and bloodshed as an appropriate Christian response to *infideles* in the Holy Land. While these metaphors of consumption do not refer specifically to ingestion, they highlight the human body's capacity to consume and to be consumed. Framing both survival and strategic cannibalism as acts of bodily desecration therefore complements the metaphorical uses of hunger and consumption in the *Dei gesta*.

While Guibert's depiction of crusader survival cannibalism at Ma'arra broadly reflects the description of anthropophagy presented in first-hand and second-generation chronicles of the First Crusade, Guibert uses the fact that these acts were allegedly committed in secret to ultimately present these allegations as hearsay. Guibert's reticence to admit Christian wrongdoing continues into his second representation of crusader cannibalism. In this case, however, no consumption of human flesh takes place. Guibert emphasises the notion that anthropophagy was nothing but a rumour, fuelled by culinary deception carried out by a strange, impoverished subset of the Christian army called the Tafurs.<sup>72</sup> By displacing the (staged) acts of cannibalism onto the Tafurs, Guibert shifts narrative focus away from the allegations of survival cannibalism – a gruesome act inspired by deprivation, desperation, and a desire to survive – to staged cannibalism, a strategically beneficial deception that instilled fear in the Turks and bolstered the Christians' reputation for fierceness.

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<sup>72</sup> Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', p. 540.

While the latter interpretation of crusader cannibalism was unique amongst first-hand and second-generation chronicles of the campaign, a similar emphasis is placed on the role of the Tafurs in carrying out acts of human flesh consumption in the thirteenth-century epic poem, the *Chanson d'Antioche*. It is possible that that a version of this poem was among the songs Guibert heard 'sung in public' in the decade after the campaign concluded. The *Chanson d'Antioche* and its connection to first-hand and second-generation chronicles of the First Crusade will be addressed next.

## Chapter Four: Hunger and Spectacle in the *Chanson d'Antioche*, the *Chanson des Chétifs*, and the *Chanson de Jérusalem*

The Benedictine chronicles examined thus far were all composed within two decades of the successful capture of Jerusalem by Christian forces from Islamic occupation in 1099. Robert the Monk, Baldric of Bourgueil, and Guibert of Nogent all position the events of the First Crusade within an ideological framework that presents Christian crusaders as instruments of the divine will and the campaign itself as part of sacred history, no less important than those other miraculous moments in time when God directly intervened in the affairs of men. The memory of the First Crusade gained new significance in the following hundred years when the loss of Jerusalem to Saladin, Sultan of Egypt (1174–1193), after a siege following the Battle of Hattin in July 1187, stimulated a desire in the west to recover the city. This gave new impetus to crusade preaching at the end of the twelfth century. As the only crusade that had, up until this point, achieved its goal of capturing the Holy City, the events of the First Crusade became a model for emulation and the rhetoric surrounding the campaign and its heroes began to shift from the realm of history into the realm of legend.

This chapter focuses on a trilogy of poems – the *Chanson d'Antioche*, the *Chanson des Chétifs*, and the *Chanson de Jérusalem* – that sit at the heart of the thirteenth-century cycle of *chansons de geste* known as the Old French Crusade Cycle (OFCC).<sup>1</sup> In its entirety, the OFCC consists of twelve poems that expand the story of the Crusades to include the ancestors of Godfrey of Bouillon as well as the deeds of Saladin during the Third Crusade (1189–1192). The core trilogy functions together as one narrative: they share characters,

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter makes use of the main edition and modern translations of the *Antioche, Chétifs, and Jérusalem: The Chanson d'Antioche: An Old French Account of the First Crusade*, trans. by Susan B. Edgington and Carol Sweetenham (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 101–330; and, *The Chanson des Chétifs and Chanson de Jérusalem: Completing the Central Trilogy of the Old French Crusade Cycle*, trans. by Carol Sweetenham (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 67–353.



reference each other, and maintain thematic motifs throughout.<sup>2</sup> The aim of this chapter is to examine how hunger is established as a motif in the *Antioche*, the *Chétifs*, and the *Jérusalem*. Against this backdrop, close attention will be paid to the crusaders' response to hunger, specifically in the *Antioche's* detailed description of Tafur cannibalism, and how these responses serve to define and defend the collective identities of the Christian crusaders, Turks, and Tafurs in the narrative.

### The Core Trilogy of the Old French Crusade Cycle

It is largely believed that the *Antioche*, the *Chétifs*, and the *Jérusalem* predate the other poems in the OFCC and estimates for the redaction of this central trilogy vary from c. 1177 to c. 1204. Arguments for the earlier date of redaction are based on Suzanne Duparc-Quioc's study of the *Antioche*, in which she argues that cultural references in the poem to the legendary Christian patriarch, Prester John, and the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus were particularly prevalent in 1170–80s Europe.<sup>3</sup> Dating the trilogy to the early-thirteenth century has been proposed by Carol Sweetenham and Susan B. Edgington based on possible propagandistic links between the OFCC and the Fourth Crusade (1202–1204).<sup>4</sup> The trilogy is written in Old French and is organised into *laissez* written in alexandrines (iambic hexameters) with a rhyme and meter typical of late-twelfth- and thirteenth-century *chansons de geste*, epic poems that recount the deeds of knights.<sup>5</sup> Together, these three poems narrate the events of the First Crusade from the failure of the People's Crusade in 1096 to the battle of Ascalon in 1099.

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<sup>2</sup> Susan B. Edgington and Carol Sweetenham, 'Introduction' in *The Chanson d'Antioche: An Old French Account of the First Crusade* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 3–97 (p. 24).

<sup>3</sup> Suzanne Duparc-Quioc, *La Chanson d'Antioche*, 2 vols (Paris: Geuthner, 1976), II: *Etude Critique*, pp. 137–9.

<sup>4</sup> Edgington and Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 47. See also, Simon T. Parsons, 'Making Heroes out of Crusaders: The Literary Afterlife of Crusade Participants in the *Chanson d'Antioche*', in *Jerusalem the Golden: The Origins and Impact of the First Crusade*, ed. by Susan B. Edgington and Luis García-Guijarro Ramos (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), pp. 291–307 (p. 293).

<sup>5</sup> Edgington and Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 67.

The first text in the trilogy, the *Antioche*, survives in nine thirteenth-century manuscripts. While several of these manuscripts attribute the *Antioche* to the poet Graindor of Douai (*fl.* late-twelfth century), it is likely that the poem was originally composed in the twelfth century and based on an oral tradition that captured the memory of the campaign in the form of a *chanson de geste*.<sup>6</sup> Some editors of the *Antioche* including Paulin Paris and Suzanne Duparc-Quioc believed that the poem was based on an early-twelfth-century *chanson de geste* composed by a participant of the First Crusade identified only once in the text as Richard le Pèlerin.<sup>7</sup> The existence of Richard and his role in the composition of the *Antioche* is difficult to confirm definitively, however.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, Guibert of Nogent, writing in around 1108, tells his audience that he will not use any information in his chronicle of the campaign that is not already being sung in public, so it is possible that a version of the *Antioche* was among these *chansons de geste* being performed in the North of France in the decade after the campaign concluded.<sup>9</sup> But, evidence to suggest who composed this earlier version of the *Antioche*, and what exact form it took, is for the most part unsubstantiated.

The *Antioche* and the *Jérusalem* are similar in length and literary construction, but whereas the *Antioche* primarily draws on Robert the Monk's *Historia* and the *Historia Ierosolimitana* (c. 1119) of the German chronicler Albert of Aachen to craft its narrative, the *Jérusalem* appears to organise a general memory of the events of 1099 – rather than details

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<sup>6</sup> For more on Graindor of Douai and his role in the creation of the *Chanson d'Antioche*, see Edgington and Sweetenham, 'Introduction', pp. 3–10.

<sup>7</sup> *Antioche*, p. 443, l. 356 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 312): 'Ricars li pelerins de qui nos le tenons'. See Paulin Paris, *Nouvelles Etudes sur La Chanson d'Antioche* (Paris: L. Techener, 1878), pp. 27–51; and Duparc-Quioc, *Etude Critique*, pp. 19–22.

<sup>8</sup> For a comprehensive breakdown of the debate surrounding Richard le Pèlerin's historical existence and his role in the composition of the *Chanson d'Antioche*, see Edgington and Sweetenham, 'Introduction', pp. 3–5; and Carol Sweetenham, 'Antioch and Flanders: Some Reflections on the Writing of the Chanson d'Antioche', in *Epic and Crusade: Proceedings of the Colloquium of the Société Rencesvals British Branch held at Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge, 27–28 March 2004*, ed. by P. E. Bennett, A. E. Cobby and J. E. Everson (Edinburgh: Société Rencesvals British Branch, 2006), pp. 131–151.

<sup>9</sup> GN, p. 83: 'amota nichil nisi quod publice cantitatur dicere libuit'.

from pre-existing texts – into a structure that mimics the *Antioche*.<sup>10</sup> The *Jérusalem* narrative does not provide any new historical content but creates several parallels between the events at Antioch and Jerusalem: the siege of Jerusalem mirrors the siege of Antioch, for example, and the battle of Ascalon is redolent of the battle of Antioch.<sup>11</sup> The *Chétifs* storyline, on the other hand, is much shorter than the other two poems and serves to bridge the awkward gap between the events at Antioch in 1098 and the crusaders' arrival at Jerusalem in 1099.<sup>12</sup> It is also entirely fantastical, providing a flashback to the fate of Peter the Hermit's followers after the battle of Civetot in 1096. According to the *Chétifs*, these men faced a dragon possessed by the devil, child-snatching lions and monkeys, and inspired the near conversion of Corbaran – the historical Kerbogha, Atabeg of Mosul – to Christianity.

The trilogy ultimately distorts the chronology of the campaign for dramatic effect, changes details of the events to fit the rhyme scheme and exaggerates episodes of individual heroism and villainy. In part, this reflects the form and function of *chansons de geste*, which were sung in public by an entertainer and therefore needed to capture and hold the attention of an audience;<sup>13</sup> but these literary choices also present the deeds of Christian crusaders as models for emulation. Indeed, several narratorial asides in the trilogy

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<sup>10</sup> Albert of Aachen appears not to have known about any of the other contemporary narratives of the campaign discussed in this thesis: his account of the campaign is therefore independent of the *GF*-tradition. For this reason, Albert's *Historia* will not be discussed in any depth, though his treatment of hunger and crusader cannibalism is certainly worthy of investigation elsewhere.

<sup>11</sup> Compare, for instance: *Jérusalem*, pp. 62–52, l. 45–52, and *Antioche*, pp. 163–169, l. 128–137. These runs of *laissez* systematically depict, in similar terms, the leaders of the campaign setting up their camps for the sieges of Jerusalem and Antioch, respectively. Mirroring of this kind can also be found in the poet's account of the leaders preparing for battle at Antioch and Ascalon. See: *Antioche*, pp. 391–457, l. 315–365, and *Jérusalem*, pp. 211–216, l. 217–223.

<sup>12</sup> Susan B. Edgington, "'Pagans' and 'Others' in the *Chanson de Jérusalem*", 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. 37–47 (p. 37); Edgington and Sweetenham, 'Introduction', pp. 27–8.

<sup>13</sup> Edgington and Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 69. See also, Paul Leverage, *Reception and Memory: A Cognitive Approach to the Chansons de geste* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), pp. 16–17.

attempt to inspire its audience to replicate the behaviour of their heroic predecessors and participate in the continual crusading activity of the late-twelfth and thirteenth centuries by framing the campaign as a redemptive and divinely sanctioned process.<sup>14</sup> This underlying message reflects an ideological framework for the crusade that had cemented itself in Benedictine accounts of the expedition written shortly after the conclusion of the venture. Thus, while the core trilogy of the OFCC was written nearly one hundred years after the Latin chronicles of the campaign and fits the events of the crusade into a different set of stylistic conventions, these epic poems continue a tradition of aggrandizing the memory of the First Crusade and its participants to suit authorial agendas, serving as a source of entertainment, edification, and emulation for its audience.<sup>15</sup>

### Hunger and Heroism

As Magali Janet notes, the lexicon of hunger abounds in the core trilogy of the OFCC.<sup>16</sup> In her analysis of the *Antioche*, the *Jérusalem*, and the *Chétifs*, Janet examines how the trilogy records the nature of food supply and the types of food eaten by the crusading force on their journey to Jerusalem.<sup>17</sup> This fits more broadly into her exploration of the trilogy's representation of Christian and Muslim bodies in which she specifically investigates the vocabulary used to describe the anatomy of characters, their clothes, weapons, voices, gestures and attitudes, sexual behaviour, eating habits, and wounds.<sup>18</sup> This lexical study illuminates literary representations of bodies that perform through their voices and gestures, bodies that desire and abstain from food and sex, and bodies that suffer injury

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<sup>14</sup> Edgington and Sweetenham, 'Introduction', p. 24.

<sup>15</sup> Carol Sweetenham, 'Introduction', in *The Chanson des Chétifs and Chanson de Jérusalem: Completing the Central Trilogy of the Old French Crusade Cycle* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 3–55 (p. 4). See also Parsons, p. 305.

<sup>16</sup> Magali Janet, *L'Idéologie incarnée: Représentations du corps dans le premier cycle de la croisade (Chanson d'Antioche, Chanson de Jérusalem, Chétifs)* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2013), p. 330.

<sup>17</sup> Janet, pp. 312–345.

<sup>18</sup> Janet, p. 15.

and death.<sup>19</sup> Janet concludes that Christian bodies in particular are presented as both valiant and suffering through conscious lexical choices in the trilogy, combining the warlike heroism inherent to epic narratives with a religious ideal for crusaders that developed in the twelfth century.<sup>20</sup>

Most relevantly to our current discussion, Janet argues that the trilogy's inclusion of scenes of food acquisition, preparation, and consumption serve a narrative purpose beyond drawing attention to the daily needs of the body.<sup>21</sup> Janet suggests that, in the case of overconsumption or starvation, eating (or the absence of eating) is presented by the poet as a social and cultural act that has the potential to physically affect the state of the body.<sup>22</sup> Janet also proposes that mealtimes more generally are assigned value in the trilogy as a communal setting in which bodies – both Christian and Muslim – could rest, recuperate, and socialise after the exertion of battle.<sup>23</sup> The remainder of this section builds on Janet's analysis of eating in the core trilogy of the OFCC by demonstrating how the experience of hunger recorded in these epic poems not only impacted descriptions of the crusaders' bodies, but also helped shape their identity within the narrative.

Of the references made to hunger in the *Antioche*, Janet suggests that the word *faim* (hunger) is used with most regularity, appearing twenty-three times in the *Antioche's* 374 *laissez*, followed by *affamé/er* (starving/to starve) and *famine* (famine) which are used ten times and four times respectively.<sup>24</sup> The relative frequency of terms relating to hunger in the *Antioche* is not particularly surprising given that the crusaders' time in and around the city of Antioch was dominated by a scarcity of provisions. The crusading force was devastated by famine during the first and second sieges of the city which occurred successively from October 1097 to June 1098. Indeed, the *Antioche* immediately presents

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<sup>19</sup> Janet, p. 16.

<sup>20</sup> Janet, p. 447.

<sup>21</sup> Janet, pp. 312–330

<sup>22</sup> Janet, p. 333.

<sup>23</sup> Janet, p. 312.

<sup>24</sup> Janet, p. 330.

hunger and dearth as two of the most notable hardships suffered by the crusaders on their journey to the Holy Land. In the first prologue to the *Antioche*, which serves as an introduction to the trilogy, the audience is told:

Nobody has ever heard of such a pilgrimage. [The crusaders] all found themselves enduring immense suffering – thirst, hunger, cold, sleepless nights and lack of food – for the love of God. In return He would reward them all well and take their souls up to His glory in Heaven.<sup>25</sup>

This excerpt highlights the theme of salvation that features prominently throughout the trilogy and demonstrates a familiarity with an ideology embedded in the memory of the campaign first seen in the chronicles of the *GF*-tradition: in these accounts the campaign is similarly presented as a dangerous pilgrimage suffered in the name of Christ, and a journey on which martyrdom could be achieved. The suggestion that hunger and a lack of food was endured by the Christians in the name of God creates a link between the crusaders' experience of hunger and their relationship with the divine that is sustained throughout the trilogy.

It is established early in the *Antioche* that the crusaders would rather risk death and achieve martyrdom than suffer extended periods of starvation. This notion is mentioned at least three times explicitly in the poem. The first instance appears in a set of *laissez* that deal with the crusaders' interaction with Emperor Alexios in Constantinople. Upon the crusading army's arrival in the city, Alexios betrays his promise to supply the force with provisions by telling the inhabitants of Constantinople not to sell food to the crusaders.<sup>26</sup> When no resources are made available, the crusading force turns on the emperor. The *Antioche*-poet relays Byzantine concerns over the crusaders' willingness to die rather than go hungry in a scene between Alexios and Taticius No-Nose, the emperor's confidant and a general of the Byzantine force. Taticius admonishes Alexios:

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<sup>25</sup> *Antioche*, p. 20, l. 1 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 101): 'De tel pelerinage n'oi nus hom parler. / Por Deu lor convint tos mainte paine endurer, / Sois et famis et froidures et veller et juner; / Bien lor dut Damedeus a tous gueredoner et les armers a cels en sa glorie mener.'

<sup>26</sup> *Antioche*, p. 58, l. 38 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 126).

“Telling your leaders not to let anything be distributed to the French was one of the worst decisions of your life. God has never before put on earth knights like this – and they’re coming your way with swords drawn. They are the flower of French chivalry. Uncle, you should just see them in their lodgings preparing their attack! They swear by God, the Son of the Blessed Virgin, that unless food appears your city will be smashed to pieces. You will not make it through to the evening: everything will be destroyed. They much prefer a joyful death to a miserable existence.”<sup>27</sup>

Several elements of this description are reminiscent of Guibert of Nogent’s account of the siege of Nicaea (May to June 1097) such as identifying the Franks as ‘the flower of French chivalry’.<sup>28</sup> There is no obvious internal or external evidence to suggest that the *Antioche*-poet used Guibert’s account of the campaign to formulate this dialogue, but the similarities are intriguing. It could be, for example, that these parallels illuminate elements that Guibert borrowed from the early-twelfth-century *chanson de geste* on which the *Antioche* is based when composing his narrative of the First Crusade.

In any case, the interaction between the crusaders and Alexios unfolds within a well-established *topos* of Greek duplicity. This motif originated in the first century BCE and survived into the Middle Ages, allowing medieval chroniclers to depict Byzantine generosity as inherently suspicious.<sup>29</sup> Cicero, for example, claimed Greece was an entirely corrupt country in which gifts and feasts were used to control the populace.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, in Virgil’s *Aeneid*, the Greeks defeat Troy not by a feats of arms but with a gift, the infamously

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<sup>27</sup> *Antioche*, p. 59, l. 39 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 127): ‘Mal avés exploitié, emperere, en vo vie, / Quant avés desfendu a ceste baronie / Que li vitaille soit por les François faillie. Ainc Diex ne fist en terre si grnat cevalerie / Qui se tiegne vers eux a l’espee forbie, / Quar il i est de France li jentius compaignie. S’or les veïssiés, onlces, a lot herbregerie / Com il s’l aparellant por faire une envaïe! / Et jurent Damedeu, le fil sainte Marie, / Que s’il n’ont le vitaille, vo cites ert brisie; / Ja ne verrés le vesper, si ert tote escillie. Miux ainment mort a joie que a dol avoir vie.’

<sup>28</sup> GN, p. 147.

<sup>29</sup> Lars Kjær, “‘I Fear Greeks, Even When They Bear Gifts’: The Gifts of Alexios I and the Histories of the First Crusade’, *Viator*, 49.1 (2018), 25–49 (p. 29). See also, Andrew Erskine, ‘Greek Gifts and Roman Suspicion’, *Classics Ireland*, 4 (1997), 33–45; and Marc Carrier, *L’autre chrétien pendant les croisades: Les Byzantins vus par les chroniqueurs du monde latin (1096–1261)* (Saarbrücken: Éditions Universitaires Européennes, 2012).

<sup>30</sup> Cicero, ‘Pro Flacco’, in *Cicero in Twenty-Eight Volumes*, trans. by C. MacDonald, 28 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966–1992), X (1977), pp. 413–558 (p. 461).

deceptive wooden horse.<sup>31</sup> Virgil presents the wooden horse as typical of Greek duplicity, noting that, upon seeing the horse, the Trojan priest Laocoön cried: 'I fear the Greeks even when they bear gifts'.<sup>32</sup> In the *Antioche*, however, food is the subject of Alexios' deceit.

After witnessing the crusaders preparing to attack, Alexios panics and agrees to provision the crusading force with substantial quantities of bread.<sup>33</sup> When Godfrey subsequently meets with Alexios, he reiterates the crusaders' willingness to risk death in order to prevent starvation:

"If you are thinking of doing us harm, let me assure you that we shall die at sword-point to get our hands on the provisions which abound in the city and which our forces desperately need."<sup>34</sup>

The suggestion that the crusaders would rather achieve a 'joyful death' at sword-point than suffer from a lack of provisions also appears in Guibert's account of the siege of Antioch, in which he quotes Lamentations 4. 9: 'It was better for those killed by the sword than for those killed by hunger'.<sup>35</sup> This sentiment highlights the debilitating experience of hunger, in which a slow and passive starvation causes such misery that death is seen as a mercy, but it also provides an insight into how death was perceived within the context of the *Antioche*. In these episodes, crusader death is portrayed as a joyful and proactive experience. This fits into a broader crusade ideology, also seen in second-generation interpretations of the campaign, which suggests martyrdom could be achieved by all those participating on the journey to the Holy Land. Invoking images of martyrdom highlights the honour associated with the crusaders' response to hunger and further emphasises the opportunity for personal salvation afforded on the venture.

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<sup>31</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid, Books I–III*, ed. by T. L. Papillon and A. E. Haigh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890), p. 42.

<sup>32</sup> Virgil, p. 42; Kjær, p. 29.

<sup>33</sup> *Antioche*, p. 61, l. 41 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 128).

<sup>34</sup> *Antioche*, p. 65, l. 46 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 130): 'Si volonmes savoir, qu'estes vers nos pensans. / Se mal nos volés faire, bien soiés afians, / Que miux volons morir as espees tranchans / Ke n'aions le vitaille don't li cis est manans / Et de coi nos barnages soit tos rasasians'.

<sup>35</sup> GN, p. 152.



The second instance which demonstrates the crusaders' preference for death in combat over death by starvation comes during the poem's account of the second siege of Antioch. At this point in the narrative, the crusaders have successfully infiltrated the city but have been besieged by the Seljuk relieving army led by Corbaran. Famine ravages the crusading force and there is some discussion among the leaders of the campaign about whether or not to continue fighting the Turks against insurmountable odds in order to maintain control of Antioch. Bohemond suggests that they ask for the opinion of the poorest members of the army, who are bearing the brunt of the famine. In response to Bohemond's query, these soldiers reply: 'My Lord, you must give battle! Better to be killed on the battlefields out there than to die here of hunger, as you can see'.<sup>36</sup> This response draws attention to the visible effects of hunger on the crusading force. Examples of these visible signs of hunger include swollen bellies, crusaders weeping and fainting from misery, and infants dying from starvation at their mother's breasts.<sup>37</sup> This imagery highlights the devastating physical effects of hunger on the bodies of crusaders and was likely included to arouse pity from the audience, but it also further alludes to the Christians' preference for potentially fatal action over passive suffering.

Similarly, in a speech intended to inspire courage in his followers during the battle of Antioch, the Tafur King exclaims:

"You have suffered enough from famine and misery. As the rustic so truly says, more honourable to have one's head cut off than to suffer too much deprivation for too long."<sup>38</sup>

The rustic proverb referred to here by the Tafur King has not been preserved in any surviving manuscript but it is reminiscent of *Li Proverbe au Vilain*, a twelfth-century French

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<sup>36</sup> *Antioche*, p. 374, l. 302 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 278): 'Sire, car vos i combatés! Mius volons ester ocis la fors enmi ces prés / Que ci morons de faim ensi com vos veés.'

<sup>37</sup> Examples of the visible effects of hunger can be found here: *Antioche*, pp. 193–95, 217, 227, 407 and 346–47.

<sup>38</sup> *Antioche*, p. 407, l. 326 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 295): 'Assez avés souertes disietes et lastés, / Li vilains bien le dist, et si est verités, / Mius nos vient a honor avoir le ciés coupés / Que longement souffrir trop grans caitivetés.'

compilation of axioms that is punctuated with the phrase *si dist li villain*.<sup>39</sup> The suggestion that soldiers were worse off from prolonged hunger than dying a swift death on the battlefield is also present in the work of Publius Vegetius Renatus, whose *De re militari*, written sometime between 383–450 CE, was taken up by both clerical and secular authors during the Middle Ages as an authority on waging war.<sup>40</sup> In a section that deals with siege warfare, Vegetius notes ‘hunger is more savage than the sword’, a sentiment Albert of Aachen cites directly in his account of the famine at Ma’arra.<sup>41</sup> It is clear that the debilitating effect of prolonged hunger in military scenarios was well established in pre-existing literature, but in the narrative construction of the *Antioche*, the experience of hunger also sheds light on the dishonour and misery associated with inaction. The negative connotations attached to inaction during times of famine demonstrates the importance of honour, a chivalric quality that characterises depictions of heroic knights in *chansons de geste*. By repeatedly emphasising the crusaders’ preference for action over passive suffering, experiences of hunger and responses to famine in the *Antioche* confirm that the crusaders are honourable soldiers, committed to their campaign and worthy of their heroic status in the narrative.

Nowhere is the effect of hunger on the construction of the crusaders’ heroic identity more evident than in Frankish and Turkish responses to siege warfare. The first siege of Antioch (21 October 1097 to 2 June 1098), for example, in which the crusading

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<sup>39</sup> Edgington and Sweetenham, ‘Introduction’, p. 295, n. 500. For more on allusions to proverbs in medieval French literature, see R. N. B. Goddard, ‘Marcabru, “*Li Proverbe au Vilain*” and the Tradition of Rustic Proverbs’, *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 88.1 (1987), 55–70.

<sup>40</sup> 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), pp. 1–9.

<sup>41</sup> Publius Vegetius Renatus, *Epitome of Military Science*, trans. by N. P. Milner (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996), p. 67; AA, I, p. 194.

force besieged the city, is immediately criticised by a Turk called Mahon in the *Antioche*.<sup>42</sup>

As the crusaders are preparing their siege, Mahon calls down to them from the ramparts:

“Aha, you pathetic Christian unbelievers [...] look at you rushing headlong to suffering and misery! Every last one of you will be killed and turned over to my archers. You will never take this town. [...] You are going to die outside our walls, of hunger, misery and sheer wretchedness. You are going to get so desperate that you will be eating your packhorses and lots of your steeds.”<sup>43</sup>

Indeed, Mahon’s suggestion that the crusaders would go hungry is completely fulfilled within the next twenty-five *laissez*. After initial success in provisioning themselves outside of the city, the crusaders quickly started to exhaust their resources. In an authorial interpolation in *Laisse* 154, the audience is told that because of their unfamiliarity with the terrain and landscape outside of Antioch, the crusaders did not know how to forage for food.<sup>44</sup> Foraging expeditions appear regularly in the *GF*-tradition, but only receive a brief mention at this juncture in the *Antioche*. According to the *Antioche*-poet, the crusaders rode thirty leagues into the surrounding area to find resources but were met with ‘hard fighting’ with neighbouring Turks: ‘They had no food left, and morale was rock-bottom. May God help them as only he can!’<sup>45</sup> These last two lines of *Laisse* 154 acknowledge a link between access to provisions – and by extension the suppression of hunger – and the army’s morale, but also recognise the role of divine intervention in supporting the crusaders’ campaign. In this case, the narrator calls on God to help the crusaders take the city of Antioch and thus end the siege and the crusaders’ suffering. This call for divine assistance reiterates a sentiment from the previous *laisse*: ‘Without the aid of the Lord who

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<sup>42</sup> Mahon is said to be the brother of Emir Bernaus, who does not feature in any other account of the siege of Antioch.

<sup>43</sup> *Antioche*, p. 171, l. 139 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 178): “‘Ahi”, dist-il, “caitis, crestien deslial, / Com vos alés querrant vo duel et vo grant mal! Car tout serés destruit et livre a bersal. [...] La fors morrés de fain, a duel et a tristal, / Par destroit mengerés ronchis et maint ceval.”

<sup>44</sup> *Antioche*, p. 189, l. 154 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 186).

<sup>45</sup> *Antioche*, p. 189, l. 154 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 186): ‘Or n’ont il mais vitaille, forment lor pot desplere, / Damedex les secore qui tres bien le puet fere!’

rules the world, the whole army would fall prey to agonising suffering'.<sup>46</sup> The suggestion that the crusaders could only succeed in their efforts to take Antioch with divine assistance acts to highlight the severity of the crusaders' circumstances and reflects the ideology established in second-generation chronicles of the campaign that the venture was ordained and directed by God according to his will.

It is clear that a severe lack of food and low morale in the Christian camp is of importance to the narrative as the *Antioche*-poet addresses it repeatedly in a series of *laissez similaires*. This literary strategy is used to reiterate an action, event, or concept from slightly different perspectives in order to explicitly illustrate its significance. Like *Laissez* 153 and 154, *Laisse* 155, for example, continues to draw attention to the dire conditions endured by the crusaders outside of Antioch:

The army was in a terrible state, devoid of all provisions. Nobody could offer anybody else any help or even moral support. The filthy weather had caught them out completely. Poverty reduced them to eating their everyday horses, while the spirited horses brought from Spain suffered so badly from hunger that they ate their halters and hurt their faces.<sup>47</sup>

Again, it is purported that the unfamiliar terrain and climate had surprised the crusaders, a claim that is attested in a letter by Stephen of Blois who comments that it was a shock for Latin Europeans that the Middle East was not always sunny.<sup>48</sup> Equally, the effect of insufficient provisions on the morale of the group is reiterated. What is perhaps most significant about this passage, however, is that it acknowledges the fulfilment of Mahon's prediction from *Laisse* 139; the crusaders had grown so hungry while besieging Antioch that they were forced to eat their own horses.

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<sup>46</sup> *Antioche*, p. 189, l. 153 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 186): 'Se cil Sire n'en pense a qui li mons apent, / Tote ert li os livre a dol et a torment.'

<sup>47</sup> *Antioche*, p. 190, l. 155 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 187): 'Molt fu li os destroite, car biens lor est faillis, / Nus ne puet aidier l'autre ne de fais ne de dis. Li ciers tans les avoit si durement soupri / Que par droite pverte manjuent lor roncis. / Li bon ceval d'Espagne sont de fain si aquis, Lor cavestres manjuent et depecent lor vis.'

<sup>48</sup> 'Epistula II: Stephani comitis Carnotensis ad Adelam uxorem', in *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacrae spectantes: Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus de Jahren 1088–1100*, ed. by Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck: Wagner'sche Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1901), pp. 149–52 (p. 150).

Horses play an important role in the trilogy and a lot of space is dedicated to describing them and their accoutrements in the OFCC. In epic poems, horses represent the chivalric ideals of military prowess and honour,<sup>49</sup> and, for this reason, the suggestion that the crusaders were unable to care for their horses and in some cases were forced to consume them is particularly poignant. First, from a practical standpoint, the fact that the crusaders ate their 'everyday horses' (*lor roncis*) out of necessity demonstrates the detrimental effects famine had on the crusaders' ability to function as an efficient military unit. Everyday horses such as palfreys (common travelling horses) or *sommiers* (beasts of burden) were integral for mobilising armies.<sup>50</sup> Not only were horses fundamental for transportation, but they were also an important indicator of social rank and identity: without his horse, a knight was no longer a knight.<sup>51</sup> Guibert makes clear this transformation of social identity in his chronicle, stating the crusaders whose horses had died or were eaten were 'converted by the hardship and starvation of the journey from knights into foot-soldiers'.<sup>52</sup>

Within the context of *chanson de geste* narratives, moreover, a knight's horse was seen as a mirror of its owner, reflecting the strength, honour, and noble lineage of the poem's protagonists.<sup>53</sup> The fact that the crusaders' higher quality horses from Spain were so hungry that they visibly damaged themselves and their equipment can therefore be viewed as a reflection of the suffering experienced by the crusading force that visibly altered their bodies and morale. Being unable to care properly for their horses – which are presented as extensions of the Christians' military prowess and honour in this trilogy – consequently calls into question the integrity of the crusaders' heroic identity as they experience prolonged hunger.

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<sup>49</sup> Paul H. Rogers, 'Rediscovering the Horse in Medieval French Literature', *Neophilologus*, 97.4 (2013), 627–639 (pp. 630–631).

<sup>50</sup> Rogers, p. 630.

<sup>51</sup> Rogers, p. 631.

<sup>52</sup> GN, p. 169.

<sup>53</sup> Rogers, p. 631.

That hunger disrupted the integrity of the crusading force in the *Antioche*, both in terms of identity and ability, is mitigated in *Laisse* 156, the final *laisse* in this quadriptych of *laissez similaires*. Here, the *Antioche*-poet further confirms the suffering of the crusaders in Antioch but places an emphasis on their fortitude in the face of adversity. In a first-person address from the poet to the audience, the crusaders are once again cast in the role of heroes by likening the narrative of the crusade to stories from antiquity and the Old Testament:

My good Christian lords, I am not exaggerating when I say that no group of people has ever suffered so much – or shown so much courage – since the time of Julius Caesar or King David.<sup>54</sup>

Comparing the actions and behaviour of crusaders to characters in pre-established and authenticating narratives is not unique. Many second-generation chronicles of the campaign note similarities between the First Crusade and the sacred history of the Maccabees and the military campaigns of revered leaders such as Alexander the Great.<sup>55</sup> This reflects the duality of crusading ideology: the campaign had sacred impetus, but its success was measured by military achievements. The memory of the First Crusade continued to be set in this idealised realm of heroes centuries after the conclusion of the campaign. Godfrey of Bouillon was, for example, included as one of the Nine Worthies (*Les Neuf Preux*) – nine men considered to be the embodiment of medieval ideals of chivalry – in the fourteenth century.<sup>56</sup> The Nine Worthies comprised three Classical Worthies (Hector, Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar), three Old Testament Worthies (Joshua, King David, and Judas Maccabee), and three Christian Worthies (King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey).<sup>57</sup> Godfrey was the only figure from the post-Carolingian era to earn this accolade.

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<sup>54</sup> *Antioche*, p. 191, l. 156 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 187): ‘Segnor, bon crestien, par verté le vos di, / Onques mais nule gens tel paine ne sofri. / Des le tans Juliiens Cesaire ne Davi / Nu furent nule gens qui tant fuissent hardi.’

<sup>55</sup> See, for instance: GN, p. 85 and 290.

<sup>56</sup> Edgington and Sweetenham, ‘Introduction’, p. 187, n. 275.

<sup>57</sup> The concept of the Nine Worthies was introduced in *Les Voeux du Paon* (The Vows of the Peacock), a *chanson de geste* composed in 1312 by Jacques de Longuyon. See: Jacques de Longuyon, ‘The Nine Worthies from *Les Voeux du Paon*’, in *The Medieval Romance of*

This was ultimately reflective of an increased romanticisation of Godfrey as the conqueror of Jerusalem and its first 'king' during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a process that occurred against the backdrop of a heightened European desire to retake Jerusalem after its loss to Saladin in 1187.<sup>58</sup>

The romanticisation of the crusaders' adherence to ideals such as courage and honour when faced with hardship is further confirmed in the second half of *Laisse* 156 which gives the audience an insight into the crusaders' resolve throughout their suffering:

The Franks made their intention absolutely clear: they would not go away or leave no matter how bad their situation until they had taken Antioch and gained command of its walls. If it is the will of Jesus in whom they placed their trust, they would capture the Holy Sepulchre where His body rose from death [...].<sup>59</sup>

The crusaders' perseverance despite the debilitating effects of hunger demonstrates their commitment to implementing the divine will and liberating the holy sites in Jerusalem. This highlights another aspect of chivalry, one which recognises the honour in oath keeping. As with most accounts of the campaign, the *Antioche's* brief summary of the Council of Clermont reports that before departing on the expedition men and women took up the cross and 'the army of Jesus was established by oath.'<sup>60</sup> The vow Urban II introduced at the Council of Clermont, signified by the wearing of a cross, was a *votum* – a vow made to God – that could only be fulfilled by fighting in the name of Christ on a journey to Jerusalem.<sup>61</sup> While no formal regulations concerning this vow survive in eleventh-century canon law, it is

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*Alexander: Jehan Wauquelin's The Deeds and Conquests of Alexander the Great*, trans. by Nigel Bryant (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2012), pp. 305–306.

<sup>58</sup> When Jerusalem was seized by Christian forces, Godfrey agreed to be the Advocate of the Holy Sepulchre, not the king. The nuances of this distinction appear to have been forgotten or dismissed in the mythologisation of Godfrey of Bouillon. For a more detailed discussion, see Edgington and Sweetenham, 'Introduction', pp. 43–4.

<sup>59</sup> *Antioche*, p. 191, l. 156 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 187): 'Bien s'aficent François, n'en iron t mie ensi, / Ne porn ule detresce n'ierent d'illuec parti, / S'aront pris Antioce don't li mur sont saisi. / Se Jhesus lor consent qui onques ne menti, Le Sepucre prendront u ses cors surrexi'.

<sup>60</sup> *Antioche*, p. 54, l. 36 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 124): 'La fu li os Jhesu estable et juree'.

<sup>61</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London: Continuum, 2003), p. 22.

clear from the frequency in which this crusader vow appears in documentary evidence that in the late-eleventh century at least some crusaders had been taking oaths before their departure to the Holy Land.<sup>62</sup>

Thus, while the first three *laissez* in this set of *laissez similaires* paid close attention to the negative effect extreme hunger had on the crusaders' integrity, both in terms of their physical ability and in the narrative construction of their chivalric identities, *Laisse 156* resolves this issue by presenting crusader suffering as a sign of their commitment to the venture and partial fulfilment of their oath made to God.

### Starvation and Divine Intervention

As with the Benedictine chronicles of the campaign, the *Antioche's* representation of hunger illuminates the crusaders' relationship with the divine. To explore this concept in more detail, it is worth examining the crusaders' miraculous victory at the battle of Antioch, the narrative climax of this poem. Like Robert the Monk's and Guibert of Nogent's texts, the *Antioche's* account of the battle of Antioch fits into a much broader narrative cycle of scarcity and abundance in which divine compassion confirms God's support for the venture. This section will demonstrate, however, that while the *Antioche* clearly draws on details from the *GF*-tradition to compose its account of the battle of Antioch, the poet apportions different significance to the experience of crusader hunger when explaining divine intervention on the battlefield.

Each account of the battle of Antioch from the *GF*-tradition presents the crusading force as weak from starvation. This image ultimately highlights the miraculous nature of their victory against Kerbogha's army which was both numerically superior and in a better state of overall health.<sup>63</sup> In these cases, representations of hunger form part of a cycle of suffering, submission, and divine reward. While the *Antioche's* account of the battle of

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<sup>62</sup> Riley-Smith, p. 23.

<sup>63</sup> Thomas Asbridge, *The First Crusade: A New History* (London: Free Press, 2005), p. 221.



Antioch is drawn from the *GF*-tradition, specifically from the text of Robert the Monk, the poet does not immediately preface his description of the battle with an account of crusader hunger. In fact, the last reference to the starving state of the crusading force prior to the *Antioche's* depiction of this climactic military engagement appears in *Laisse* 284, some twenty *laissez* before the battle begins. In a description of the second siege of Antioch the poet provides an extended account of the desperate hunger and dearth experienced by the crusaders inside the walls of the city:

Our Lord's people suffered such a time of scarcity that even the very richest went hungry. The princes soon felt serious ill effects; fat bodies became weak as did their war horses, whilst the rank and file were completely desperate. They raced to pull up plants by their roots just as they were, leaving neither leaf nor root uneaten. If anyone could lay hands on raw donkey thigh it cost him 60 shillings and not a penny less, with a lucky purchaser needing all his bargaining powers. Anyone in a position to buy a small loaf was happy to pay a whole bezant of pure gold. They skinned donkeys, horses, and mules, boiling and roasting the flesh so they could eat it; The skin complete with hair was barbecued over an open fire and the sergeants and squires ate it just as it was without bread.<sup>64</sup>

The component parts of this passage seem to have been taken directly from Robert the Monk's account of the siege of Antioch. Crucially, this description of crusader hunger combines several elements that appear in other first-hand and second-generation accounts of the crusaders' experience of famine in Antioch. It is noted, for instance, that hunger was universally detrimental: it affected the poor and the rich, physically weakening the bodies of the crusaders as well as their horses.<sup>65</sup> The *Antioche*-poet also acknowledges that because of the extortionate price of bread the crusaders were forced to consume vegetation before turning to boiling and roasting the flesh and skin of beasts of burden to

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<sup>64</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 346–347, l. 284 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, pp. 266–267): 'Li gent Nostre Segnor orent un tans si chier, / Trestot li plus rice home orent poi a mangier. / Don't commencent li prince forment a empirier, / Li cors lor afebloient et li corant destrier, / Et li menue gent ont molt grant desirier. / Les herbes totes crues corurent esracier, / Ne fuelle ne racine ne voelent pas laisier, / Le quisse d'asne crue, qui le puet esligier, / .LX. sols l'acate, ainc n'l ot mains denier, / Et qui avoir le pot, molt sot bien bargenier; / Et qui pot achater un petit pain entire, / Volentiers l'acheta un bezant fin d'ormier. / Asnes, cevals et muls faisoient escorcier, / Si mangüent le car en eve et en rostier; / Le quir o tot le poil metent sor le brasier, / Tot sans pain la manjuent serjant et escuier.' Compare: RM, p. 64.

<sup>65</sup> Compare: *GF*, p. 62; *PT*, p. 104; *FC*, p. 226; *RA*, p. 77; *BB*, p. 73; *RM*, p. 64; *GN*, p. 226.

assuage their hunger.<sup>66</sup> That these specific representations of hunger appear in both Latin chronicles of the campaign and in vernacular *chanson de geste* is highly significant. Indeed, the continued use of these rhetorical motifs across time and literary genres suggests that these factors were not only recognisable indicators of extreme dearth but had become embedded in a collective memory of the siege of Antioch.

After this description of dearth during the second siege of Antioch, the crusaders' starving and weakened state is not explicitly referenced again before the Christians' victory against Corbaran (Kerbogha). The *Antioche*-poet does, however, mention that the crusaders fasted before engaging in combat. Towards the end of the second siege of Antioch, the poet explains that, in an attempt to end the siege with minimal bloodshed, the leaders of the crusade sent Peter the Hermit as an envoy to Corbaran's camp. Peter, along with two other messengers, delivered the leaders' proposal to Corbaran, that the claim on Antioch be settled by a trial of champions.<sup>67</sup> This embassy is referenced in each of the first-hand and second-generation accounts of the campaign, but there is some disagreement between narratives with regard to what was discussed between Peter and Kerbogha.<sup>68</sup> Of the texts examined in this thesis, only Fulcher of Chartres suggests that Peter offered Kerbogha a trial by champions to decide who should take control of Antioch.<sup>69</sup> When Peter returns unsuccessful from his envoy, the *Antioche*-poet claims the leaders of the campaign were overwhelmed with a desire to fight the Turks. The leaders' enthusiasm to engage in battle is tempered, however, by the Bishop of Le Puy who suggests that before entering into combat the whole army should take part in three days of penitential fasting.<sup>70</sup> As seen in the previous chapter, this episode similarly appears in Guibert of Nogent's account of the

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<sup>66</sup> Compare: *GF*, p. 62; *PT*, p. 104; *FC*, p. 226; *RA*, p. 77; *BB*, p. 73; *RM*, p. 64; *GN*, p. 226.

<sup>67</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 363–377, l. 295–302 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, pp. 275–279).

<sup>68</sup> *GF*, pp. 66–68; *PT*, pp. 108–109; *FC*, pp. 247–249; *RA*, p. 79; *BB*, pp. 78–79; *RM*, pp. 70–71; *GN*, pp. 233–236. For more on Peter the Hermit's embassy, see: Thomas Asbridge, 'The Holy Lance of Antioch: Power, Devotion and Memory on the First Crusade', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 33 (2007), 3–36 (pp. 15–20).

<sup>69</sup> *FC*, p. 248.

<sup>70</sup> *Antioche*, p. 375, l. 302 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 279).

lead up to the battle of Antioch.<sup>71</sup> Enduring hunger to combat famine may seem paradoxical, but as Caroline Walker Bynum has demonstrated, fasting – essentially an embracing of hunger – was used from the fourth century as a way of attracting God’s forgiveness and inducing divine aid.<sup>72</sup> Fasting in this scenario transforms hunger suffered into hunger sought, and is presented as a penitential act of self-control deployed by the crusading force to attract God’s forgiveness and compassion before engaging in battle.<sup>73</sup>

In her analysis of the core OFCC trilogy, Janet posits that fasting during the campaign was also intended to be perceived as an act of *imitatio Christi*.<sup>74</sup> In the *Jérusalem*, for example, before the first attack is launched on the city of Jerusalem, the Bishop of Mautran states as he blesses the Christian army:

“My lords, may He who created the whole world and sheltered in the womb of the Holy Virgin and fasted for 40 days in the desert protect you.”<sup>75</sup>

Janet argues that this reference to Jesus’ time in the wilderness reconfigures the crusaders’ fasting as an imitation of Christ’s perseverance in the face of temptation. Attempting to control their hunger essentially becomes a means of controlling themselves in the violent circumstances of the First Crusade, an ascetism that confirms the crusaders’ right to martyrdom and explains the divine favour they receive in the narrative.<sup>76</sup> Thus, in the narrative construction of the *Antioche* and the *Jérusalem*, the crusaders’ experience of hunger maintains a penitential and exhortatory dimension and allows the crusading force to be positioned closer to God. This, alongside the crusaders’ portrayal as instruments of the divine will, acts to legitimise the crusaders’ campaign to the Holy Land.

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<sup>71</sup> GN, p. 236.

<sup>72</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (London: University of California Press, 1987), p. 33.

<sup>73</sup> Janet, p. 399.

<sup>74</sup> Janet, p. 340.

<sup>75</sup> *Jérusalem*, p. 83, l.76 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 215): “Baron, cil vos garisce qui tot le mont cria / Et en la sainte virgene pucele s’aombra / Et les .XL. jors el desert jeüna!”

<sup>76</sup> Janet, p. 339.

Calling for the whole army to fast on the eve of battle is also particularly poignant as hunger (self-inflicted or otherwise) is, as we have seen, a sign of vulnerability: a hungry man is weak and physically unable to lead an assault.<sup>77</sup> According to the *Antioche*-poet, it is the crusaders' vulnerability and submission to God that attracts divine attention before the battle of Antioch, the military engagement which ended the second siege of the city on 28 June 1098.<sup>78</sup> Attempting to take control of their hunger by fasting before battle is therefore not only depicted as an act of penance, but also as a call for divine assistance. In the *Antioche's* account of the battle of Antioch, the appearance of saints on the battlefield is subsequently framed as a reward for the crusaders' perseverance during the sieges of Antioch and testimony to God's continued support for the expedition.<sup>79</sup> As Beth C. Spacey has suggested, the inclusion of this miraculous intervention at Antioch positions the campaign as part of sacred history and the crusaders as steadfast implementers of the divine will.<sup>80</sup>

At first glance, the development of this scene is reminiscent of the narrative cycles of scarcity and abundance seen in Robert the Monk's and Guibert of Nogent's chronicles of the campaign. The hungry crusaders submitted themselves to God by fasting – a self-inflicted hunger – and as a reward received divine assistance in the battle of Antioch. Indeed, after fifty-two *laissez* relaying the battle itself, the audience is told that the victorious crusaders were able to rest in the tents of the defeated Turks and feast on their food:

Now listen to what the Saracens had done, the fools: they had put their supper on at daybreak, not thinking our men would ever be brave enough for even one [crusader] to come out of the city and take them on. But God

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<sup>77</sup> Janet, p. 341.

<sup>78</sup> Janet, p. 339.

<sup>79</sup> For the appearance of saints on the battlefield in the *GF*-tradition, see *GF*, p. 69; *RM*, p. 51; *BB*, p. 81; *GN*, p. 240.

<sup>80</sup> Beth C. Spacey, *The Miraculous and the Writing of the Crusade Narrative* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020), p. 33.

in his bounty came to the aid of the Christians. Now that the Saracens were dead, captured and shamed, our men had plenty to eat.<sup>81</sup>

This passage originally appears in Robert the Monk's account, although he suggests that the Turks had prepared but not cooked their food on the morning of the battle, alluding to the their arrogant assumption that they would return to their own tents, victorious, by dinner time.<sup>82</sup> Like the narrative cycles of hunger and abundance seen in Robert's and Guibert's narratives, the *Antioche*-poet presents this abundance of food as a divine reward, linking the satisfaction of hunger to divine compassion.

This cycle is much longer than Robert's and Guibert's, however. The last mention of extreme deprivation and famine occurs eighteen *laissez* before the Bishop of Le Puy proposes the crusaders partake in a penitential fast before entering battle and it is a further sixty-five *laissez* before the crusaders are depicted as having enough to eat.<sup>83</sup> For this reason, the narrative resolution of the crusaders' hunger – their satiation in the Turkish tents – does not have as great an impact in the *Antioche* as it does in second-generation chronicles. Whereas the Benedictine monks consistently refer to the starving state of the crusading force in their accounts of the battle, illuminating the miraculous nature of their victory and the divine intervention required to ensure copious provisions in the aftermath of combat, there is no such explicit connection between dearth and abundance in the *Antioche*. The poet focusses on the crusaders' eagerness to engage in battle rather than their starving weakened state. Indeed, the fifty *laissez* (315–365) that recount the battle itself include two set pieces that formulaically detail how the leaders of the crusade marched out of Antioch and how each of them engaged in battle.<sup>84</sup> These *laissez* function to

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<sup>81</sup> *Antioche*, p. 459, l. 367 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 319): 'Oiez que orent fait li Sarrasin dervé: / Lor mangier missent quire des qu'il fu ajorné, / Ne quidierent li nostre fussent ja si osé / Que uns sels en issist contre els de la cite. Ne mais Dex aït l'ost par le soie bonté! / Li nostre ont del mangier et del boire a plenté.'

<sup>82</sup> RM, p. 77.

<sup>83</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 346–347, l. 284; pp. 363–377, l. 295–302; p. 459, l. 367 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, pp. 266–267; 275–279; 319).

<sup>84</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 391–457, l. 315–365 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, pp. 287–318).

highlight individual heroics as well as Corbaran's dismay at the sight of the crusading force's military prowess. The fact that the crusaders were supposedly starving at this point is not mentioned in this run of *laissez* at all and, unlike the second-generation chronicles of the campaign, the *Antioche*-poet does not provide any sustained indicators of a cycle of scarcity and abundance in his account of the battle of Antioch.

This demonstrates a shift in the significance attributed to crusader hunger in the narratives examined thus far. Whereas the Latin chronicles of the campaign suggest the Christian forces ought to have been defeated at Antioch because they were starving, the *Antioche* does not dwell on the crusading force's weaknesses in this episode. Although the *Antioche* clearly uses details from Robert the Monk's text to construct his version of the battle of Antioch, and as a result repeats elements of Robert's narrative cycles, the *Antioche*-poet is much more focussed on highlighting the courage and military prowess of the protagonists, motifs common to the *chanson de geste* genre. Thus, while earlier in the poem it is noted that the crusaders were starving, and the poet claims that these men also devoted themselves to God on the eve of battle through penitential fasting, the narrative resolution of crusader hunger is undermined by more prevalent themes of Christian heroism. What is important to recognise, however, is that the *Antioche*'s discussion of the crusaders' penitential and exhortatory fast – a self-inflicted hunger – and their subsequent victory over Corbaran's forces still underscores the crusaders' relationship with God. The *Antioche*-poet confirms that it was divine intervention, alongside individual heroics, that ultimately guaranteed the crusaders' success on the battlefield, and divine compassion that ensured they were well provisioned in the aftermath of battle. The result is a narrative climax that highlights the crusaders' special relationship with God while also emphasising their military capabilities.

## The Tafurs

The depiction of the crusaders as courageous heroes undertaking a divinely sanctioned enterprise creates an uncomfortable problem, however, when the trilogy comes to address the allegations of cannibalism levelled at the crusading force. Contrary to the chronicles from the *GF*-tradition examined thus far, the *Antioche* situates acts of cannibalism at both the first siege of Antioch and at Ma'arra, though anthropophagy at Ma'arra is only briefly mentioned in the twelve couplets that link the end of the *Antioche* to the beginning of the *Chétifs*.<sup>85</sup> Locating cannibalism primarily in Antioch was probably intended to centralise the action in the poem, creating a cohesive narrative in the *Antioche* that was focussed in and around the city.<sup>86</sup>

As we have seen, Benedictine chroniclers writing in the *GF*-tradition tend to marginalise or deny the cannibalistic practices of the crusading force, framing acts of anthropophagy as part of the suffering endured by the crusaders on their mission to carry out God's will. The result is a conscious attempt to present cannibalism as an act of survival, both circumstantial and exceptional.<sup>87</sup> Guibert alone of the second-generation chroniclers displaces these acts of cannibalism onto a marginalised sub-group of the Christian army, the Tafurs, claiming their anthropophagical behaviour was a military strategy. Like Guibert, the *Antioche* attributes most of the crusaders' despicable behaviour – including rape, pillaging, and cannibalism – to the Tafurs, and considerable attention is paid in the poem to describing their physical appearance, behaviour, and actions.<sup>88</sup> Unlike Guibert, however, the *Antioche* does not situate the Tafurs as an impoverished group on the fringe of society: their poverty and lack of fine clothes, horses, and proper weapons is acknowledged in the

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<sup>85</sup> *Antioche*, p. 475, *Couplet 4* (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 326).

<sup>86</sup> Janet, p. 348.

<sup>87</sup> Marion Uhlig, 'Chrétiens, mangeurs d'hommes et urbanité païenne dans la "Chanson d'Antioche": L'"Excitatorium" en question', *Romania*, 132.527/528 (2014), 353–376 (pp. 359–60).

<sup>88</sup> For a sample, see: *Antioche*, pp. 169–171, l. 138; pp. 217–219, l. 174; pp. 219–220, l. 175; and pp. 316–320, l. 262–263.

trilogy, but the Tafurs are consistently presented alongside the rest of the Christian army, if not integrated into it, throughout the narrative.

Indeed, the Tafurs' enduring significance in the plot of the trilogy is established in their first appearance in the *Antioche*. The audience is introduced to the Tafurs in *Laisse* 135 in a scene that anticipates the outcome of the First Crusade.<sup>89</sup> The *Antioche*-poet notes that the King of the Tafurs was given the honour of crowning Godfrey of Bouillon, making him the first king of Jerusalem. This scene appears in full in the *Jérusalem*.<sup>90</sup> Interestingly, Godfrey actually declined the position of king in 1099, agreeing instead to be Advocate of the Holy Sepulchre, but the historical subtleties of the assumption of power in Jerusalem after it was taken by the crusading force are glossed over in both poems. Nevertheless, stating that Godfrey was crowned in the newly conquered Holy City by the King of the Tafurs highlights the Tafurs' prominent role in the trilogy's narrative of the First Crusade.

Furthermore, unlike Guibert, the *Antioche* and the *Jérusalem* provide several detailed character portraits of the Tafurs. As Janet has shown in her analysis of the anatomy of characters in the OFCC, the inclusion of character portraits in these poems is somewhat unusual as most descriptions of physical appearance and personality in *chansons de geste* are integrated into scenes of action so as not to disrupt the flow of the narrative.<sup>91</sup> In the core trilogy of the OFCC, however, the Tafurs are extensively described, providing the audience with information about their eating habits, clothing, weapons, and appearance. The set piece that describes the Tafurs marching from Antioch to engage in battle with the Turkish forces, for example, claims:

Had you been there you been there you would have seen countless  
tattered rags, countless long beards and matted heads of hair, countless  
thin and desiccated and faded [bodies], countless twisted spines and  
swollen stomachs, countless crippled legs and feet sticking out at all angles,  
countless burnt calves and worn-out shoes.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>89</sup> *Antioche*, p. 167, l. 135 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 176).

<sup>90</sup> *Jérusalem*, p. 152, l. 157 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 272).

<sup>91</sup> Janet, pp. 100–101.

<sup>92</sup> *Antioche*, p. 407, l. 326 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 294): 'La peüssiés veïr tant vies dras depanés / Et tante longe barbe et tans ciés hurepés, / Tans magres et tans ses



Here, the Tafurs are characterised by their deformed bodies and their ragged, impoverished, and famished appearance. Much like traditional characterisations of the savage literary ‘Saracen’, the Tafurs are also depicted as having frightening features: they have unruly hair, they roll their eyes and grind their teeth.<sup>93</sup> These teeth are specifically described as being long and incredibly sharp.<sup>94</sup> Janet’s analysis of how bodies are depicted in the core trilogy of the OFCC argues that the bodies of Turks and Tafurs are specifically distinguished by their mouth (*goule*), teeth (*dents*) and throat (*guitron*).<sup>95</sup> Indeed, depictions of Muslim characters in first-hand accounts and second-generation chronicles of the campaign demonstrate a similar focus on these areas in their characterisations of the Christians’ enemy. The *GF*-author and Peter Tudebode, for example, describe how the Turks ‘began to shriek and snarl and shout’ (*coeperunt stridere et garrere ac clamare*) outside the walls of Antioch and Fulcher depicts the Turks at Dorylaeum as howling noisily (*ululatibus concrepantes*).<sup>96</sup> Equally, Robert the Monk and Baldric of Bourgueil describe the

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et tans descolorés, / Et tante torte eskine et tans ventres enflés, / Et tante jambe torte et tans pies bestornés, / Et tante mustiaus rostis et tans caukains crevés.’

<sup>93</sup> See, for instance, *Antioche*, pp. 438–39, l. 353 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 310) and *Jérusalem*, p. 177, l. 184 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 291). The literary conventions for depicting ‘Saracens’ have been well explored. For a starting point, see John V. Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008); Lynn Tarte Ramey, *Christian, Saracen and Genre in Medieval French Literature: Imagination and Cultural Interaction in the French Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Jean Flori, ‘En marge de l’idée de guerre sainte: L’image des musulmans dans la mentalité populaire en Occident (xi<sup>e</sup>–xii<sup>e</sup> siècles)’, in *L’Occident musulman et l’Occident chrétien au moyen âge*, ed. by Mohammed Hammam (Rabat: Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines, 1995), pp. 209–21. On images of Muslims in *chansons de geste* specifically, see Norman Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens: An Interpretation of the Chansons de Geste* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1984); 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 J. Nicholson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), pp. 49–65; and Simon Thomas Parsons, ‘The Use of *Chanson de geste* Motifs in the Latin Texts of the First Crusade c.1095–1145’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2015).

<sup>94</sup> *Jérusalem*, p. 201, l. 207 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 309): ‘Plus ont trençans les dens que n’est alesne agüe’.

<sup>95</sup> Janet, p. 39.

<sup>96</sup> *GF*, p. 40; *PT*, pp. 74 and 77; and, *FC*, p. 194.

Turks gnashing their teeth (*strident dentibus*) and barking like dogs (*canum latriant*).<sup>97</sup>

These visceral noises and behaviours originate in the mouth and throat and attach a sense of animality and savagery to Turkish bodies. The same connotations appear in the *Antioche's* depiction of the Tafurs' long, sharp, gnashing teeth.

In comparison, when discussing the features of Frankish protagonists, the *Antioche*-poet uses more complimentary anatomical nouns such as *ciere* or *façon* (face).<sup>98</sup> On several occasions, for example, Godfrey is described as 'noble-faced' (*a le ciere hardie*).<sup>99</sup> These anatomical nouns are often accompanied with formulaic modifiers like *clere* (bright or clear, referring to beauty) or *bel* (handsome) which render the small character portraits attached to Frankish protagonists innately laudatory.<sup>100</sup> During the battle of Antioch, for instance, Achard of Montmerle is described as having a 'bright face' (*a le clere façon*) and in a reference to a poem from the beginning of the OFCC, Godfrey's ancestor, the Swan Knight, is portrayed as having a 'handsome face' (*a le bele façon*).<sup>101</sup> These depictions work within an ideological framework that ties moral connotations to outward physical appearances. The pejorative terms that focus on the Turks' and Tafurs' faces and mouths are part of a discriminatory anatomical vocabulary that attaches connotations of ugliness, animality, and monstrosity to the Turks and Tafurs in the narrative.<sup>102</sup> This sets the Tafurs apart from other crusaders and highlights their 'otherness'.

Whereas portraits of Turkish characters are wholly negative, Tafur otherness is somewhat mitigated through complimentary comparisons to animals like lions and qualifiers that celebrate the Tafurs' strength. In the *Jérusalem*, for instance, the poet recalls how the Tafurs 'drew themselves up imperiously and glared fixedly like lions' at their

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<sup>97</sup> RM, pp. 25, 27, and 42; BB, p. 50.

<sup>98</sup> Janet, p. 47.

<sup>99</sup> *Antioche*, p. 225, l. 179; and p. 385, l. 309 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 204 and 284).

<sup>100</sup> Janet, pp. 47–60.

<sup>101</sup> *Antioche*, p. 372, l. 300; and p. 441, l. 355 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 277 and 311).

<sup>102</sup> Janet, pp. 37–39.

enemy.<sup>103</sup> In medieval literature, lions often symbolised courage and a vigilant defence of the faith as well as evoking a sense of fierceness.<sup>104</sup> These would have been considered positive attributes for those participating in what was believed to be a divinely sanctioned enterprise. In the *Antioche* we also see the first use of ‘lion-hearted’ as an adjective to describe courageous leaders, a byname that would eventually be attached to the crusading king, Richard I of England.<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, strength is a particularly revered characteristic in portraits of the crusaders, not only as a marker of masculine and chivalric ideals but as an attribute that facilitates good deeds. When combined with a focus on the Tafurs’ mouths, teeth and throat, the Tafurs’ strength renders them morally and socially ambiguous, a fearsome group with the ability to devour their enemies. Indeed, the first reference to the Tafurs that does not anticipate their role in the conclusion of the campaign immediately prefigures their cannibalism at Antioch. While setting up camp for the first siege of the city alongside the other crusade contingents, the Tafurs ‘swore by God who created the world that if they could get their hands on the pagans they would gobble them up’.<sup>106</sup> This is the first time cannibalism is directly linked to the Tafurs in the *Antioche*, a connection that becomes an identifying feature of the group throughout the trilogy.

### Cannibalism in *Laisse* 174

The *Antioche*-poet’s treatment of Tafur cannibalism during the first siege of Antioch is spread over a hundred lines and is presented in two ways: *Laisse* 174 provides an overview of how and why the cannibalism occurred, and *Laisse* 175 describes in more detail how

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<sup>103</sup> *Jérusalem*, p. 176, l. 183 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 290): ‘Fierement se contient, regards ont de lions.’

<sup>104</sup> Instances in which crusaders have been positively compared to lions have also been discussed in Chapter 2, p. 97.

<sup>105</sup> Natasha R. Hodgson, ‘Lions, Tigers, and Bears: Encounters with Wild Animals and Bestial Imagery in the Context of Crusading to the Latin East’, *Viator*, 44.1 (2013), 65–95 (p. 66).

<sup>106</sup> *Antioche*, p. 170, l. 138 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 177): ‘Et jurent Damediu qui forma tout le mont / Que s’il tient paiens as dens les mengeront’.

what was initially an act of survival transformed into an anthropophagical spectacle.<sup>107</sup> The next two sections of this chapter will address *Lais*es 174 and 175 separately to examine this shift in narrative focus and interpretation of crusader cannibalism.

Of the narrative sources examined thus far, only this trilogy of epic poems suggests that crusader cannibalism was incited by Peter the Hermit. As discussed in Chapter Two, Peter the Hermit is not presented favourably in second-generation chronicles of the First Crusade, but in the OFCC he is given a more prominent role as the instigator of the campaign. While he is not villainised in the trilogy, he is depicted as somewhat morally ambiguous. His actions are for the most part honourable, but he is depicted as having long, unwashed hair, a white beard, sharp teeth, and a dragon's gaze.<sup>108</sup> In this description we see the same anatomical vocabulary used to describe Peter as is used in depictions of the cannibalistic Tafurs and the man-eating dragon fought by Christians in the *Chétifs*.<sup>109</sup> This description distorts the figure of a man of God and aligns him with marginal, if not deviant, characters in the narrative. Indeed, Peter is often set alongside the Tafur King, giving the Tafurs both a secular and a religious leader in a microcosmic reflection of the crusading army. It is during an interaction between Peter and the Tafur King that cannibalism is introduced into the narrative.

Like the other chronicles examined in this study thus far, the *Antioche* situates crusader cannibalism during a period of extreme dearth. These circumstances of scarcity are primarily outlined in *Lais*se 158, which recalls the first siege of Antioch. The poet states:

I cannot pass on without saying more about the terrible famine the Christians suffered for the salvation of their souls. Anyone lucky enough to happen across a small loaf was delighted to give nine bezants for it; the raw thigh of a donkey fetched 100 sous, a pear (if available) five sous, and a couple of much enjoyed beans cost a denier. The mass of the army found

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<sup>107</sup> For the episode of Tafur cannibalism during the first siege of Antioch, see *Antioche*, pp. 216–221, l. 174–175 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, pp. 200–202).

<sup>108</sup> *Jérusalem*, p. 191–92, l. 197–98 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 302–3).

<sup>109</sup> Janet, p. 60. *Chétifs*, p. 67, l. 89 (trans. by Meyer, p. 123): 'Le poi lot dur et lonc, al Diable est sanblans; / Les ongles et les dens afileés et trençans'.

themselves reduced to eating their boots and shoes without seasoning;  
they even ate the soles.<sup>110</sup>

While some of the items for sale – the thigh of a donkey, a pear, and beans – are original to the *Antioche*, the extortionate prices listed, along with the suggestion that the crusaders were forced to consume shoe leather, reflect the descriptions of dearth presented in first-hand and second-generation accounts of the Antiochene famine. Again, the reiteration of these details in both Latin chronicles and vernacular poetry suggests that the *Antioche*-poet was drawing on recognisable literary tropes as well as records of experience captured in first-hand and second-generation accounts of the campaign to construct its narrative of events. This is significant as it illuminates thematic and narrative continuity across what have been considered as distinct literary genres, pointing, in turn, to a collective memory of the events of the campaign and the crusaders' experience of hunger.

Whereas the first-hand and second-generation chronicles of the campaign do not discuss anthropophagy until the crusading force reach and besiege the city of Ma'arra, it is within this context of dearth at Antioch that crusader cannibalism occurs in the core trilogy of the OFCC. Indeed, halfway through *Laisse* 174, the audience's attention is once again directed to the lack of food and low morale suffered by the crusading force during the first siege of Antioch. What follows is a dialogue between Peter the Hermit and the King of the Tafurs in which Peter proposes an unconventional way of assuaging the Tafurs' severe hunger:

Meanwhile back in the Christian army scarcity was the order of the day. There was little if any food and morale was low. Lord Peter the Hermit was in his tent when the King of the Tafurs came to see him, accompanied by more than a thousand of his followers. All of them had stomachs swollen by hunger. 'My lord,' they said, 'for holy charity's sake tell us what to do. In truth, we are dying of hunger and deprivation.' Lord Peter replied: 'That is because you cannot bring yourself to do what needs to be done. Go and

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<sup>110</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 193–194, l. 158 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, pp. 188–189): 'Molt fu grans li famine, bien doit on parler, / Que Crestien souffrirent por les armes salver. / Car qui un petit pain i peüst recouvrer / Volentiers en fesist .IX. bezans fins doner. / Le quise d'ane crue font cent sol acater, / .V. sols vent on le poire quant on le puet trover; / II. Feves a denier, la ot grant desirer, / Petit i remest huese a mangier ne solller, / Nes les tacons dessous manjuent sans saler.'

fetch those [dead] Turks lying over there on the battlefield. They would taste perfectly alright if you cooked and seasoned them properly.’ The King of the Tafurs said, ‘You’re right, you know.’<sup>111</sup>

The reference to the Christian army suffering from scarcity at the beginning of this scene mixes the crusaders and the Tafurs together in common distress. This suggests that the Tafurs were not necessarily perceived to be a homogenous group completely apart from the crusading force.<sup>112</sup> Despite Peter’s peculiar character portrait, it is important to note that in the *Antioche* Peter’s suggestion that cannibalism might alleviate the Tafurs’ hunger is not depicted as a wicked idea; instead, it is offered as a practical solution to the Tafurs’ problem. The fact that the *Antioche*-poet presents this interaction as a civilised exchange between Peter and the King of the Tafurs highlights the logic behind such a proposition, as does the suggestion that with proper culinary preparation – including seasoning – human flesh would not only satisfy hunger but would also be palatable.

The Tafur King takes Peter’s advice and assembles a horde of ten thousand men. They ‘flayed the Turks, cutting off the skin, then boiled and roasted the flesh’ and ‘ate their fill, although there was no bread to go with it.’<sup>113</sup> The stages of cannibalism outlined here are not dissimilar to the three-stage process depicted in chronicles from the *GF*-tradition. There is a brevity to these descriptions which distils the act of cannibalism into its component parts: butchering the flesh from the corpses, cooking the meat, and then consuming it. The conciseness of the *Antioche*-poet’s first mention of Tafur cannibalism complements the almost dismissive way Peter the Hermit suggests it. The lack of

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<sup>111</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 217–18, l. 174 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 200): ‘Crestien sont en l’ost, moult i a grant cierté; / N’orent point de vitaille, tot furent esgaré. / Dans Pieres li hermits fu ens enmi son tré, / Li rois Tafurs i vint, avoec lui son barné, / Plus en i ot de mil, tot sont de faim enflé: / “Sire, conselliés nos, por sainte carité! / Por voir morons de faim et de caitiveté.” / Et respondi Pieres: “C’est par vo lasqueté! / Alés, prandés ces Turs qui la sont par cel pré, / Bon ierent a mangier s’il sont quit et salé.” / Et dist li rois Tafurs: “Vos dites verité.”’

<sup>112</sup> Uhlig, p. 365.

<sup>113</sup> *Antioche*, p. 218, l. 174 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 200): ‘Les Turs ont escorcié, s’en ont le quir osté, / En l’eve et el rostier ont le car quisiné; / Asse zen ont mangiet, mais de pain n’ont gosté.’

embellishment to this account of anthropophagy further implies that it was a rational and necessary act to combat starvation within the ranks of the Tafurs. Indeed, as Marion Uhlig suggests in her assessment of the relationship between Christians and Muslims in the trilogy, the *Antioche*-poet's reference to a lack of bread at the end of the account of Tafur cannibalism recalls the situation of shortage that acts as the backdrop to this episode, effectively legitimising the anthropophagy as an act of survival.<sup>114</sup>

The vocabulary used to identify parts of cannibalised bodies in this episode is also significant. When suggesting cannibalism, Peter the Hermit does not attach an anatomical noun to the Turkish corpses intended for consumption; he simply tells the Tafur King to collect 'those Turks' (*ces Turs*) from nearby. No mention is made of the fact that these Turks are deceased, although it is implied. It is only when the Tafurs start to butcher the corpses that the collective noun 'those Turks' is associated with tangible human forms. The *Antioche*-poet explains, for example, that the Tafurs first removed the Turks' skin (*quir*). In the trilogy, *quir* is usually reserved for references to the skin of animals, specifically processed skin like the leather used in war machines or the Tafur King's helmet.<sup>115</sup> *Quir* is also used on some occasions to describe living or unprocessed skin, like the hide of the anthropophagous dragon in the *Chétifs* and the pack animal skin 'complete with hair' eaten by starving crusaders during the second siege of Antioch.<sup>116</sup> The suggestion that animal skin was cooked with the hair still on it indicates that the animal was not processed properly, whether out of negligence caused by desperation or in an attempt not to waste any part of the animal that could be consumed. This creates a repulsive image that conveys the desperation of the famine.

The only cases in which *quir* is used to refer to human anatomy are in descriptions of Muslim bodies. The physical form of Christian and Muslim characters is most frequently

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<sup>114</sup> Uhlig, p. 362.

<sup>115</sup> Janet, p. 34. *Jérusalem*, p. 81 and p. 102. (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 215 and p. 230).

<sup>116</sup> *Chétifs*, p. 38, l. 52 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 98); *Antioche*, p. 346–47, l. 284 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 267).

referred to as *cors* (body) in the trilogy. *Cors* variously alludes to ‘a body’ in the sense of an individual or to the physical and perishable site where injuries could be sustained in active combat.<sup>117</sup> That *quir* is used to describe the physical state of Turkish corpses – specifically illustrating that their skin had been detached from the rest of their body – adds a layer of anatomical nuance to the scene that likens the Turks’ bodies to that of processed animals intended for consumption. This serves to dissociate ‘those Turks’ from physical human forms ultimately dehumanising the bodies cannibalised by the Tafurs.

The use of the term *car* (flesh) to identify the part of the Turks’ bodies that was boiled and roasted by the Tafurs is also noteworthy. Animal flesh or meat (*car*) appears in records of the food carried by the crusaders on their journey to the Holy Land. Its presence in these lists is formulaic and often completes a food triad – *pain* (bread), *vin* (wine), *car* (meat) – that indicates that the crusading force was well provisioned.<sup>118</sup> Of the anatomical nouns reserved for the human body in the trilogy, however, *car* is used relatively infrequently, suggesting that its use to describe the flesh of the Turks in *Laisse* 174 dehumanises the Christians’ enemy.<sup>119</sup> Moreover, wounds received on the battlefield that might reveal the crusaders’ flesh, while numerous, are not explored in great anatomical detail in the trilogy. As Janet has demonstrated, the *chanson de geste* genre tends to focus on blows struck rather than blows suffered, so much more attention is paid to the mutilation of Muslim antagonists because these injuries were testament to their defeat in combat.<sup>120</sup>

In the *Antioche*, *car* is specifically used in transgressive scenes of Muslim mutilation.<sup>121</sup> In a set of *laissez similaires* during the first siege of Antioch, for example, Garsion – the historical Yaghi-Siyan, Turkish ruler of Antioch – is so afraid that his city will

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<sup>117</sup> See Janet’s analysis of anatomical terminology for the body in the core trilogy of the OFCC, pp. 24–35.

<sup>118</sup> Janet, pp. 316–317.

<sup>119</sup> Janet, pp. 30–31.

<sup>120</sup> Janet, pp. 377–78.

<sup>121</sup> Janet, p. 31.



be captured he sends an embassy to the Sultan of Persia asking for help.<sup>122</sup> To authenticate his message, Garsion takes a blade and slices off his beard ‘complete with skin [*quir*] and flesh [*car*]’ which is promptly wrapped and delivered to the sultan with the plea for aid.<sup>123</sup> This moment is of such morbid interest to the *Antioche*-poet that it is reiterated in three successive *laissez*. Like the episode of Tafur cannibalism, *car* and *quir* are used in this scene to detail the parts of Garsion’s face that have been affected by his actions. In this act of self-mutilation incited by concern about the crusaders’ military prowess, these terms manifest as sites of gruesome bodily damage. This demonstrates an anatomical specificity not seen in depictions of crusaders’ injuries that reveals the perishability of Turkish bodies and highlights the crusading force’s ability to dominate them. In the cannibalism seen in *Laisse* 174, the use of *quir* and *car* therefore dehumanises the Turks and establishes Christian superiority over the bodies of their enemies.

After relaying the conversation between Peter the Hermit and the Tafur King and the Tafurs’ subsequent cannibalism, the *Antioche*-poet turns his attention to the reaction of the inhabitants of Antioch as they witness the anthropophagy unfold before them:

The pagans were absolutely terrified. Alerted by the smell of meat cooking, they all hung over the walls. The beggars had an audience of twenty thousand pagans, every last Turk sobbing and heartbroken as they watched their own people being eaten.<sup>124</sup>

Neither the *GF* nor Robert, Baldric or Guibert provide any extended account of the Antiochenes’ reaction to the sight of their own people being cannibalised, although Guibert briefly acknowledges that the women of Antioch ‘feasted’ on the sight of bloodshed.<sup>125</sup> What is perhaps most significant about the *Antioche*-poet’s proposed version of the Turk’s response is that the inhabitants of Antioch were prompted to observe the Tafurs’ actions by

<sup>122</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 241–243, l. 192–194 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, pp. 212–214).

<sup>123</sup> *Antioche*, p. 242, l. 193 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 213).

<sup>124</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 218–19, l. 174 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 200): ‘De cel furent paien durement esfreé; / Por le flair de la car sont al mur acouté, / De .XX. mil paiens sont li Ribaut regardé, / K’il n’l a un seul Turc qui n’ait des iex ploré; / De lor gent qu’il manjuent ont grant dol demené’.

<sup>125</sup> GN, p. 192.

the smell of cooking meat. None of the second-generation Benedictine chronicles examined in this study note the smell of cooking human flesh in their descriptions of cannibalism, though they all reference the stench of decaying corpses in the aftermath of the battle of Antioch and Jerusalem in scenes taken almost verbatim from the *GF*.<sup>126</sup> The suggestion that cooked human flesh smelt like a gastronomically prepared meat – and was not, therefore, immediately recognised as evidence of cannibalism – blurs the boundary between culinarily prepared food and taboo foodstuff, a sensory deception that makes witnessing the cannibalism more horrifying to the inhabitants of Antioch.

Referring to the smell of the scene also highlights the experience of other senses in this visual spectacle. This is complemented by the suggestion that every one of the twenty thousand people watching the Tafurs were sobbing, an audible expression of grief.<sup>127</sup> Thus, in this short depiction of the Antiochenes' reaction to witnessing Tafur cannibalism the *Antioche*-poet conjures up the senses of smell, sight, and sound for the audience. This lends a performativity to the scene that detracts from the act of cannibalism itself and refocuses the audience's attention on the response that the Tafurs' anthropophagy garners in the narrative.

While adding a sense of performativity to the Turks' reaction to Tafur cannibalism reflects the fact that these poems were typically sung in public and needed to capture the attention of a potentially restless audience, it also attaches a value to the anthropophagical meal. Jean-Claude Mühlethaler suggests that in order to maintain a heroic register and a consistent pace, thirteenth-century *chansons de geste* avoided drawing attention to the

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<sup>126</sup> *GF*, p. 48 and p. 92; *BB*, p. 92; *GN*, pp. 207–208, 314, and 336. William of Malmesbury, an early-twelfth-century English writer, observes that in Antioch some crusaders 'made the dead support the dying, feeding on human flesh; but far away in the mountains, for fear their comrades might be revolted by the smell of burning meat.' William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. by R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson, and M. Winterbottom, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1998), I, p. 635.

<sup>127</sup> *Antioche*, p. 219, l. 174.

needs of the body unless they served a narrative purpose.<sup>128</sup> For this reason, extended descriptions of meals in epic poetry tend to have a symbolic significance. This relies on the fact that eating is not only a biological act, but also a social and cultural performance. *Laisse* 174 demonstrates that in the context of the narrative the Tafurs' anthropophagy is valuable as it successfully abates their hunger while also terrifying their enemy. This fear is further confirmed in a line attributed to a Turkish voice at the end of *Laisse* 174:

“Alas Lord Mohammed! This is appallingly cruel behaviour! Make sure you take vengeance on those who have put you to such shame and insulted you beyond belief by eating your own people. These are not Frenchman - they are living devils! May Mohammed curse them and their Christian religion! If that is the sort of thing they are capable of, we shall be humiliated and defeated.”<sup>129</sup>

The direct appeal to Mohammed in this passage mirrors those entreaties made to God by the narrator on behalf of the crusaders, creating a parallel between the protagonists and the antagonists in the *Antioche's* narrative of the campaign. This, along with the emotional response attributed to the Turkish inhabitants of Antioch highlights the humanity of the Turks which is not often explored in depictions of ‘pagan otherness’ and does not align with the dehumanising vocabulary used to describe their bodies.

The Turks' humanity is also demonstrated in the scene that precedes the episode of cannibalism. *Laisse* 174 begins with a description of the good treatment of a crusader named Rainalt Porcet who was captured by Turks and taken into the city of Antioch.<sup>130</sup> The only near-contemporary references to Rainalt's imprisonment are in Peter Tudebode's chronicle of the campaign and a text commonly known as the *Historia belli sacri* (c. 1130),

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<sup>128</sup> Jean-Claude Mühlethaler, ‘De la frugalité de l'ermite au faste de prince. Les codes alimentaires dans la littérature médiévale’ in *Manger: Cours public de l'université 1995–1996* (Paris: Payot, 1996), pp. 7–35 (p. 14). For an overview of the field of medieval gastronomy that calls for an interdisciplinary approach to examining representations of food and eating in medieval literature see Nelly Labère, ‘La nourriture dans la littérature française du Moyen Âge’, *Food & History*, 10 (2012), 180–187.

<sup>129</sup> *Antioche*, p. 219, l. 174 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 200): “Ahi! Mahomet sire, com grande cruelté! / Quar prent de cels venjance qui si t'ont vergondé, / Quant il te gent manjuent, tot t'ont despersioné, / Ço ne sont pas François, ançois sont vif malfé. / Mahomés les maldie et lor crestienté! / Quar s'il le puent faire, tot sommes vergondé!”

<sup>130</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 217–18, l. 174 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, pp. 199–200).

which was compiled by an anonymous monk of Monte Cassino and covers the events in Jerusalem from 1095 to 1131.<sup>131</sup> The *Antioche* notes that after unsuccessfully trying to convert Rainalt to Islam, Garsion calls for doctors to treat his wounds and ‘he [Rainalt] was allowed to choose clothes and shoes and [was] given plenty to eat and drink.’<sup>132</sup> There may be some tongue-in-cheek humour at play here given that Porcet is a derivative of the word *porcelot*, meaning piglet. As a result, an audience might infer that the Turks were kind to Rainalt ‘the Piglet’ because of Islam’s prohibition of consuming pork, alluding to Garsion’s failure to convert him if consumption is read as a metaphor for the assimilatory process of conversion. Nevertheless, the civilised treatment of a Christian prisoner by the Turks inside the walls of Antioch stands in marked contrast to the behaviour of the Tafurs outside the city who show no respect to their enemies, dead or alive, and remedy their own starvation at the expense of the Turks.

Furthermore, it is significant that the Turkish voice assumes those who committed the acts of cannibalism were part of the ‘Frenchmen’ collective. In fact, there is no indication that the Turks recognise the Tafurs as a separate group until the *Jérusalem*. The assimilation of the man-eating Tafurs into the heroic ranks of the crusading force, even if only through the eyes of the Turks, calls into question the integrity of the crusaders’ collective identity. Indeed, the *Antioche*-poet describes the cannibals as ‘living devils’ which provides a neat parallel to those instances in the text where the crusaders refer to the Turks as ‘the race of the Devil’.<sup>133</sup> As Uhlig suggests, by being associated with the shameless and immoral Tafurs, the crusaders momentarily cease to embody the values of morality and honour that legitimise the campaign.<sup>134</sup> While the crusaders’ culpability for the

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<sup>131</sup> PT, pp. 79–80; *Hystoria de via et recuperatione Antiochiaie atque Ierusalymarum (olim Tudebodus imitatus et continuatus): I Normanni d’Italia alla prima Crociata in una cronaca cassinese*, ed. by Edoardo D’Angelo, Edizione nazionale dei testi mediolatini, 23 (Florence: SISMELE, Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2009), pp. 58–59.

<sup>132</sup> *Antioche*, p. 217, l. 174 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 200): ‘Vestus ert et caucies tot a sa volente, / A boire et a mangier avoit a grnat plenté’.

<sup>133</sup> *Antioche*, p. 202, l. 162 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 193).

<sup>134</sup> Uhlig, p. 374.

Tafurs' transgression loses some credibility because it comes from the voice of a Turk, we do see a conscious attempt from the *Antioche*-poet to further mitigate any potential damage done to the collective identity of the crusaders by linking cannibalism to military prowess. The anonymous Turk claims that if cannibalism 'is the sort of thing [these Franks] are capable of, we shall be humiliated and defeated'.<sup>135</sup> Here, cannibalism, or more precisely, the ability to commit cannibalism, is specifically associated with an inevitable Christian victory. This positions the Tafurs' anthropophagy as a marker of the crusaders' determination to emerge victorious. That this is a source of humiliation for the Turks also renders cannibalism a beneficial demoralisation tactic for the crusading force. Thus, while it is noted elsewhere in *Laisse* 174 with no uncertainty that it was the Tafurs alone who committed acts of cannibalism in Antioch, here the *Antioche*-poet tactically assimilates the Tafurs into the main body of the crusading army to highlight the crusaders' commitment to their venture. This ultimately reflects a notion established in Raymond of Aguilers' and Guibert of Nogent's chronicles of the campaign: man-eating could have value as a military strategy.

### Cannibalism in *Laisse* 175

The overview of Tafur cannibalism and the Antiochenes' reaction to it provided in the second half of *Laisse* 174 is reiterated and developed in more detail in *Laisse* 175. This demonstrates the technique of *enchâînement*, where the beginning of a *laisse* echoes the end of the preceding one. Critically, *Laisse* 175 continues to present the preparation of human flesh for consumption beyond an act of survival. *Laisse* 175 begins:

Now the King of the Tafurs along with his numerous companions set to work with a will. They used their sharp keen knives to skin the Turks down on the battlefields; they carved them into joints in full view of the pagans and boiled or barbecued them till they were done to a turn. Then they gobbled them eagerly without bread or any seasoning, saying to each other: 'This is absolutely delicious – much better than pork or roast

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<sup>135</sup> *Antioche*, p. 219, l. 174 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 200).

gammon. More fool anyone who dies among this kind of plenty.’ The King and his barons ate to their hearts’ content.<sup>136</sup>

This passage highlights the Tafurs’ knife skills and makes specific reference to their ability to carefully butcher the Turkish corpses. Throughout the trilogy, the Tafurs are consistently depicted wielding sharp knives (*coutels trençons*) in battle, along with other unconventional weapons such as stones, large hammers, clubs, sharp axes, *guisearmes*, and scythes.<sup>137</sup> For the most part, these are all agricultural tools diverted from their primary function, and can be classified in two ways: those that strike and those that slice.<sup>138</sup> The suggestion that the Tafurs used their sharp knives in the culinary preparation of Turkish bodies is particularly poignant, therefore, as it translates what was an unconventional weapon in active combat into an appropriate tool for butchering human flesh for consumption.

Furthermore, the Tafurs’ knives are consistently referred to as *trençons* (sharp). This is the same adjective used to describe the Tafurs’ teeth on several occasions. Just as the Tafurs’ knives maintain a dual purpose – slicing men on the battlefield and butchering Turkish bodies for consumption – the Tafurs’ teeth are both literally involved in ‘gobbling up’ Turkish flesh and symbolise that threat of consumption in active combat. During the battle of Antioch, for instance, the *Antioche*-poet notes:

[The Tafurs] flung themselves straight into the thick of battle, raining down blows with stones and maces, razor-sharp knives and tempered axe-blades. They sliced off numerous pagan heads; anyone who could not do this attacked with stones that came to hand. They were a daunting sight, their hair standing on end, running towards their enemies teeth bared, so that anyone who saw them thought he was going to be their next meal.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> *Antioche*, p. 219, l. 175 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 201): ‘Or est li rois Tagurs auques esvertués, / Et il et sa compaigne don’t il i ot assés; / A lor coutels qu’il ont trençans etofilés / Escorçoient les Turs, aval parmi les prés; / Voiant paiens, les ont par pieces decolpés, / En l’eve et es carbons les ont bien quisinés. / Volentiers les manjuent, sans pain, tos dessalés; / Et dist li uns a l’autre: “Molt est cis savourés, / Mius vaut que cars de porc ne que bacons ullés, / Dehés ait qui morra tant com en ait assés.” / Ricement se conroie li rois et ses barnés.’

<sup>137</sup> For an example of the Tafurs’ wielding unconventional weapons in the battle of Antioch see *Antioche*, pp. 438–39, l. 353 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 310).

<sup>138</sup> Janet, p. 172.

<sup>139</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 438–439, l. 353 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 310): ‘Puis que ele se fu en l’estor embatur, / Mains cols i ont fergus de pierre et de maçue / Et de coutels trençans et de hace esmolue; / A maint felon paien ont la teste tolue; / Ki n’l pot avenir de

This vivid image collates several characteristics considered to be markers of the Tafurs' otherness: their unconventional weapons, their unruly hair, and their teeth. In this scene, however, these indicators of otherness become symbolic of the Tafurs' military prowess and fearsome reputation. Indeed, the *Antioche*-poet's discussion of the Tafurs' fighting style fits seamlessly into a series of *laissez similaires* that describe how crusade leaders courageously and brutally fought their enemies in battle. Hugh of Vermandois, Godfrey of Bouillon, Robert of Flanders, Tancred, and Robert of Normandy are all formulaically depicted as landing such heavy blows in battle that they tear through the golden helmets and mail of enemy soldiers, slicing into their heads and hearts.<sup>140</sup> Significantly, the Tafurs' use of knives, in conjunction with the visibility of their teeth, specifically recalls their earlier anthropophagy. This renders them a 'daunting sight' for their enemies and highlights a link alluded to in *Laisse* 175 that connects the culinary preparation of human flesh for consumption with military prowess. Within this context, the Tafurs' alterity does not maintain any negative connotations. Instead, their brutality is commendable because it aligns with that of the crusade leaders and allusions to their anthropophagy confirm their fearsome reputation.

Furthermore, the verb *quisiner* (to cook) used to describe the cooking process of human flesh in *Laisse* 174 is modified in *Laisse* 175 with the adverb *bien* (well), emphasising the quality of the Tafurs' cooking and drawing attention to the gastronomic process involved in preparing human flesh for consumption.<sup>141</sup> The core OFCC trilogy has a much more varied vocabulary of culinary preparation than the chronicles of the *GF*-tradition: *escorcier* (to flay or skin), *haller* (to dry out), *decolper par pieces* (to cut or butcher into pieces), *quisiner en l'ève et el rostier* (to cook by boiling and roasting) are all used in the

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bon caillau i rue; / Orible gent estoit et molt sanbloit herue, / Tit as dens eskigniés lor est sore corue, A celui qui le voit est que le manjue'.

<sup>140</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 427–431, l. 340–344 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 304–306).

<sup>141</sup> Uhlig, p. 362.

trilogy to denote the cooking process of human flesh.<sup>142</sup> Placing an emphasis on the various ways in which human flesh is cooked removes some of cannibalism's savage connotations, though it does not prevent the act from being perceived as inherently unacceptable.

Indeed, like *Laisse* 174, *Laisse* 175 notes that the Tafurs consumed the human flesh without seasoning and bread, but, in this case, the suggestion that the flesh was eaten by itself appears to be less a reflection of the circumstances of starvation that necessitated cannibalism and more a commentary on the ironic incivility of eating meat without its usual accompaniment. Mühlethaler posits in his analysis of *Le Chevalier au Lion* (c. 1178–1181), an Arthurian romance composed by the French poet Chrétien de Troyes, that the presence of salt, pepper, and toasted bread at the dinner table was a marker of civility.<sup>143</sup> In the *Jérusalem*, Peter the Hermit reiterates this idea to highlight the savagery of the Tafurs. When asked to describe the Tafurs to the Sultan of Persia, Peter claims the Tafurs 'are truly terrifying: they eat your men without so much as a seasoning of salt or pepper'.<sup>144</sup> The lack of salt and bread in *Laisse* 175, therefore, demonstrates a departure from the depiction of cannibalism as an act of survival as it calls into question the level of the Tafurs' culinary preparation rather than the morality of the act of cannibalism itself.

Despite the Tafurs' failure to season the meat or provide bread alongside it (presumably due to the famine ravaging the crusading force at this time), the Tafurs exclaim that the prepared Turkish flesh tasted 'absolutely delicious'.<sup>145</sup> This confirms Peter the Hermit's statement from the previous *laisse*, that human flesh would 'taste perfectly alright' if prepared properly.<sup>146</sup> Peter's prediction is in fact exceeded with the suggestion that the Turks' flesh tasted better than pork and gammon. Likening the taste of Turkish corpses to culinarily prepared meat may be slight at Islam's prohibition of pork products,

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<sup>142</sup> These types of culinary preparation can be found in *Antioche*, pp. 216–221, l. 174–175 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, pp. 200–202).

<sup>143</sup> Mühlethaler, p. 18.

<sup>144</sup> *Jérusalem*, p. 216, l. 223 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 321).

<sup>145</sup> *Antioche*, p. 219, l. 175: 'Molt est cis savourés'.

<sup>146</sup> *Antioche*, p. 218, l. 174 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 200).



but perhaps more explicitly completes the conversion of human flesh into a gastronomic dish.<sup>147</sup> The scene in *Laisse* 175 of the *Antioche* is no longer focussed on the Tafurs assuaging their hunger, instead it emphasises the abundance of edible human flesh hitherto unrecognised as a potential provision for the army.

Janet argues that because the *Antioche*-poet specifically references the taste of human flesh in his account, the Tafurs' anthropophagy should be interpreted as an episode of '*cannibalisme de goût*' (cannibalism of taste, or gastronomic cannibalism).<sup>148</sup> Indeed, Janet implies that the Tafurs continued to consume human flesh because they liked the flavour.<sup>149</sup> As Vincent Vandenberg notes, in medieval literature gastronomic cannibalism is often presented as a parody of socially accepted cooking, involving the preparation, preservation and even the selling of human flesh as a meat consumed by choice.<sup>150</sup> This subcategory of cannibalism is, for example, apparent in thirteenth-century depictions of the Mongols. Early missionaries to Mongol-held territories such as John of Plano Carpini (c. 1185–1252) and Simon of Saint-Quentin (*fl.* 1245–1248) claim in their work that the Mongols ate gastronomically prepared human flesh not because they were starving, but because they enjoyed the taste.<sup>151</sup> Taking this definition into consideration, I would dispute Janet's suggestion that the Tafurs specifically committed acts of gastronomic cannibalism. While several culinary processes occur in the episode, the *Antioche*-poet consistently positions the Tafurs' anthropophagy against a backdrop of dearth and famine. Indeed, Peter the Hermit initially proposed cannibalism in *Laisse* 174 because there was nothing else for the Tafurs to eat. In this case, the impetus for anthropophagy stemmed from a

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<sup>147</sup> Uhlig, p. 362.

<sup>148</sup> Janet, p. 353.

<sup>149</sup> Janet, pp. 353–357.

<sup>150</sup> Vincent Vandenberg, 'Choosing Human Flesh? A Few Medieval Peculiarities and the Debates of Contemporary Research', *Anthropozoologica*, 45.1 (2010), 149–155 (p.151).

<sup>151</sup> For a discussion on the cannibalistic practices and depictions of the Mongols in the thirteenth century see Heather Blurton, 'Tartars and Traitors: The Uses of Cannibalism in Matthew Paris's *Chronica Majora*', in *Cannibalism in High Medieval English Literature* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 81–105.

desire to assuage extreme hunger and not as a result of the Tafurs' culinary preferences. Despite being anticipated by Peter, the fact that the Tafurs liked the taste of roasted human flesh is presented as coincidental. Thus, the Tafurs' man-eating cannot strictly be considered an episode of gastronomic cannibalism. This is not to say references to the taste of human flesh are not significant, however, as the Tafurs' apparent enjoyment of the flavour of Turkish flesh certainly adds to their ambiguous moral status in the narrative.

It is not only the depiction of Tafur cannibalism that is developed in *Laisse* 175. The reactions of those who witness the anthropophagy from inside the city walls are also given more space in the second of these *laissez enchaînées*. The underlying narrative remains the same: the inhabitants of Antioch are alerted to the actions of the Tafurs by the smell of cooking meat, and subsequently gather on the walls and ramparts of the city. *Laisse* 175 adds, however, that Garsion and his family were among those witnessing the unfolding of the anthropophagical scene. The layout of this scene is almost theatrical in its set up. The Tafurs are placed below the walls of the city, at the centre of the Turks' attention, while the Antiochenes are gathered on the ramparts at various vantage points according to a social hierarchy.<sup>152</sup> The *Antioche*-poet notes, for instance, that Garsion, the King of Antioch, had the best view from the highest windows.<sup>153</sup> The clear demarcation of space in this episode positions the Tafurs as the actors and the Turks as powerless spectators.

Indeed, the verbs *regarder* (to watch) and *voir* (to see) used in this scene emphasise the visual dimension of the confrontation, placing both the Turks and the crusading force in a position where they can observe each other.<sup>154</sup> While the besieged Antiochenes are looking down on the Tafurs, the *Antioche*-poet notes that the King of the Tafurs 'looked up at the assembled infidels'.<sup>155</sup> When the King of the Tafurs notices that their

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<sup>152</sup> Uhlig, p. 365.

<sup>153</sup> *Antioche*, p. 219, l. 175 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 201).

<sup>154</sup> Uhlig, p. 365.

<sup>155</sup> *Antioche*, p. 220, l. 175 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 201): 'Li rois Tafurs regarde, voit paiens assamblés'.

anthropophagical acts are being watched, he calls on his followers to start exhuming the bodies of Turks from communal graves:

[The Tafurs] carried [the corpses] all up onto a hill; they flung the decomposing ones into the Orontes and skinned the others, hanging the meat to dry in the wind.<sup>156</sup>

The reciprocity of this scene is striking. The Tafurs act under the gaze of their enemies while simultaneously watching for the Turks' reaction as they begin to visibly desecrate Turkish bodies on the hillside.<sup>157</sup> This display is reminiscent of Guibert's suggestion that the Tafurs staged an act of cannibalism 'in full view of the Turks'.<sup>158</sup> By making use of the visibility granted by higher ground and by throwing the bodies that were too decomposed to consume into the river, this scene suggests that acts relating to cannibalism were about the desecration and demoralisation of the enemy as well as about consumption. Both are horrifying to the Turks and the repercussions of the Tafurs' actions on the Turks' psyche are visible two *laissez* later when it is noted that they were afraid to bury their fallen comrades in case the Christians dug them up to eat.<sup>159</sup> The threat of cannibalism is also echoed in *Laisse* 188 when Garsion realises that the crusaders will not give up their fight until they take Antioch. He fears the crusaders will kill him and skin and roast his household.<sup>160</sup> This recalls the same phrase used to describe the Tafurs' culinary preparation of human flesh in *Laisse* 174.

The staging of the Tafurs' cannibalism at Antioch is also redolent of a scene from the beginning of the *Antioche* which describes the siege of Civetot (1096), an event

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<sup>156</sup> *Antioche*, p. 220, l.175 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 201): 'Et vont as trancieries, si les ont desterrés, / Tos ensamble les on ten un mont aportés, / Trestot les prris ont dedens Ferne jetés / Et les autres escorcent, ses ont al vent hallés.'

<sup>157</sup> Uhlig, p. 365.

<sup>158</sup> GN, p. 311.

<sup>159</sup> *Antioche*, p. 223, l. 177 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 203).

<sup>160</sup> *Antioche*, p. 237, l. 188 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 210): 'et toute sa maisnie escorcier et rostir'. Interestingly, a similar fear of being consumed can be found in the *Chétifs*. In a reversal of roles, it is the Christian followers of Peter the Hermit – the *chétifs* – who voice their fears of being devoured by the dragon Sathanas. *Chétifs*, p. 46, l. 59 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 106).

technically part of the failed People's Crusade led by Peter the Hermit that the *Antioche*-poet groups with the main Princes' campaign to give Peter more agency in the conception of the First Crusade. While regarding the starving and thirsty crusading force outside of Civetot, Corbaran remarks to Soliman of Nicaea (Qiliji Arslan I, sultan of Rūm):

“Look at all these bedraggled losers! None is going to escape our clutches, not one has eaten for at least the last two days – so let's eat in full view of them with Amedelis keeping lookout. When they see us eating, their people will really feel their hunger.” [...] So Corbaran, Soliman of Nicaea and his entourage dined on the summit of Civetot while Amedelis kept watch with 30,000 Turks. The Franks saw every last mouthful. They were all desperate to join in, and many passed out from sheer misery and starvation. The bishop of Forez wept at the pity of it.<sup>161</sup>

This episode is not found in any eyewitness or second-generation account of the campaign but provides the perfect counterpart to the anthropophagical banquet scene at Antioch. Like the episode at Antioch, repeated use of the verbs *voir* and *regarder* emphasise the scene's visual dimension. In both episodes, holding the higher ground is crucial for maximising the potential visibility of the incident, transforming eating and food preparation into a strategic performance intended to demoralise the enemy. Like the Antiochenes, the bishop of Forez's response to the sight of the Turks enjoying a meal while the crusading army starved was to weep. In this case, Forez's tears take on a spiritual function: they are understood to be part of an appeal for divine aid, a mediation between the crusaders and God. As Janet has noted, this reflects the medieval concept of contrition, a doctrine that calls for tears in the process of repentance and provides another example in the trilogy where vulnerability creates a special connection between the crusaders and the divine.<sup>162</sup> Perhaps more significantly, the bishop's emotional response provides a contrast to the

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<sup>161</sup> *Antioche*, p. 45, l. 28 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 118): “Veés tos ces caitis, nus n'en escapera; / Bien a .II. jors passes que nus d'els ne manja, / Or mangon devant els, Amis nos gardera, / Quant nos veront mangier lor gens afamera.” [...] Al chief de Civetot Corbarans se disna / Et Solimans de Nique et las gens que il a. / A .XXX. mile Turs Amesdelis gaita. / Franc voient le mangier, cascuns le desira, / De l'angoisse et del fain assés s'en i pasma, / Li vesques de Forois de pitié en plora.’

<sup>162</sup> Janet, p. 94. See also Katherine Harvey, ‘Episcopal Emotions: Tears in the Life of the Medieval Bishop’, *Historical Research*, 87.238 (2014), 591–610.

crusaders' reaction to the scene. The crusaders faint after witnessing the Turks' meal, both from misery and starvation. Fainting is presented as a physical response to the suffering endured by crusaders, a visible sign of distress exacerbated by the Turks' strategic and performative meal. This further emphasises the debilitating effect hunger had on the crusaders and demonstrates another instance in the narrative where the act of eating is established as a demoralising and strategic spectacle.

While the *Antioche*-poet claims that cannibalism was solely enacted by the Tafurs, as *Laisse* 175 progresses the involvement of crusade leaders in the scene highlights the strategic benefits of cannibalism, transforming what was initially presented as an act of survival into a military tactic. After detailing how the Tafurs deliberately exhumed the bodies of dead Turks to find flesh that they could dry out, the *Antioche*-poet notes:

Count Robert came up to them with Bohemond and Tancred, the highly esteemed duke of Bouillon, Count Hugh of Vermandois and the noble and sagacious bishop of Le Puy; all the commanders without exception accompanied them, but every last one in armour and carrying weapons. They all came to a halt in front of the King of the Tafurs and asked him jocularly: 'How's it going?' 'In faith,' replied the King, 'I must say I feel very well fed. There is plenty to eat though I wouldn't say no to a drink to wash it down.' 'Certainly,' said the duke of Bouillon, 'have a drink'. He had a bottle of good wine from his own private supply presented. The King of the Tafurs had a swig and passed it round.<sup>163</sup>

As Uhlig has observed, unlike the Turks, the Christian leaders of the campaign do not see (*voir*) the Tafurs; instead, they go to them and stop before them. These verbs *aller* (to go) and *arreter* (to stop) indicate movement and immediately make the leaders' involvement in the episode more active than that of the Turks, who are watching helplessly.<sup>164</sup> In the scene that follows, the leaders interact directly with the Tafurs and playfully ask the Tafur King

<sup>163</sup> *Antioche*, p. 220, l. 175 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 201): 'Li quens Robers i vient, Buiemons et Tangrés, / Et li dus de Buillon qui molt fu honorés, / Li quens Huës li Maisnes est avoec els alés, / Et li vesques de Pui, qui praus fu et senés, / Et trestot li baron, n'en i a nul remés, / Mais cascuns s'els fu bien fervertis et armés. / Devant le roi Tafurs s'est cascuns arestés, / En riant li demandent: "Comment vos contenés? / – Par foi, ce dist li rois, giers sui bien asasés, / Se jou avoie a boire, a mangier as asés." / Dist lis dus de Buillon: "Certes, vos en arés." / De son bon vin li fu uns botels presentés, / Li rois Tafurs en but, as autres fu livrés.'

<sup>164</sup> Uhlig, p. 367.

'How's it going?' (*Comment vos contenés?*). The suggestion of laughter in direct association with the Tafurs' behaviour instigates a shift in tone in the piece: the narrative draws the audience away from the fear-inducing savagery of cannibalism, playing instead on the jovial comradery between two groups.

As Frédéric Tinguely and Norman Susskind have suggested, laughter serves a social function when considered within the context of inter-group relationships.<sup>165</sup> In the *Antioche's* description of the siege of Civetot, for example, when Corbaran hears from a messenger that the crusaders are willing to surrender after viewing the Turks' hilltop banquet, the audience is told that he 'roared with laughter' saying "'The battle is over, these Franks are in disarray and desperate with hunger"' .<sup>166</sup> Mockery and bragging through laughter is a common characteristic of literary 'Saracens'.<sup>167</sup> Indeed, Guibert notes that Kerbogha laughed at the diminished size of the crusading force in the lead up to the battle of Antioch.<sup>168</sup> By laughing at the crusaders' misfortune in the *Antioche*, Corbaran also demonstrates a type of exclusionary laughter which targets individuals outside of the collective identity to which he belongs. This in turn defines and reaffirms his position within his own community. Uhlig argues that the laughter of the crusade leaders as they approach the Tafurs not only provides a counterpart to the Turks' fear in *Laisses* 174 and 175, but also functions as a positive social gesture that signifies a unity between the leaders of the campaign and the Tafurs.<sup>169</sup> Inclusionary laughter in this sense targets the behaviour or attributes of a group or an individual in order to confirm the parameters of their collective

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<sup>165</sup> Frédéric Tinguely, 'Rire et relations interculturelles: l'exemple du voyage en Perse à l'âge classique', in *Le Rire des Voyageurs (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, ed. by Dominique Bertrand (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise Pascal, 2007), pp. 73–87 (p. 75); and Norman Susskind, 'Humor in the Chansons de Geste', *Symposium*, 15.3 (1961), 185–197 (p. 192).

<sup>166</sup> *Antioche*, p. 49, l. 30 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 120–21): 'Quant Corbarans l'entent, s'en a un ris jeté, / Et dist a Soliman: "L'estor avons fine, / Li Franc sont desconfi, de fain sont afamé."'

<sup>167</sup> Janet, p. 215.

<sup>168</sup> GN, p. 238.

<sup>169</sup> Uhlig, p. 369.

identity. The fact that the leaders of the campaign appear to be laughing *with* the Tafurs, and not *at* them, suggests some form of approval of the Tafurs' actions and demonstrates an assimilation between the two communities.

This assimilation between the Christian leaders of the campaign and the Tafurs is further demonstrated by the fact that Godfrey offers the King of the Tafurs wine from his own collection to wash down the human flesh. The act of providing wine after the Tafur King playfully requested a drink adds to the jocular nature of the scene but also supports the transition of cannibalism from an act of survival to an anthropophagic banquet, prestigious enough to warrant good wine to accompany it. Thus, with Peter the Hermit's encouragement of the act, the princely leaders' light-hearted dialogue with the Tafur King, and Godfrey's supplying of fine wine to accompany the feast, cannibalism in *Laisses* 174 and 175 appears to be sanctioned by the crusade leaders: they bear witness to and participate in the anthropophagy, albeit indirectly, not by consuming human flesh but by allowing it to happen.

Furthermore, Godfrey's gift of wine to the King of the Tafurs has led several scholars to conclude that the episode of cannibalism presented in the *Antioche* was intended to be perceived as a parody of the eucharist. In his analysis of crusader cannibals, for instance, Jay Rubenstein briefly suggests that by attaching a more jovial tone to the events of cannibalism at Antioch than any of the Latin chronicles, and by noting that Godfrey responds not with shame or anger at the sight of the Tafurs' cannibalism but by providing wine to wash down the human flesh, the *Antioche*-poet encourages the audience to make a eucharistic joke out of the situation.<sup>170</sup> Michel Rouche's examination of crusader cannibalism, on the other hand, argues that the Tafurs ate without bread not necessarily as a result of famine but because the Turks' flesh was intended to represent the manna

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<sup>170</sup> Jay Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', *French Historical Studies*, 31 (2011), 525–552 (p. 549).

granted to the crusaders by God.<sup>171</sup> Janet offers a convincing rebuttal to Rouche's argument, however, on the grounds that this trilogy does not offer any religious interpretation of Tafur cannibalism.<sup>172</sup> Indeed, while medieval audiences might have spotted paradoxical similarities to the eucharist in scenes of Tafur cannibalism, there is no overt indication in the text that the Turks' flesh should be considered as sacral.

The tactical advantages of allowing cannibalism to occur is further explored in the leaders' subsequent dialogue with Garsion, who witnesses the exchange between the Tafur King and the crusade leaders from his vantage point on the walls of the city. Garsion calls out directly to Bohemond:

"My lord," said Garsion, "you have been very poorly advised in having our dead flayed and exhumed. By Mohammed, you know this is terrible behaviour."<sup>173</sup>

Intriguingly, Garsion's grievances are focussed on the debasement of Turkish bodies, not their consumption by the Tafurs, although it is implied. The emphasis of this outcry is firmly placed on the immorality of these actions, and much like the anonymous Turkish voice from *Laisse* 174, Garsion holds the whole crusading force accountable for the episode rather than the Tafurs. In response, Bohemond denies all responsibility for these acts of bodily desecration:

"My lord," replied Bohemond, "none of this can be laid at our door. We did not order it and it wasn't on our initiative. The responsibility lies with the King of the Tafurs, their leader. They are a ferocious people who detest you: as far as they're concerned Turkish flesh tastes better than spiced peacock. The King of the Tafurs fears nobody."<sup>174</sup>

This response denies the involvement of any Christian leader in the actions of the Tafurs and attempts to disassociate the two groups by highlighting that the Tafurs have their own

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<sup>171</sup> Michel Rouche, 'Cannibalisme sacre chez les croises populaires', in *La Religion Populaire: Aspects du Christianisme populaire a travers l'histoire*, ed. by Yves-Maire Hilaire (Lille: Université de Lille, 1981), pp. 29–41 (p. 33).

<sup>172</sup> Janet, p. 354.

<sup>173</sup> *Antioche*, p. 220, l. 175 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 201–2): 'Sire, dist Buiemons, ce n'est pas par no grés, / Ainc ne le commandames, n'est par no volentés, / Ces par le roi Tafur qui est lor avoués, / Une gens moult averse don't n'estes pas amés; / Plus ainment cars de Turs que paons empevrés, / Par nului puet ester li rois Tafurs dontés.'

<sup>174</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 221–222, l. 175 (trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 202).



leader separate from the ranks of the crusade 'Princes'. Bohemond further minimises his involvement in the Tafurs' anthropophagy by using third-person pronouns to identify the Tafurs as a group unto themselves. The suggestion that human flesh tasted better than spiced peacock is, for example, prefaced with the caveat 'as far as they [the Tafurs] are concerned'. This ensures Garsion, and by extension the audience of the poem, recognises that this specific assessment of flavour came from the man-eating Tafurs and not anyone from the main body of the crusading force. In so doing, Bohemond establishes the Tafurs as a group marginal to, if not separate from, the Christian army. This is a paradoxical categorisation, however, as the suggestion that the Tafurs detest the Turks confirms that the crusade leaders and the Tafurs share a common enemy. This essentially allows Bohemond to tactically assimilate the Tafurs into the crusading force, while ensuring the groups remain distinct from each other, as the implication of having the Tafurs as allies allows the crusaders to use the threat of the Tafurs' anthropophagical behaviour to instil fear in their enemy. This confirms the idea presented through the anonymous Turkish voice in *Laisse* 174, that acts of cannibalism symbolised the crusaders' shameless determination to emerge victorious on their venture.

This is certainly the case in the *Jérusalem* where the crusade leaders continue to use the Tafurs' reputation for man-eating to their advantage. After the first attack is launched on the city of Jerusalem, for instance, Godfrey takes any prisoners who will not convert to Christianity and hands them over the Tafurs:

[Godfrey] handed [those who would not convert] over to the *ribalts* [Tafurs] who beheaded them and, once they had killed them, stripped them naked. They dragged the bodies out in front of Jerusalem and flung them inside using Turkish mangonels. They flayed the corpses and cut them open and salted them, then hung them up to dry in the wind. As for the heads, they impaled them on sharp sticks and stuck them in along the edge of the ditches. Corbadas climbed up to the top of the lofty Tower of David. He leaned out of one of the windows, greatly distressed at what he had seen [...]<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> *Jérusalem*, p. 92, l. 85 (trans. by Sweetenham, p. 222): 'Li dus Godefrois l'ot, si est avant passes: / As ribals les livra, cil les ont decolés / Et tos nus despoilliés quant il les on tûes. / Devant Jerusalem ont les cors trainés, / As mangonels turçois les ont laiens jetés. / Les cars

This scene mirrors the *Antioche's* account of Tafur cannibalism from *Laisse* 175, providing a clear example of how the *Jérusalem* compilers seemingly took the structure of the *Antioche* and applied it a general memory of the events of 1099. Unlike the episode of cannibalism presented in the *Antioche*, however, the Tafurs kill their victims before desecrating their bodies in this scene; but a similar spectacle is made by stripping the Turks' bodies, flaying their skin, salting it, and hanging it out to dry in full view of the city. Again, in this episode visibility and deliberate staging is used to maximise the distress of the spectators. Like Garsion, for instance, Corbadas – the King of Jerusalem, the historical Fatimid governor Iftikhar ad-Daulah – witnesses the Tafurs' performance from a high window. What is perhaps most significant about this scene is the fact that it is never suggested that the Tafurs eat the Turks they kill and butcher. Instead, this butchering and preservation process draws on the memory of the Tafurs' cannibalism in Antioch, implying that the human flesh is being preserved for consumption. It is this allusion to cannibalism, created by the sight of the Tafurs' processing Turkish bodies, which terrifies those who witness it. That Godfrey instigates this scene by handing over the non-converts to the Tafurs further confirms the strategic benefit of the Tafurs' reputation as fearsome cannibals. Thus, what appears to be a marker of their otherness and moral ambiguity in the *Antioche*, is transformed into an approved military strategy in the *Jérusalem*, positioning the Tafurs as an unrestrained asset working alongside the crusaders to achieve a common goal: liberating Jerusalem from the hands of the *infideles*.

## Conclusion

The suggestion that hunger was endured by the crusaders in the name of God permeates the central trilogy of the OFCC. Hunger is presented as a sign of vulnerability that disrupts

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ont escorciés et overs et salés, / Puis les pendent en halt si sont al vent hallés. / Et les testes ficierent dedens les agus pels, / Puis les ont esteciés par desus les fossés. / En la grant Tor David est Corbadas montés.'

the integrity of the crusading force, both in terms of their heroic identity and their ability to work as an effective military unit. The debilitating and universally detrimental effects of hunger – exemplified through evocative images of swollen bellies, weeping and fainting crusaders, and starved children – are used, however, to highlight the crusaders' perseverance in the face of adversity. The crusaders are consistently depicted as more inclined to engage in combat against insurmountable odds than suffer passively during extended periods of famine. In the eyes of the poet, this mentality confirms the crusaders to be honourable soldiers, committed to their campaign and worthy of their heroic status in the trilogy.

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the crusaders' vulnerability and supplication to God for aid in periods of famine attracts divine attention and incites miraculous intervention at key junctures in the narrative. The *Antioche*-poet references elements of these pre-existing cycles of scarcity and abundance but apportions less significance to crusader hunger in inducing divine aid. Fasting – a self-inflicted hunger – is recognised by the *Antioche*-poet as a legitimate way of calling on God for assistance, but in the *Antioche's* version of the battle of Antioch, God specifically rewards the crusaders for their perseverance and courage in combat. This shifts the narrative focus from the crusaders' weaknesses to their military prowess, allowing for extended – and captivating – scenes of individual heroism. In turn, this establishes the crusading force as steadfast implementers of the divine will, legitimising the campaign and rendering the First Crusade and its participants models for emulation.

The depiction of the crusaders as courageous instruments of the divine will creates an uncomfortable problem, however, when the trilogy explores episodes of crusader cannibalism. Like Guibert of Nogent, the *Antioche* and the *Jérusalem* attach allegations of anthropophagy to the Tafurs. Despite their savage character portraits and behaviour, the Tafurs are not relegated to a marginal space in this trilogy as they are in Guibert's chronicle. In the core trilogy of the OFCC, the Tafurs are allowed to remain inside the Christian camp

and are consistently portrayed alongside other Frankish contingents during battle. The honour of crowning the first king of the Kingdom of Jerusalem is also bestowed on the King of the Tafurs, demonstrating the Tafurs' enduring significance to the narrative.

By aligning themselves with and encouraging the anthropophagous Tafurs, however, the crusaders cease to embody the values of morality and honour which legitimise the campaign, effectively disrupting the integrity of the First Crusade as a whole. *Laisses* 174 and 175 attempt to mitigate this problem, first by presenting cannibalism as a circumstantial act of survival, and then by transforming it into a strategic spectacle that incites laughter from the protagonists of the narrative at the expense of those who witness it. Anthropophagy is therefore given value in the *Antioche* as a strategic performance that terrifies and demoralises the enemy while establishing a fearsome reputation for the Tafurs. By transforming a gruesome act of survival into an anthropophagical feast, the scene no longer focusses on the satisfaction of hunger; instead, it highlights the flexible relationship between the heroic Christian crusaders and the morally ambiguous Tafurs. As a result of their fearsome anthropophagous reputation, the Tafurs are tactically assimilated into the heroic ranks of the Franks. Here the Tafurs' markers of otherness and moral ambiguity become military assets allowing them to work alongside the crusaders to achieve a set of common goals.

## Chapter Five: Gluttony, Greed, and Unclean Meat in William of Tyre's *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum*

William of Tyre's account of the First Crusade, known as the *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum* (*A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*), was composed between c. 1170 and c. 1184/6 and comprises twenty-three books that cover the involvement of Latin Christians in the Near East from the beginning of the First Crusade in 1095 to the mid-1180s.<sup>1</sup> While William touches on topics that concern both the Mediterranean world and Western Europe, the text focuses on matters connected to the Kingdom of Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> The first eight books of the *Historia* deal specifically with the events of the First Crusade.<sup>3</sup>

The geographical and cultural context in which William of Tyre wrote his *Historia* is quite different to that of the sources previously discussed in this thesis. The *GF*-author and the other first-hand account writers, the French Benedictine monks, and the *Chanson d'Antioche*-poet all wrote within the socio-political and cultural environs of western Christendom. The first-hand and second-generation chronicles examined thus far were all composed near-contemporaneously to the events they describe, and the *Antioche* was likely based on an oral tradition circulating in the early-twelfth century. In contrast, the *Historia* was composed by William, a native Jerusalemite, in the Holy Land, at the behest of King Amalric of Jerusalem (r. 1163–1174). The first eight books of William's *Historia* are therefore an important source for understanding the literary cultures of the crusader states in the period after their foundation, especially as they relate to the memorialisation and narrativisation the events of the First Crusade.

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter uses Babcock and Krey's translation of WT alongside the main edition: William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, trans. by Emily Atwater Babcock and A. C. Krey, 2 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943).

<sup>2</sup> Emily Atwater Babcock and A. C. Krey, 'Introduction' to *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, trans. by Emily Atwater Babcock and A. C. Krey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), pp. 3–49 (p. 32).

<sup>3</sup> WT, I, pp. 97–625 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, pp. 53–556).

Despite an increased scholarly interest in the form and function of William's writing in recent years, a comprehensive survey of his account of the First Crusade has yet to be undertaken.<sup>4</sup> William's version of the expedition is often undervalued because it contains little unique historical information as it predominantly draws on other first-, second-, and even third-generation accounts of the campaign, including the work of the *GF*-author, Raymond of Aguilers, Fulcher of Chartres, Baldric of Bourgueil, and a version of the *Antioche*.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, modern critical analyses of the text focus on William's coverage of the years 1127–1184 which offers an important contemporary and local perspective on events in the Latin East after Fulcher of Chartres' chronicle ends in 1127.<sup>6</sup> As Andrew Buck has demonstrated, however, exploring William's account of the First Crusade not only highlights the ways William used existing narratives of the campaign to construct his version of events, but it also helps to situate the entire *Historia* in a wider twelfth-century historiographical context.<sup>7</sup>

This chapter sheds new light on William's chronicle of the First Crusade by examining how his depictions of hunger, eating, and crusader cannibalism compare with those of the western-Latin crusade commentators examined previously. This focus will illuminate how the campaign's narrativisation as well as the form and function of vocabularies of consumption developed in these accounts across geographical space and time. The first section of this chapter will explore William's approach to food and food

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<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Andrew D. Buck, 'Between *Chronicon* and Chanson: William of Tyre, the First Crusade, and the Art of Storytelling', in *Crusade, Settlement, and Historical Writing in the Latin East and Latin West, c. 1100–c.1300*, ed. by Andrew D. Buck, James H. Kane, and Stephen J. Spencer (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, forthcoming), [pre-print] pp. 1–9 (p. 1); Andrew Buck, 'William of Tyre, *Translatio Imperii*, and the Genesis of the First Crusade: Or, the Challenges of Writing History', *History: Journal of the Historical Association*, 107.377 (2022), 625–650; and, Benjamin Z. Kedar, 'Some New Light on the Composition Process of William of Tyre's *Historia*', 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 J. Nicholson (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 3–11.

<sup>5</sup> Edbury and Rowe, pp. 45–46; Buck, *Chronicon*, pp. 3–6.

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Buck, 'William of Tyre, Femininity, and the Problem of Antiochene Princesses', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 70.4 (2019), 731–749 (p. 732).

<sup>7</sup> Buck, 'Chronicon', p. 2.

provisioning within the framework of twelfth-century moral theology, especially the concepts of vice and virtue. Specific attention will be paid to William's emphasis on the virtue temperance and his depiction of the vices greed and gluttony in circumstances of dearth and abundance. The second section of this chapter focusses on the *Historia's* two references to crusader cannibalism: the first is a staged deception designed by Bohemond of Taranto to drive spies away from the Christian camp and the second is presented as a desperate and dangerous act of survival in the city of Ma'arra.

### William of Tyre's Career and the *Historia*

William was native to the Kingdom of Jerusalem and was likely born in the city of Jerusalem in around 1130. He was a highly educated man who spent nearly twenty years studying the liberal arts, theology, civil and canon law in some of the most important intellectual centres of the twelfth century, notably the schools of Paris, Orléans, and Bologna.<sup>8</sup> William returned to Jerusalem in 1165 after completing his studies and quickly rose to prominence in the Kingdom of Jerusalem under the royal patronage of King Amalric.<sup>9</sup> He was appointed as royal ambassador in 1165 and travelled to Byzantium on embassies in 1167–8 and 1179.<sup>10</sup> In 1165 he received a prebend in Tyre cathedral and was made archdeacon there in 1167.<sup>11</sup> William also became tutor to Amalric's son, the future Baldwin IV (1174–1185) in 1170. He instructed Baldwin in the liberal arts but was also concerned with the moral and physical welfare of the young prince, taking pride in watching over the 'formation of [Baldwin's] character'.<sup>12</sup> In 1174, after Amalric's death, Baldwin elected William chancellor of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, and in 1175 William was installed as the Archbishop of

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<sup>8</sup> Nicholas Morton, 'William of Tyre's Attitude towards Islam: Some Historiographical Reflections', 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. J. Nicholson (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 13–23 (p. 13).

<sup>9</sup> Morton, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> R. H. Davis, 'William of Tyre', in *Relations between East and West in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Derek Baker (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), pp. 64–76 (p. 64).

<sup>11</sup> Davis, p. 64.

<sup>12</sup> WT, II, p. 961 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, II, p. 397).

Tyre. These were two of the highest offices in the kingdom, second only in authority to the role of Patriarch. Indeed, William had designs on becoming the Patriarch of Jerusalem but, when the position was vacated in 1180, he had lost his influence at court and failed in his bid to be elected.<sup>13</sup>

During this prestigious career, William produced three known works: a now-lost account of the Third Lateran Council, a synod of around three hundred bishops presided over by Pope Alexander III (1159–1181) which William attended in 1179, a lost history of Islam known as the *Gesta orientaliū principū*, and the *Historia* which survives in seven manuscripts and one fragment. In his analysis of the *Historia*'s construction, Andrew Buck argues that what became the *Historia* probably began as a standalone account of the First Crusade composed before 1170. In Buck's view, it was this text that was extended and reedited at the request of King Almaric to include events in the Latin East that occurred after the conclusion of the First Crusade.<sup>14</sup> Peter Edbury and John Gordon Rowe suggest that William had drafted a substantial part of this history before he travelled to Rome in 1178 for the Third Lateran Council, and that he extensively revised and added to this draft upon his return to the Kingdom of Jerusalem until the period immediately preceding his death in c. 1184/6.<sup>15</sup> William's *Historia* was so well regarded that, at some point between the end of the Third Crusade and the early 1230s, it was translated into Old French for a French audience.<sup>16</sup> This French version is usually referred to as *L'estoire de Eracles* and survives in fifty-one manuscripts. Most of these manuscripts have continuations which expand William's original narrative to include descriptions of events from the thirteenth century.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Davis, p. 65.

<sup>14</sup> Buck, 'Translatio', p. 646.

<sup>15</sup> Peter W. Edbury and John Gordon Rowe, *William of Tyre: Historian of the Latin East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 26–29, 170–71. Kedar, 'New Light', p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Peter Edbury, 'The French Translation of William of Tyre's *Historia*: the Manuscript Tradition', *Crusades*, 6.1 (2008), 69–105 (pp.69–70).

<sup>17</sup> Edbury, 'The French Translation', pp.69–70. See also, Natasha R. Hodgson, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007), p. 28.



In a departure from the first-hand and second-generation chronicles of the First Crusade examined thus far, which presented the campaign as designed and directed by God, William places a more equal emphasis on human agency in the venture. While William still accepted that human affairs were subject to divine intervention, he considered the actions – and more specifically, the sins – of mankind to be instrumental in directing the outcome of events.<sup>18</sup> Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen has explored this idea, demonstrating that while William initially presents the First and Second Crusades as acts of God carried out by men, the crusaders' successes and failures ultimately receive explanations in the *Historia* that extend beyond the divine will to include human volition, sin, and even chance.<sup>19</sup> Lehtonen has convincingly suggested that these alternative theories of causation were reflective of the teachings of mid-twelfth-century philosophers like William of Conches (c. 1090–1155), prominent in the Schools of Chartres and Paris, who distinguished between events caused directly by God and those caused indirectly by 'lower instances' such as nature, human beings, and fortune.<sup>20</sup> William applies these twelfth-century explanatory concepts throughout his narrative, providing a complex mix of reasons and justifications for the outcomes of the historical events he describes.

### Virtues and Vices

William's familiarity with twelfth-century theories of causation is evident in his references to the vices and virtues of the crusading force. These concepts shape William's interpretation of the crusaders' behaviour and moral character in the *Historia* and explain why certain aspects of the campaign unfolded as they did. Before entering a discussion

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<sup>18</sup> Edbury and Rowe, pp. 32–58; and, 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 Edgington and Helen Nicholson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 25–34 (pp. 26–27).

<sup>19</sup> Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen, 'By the Help of God, Because of Our Sins, and by Chance: William of Tyre Explains the Crusades', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. by Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen, Kurt Villads Jensen, Janne Malkki and Kaja Ritari (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2005) pp. 71–84 (p. 79).

<sup>20</sup> Lehtonen, p. 77.

about William's moral assessment of the crusaders, it is worth outlining how the concepts of vice and virtue were understood in the period in which William was writing.

The twelfth-century renaissance, which saw renewed interest in the classics and an increased attention to literature, the arts, and science, profoundly affected the field of moral thought.<sup>21</sup> During this period debates concerning what constituted virtuous and vicious behaviour flourished in intellectual centres in the West. Virtue, vice, and sin are philosophical concepts borrowed from the ancient world that embedded themselves in Christian doctrine during the fourth century as a means of defining and directing conduct that was sanctioned by the Church.<sup>22</sup> It is worth noting that late-medieval theology increasingly distinguished between a vice (*vitium*), which refers to a bad habit, and a sin (*peccatum*), which refers to one evil act that violates God's law; but, during the twelfth century, these terms were used relatively interchangeably, especially in works of popular religious instruction.<sup>23</sup>

The concept of 'sin' originates in Graeco-Roman philosophy, but references to specific vices first appear in Christian theology in the work of the fourth-century desert monk Evagrius Ponticus (*d.* 399).<sup>24</sup> Evagrius' follower John Cassian (*d.* 435), who moved from the desert to a monastery in France, integrated Evagrius' notion of capital vices into Western thought, and in his *Institutes* dedicates a chapter to each of the then eight capital vices: gluttony (*gula*), fornication/lust (*fornicatio/luxuria*), greed (*avaritia*), wrath (*ira*), sadness (*tristitia*), sloth (*acedia*), vainglory (*vanagloria*), and pride (*superbia*).<sup>25</sup> Gregory the Great, in the sixth century, revised John Cassian's list, bringing the total of capital vices, also known as cardinal vices, to seven. Gregory argued that pride was the root of all sin, and

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<sup>21</sup> Istvan P. Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages: A Study in Moral Thought from the Fourth to the Fourteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p. 69.

<sup>22</sup> Virginia Langum, *Medicine and the Seven Deadly Sins in Late Medieval Literature and Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 12.

<sup>23</sup> Langum, p. 13.

<sup>24</sup> Langum, p. 12.

<sup>25</sup> Langum, p. 13; John Cassian, *De Institutis coenobiorum*, ed. by Jacque-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, XLIX (Paris: Garnier, 1846).

combined sadness with sloth, pride with vainglory, and added envy (*invidia*).<sup>26</sup> Pride, envy, wrath, sloth, greed, gluttony, and lust became, for the most part, the standard list of capital vices in Christian moral thought from the sixth century onwards.

The Third and Fourth Lateran Councils (1179 and 1215, respectively) considered the vices. The canons of the Third Lateran Council, for instance, forbade priests from taking money to conduct any of the sacraments (Canon 7) and prohibited simony (Canon 13) to prevent avarice from ‘blinding’ members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Greed is also mentioned in Canon 24, which claims any layman who provides Muslims with the ‘arms necessary to attack Christians’ or anyone who ‘in the vilest avarice presume to rob shipwrecked Christians’ should be excommunicated. Canon 11, which inveighs against lust, declares married clergy should lose their benefices, and decrees that any priests who engage in the ‘unnatural vice’ of sodomy should be deposed from their offices and any layman who does the same should be excommunicated.<sup>27</sup>

The Third and Fourth Lateran Councils also emphasised pastoral care, specifically to protect the faithful from sin. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries various mnemonics were introduced to help priests remember the seven vices so they could, as part of their pastoral duty of care, warn their congregations against vicious behaviour.<sup>28</sup> These included the seven wounds of Christ, the seven branches on a tree, the seven-headed beast of Revelation, the seven demons driven from Mary Magdalene, the seven kinds of animals, the seven kinds of stones, the seven diseases, and the seven Old Testament kings who persecuted Israel.<sup>29</sup> Each of these schemata gave allegorical

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<sup>26</sup> Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, trans. by Charles Marriott, 4 vols (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1850), IV, p. 490.

<sup>27</sup> *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. by Norman P. Tanner, 2 vols (London: Sheed & Ward, 1990), I, pp. 215–223.

<sup>28</sup> Langum, pp. 5–13.

<sup>29</sup> Langum, p. 13. For more on these schemata for remembering and teaching the seven vices, see Siegfried Wenzel, ‘Preaching the Seven Deadly Sins’, in *In the Garden of Evil: The Vices and Culture in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard Newhauser (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2005), pp. 145–169.

representation to the seven vices to allow the laity to more easily identify and remember sins to confess and atone for. As a secular archbishop responsible for the bishops, priests, and citizens of the archdiocese of Tyre, and an attendee at the Third Lateran Council in 1179, William would have been well aware of the importance of the concept of vice in defining and directing good Christian behaviour.

Seven cardinal virtues provided a positive counterpart to the vices outlined above. Like the cardinal vices, the origins of the concept of virtue can be found in classical sources. Four cardinal virtues – prudence (or wisdom), justice, fortitude, and temperance – are mentioned in the work of Plato, for example.<sup>30</sup> In the fourth century, Christian authors adopted this classical scheme, integrating the concepts of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance into moral thought alongside the theological virtues found in the Bible: faith, hope, and charity.<sup>31</sup> Moral theology and philosophy received increased scholarly attention in the twelfth century as burgeoning intellectual centres recognised how these classical teachings on virtue could be instructive for Christian society.<sup>32</sup> Classical moral philosophy reached twelfth-century intellectual circles predominantly through the work of Cicero and Seneca, and the moral sayings of classical authors formed part of the instruction in the arts at schools in the West where William was educated.<sup>33</sup>

Indeed, we know that among William's contemporaries at the cathedral schools in Northern France and Northern Italy were other twelfth-century moral thinkers such as John of Salisbury, Bishop of Chartres (1176–1180).<sup>34</sup> Additionally, William lists seventeen of his teachers in his *Historia*, most of whom are also cited as tutors in the works John of Salisbury. These tutors include Peter Helias (c. 1100– after 1166), Ivo of Chartres (1040–

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<sup>30</sup> Plato, *Republic*, trans. by G. M. A. Grube and revised by C. D. C. Reeve (Cambridge: Hackett, 1992), pp. 94–121.

<sup>31</sup> Bejczy, *Cardinal Virtues*, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Bejczy, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> Bejczy, pp. 71–2.

<sup>34</sup> For an introduction to John of Salisbury's theological training and perspectives, see: Christophe Grellard, 'John of Salisbury and Theology', in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, ed. by Christophe Grellard and Frédérique Lachaud (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 339–373.

1115), Peter Lombard (1096–1160), and Gilbert of Poitiers (c. 1076–1154).<sup>35</sup> Of William's tutors, Peter Lombard, who taught in Paris, was the most interested in moral theology. His *Libri Quattuor Sententiarum* (*The Four Books of Sentences*, c. 1150s), which became an official textbook for scholastic theologians after it was approved by the Church at the Fourth Lateran Council, explores the seven cardinal virtues and vices and contemplates the psychology of sin in Books 2 and 3.<sup>36</sup> In Book 19 of the *Historia*, William claims to have 'carefully listened to [Peter] for six consecutive years' because he was singular in his knowledge of theology.<sup>37</sup>

William's acknowledgement of this network of philosophers and theologians operating and sharing ideas in prominent intellectual centres in the West confirms that during his education William came into close contact with scholars promulgating contemporary discourse concerning moral theology. Earlier Benedictine monks, such as Robert the Monk, Baldric of Bourgueil, and Guibert of Nogent, had a very different kind of training. They were well versed in theology, but they did not have the same focus on the pastoral care of a rapidly expanding and urbanising population as secular clergy in the late-twelfth century.

Thus, William's education in the West, his participation in ecclesiastical assemblies like the Third Lateran Council which aimed to root out vice from within the Church and laity, and his role as a secular bishop with a duty of pastoral care to guide the faithful towards virtuous behaviour, all suggest William was familiar with the didactic value of the concepts of vice and virtue. William clearly had an understanding of how ideas relating to moral theology could be used to explain causal relationships between human action and

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<sup>35</sup> WT, II, p. 880.

<sup>36</sup> Peter Lombard, *The Sentences*, trans. by Giulio Silano, 4 vols (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2008), II–III; and, Siegfried Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth: Acedia in Medieval Thought and Literature* (Durham: The University of North Carolina Press, 1967), p. 29 and 65.

<sup>37</sup> WT, II, p. 880: 'In theologia autem virum in ea scientia singularem [...] magistrum videlicet Petrum Lombardum [...] annis sex continuis diligenter audivimus'.

historical outcomes. It is unsurprising, therefore, that these cardinal vices and virtues appear in William's treatment of the First Crusade as a means of assigning significance to and explaining the successes and the failures of the crusading force from 1095 to 1099.

### Abundance, Intemperance, and Gluttony

Discursive attention is paid to sinful behaviour in all the narrative sources of the First Crusade examined thus far. Fulcher of Chartres, for example, claims the famine experienced by the crusaders in Antioch during the winter of 1098 was brought about by the avarice and pride of the crusading force.<sup>38</sup> Raymond of Aguilers accuses the crusading force of sloth several times, but especially criticises the fact that they temporarily ceased their assault on the city of Jerusalem due to 'sloth and fear', and the *GF*-author inveighs against the crusaders' 'filthy lust' for both Christian and pagan women.<sup>39</sup> These vices also appear in the Benedictine chronicles of the campaign alongside an emphasis on the laudable – and distinctly monastic – qualities of moderation, humility, and perseverance exhibited by crusaders on several occasions.<sup>40</sup> There are, predictably, areas in which the *Historia* reflects first-hand and second-generation interpretations of the crusaders' morality given that William draws on these narratives to construct his own account of the First Crusade; but, one area in which William displays a unique use of the concepts of vice and virtue is his representation of food, food management, and eating during the campaign. This section specifically examines William's moral assessment of the crusaders' food management during periods of abundance in the narrative.

Like the *Chanson d'Antioche*, William suggests that it was Peter the Hermit who first became aware of the extent of Jerusalem's suffering under Islamic control. Indeed, in the *Historia* it is Peter who rallies the People's Crusade to provide aid for the Eastern Christians. Like the crusade narratives examined thus far, William notes that the People's

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<sup>38</sup> FC, p. 54.

<sup>39</sup> RA, p. 139; *GF*, p. 58.

<sup>40</sup> See, for example: BB, p. 18; RM, p. 42; and GN, p. 182.

Crusade faced problems associated with food availability while they were settled at Civetot. Unlike the majority of the first-, second-, and third-generation narratives, however, William claims that it was an abundance of provisions – not a lack of supplies – that caused problems for the crusaders in Civetot. The *Historia* states that when the crusaders arrived in the city they enjoyed abundant supplies of all kinds because ‘an ample store of goods was offered for sale nearly every day’.<sup>41</sup> According to William, however, an availability of provisions was not beneficial for the army because after two months ‘this very abundance of supplies, together with unwonted leisure, [rendered] this wretched and stiff-necked people reckless’.<sup>42</sup> William goes on to claim that, despite the availability of sufficient provisions, inactivity (*otio*) – which is presented as distinct from convalescence (*refectio*) – drove the crusaders to disobey their leaders and violently pillage the countryside surrounding Civetot.

While the Benedictine chronicles and the *Antioche* suggest that inactivity was often met with crusader dissent, especially during circumstances of dearth, William’s narrative alone suggests that an abundance of provisions combined with inactivity was detrimental to the moral integrity of the crusading force. Up until the thirteenth century, for instance, theologians saw inactivity, idleness, and boredom as the primary manifestations of sloth (*acedia*) in laymen.<sup>43</sup> Although it was believed that sloth was driven away by some form of activity, I think that it is significant that William specifically suggests inactivity led crusaders to leave their posts against the orders of their chiefs. Moral theologians as early as the fourth century determined that sloth prompted restlessness in monks, tempting them to leave their monasteries against their monastic vows in search for salvation elsewhere.<sup>44</sup> The chief remedies prescribed to those afflicted by these slothful urges in twelfth-century moral

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<sup>41</sup> WT, I, p. 149 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 106): ‘non defuit eis pene cotidie rerum venalium copia et refectio pro tempore necessaria.’

<sup>42</sup> WT, I, p. 149 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 106): ‘Qua rerum ubertate simul et ocio dissolutus miser et dure cervicis populus’.

<sup>43</sup> Wenzel, pp. 30–37.

<sup>44</sup> Wenzel, p. 5.

theology were endurance, perseverance, and temperance, qualities William implies the People's Crusade lacked while they were camped outside Civetot.<sup>45</sup> In this scene, therefore, I believe that it is possible to draw out allusions to both lay and monastic *acedia*. This may reflect an idea found in the Benedictine chronicles of the campaign that the crusaders maintained a dual identity as both soldiers and monk-like pilgrims on the expedition and as such were expected to adhere to the moral values of each calling. Unfortunately, as William does not directly mention slothfulness in this scene it is difficult to ascertain whether these implied references to *acedia* were intentional. It is significant to our investigation, however, that this episode is ultimately underscored by a criticism of the People's Crusade's intemperance and disobedience.

Indeed, William appears especially concerned with the recklessness (*dissolutus*) of Peter the Hermit's army and goes on to present a causal relationship between the crusaders' insolent (*insolentie*) actions outside Civetot and the failure of the People's Crusade as a whole. The *Historia* explains that the wanton behaviour of the crusaders alerted Qilij Arslan to their presence, which eventually led to the siege of Civetot that brought about their destruction. William concludes:

Thus this stiff-necked and unruly people, unwilling to heed the counsels of those wiser than themselves, were swept along by their own rash impetus down to utter destruction. And because they did not know how to wear the yoke of salutary discipline, they reaped the worthless harvest of their ways and were given over to the sword of the enemy.<sup>46</sup>

The use of a harvesting metaphor to highlight the downfall of the People's Crusade is particularly poignant as it recalls the situation of abundance the crusaders abandoned when they decided to plunder the area surrounding Civetot. The crusaders' behaviour was, therefore, worthless (*inutil[is]*) because there was no demand for resources. In short,

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<sup>45</sup> Wenzel, p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> WT, I, p. 153 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 110): 'Sic ergo cervicosus populus et intractabilis dum monitis nescit adquiescere melioribus, suo lapsus impetus totus descendit in iteritum, et dum discipline salutaris nescit iugum portare, viarum suarum fructus inutiles collegit, hostium gladiis deputatus.'



pillaging the nearby countryside was needlessly destructive. In this passage, William also presents military discipline as a yoke (*jugi*), the equipment that joins a pair of draft animals together to facilitate labours like ploughing. Ultimately, William claims the crusaders were unable to submit to this yoke because they lacked discipline, suggesting they were ill-equipped to carry out their divinely-sanctioned task. This renders the defeat of the People's Crusade somewhat inevitable and confirms that, for William, it was the crusaders' intemperance and lack of discipline, brought about by an abundance of provisions and idleness, that led to their destruction.

William's account of the first siege of Antioch provides further evidence to suggest that recklessness in the crusading force could come as a direct result of abundant provisions. Here, more so than in his account of the People's Crusade's defeat at Civetot, William suggests that the crusaders' recklessness was directly related to food consumption. As the siege of Antioch entered its third month, William notes that the crusaders' food provisions began to fail:

At first there had been the greatest abundance of all things needful for the use of man as well as plenty of fodder for the horses; therefore, as is the habit of thoughtless men, the people concluded that the same condition of prosperity would continue without exertion of their part. Hence, they abused their privileges and wasted in a short time the food that should have sufficed for many days if it has been apportioned with proper moderation.<sup>47</sup>

Much like William's account of Civetot, this scene starts with an acknowledgement that there were initially sufficient supplies for the crusading army and their horses outside the city of Antioch. Yet, William goes on to admonish the crusaders for becoming complacent with their abundant provisions, failing to govern their resources appropriately. He calls the crusading force 'thoughtless' (*imprudens*) and suggests that they were too naïve to accept

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<sup>47</sup> WT, I, p. 258 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 213): 'Cum enim ab initio maximam rerum necessariorum habuissent opulentiam et equis eorum non deessent pabula, more imprudentum arbitrati sunt quod se in eodem statu deberent continuare tempora: nichil sibi facientes reliquum sed concessa abutentes ubertate, infra paucos dies que ad multos sufficere poterant si congruo dispensarentur moderamine, profligabant victualia.'

what he later describes as the ‘varied fortunes [of] continual warfare’.<sup>48</sup> It is probable that William accompanied Baldwin IV on military campaigns in the late 1170s in his role as chancellor, giving him some (if limited) first-hand experience of war.<sup>49</sup> William’s translators, Emily Atwater Babcock and A. C. Krey, argue, for example, that William’s use of the first person and the extent of detail he provided in his account of the Battle of Montgisard, fought between the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Ayyubid Sultanate in November 1177, suggests he was present on the campaign.<sup>50</sup> If we consider that William’s account of the First Crusade was substantially edited as part of the *Historia*’s second redaction sometime after 1178, his description of the crusaders’ immoderate and wasteful use of resources outside of Antioch in early 1098 may have been informed by his personal experience of campaign provisioning. At the very least, William’s practical assessment of the eleventh-century crusaders demonstrates both common sense and a familiarity with successful food management during military campaigns.

Acting without moderation not only had practical implications for the crusaders’ resources, but it also affects how William presents the moral integrity of the crusading force. The crusader’s morality comes under question as William begins to specify the crusaders’ excesses in the camp during this period of abundance:

There was no limit to the extravagance in camp, nor was temperance, the friend of the wise man, present. Everywhere was luxury, everywhere superfluity; not only was this true of those things which are necessary for the nourishment of man, but even in respect to fodder for the horses and draft animals. All idea of moderation was lacking.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> WT, I, p. 257 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 213): ‘assidui Martis eventus varios’.

<sup>49</sup> A. C. Krey, ‘William of Tyre: The Making of an Historian in the Middle Ages’, *Speculum*, 16.2 (1941), 149–165 (p. 155).

<sup>50</sup> WT, II, p. 430, n. 42.

<sup>51</sup> WT, I, p. 258 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, pp. 213–214): ‘Non erat in castris modus nec prudentibus amica parsimonia, sed ubique luxus, ubique superfluitas, nec solum in his que ad hominum pertinebant alimoniam, verum et in cibis iumentorum et in equorum pabulis omnis omnino modus defecerat’. I have altered Babcock and Krey’s translation of ‘*parsimonia*’ from ‘economy’ to ‘temperance’ to better reflect William’s engagement with the Platonic idea in which moderation relates to the triumph of reason and wisdom over excessive and irrational appetites.

In this passage, William specifically refers to the crusading force's lack of moderation. Moderation, also known as temperance, is a moral virtue concerned with avoiding excess and extremes, particularly in relation to eating, drinking, and sex.<sup>52</sup> In Chapter 2, we saw that self-restraint and moderation were presented as virtuous qualities in monks in the Benedictine Rule and subsequently permeated Baldric of Bourgueil's interpretation of the crusaders' behaviour in his narrative of the First Crusade. There is textual evidence to suggest that William used Baldric's text, in conjunction with other works, to construct his narrative of events, which may account for some of William's emphasis on crusader immoderation.<sup>53</sup> Yet, William presents a more nuanced understanding of the concept of moderation than Baldric does anywhere in his narrative. Here, William expressly refers to the relationship between temperance (*parsimonia*) and wisdom (*prudentia*) in his description of crusader excess; according to William, temperance is the friend of the wise man. This expression demonstrates an engagement with Platonic ideas that position wisdom, also known as prudence, as the virtue that connects reason to moral activity.<sup>54</sup> In short, temperance requires practical wisdom to discern what constitutes moderation, directing individuals to act between extremes.<sup>55</sup> The twelfth century saw a renewed interest in the works of Plato, centred mainly in the cathedral school at Chartres, and platonic ideas and commentaries permeate the work of several of William's contemporaries including William of Conches and John of Salisbury.<sup>56</sup> While descriptions of crusader immoderation could simply have been inherited from pre-existing narratives of the campaign, it is likely that William also drew on concepts from classic moral philosophy

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<sup>52</sup> Robert C. Roberts, 'Temperance', in *Virtues and their Vices*, ed. by Kevin Timpe and Craig A. Boyd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 93–111 (p. 95).

<sup>53</sup> For more on William's critical perception and reworking of other crusade narratives, see Edbury and Rowe, pp. 45–60.

<sup>54</sup> W. J. Wood, 'Prudence', in *Virtues and their Vices*, ed. by Kevin Timpe and Craig A. Boyd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 37–58 (p. 37).

<sup>55</sup> Wood, p. 41.

<sup>56</sup> Dermot Moran, 'Platonism, Medieval', in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig, 10 vols (London: Routledge, 1998), VII, pp. 431–439; Grellard, pp. 339–373.

learnt during his time in schools in the West to construct his assessment of the crusaders' behaviour.

The luxury and overindulgence William describes in the passage above are presented as the antithesis of temperance. When specifically linked to provisions 'necessary for the nourishment of man', these traits are also symptoms of the vice of gluttony. Gluttony was considered the most natural of the seven cardinal vices in medieval thought because eating and drinking are human necessities. For this reason, gluttony is often presented as one of the most dangerous vices because the root of gluttonous behaviour – the desire to sustain life – is ever present in the human experience.<sup>57</sup> Gregory the Great organised the symptoms of gluttony under five headings which later writers such as Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) condensed into the short verse: 'hastily, sumptuously, excessively, ravenously, fastidiously' (*Praepropere, laute, nimis, ardentem, studiose*).<sup>58</sup> These five types of gluttony describe how gluttons consume food and drink. According to Gregory, a glutton might not wait for an appropriate mealtime to eat (*praepropere*), and/or seek costly foods (*laute*) or elaborate dishes (*nimis*). A glutton might also keep eating after their natural hunger is satisfied (*ardenter*) or unreasonably desire that food be prepared to their own preferences (*studiose*).<sup>59</sup> In William's account of the crusaders' overindulgences outside Antioch, we see an example of ravenousness and sumptuousness. While William does not provide a detailed description of *how* the crusaders consumed their provisions, it is implied that outside of Antioch the crusaders lived in the luxury of abundance, consuming more than they ought to, more quickly than they ought to.

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<sup>57</sup> Langum, p. 159. See also: Susan E. Hill, *Eating to Excess: The Meaning of Gluttony and the Fat Body in the Ancient World* (Oxford: Praeger, 2011).

<sup>58</sup> Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, trans. by Charles Marriott, 4 vols (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1850), IV, pp. 405–406; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, ed. by Thomas Gilby, 47 vols (Cambridge: Blackfriars, 1968), XLIII, p. 126. For the translation of Aquinas's verse and a commentary on medieval perceptions of gluttony more generally, see Robert B. Kruschwitz, 'Gluttony and Abstinence', in *Virtues and their Vices*, ed. by Kevin Timpe and Craig A. Boyd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 137–155 (p. 139).

<sup>59</sup> Gregory the Great, p. 405; Aquinas, p. 127. See also, Kruschwitz, p. 139.

It is telling that William's condemnation of the crusaders' actions outside Antioch extends to their lack of moderation with their horses' fodder. Ensuring that warhorses, palfreys, and other beasts of burden were well cared for was essential in mobilising armies efficiently. As chancellor, William would also have been acutely aware of the importance of cavalry in warfare strategy. Indeed, it is especially poignant that William criticises the crusaders for potentially putting their knights' horses at risk of starvation because, at the time William was writing, the Kingdom of Jerusalem's access to mounted warriors was extremely limited. In his late-thirteenth-century catalogue of feudal obligations, for example, John of Ibelin notes that the Kingdom of Jerusalem could only call upon a total of 677 retained knights from its major cities.<sup>60</sup> This was a fraction of the knights polities in the West could assemble. To put this in perspective, in England during King John's reign (1199–1216) there were c. 5,000 knights that could be called to arms.<sup>61</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith has estimated that there were c. 5,000 knights across several contingents at the battle of Nicaea in June 1097, predominantly drawn from France and Northern Italy, but even this did not constitute the total number of knights that could be assembled from these countries.<sup>62</sup> A knight at the time of the First Crusade would have likely travelled with at least one riding horse and a warhorse, making the minimum total number of expected horses at the outset of the campaign around 10,000.<sup>63</sup> According to William, each of these horses was at risk of starvation as a result of the crusaders' immoderate use of horse fodder. William's criticism of the crusaders' misuse of provisions seems to be reflective of his understanding of warfare, therefore: he recognised the importance of knights and their

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<sup>60</sup> John of Ibelin, '*Le Livre des Assises*', in *John of Ibelin and the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, trans. by Peter W. Edbury (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997), pp. 191–200 (pp. 196–199).

<sup>61</sup> Christopher Daniell, *From Norman Conquest to Magna Carta: England 1066–1215* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 89.

<sup>62</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, 'Casualties and the Number of Knights on the First Crusade', *Crusades*, 1 (2002), 13–28 (p. 20).

<sup>63</sup> John H. Pryor, 'Modelling Bohemond's March to Thessalonike', in *Logistics of Warfare in the Age of the Crusades*, ed. John H. Pryor (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 1–24 (p. 7).

mounts in First Crusade because there was so few that could be called to arms in the Kingdom of Jerusalem one hundred years later.

As we have seen in the *Chanson d'Antioche*, the relationship between knights and their horses was also an integral part of a knight's reputation and identity. From the twelfth century, the fusion of military prowess and Christian piety became an essential aspect of chivalry.<sup>64</sup> This is demonstrated, for instance, in the *Summa de vitiis* (*Summa on the Vices*, c. 1236) of William Peraldus (c. 1200–1271), a prior of the Dominican Order in Lyon. The *Summa* is compiled of nine treatises of varying lengths that examine and explain the seven cardinal sins for the benefit of preachers engaged in pastoral work following the Fourth Lateran Council. While none of the text includes chivalric allegory, a thirteenth-century English copy of part of Peraldus' *Summa*, preserved in MS. Harley 3244 in the British Library, is prefaced with a two-page illustration of a knight preparing to fight the seven cardinal sins and their sixty-nine demonic progenies.<sup>65</sup> This illustrates a quotation from Job 7. 1, which is inscribed at the top of the painting and proclaims, 'the life of a man on earth is a warfare'.<sup>66</sup> The knight is accompanied by seven doves representing the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost and thirteen pieces of the knight's armour are labelled with virtuous qualities. The knight's lance is inscribed *perseverantia* (perseverance), his hauberk is *caritas* (charity), his shield – which features the 'Scutum Fidei' diagram of the Trinity – is *fides* (faith), and his horse is labelled *bona voluntas* (good will).<sup>67</sup> In this illustration we see an example of the schemes designed to help preachers and the laity understand and remember the vices and virtues. Perhaps more significantly to our current discussion, we also see a visualisation of the interaction between the concepts of knighthood, piety, and

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<sup>64</sup> Richard Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 47.

<sup>65</sup> London, British Library, Harley MS. 3244, fols 27<sup>v</sup>–28<sup>r</sup>. See also, Michael Evans, 'An Illustrated Fragment of Peraldus's *Summa* of Vice: Harleian MS 3244', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 45 (1982), 14–68 (p. 14).

<sup>66</sup> Job 7. 1. See also, Richard Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), pp. 1–5.

<sup>67</sup> Evans, p. 21.

morality. In this case, theological and cardinal virtues are presented as defences against vice, and a knight's body, armour, and horse are used as the allegorical framework through which this idea can be illustrated.

These allegories were more than a didactic device used to explain moral theology for the purposes of pastoral care, however. Connections between a knight's body, his accoutrements, and virtuous behaviour also appear in much later manuals of chivalry. Ramon Llull (c. 1232–1315), a Catalan mystic and poet, writes in his late-thirteenth-century *Libre de l'Orde de Cavalleria* (*The Book of the Order of Chivalry*, c. 1275) that a knight must live his life guided by Christian virtues if he wants to attain true nobility.<sup>68</sup> Llull dedicates a chapter in the *Libre* to describing the symbolic significance of a knight's armour and his horse's accoutrements. Like the illustrated knight in the *Summa*, each of these elements is assigned a virtuous quality which would help a knight fulfil his duty of defending Christendom and ensuring justice.<sup>69</sup> Llull claims that a knight's lance signifies truth, his spurs represent diligence, and his hauberk symbolises fortitude against vice.<sup>70</sup> Notably, Llull also claims that a knight's horse 'signifies the nobility of courage', a vital attribute for those fighting in defence of their Christian beliefs.<sup>71</sup> For this reason, Llull cites learning to care for a horse and ministering to its needs as one of the most important offices of a knight.<sup>72</sup> In Llull's view, caring for one's horse was not only essential for ensuring a knight and his mount were physically prepared to engage in battle, but it was also a key part of cultivating a virtuous and chivalric identity for individual knights.

In both the *Summa* and in Llull's chivalric handbook, which are just a small representation of how discourses surrounding knighthood developed in the high Middle

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<sup>68</sup> Ramon Llull, *The Book of the Order of Chivalry*, trans. by Noel Fallows (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), pp. 33–82. See also: Antonio Disalvo, 'Ramon Llull and the Language of Chivalry', *Mystics Quarterly*, 14 (1988), 197–206 (p. 200).

<sup>69</sup> 'On the Meaning of the Knight's Arms' in Llull, pp. 66–70.

<sup>70</sup> Llull, pp. 66–67.

<sup>71</sup> Llull, p. 68.

<sup>72</sup> Llull, p. 68. For the importance of maintaining one's horse see, pp. 42 and 53.

Ages, we see that codes of chivalry required knights to behave virtuously in order to fulfil their duties and demonstrate their honour, bravery, and nobility. William alludes to these chivalric ideals by suggesting the crusaders were not maintaining their horses. Being unable to properly care for one's horse which, as we have seen, held deep symbolic significance, was indicative of a knight's inability to perform other chivalric duties. Essentially, by suggesting that the crusaders lacked the virtue of temperance when it came to using the abundant resources they had in their possession, William calls into question the crusading knights' chivalric integrity. The Christians are not presented as heroic and pious, but are instead depicted as immoderate, gluttonous, and extravagant. These attributes were not commensurate with the expected lifestyle of knights. In this scene, therefore, William once again posits that an abundance of resources caused recklessness in the crusaders' camp, a fact which disrupted the chivalric identity and the moral integrity of the crusaders themselves.

This examination of the crusaders' responses to an abundance of provisions in the *Historia* has demonstrated that William was uniquely conscious of the negative impact too many resources could have on the moral integrity of the crusading force. As chancellor of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, William would have been aware of the importance of proper food management in warfare scenarios, especially as it related to caring for an army's horses. In his criticism of the crusaders' immoderate use of provisions during the first siege of Antioch, William highlights the crusaders' recklessness and emphasises a causal relationship between abundance, intemperance, and gluttony.

### [Dearth, Greed, and Gluttony](#)

The crusaders' behaviour during periods of dearth is also subject to moral judgement. Indeed, the crusaders' intemperance and over-consumption of food provisions is presented much more critically by William when he describes how famine ravaged the crusading force. Like the other crusade narratives examined in this study, famine features as a



prominent theme in the *Historia* and the most destructive period of dearth described in the text occurs in and around the city of Antioch. It is noted that during the first siege of Antioch the ‘resources of the country nearby had become exhausted’ from foraging expeditions made necessary by the crusaders’ initial overindulgences.<sup>73</sup> As in other accounts of the famine of Antioch, William provides a list of food prices to illustrate how dire the circumstances of famine were in the Christian camp:

Bread sufficient to provide one meal a day for one person could with difficulty be obtained for two shillings. A cow or heifer which earlier sold for five shillings brought two marks. A lamb or kid which might have been bought once for three or four pennies now cost five or six shillings and could scarcely be found at that. Eight shillings was barely enough to purchase the food necessary for a horse for one night.<sup>74</sup>

These prices, except for the cost of horse fodder, seem to have been taken directly from the work of Albert of Aachen.<sup>75</sup> Like the accounts of the Antiochene famine from the *GF*-tradition, William uses references to the increased price of bread and livestock to highlight the circumstances of dearth experienced by the crusaders in the city.

It is also worth noting that William’s cost analysis includes the price of provisions for the crusaders’ horses. The suggestion that one night’s worth of fodder could barely be purchased for eight shillings suggests that providing sufficient foodstuff for the army’s horses was a major problem for the crusaders at this time. This specific price point appears to have come from the account of Raymond of Aguilers.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, Raymond and the *Chanson d’Antioche*, like William, both emphasise the physical wellbeing of horses in their narratives, especially the extent to which the horses suffered hunger during periods of hardship.<sup>77</sup> William’s inclusion of the extortionate price of horse fodder, however, also

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<sup>73</sup> WT, I, p. 258 (trans. Babcock and Krey, p. 214).

<sup>74</sup> WT, I, p. 258 (trans. Babcock and Krey, p. 214): [...] ita ut vix pro duobus solidis qui uni persone semel in die sumpto cibo sufficeret panis inveniretur. Bos vel iuvenca, que ab initio pro quinque aut sex solidis vix repertus vendebatur, equo autem pro cibo necessario per noctem octo vix poterant solidi sufficere [...]

<sup>75</sup> AA, I, p. 118.

<sup>76</sup> RA, p. 53.

<sup>77</sup> See for instance, RA, p. 53; and *Antioche*, p. 190, l. 155.

justifies his harsh criticism of the crusaders' immoderate use of resources when they first arrived in Antioch, underscoring once again his practical understanding of the importance of well-cared for horses for the efficiency and reputation of armies. It is also intriguing that William includes the cost of equine provisions alongside the price of other foodstuff in his description of the Antiochene famine. Its presence here implies that the extortionate cost of horse fodder was, in William's view, just as indicative of the circumstance of dearth experienced in Antioch as the price of bread was.

In the second siege of Antioch, after the crusaders have breached the walls of Antioch and are then themselves besieged in the city, a whole subsection of the narrative is dedicated to describing how famine ravaged the crusading force. The audience is told that famine affected not only the 'common people and the men of lesser rank but involved in its horrors even the more important chiefs'.<sup>78</sup> The all-encompassing effect of famine is implied in other narrative sources of the First Crusade, but none so openly admit that the leaders of the campaign were affected as much as were the poorest members of the army. Indeed, Raymond overtly claims that wealthier participants of the campaign were less affected by famine because they could afford to pay the expensive prices for food.<sup>79</sup> William provides nuance to this claim in his description of famine. He suggests that despite being able to afford inflated prices offered at markets, the leaders of the First Crusade were, in fact, *more* affected by the famine than other men because 'they had more people to maintain and could not refuse their bounty to those who sought it'.<sup>80</sup>

The idea that the leaders of the First Crusade were obligated to ensure their followers were well provisioned is not unique to William's narrative. This notion is also

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<sup>78</sup> WT, I, p. 316 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 271): 'Nec solum plebios et medie manus homines huius tammiserabilis inedia calamitas involverat, verum et maioribus nimis importune se ingesserat principibus [...]'.  
<sup>79</sup> RA, pp. 76–77.

<sup>80</sup> WT, I, p. 316 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 271): 'eratque eis tanto molestior, quanto pluribus providentes indigebant amplioribus et suam petentibus negare non poterant munificentiam'.

touched on in the *Antioche*. The *Antioche*-poet, for example, praises Baldwin for asking Tancred of Apulia to help provision his starving men outside of Nicaea.<sup>81</sup> Tancred graciously agrees to share all the resources he possesses with Baldwin, but the focus of the scene is Baldwin's subsequent generosity. Baldwin willingly shares his personal provisions equally with his own knights, 'keeping not even a tuppenceworth for himself and sitting down to eat with them all'.<sup>82</sup> Generosity is presented in the *Antioche* as edifying and virtuous behaviour in a leader; in this case, Baldwin's generosity culminates with Baldwin sat eating with his men, the very image of crusading unity. The *Historia* does not feature this scene of food sharing, but William does present a belief that the leaders of the campaign were obliged to provide for their dependents. The result of this obligation, William notes, was that famine affected the leaders more detrimentally than the poorer members of the crusading army. This situation reduced the Christian force 'to such destitution that practically the entire host was in danger of perishing.'<sup>83</sup>

William further examines the effect famine had on the higher levels of the crusading force later in the passage. In the same subsection of the *Historia* mentioned above, William states:

The nobles felt no shame, the freeborn no hesitancy in presenting themselves as uninvited guests at the table of strangers. Greedily [*avide*] they hung on the generosity of others as suppliants importunately demanding from the hands of strangers what was too often refused.<sup>84</sup>

Interestingly, William provides no moral commentary on the actions of individuals seeking help from the leaders of the campaign during the early stages of famine, despite its detrimental effect on the crusade chiefs. Here, William suggests forcing oneself on the hospitality of others, uninvited, brought shame on those who were driven to beg for food

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<sup>81</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 131–132, l. 107.

<sup>82</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 131–132, l. 107.

<sup>83</sup> WT, I, p. 258 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 214): 'ad tantam redigeretur inopiam, quod fame invalescente pene populus deperiret universus.'

<sup>84</sup> WT, I, p. 315 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 270): 'Non erat rubor nobilius, non ingenuis verecundia, mensis alienis importunos se convivas ingerere, avide manibus alienis inhiare, importune petere quod sepius negabatur.'

out of necessity. The invocation of shame, a concept that defines and directs appropriate and inappropriate conduct, shows that William is making a moral assessment of the noblemen's behaviour.<sup>85</sup>

Babcock and Krey's translation of this passage suggests the desperately hungry nobles acted 'greedily' (*avide*) when attempting to acquire sustenance. Greed or *avaritia*, derived through *avarus* from *aveo* (to crave), was recognised as a cardinal vice during the medieval period, and according to Augustinian tradition was the desire of wanting more than was enough.<sup>86</sup> In this case, I think that Babcock and Krey's translation of *avide* is misleading. William does not appear to be describing 'greed' in the Augustinian sense because the crusaders are not seeking to overindulge in food, rather they desire enough provisions to assuage their desperate hunger. I would argue that, in this context, the adverb *avide* conveys a sense of eagerness that borders on impatience. *Avide* is used in a similar way by Raymond of Aguilers to describe the way starving crusaders 'eagerly' consumed the flesh of corpses dragged from swamps in Ma'arra because they had nothing else to eat.<sup>87</sup> In the *Historia's* assessment of the second siege of Antioch, William similarly suggests that extreme hunger reduced men to shameless and intemperate behaviour.

Additionally, it is significant that William suggests that those men who fell greedily on the generosity of others were often refused hospitality because William goes on to assert that those who withheld their personal provisions were also greedy:

Those who had formerly been regarded by their friends as liberal and lavish in hospitality now sought the most retired places, inaccessible to others, for taking refreshment. There they fell greedily upon the food, such as it was, which they had been able to procure from various sources and refused to share it with anyone. Is it necessary to say more?<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Mary C. Flannery, 'The Concept of Shame in Late-Medieval English Literature', *Literature Compass*, 9.2 (2012), 166–182 (p. 177).

<sup>86</sup> Richard Newhauser, *The Early History of Greed: The Sin of Avarice in Early Modern Thought and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. xii.

<sup>87</sup> RA, p. 101. Compare: 'Interea tanta fames in exercitu fuit, ut multa corpora iam fetentium, que in paludibus civitatis eisdem et amplius ebdomas iacuerant, populus avidissime comederet.'

<sup>88</sup> WT, I, p. 316 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 271): 'quique apud suos in largiendis dapibus prius liberales iudicabantur et profusi, hii secessus querentes abditissimos et loca

This is a more typical depiction of greed: it is implied that these men had enough to share but were unwilling to do so. Not only do these men demonstrate greed by hoarding and refusing to share their own provisions, but they also act gluttonously by consuming their food intemperately and in private. Indeed, the suggestion that these men consumed their food in seclusion physically separates those who had access to provisions from those without and draws to the audience's attention the connotations of secrecy and shame attached to the crusaders' actions. William highlights in stark relief this disunity in the crusading force by referring to the liberal hospitality these men had shown previously in periods of abundance.

What is more, this passage demonstrates an instance in which William directly addresses the audience. William asks: 'Is it necessary to say more?' (*Quid plura?*) after relaying crusaders' shameful refusal to share their food with those that sought aid.<sup>89</sup> As we have seen, authorial interpolations forge relationships between the narrator and audience and appear in several of the chronicles and, more prominently, in the epic poems examined thus far.<sup>90</sup> This is one of only two occasions in William's account of the First Crusade that he interjects in this way. By following his depiction of crusader greed and gluttony with a rhetorical question that asks whether the implication of the scene needs clarifying, William assumes that the audience will understand how this scenario reflects the detrimental effects famine had on the moral integrity of the crusading force.

This thesis has examined several ways in which chroniclers of the First Crusade believed the crusaders could achieve glorious and noble deaths on crusade, including death from starvation, but in his assessment of the crusaders' response to dearth, William shows how deprivation could also result in dishonourable deaths. Indeed, the crusaders' lack of temperance has fatal implications after their victory at Antioch. In the aftermath of the

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inaccessa ceteris, qualemqualem sumted refectionem, his que undecumque collegerant incumbabant avidius, nemini quod eis erat pro cibo communicantes. Quid plura?

<sup>89</sup> WT, I, p. 316 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 271).

<sup>90</sup> Buck, '*Chronicon*', p. 21.

battle, William notes that a terrible disease ravaged the crusading force killing many, including Adhémar, bishop of Le Puy.<sup>91</sup> William reports that some claimed this illness came from 'disease latent in the air'.<sup>92</sup> Others, he says, more convincingly argue that people died of overeating:

[...] when the people, so long victims of cruel hunger, finally obtained an abundance of food, they were overeager [*aviditate*] to eat in order to make up for their privations. Thus their intemperate gluttony [*inmoderata gulositate*] was the cause of their death.<sup>93</sup>

Here, William once again provides an example in which an abundance of provisions caused the crusaders to behave without moderation. Indeed, the crusaders eat with *aviditas* after experiencing prolonged famine. Like those who sought provisions from strangers during the second siege of Antioch, this invocation of eagerness highlights the crusaders' desperation for sustenance. It is intriguing, therefore, that William goes on to suggest that the crusaders' desire to eat after such deprivation manifested in an act of gluttony (*gulositas*). This is particularly significant as it highlights the reason why gluttony was considered to be one of the most dangerous vices. Gluttonous behaviour is grounded in a natural desire for nourishment, a desire that would have been exponentially augmented after a prolonged period starvation making it difficult for reason to recognise what constituted moderate behaviour. William uses this idea to underscore how starvation effected the crusaders' ability to eat with moderation when they were afforded an abundance of provisions.

Indeed, William emphasises the importance of moderation in the sentence that follows his suggestion that gluttony caused the deaths of many crusaders. He claims:

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<sup>91</sup> WT, I, p. 344 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 299).

<sup>92</sup> WT, I, p. 344 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 299): 'quod ex occultis quibusdam aeris passionibus hoc accideret'.

<sup>93</sup> WT, I, p. 344 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 299): 'aliis vero id pro causa assignantibus quod populus, longo tempore famis acerbitate vexatus, postquam alimentorum attigit opulentiam cibos cum aviditate sumens nimia, preteritos defectus querens redimere sibi ipsi causam mortis inmoderata gulositate inferebat [...]'

[...] those who were temperate and partook of food sparingly were in much better condition than the rest and returned sooner to a normal state of health.<sup>94</sup>

This passage reflects contemporary understandings of sickness and health in which moderation in both behaviour and consumption was vital for keeping the body's four humours – blood, phlegm, black bile, and yellow bile – in balance.<sup>95</sup> An imbalance in an individual's humoral constitution was believed to cause ill health and several external factors, including food and drink intake, were thought to effect the proportions of these humours inside the body.<sup>96</sup> Within this context, gluttony, the consumption of more than was necessary to maintain health, was not only perceived as a moral failing but also had the potential to be physically detrimental to the wellbeing of human bodies. William's emphasis on temperance in the passage outlined above is, therefore, significant as it demonstrates that his understanding of good health and morality were grounded in the concepts of moderation and self-control.

Furthermore, this passage features as the culmination of William's discussion of the crusaders' shameless behaviour centred on food and food provisions during their time in and around the city of Antioch. As has been demonstrated above, William criticises the crusaders for their immoderate use of provisions when they arrived at Antioch. He rebukes those who greedily sought handouts during the second siege of the city, he shames those who hoarded their food in secluded areas, and in this case, he claims gluttonous overconsumption brought about crusader death. In each of these scenarios, William

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<sup>94</sup> WT, I, p. 344 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 299): [...] idque pro sue opinionis assertione in evidens trahebant argumentum, quod sobriis et his, qui parce sibi sumebant alimenta, multo Melius erat et facilius redibant ad convalescentiam.

<sup>95</sup> For more on representations of sickness and health in crusade narratives, especially with reference to the concept of moderation, see Joanna Phillips, 'The Experience of Sickness and Health during Crusader Campaigns to the Eastern Mediterranean, 1095–1274' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Leeds, 2017), especially pp. 101 and 226.

<sup>96</sup> For more on the external factors that could affect the balance of the four humours see: Pedro Gil-Sotres, 'The Regimens of Health', in *Western Medical Thought From Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, ed. by Mirko D. Grmek, trans. by Antony Shugaar (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 291–318; and, Melitta Weiss Adamson, *Medieval Dietetics: Food and Drink in Regimen Sanitatis Literature from 800 to 1400*, German Studies in Canada, 5 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995).

admonishes the crusaders for their immoderate actions. Here, William justifies this criticism by providing an impactful example of the power of temperance: in this case, eating temperately facilitated crusader health while immoderate overconsumption caused death.

Thus, in his account of the crusaders' response to scarcity in and around the city of Antioch, William criticises the crusading force for their greedy and gluttonous behaviour. Within these circumstances of dearth, references to greed and gluttony act to illuminate how extreme hunger effects the crusaders' ability to recognise and act with moderation. While he ultimately acknowledges that the crusaders were desperate with hunger, in William's view, the experience of famine essentially weakens the crusaders' moral integrity. Indeed, William places a distinct emphasis on temperance in his assessment of crusader behaviour. This virtue is not only morally beneficial but one that helps manage illness and encourage recovery, two highly important factors for ensuring the overall health and fighting capability of an army.

### Clean and Unclean Meat

Gluttony's inextricability from the needs of the body meant that moral commentaries often focus on what one may consume.<sup>97</sup> William engages with this idea in his description of what the crusaders were driven to eat during the worst of the famine in Antioch:

For since no food could be brought into the place, a famine of unusual violence arose. The failure of supplies and the stern demands of importunate nature drove the starving people to shameful expedients. There was no choice in the matter of food, even for the most fastidious; no arbitrary distinction between clean and unclean meat existed; whatever chance offered, whether free or at a price, was at once used for food.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Langum, p. 160.

<sup>98</sup> WT, I, p. 315 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 270): 'nam cum nichil inferretur alimentorum, exorta est fames in civitate solito vehementior, ita ut pre defectu victualium et famis importune urgentis acerbitate ieiuna plebs propagandi cibi gratia ad turpia nimis declinaret compendia. Non erat in escis, etiam apud delicatos, differentia, non erat mundorum ab inmundis legalis illa distinctio, sed quod casus offerebat, sive gratis sive cum precio, id in cibum vertebatur'.



This lack of distinction between clean (*munda*) and unclean (*immunda*) foodstuff is of particular interest. Baldric of Bourgueil makes a similar observation in his account of the second siege of Antioch, noting that the starving Christians were ‘compelled to eat horses and donkeys and other things that were unclean [*immundum*]’.<sup>99</sup> That the experience of famine reinforced ideological and social justifications for unclean and clean food designations was not a new idea. As demonstrated in Chapter One, that people might be driven to consume that which is considered *immunda* or ‘inedible’, like spiky plants, rats and dogs, or leather straps, during periods of famine has ancient precedents. Indeed, in his eleventh-century text, Rodulfus Glaber also claims that a lack of bread during a dire famine in 1105 forced people to eat ‘the flesh of unclean animals and reptiles [*immundorum animalium et reptilium*]’.<sup>100</sup> That people are recorded eating similar things during periods of dearth – particularly foodstuffs considered ‘inedible’ to contemporary audiences – points to an established discourse of consumption that used ideas about what was normal and abnormal to eat as a way of communicating the severity of famines.

Distinctions between clean and unclean food also appear in penitential handbooks, introduced in the sixth century to help priests take confession and prescribe penances for sinful behaviour. A ninth-century penitential known as the *Pseudo-Theodore* because of its false attribution to the seventh-century Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury (668–690), for instance, includes a list of thirty-two articles that explain what types of food Christians could consume as well as the penalties for breaking these dietary rules.<sup>101</sup> This text is typical of penitentials in that it prohibits the consumption of meat polluted by blood, semen, or

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<sup>99</sup> BB, p. 67 (trans. p. 108): ‘Fames interim pedententim conualuit, et ut equos et asino, et si quid aliud immundum erat, deuorarent, compulsi sunt Christiani.’

<sup>100</sup> Rodulfus Glaber, *The Five Books of the Histories*, ed. and trans. by John France (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 83.

<sup>101</sup> *Paenitentiale Pseudo-Theodori*, in *Die Bussordnungen der abendländischen Kirche*, ed. by H. Wasserschleben (Halle: Verlag von Ch. Graeger, 1851), pp. 566–622 (pp. 601–604). For a translation of ‘Chapter 16: On the distinction of food, clean and unclean’ of the *Pseudo-Theodore Penitential*, see Rob Meens, ‘A Penitential Diet’, in *Medieval Christianity in Practice*, ed. by Miri Rubin (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 144–150 (pp. 144–146).

any other bodily fluid from a human or animal, or the consumption of any foodstuff soiled by contact with a dead creature or killed and/or partially consumed by animals. The handbook also identifies two classes of animals more broadly: one clean and edible, and the other unclean and not fit for human consumption.<sup>102</sup> While it is not expressly stated which animals fit into which category, it can be inferred that those animals capable of contaminating food with their presence – like cats and dogs which might partially consume the food of their owners (Article 22), or mice and weasels which might fall into oil, honey, milk, or dry goods and die therein (Articles 2–4, 8, 23) – were likely considered unclean and therefore inedible.<sup>103</sup>

What is perhaps most important for our purposes is that it is repeatedly established in the *Pseudo-Theodore* and other penitentials that contaminated food and unclean animals could be consumed in times of need with limited penalty (Articles 1, 11, and 13), as Article 13 confirms: ‘Who out of necessity eats an animal that seems to be unclean, bird or beast, this does not matter’.<sup>104</sup> Although no penitential handbooks were produced or copied after the twelfth century, many of the prohibitions were written into canon law as well as confessional handbooks in the later Middle Ages.<sup>105</sup> Ivo of Chartres (1040–1115), for example, wrote about the prohibition of consuming unclean flesh or animals torn apart by beasts in his *Decretum* (c. 1095).<sup>106</sup> In the *Decretum*, a compendium of decretals concerning

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<sup>102</sup> Rob Meens, ‘Pollution in the Early Middle Ages: the Case of Food Regulations in Penitentials’, *Early Medieval Europe*, 4 (1995), 3–19 (p. 14).

<sup>103</sup> Meens, ‘Pollution’, p. 14. For a more detailed insight into the idea of contagion, food prohibitions, and unclean food in penitential handbooks, see Pierre Bonnassie, ‘Consommation d’aliments immondes et cannibalisme de survie dans l’Occident du haut Moyen Âge’, *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations*, 44 (1989), 1035–1056; and, Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 2010), especially pp. 75–76. See also, Rebekah L. Pratt, ‘From Animal to Meat: Illuminating the Medieval Ritual of Unmaking’, *eHumanista: Journal of Iberian Studies*, 25 (2013), 17–30.

<sup>104</sup> *Paenitentiale Pseudo-Theodori*, p. 602 (trans. by Meens, ‘A Penitential Diet’, p. 145).

<sup>105</sup> Karl Steel, *How to Make a Human: Animals and Violence in the Middle Ages* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2011), p. 74.

<sup>106</sup> Ivo of Chartres, *Decretum*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, CLXI (Paris: Garnier, 1855), pp. 59–1022.

eleventh-century Canon Law, Ivo claims only light fasting is required of those who consumed flesh that was ‘unclean, dead, or torn by beasts’ because they were starving.<sup>107</sup> William cites a *magister Ivo, genere et natione Carnotensis* as one of his tutors in Book 19 of the *Historia*.<sup>108</sup> Although Ivo of Chartres had been dead for thirty years before William started his education in Europe, his appearance in William’s list of instructors suggests that, even though William never met him, his work was formative in William’s learning. Ivo’s assertion that dietary rules could be broken in times of need is, as we have seen, reflected in the accounts of both William and Baldric. William’s suggestion that the crusaders were so hungry that ideological distinctions between clean and unclean meat had no bearing on what they ate highlights the circumstances of dearth in Antioch.

Indeed, William notes that the crusaders had no choice in what they ate during this period of famine. Whatever food was available to them was dictated by chance. This food insecurity led to what William describes as ‘shameful expedients’ on the crusaders’ part:

The flesh of camels, asses, horses, mules, and unclean animals of all kinds was looked upon as the rarest delicacies when it could be obtained, and, dreadful to relate, the bodies of beasts that were suffocated and dead [*suffocate et morticina*] were dug up and devoured, such were the foods with which they tried to quell the cravings of hunger and to prolong their miserable lives by any means possible.<sup>109</sup>

The list of animals allegedly consumed by starving crusaders matches the other crusade narratives examined in this thesis. The first-hand accounts, the Benedictine chronicles, and the *Chanson d’Antioche* all state that crusaders ate camels, asses, horses, and mules to

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<sup>107</sup> Ivo of Chartres, p. 884: ‘Qui manducat carnem immundam, aut morticinam, aut dilaceratam a bestiis, 40 dies poeniteat. Si enim necessitate famis contingit, multo levius est.’

<sup>108</sup> WT, II, p. 880.

<sup>109</sup> WT, I, p. 316 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 271): ‘Camelos, asinos, equos, mulos et inmunda quelibet et indigna relatu, suffocata et morticina, quotiens dabatur ex his aliquid habere pro summis reputabant delciis et ex his importunam repellentes esuriam, miseram quocumque modo sustentabant vitam.’ I have altered Babcock and Krey’s translation of *morticina* from ‘died of disease’ to simply ‘dead’ in this passage to better reflect the idea that the animal flesh consumed by the crusaders had not been slaughtered by humans, it had been found deceased.

assuage their hunger.<sup>110</sup> The unclean animals mentioned by William likely refer to creatures like rats and dogs which are specifically associated with food contamination in penitential handbooks like the *Pseudo-Theodore* and are described as having been consumed by desperately hungry crusaders in Fulcher of Chartres account of the First Crusade.<sup>111</sup> In this passage, we see that William is drawing on well-established narratives of the campaign to inform his depiction of crusader hunger inside Antioch.

The suggestion that crusaders ate the bodies of beasts which had died of strangulation and unknown causes (*suffocata et morticina*) is particularly poignant.<sup>112</sup> William's most recent translators have suggested that the adjective *morticina* used in this phrase implies that the animal carcasses unearthed by the hungry crusaders had died of disease.<sup>113</sup> I propose, however, that *morticina* in this case more likely refers to the fact that the flesh consumed was carrion, unfit for food because the cause of the animal's death was unknown. This more literal translation relates William's depiction of crusaders' consumption of animal carcasses to one of the few, yet definite, food prohibitions found in Christian scripture. Acts 15. 20 and 15. 29, part of the Apostolic Decree, forbid the consumption of food that has been used in a pagan ceremony, 'things strangled' (*suffocatum*), and blood (*sanguinis*).<sup>114</sup> *Suffocatum* in this sense refers to an animal that has been killed without its blood being shed. In his commentary on Ezekiel 44. 31 – 'The priests shall not eat of any thing that is dead of itself [*morticinum*] or caught by a beast, whether it be fowl or cattle' – Saint Jerome (c. 340s–420) explains that *morticinum* (carrion) is the same as the *suffocatum* forbidden in Acts because the animal's death was not brought

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<sup>110</sup> PT, p. 104; *GF*, p. 62; FC, p. 226; RA, p. 77; BB, p. 73; RM, p. 64; GN, p. 226; *Antioche*, pp. 346–347, l. 284.

<sup>111</sup> FC, p. 226.

<sup>112</sup> Steel, pp. 70–85.

<sup>113</sup> Babcock and Krey, p. 271.

<sup>114</sup> Steel, p. 70.

about by human agency.<sup>115</sup> In Jerome's view this also meant that any animal 'seized by beasts' (*captum a bestia*) and killed was unsuitable for human consumption.<sup>116</sup>

Jerome's definition and proscription of *morticinum* and *suffocatum* also permeate penitential handbooks. Article 11 in the *Pseudo-Theodore*, for instance, references Acts 15. 29 directly:

An animal or a bird that has been killed by a dog, a fox, or a bird of prey such as a falcon, or by a stick, a stone, or an arrow that has no iron [arrow-head], these are all suffocated and should not be eaten, for the Acts of the Apostles demands that we will abstain from four things: fornications, things suffocated, blood, and idolatry (Acts 15. 29) And who eats from such things should abstain from meat for five weeks. When someone did so forced by hunger, he should fast for one week.<sup>117</sup>

Like Jerome, this passage equates carrion and creatures that have been killed by other animals with the concept of *suffocatum* found in Acts, rendering the consumption of these animals unclean and prohibited. By specifically using the adjectives *suffocatum* and *morticinum* to describe the animals the Christians were forced to dig up and consume, William makes reference to the food prohibitions found in the Scriptures, scriptural commentary, and pastoral guidance in penitential handbooks. While the crusaders' desperation for food ultimately makes their actions permissible – or, at least, they incur less penance than that prescribed in normal circumstances – William's language nevertheless highlights their transgression.

That William understands the illicit nature of the crusaders' consumption of unearthed *suffocatum* and *morticinum* can be seen in his suggestion that these events were 'dreadful to relate'. This is the second and final authorial aside in William's account of the First Crusade. It is intriguing that both interpolations relate directly to scenes of

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<sup>115</sup> Saint Jerome, *Commentariorum in Ezechielem Prophetam*, ed. by Jacque-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, XXV (Paris: Garnier, 1845), p. 444: 'ut morticinum non comedat tam de avibus quam de pecoribus, cujus nequaquam sanguis effusus est, quod in Actibus apostolorum dicitur suffocatum [...]'

<sup>116</sup> Later interpretations suggested animals killed by humans were not in the *suffocatum* category. So hunters could kill their prey with the aid of dogs or raptors and still observe the proscriptions of scripture. See Steel, pp. 83–86.

<sup>117</sup> *Paenitentiale Pseudo-Theodori*, p. 602 (trans. by Meens, 'A Penitential Diet', p. 145).

consumption as this may suggest that William thought the significance of eating was worth underscoring. In this case, injecting an authorial commentary further forges a line of communication with the audience that ensures the horrifying nature of the scene is fully emphasised.

It is also worth noting the similarities between William's description of the crusaders' unclean consumption in Antioch and some of the representations of anthropophagy provided in first-, second-, and third-generation narratives examined previously in this thesis. To begin, the suggestion that the crusaders' shameful consumption of unclean meats was 'dreadful to relate' (*indigna relatu*) is reminiscent of Robert the Monk's claim that crusader cannibalism was 'a horrible thing to describe' (*quod etiam dictu horribile est*).<sup>118</sup> Similarly, William's description of animal carcasses being dug up to eat resembles Raymond of Aguilers' depiction of crusaders consuming the decaying flesh from human corpses exhumed from swamps.<sup>119</sup> Finally, the proposition that the crusaders' hunger transformed what was normally considered unclean meat into the 'rarest delicacies' (*summ̄is delciis*) is resonant of the conversion of human flesh into a gastronomically prepared meat that rivalled gammon and spiced peacock in flavour in the *Antioche*.<sup>120</sup> The similarity in these discussions of consumption further alludes to a pre-existing discourse surrounding ideas of starvation that use depictions of shameful and illicit eating alongside gruesome gustatory imagery to describe starvation.

### Crusader Cannibalism in the *Historia*

William of Tyre's *Historia* only twice refers to crusader cannibalism. The first reference is at the beginning William's account of the second siege of Antioch, which recalls the strategic culinary preparation of a Turkish prisoner in an act of staged cannibalism. The second reference more closely follows the interpretation of crusader cannibalism found in first-

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<sup>118</sup> RM, p. 88.

<sup>119</sup> RA, p. 81.

<sup>120</sup> *Antioche*, pp. 176–177, l. 175.

hand chronicles of the campaign, depicting the consumption of human flesh as a necessary, albeit morally and physical detrimental, act of survival.

### Staged Cannibalism

The *Historia* first refers to crusader cannibalism at the point when the crusaders have entered Antioch – apart from the citadel – but have been besieged by Kerbogha’s relief force. The account of staged cannibalism appears early on, before the worst of the famine has set in. At this point, the crusaders had not yet been forced to consume unclean animals. According to William, the main issue for the crusading force at this time was the presence of spies in the Christian camp who were leaking the crusaders’ strategies to the enemy. These spies managed to go unnoticed by pretending to be Greeks, Syrians, and Armenians, easily assuming the characteristics of such nations by using cultural idioms, manners, and dress.<sup>121</sup> When the leaders of the campaign meet to discuss this problem it is Bohemond of Taranto who, ‘with the help of God’, takes on responsibility for ridding the camp of any spies.<sup>122</sup> In short, Bohemond’s solution involves staging the consumption of enemy prisoners to terrify the spies into fleeing, lest they be caught and consumed too.

William crafts a detailed scene of Bohemond’s anthropophagical deception. The audience is told that the plan commenced ‘as the shades of evening began to come on apace’ and ‘the usual preparations for dinner were in progress’.<sup>123</sup> This timing immediately situates *faux*-cannibalism within a normal setting of cooking and consumption. Bohemond calls for Turkish prisoners to be brought forward and hands them over to the headsman, ordering that they be killed (*jugulare*).<sup>124</sup> While Babcock and Krey translate the verb

<sup>121</sup> WT, I, p. 265 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 221).

<sup>122</sup> WT, I, p. 266 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 222): “‘Fratres et domini, omnem istam sollicitudinem proicite super nos, nam nos auctore domino conveniens huic morbo inveniemus remedium.’”

<sup>123</sup> WT, I, p. 266 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 222): ‘circa primum noctis crepusculum, cum alii per castra pro cene apparatu’.

<sup>124</sup> WT, I, p. 266 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 222): ‘educi precipit Turcos aliquot quos habebat in vinculis, et tradens eos carnificibus iugulari mandat’.

*jugulare* as ‘to strangle’, it is not possible to know what form of throat-based execution William intended to depict here. *Jugulare* could also be translated as ‘to kill by cutting the throat’. Indeed, strangulation is not a usual method of killing a large animal intended for consumption and it is also a peculiar way of dispatching prisoners, so this seems an odd translation. Given that the Turkish prisoners were killed with the intention of being butchered and cooked, having their throats cut would make more sense as this would drain their bodies of blood and allow for more efficient roasting.

Additionally, it is worth considering whether William’s use of the verb *jugulare*, with its two meanings, could be another reference to the food prohibitions laid out in Acts. Aside from the fact that the consumption of human flesh was considered taboo, if *jugulare* here means ‘to strangle’ (as in the translation), the Turks’ bodies would literally become *suffocatum* (things strangled), unclean flesh unsuitable for consumption. On the other hand, if *jugulare* was intended to suggest that Bohemond ordered the Turkish prisoners’ throats be cut and blood drained, this would conform to Acts’ proscription of ingesting blood (*sanguin[e]*).<sup>125</sup> The first interpretation enhances the transgressive nature of that which was already considered taboo by suggesting that the manner of the Turks’ death made their flesh unclean. The second interpretation likens the Turks’ deaths to those of animals to be butchered, dehumanising them. That is to say that I believe there is a nuance to William’s description of the systematic killing of a large number of Turkish prisoners within the context of staged cannibalism that is difficult to pin down.

What is important, regardless of the manner of the prisoners’ execution, however, is that these killings were intended to be witnessed by other crusaders and spies within the camp. The bloody sight of Turkish prisoners having their throats cut or the protracted display of numerous successive strangulations was a performance designed to intrigue onlookers. Indeed, the spectacle of the scene appears to have been important because

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<sup>125</sup> Acts 15. 20 and 15. 29.



William claims that after the execution of the prisoners Bohemond ‘had a huge fire built as if preparing dinner and directed that the bodies [of the Turks], after being prepared with care, should be roasted’.<sup>126</sup> From a practical standpoint, building a huge fire would allow more flesh to be cooked at once, but the flames and smoke from a large fire would also further draw attention to the site of the staged anthropophagy. Moreover, while William gives no indication as to how the bodies were prepared for roasting, the suggestion that this process was done carefully (*studiosius preparari*) is significant. This description implies that time and effort was taken to prepare the human flesh. In a scene where the visibility of anthropophagical activity is integral to the success of the deception, these factors lend a performativity to the preparation of human flesh for consumption.

The fact that Bohemond orders the Turks’ bodies to be butchered and roasted also positions the preparation of human flesh as a parallel of normal food practice. As we have seen in the works of Fulcher of Chartres and Baldric of Bourgueil, in cases of survival cannibalism culinary preparation of this kind is often presented as a civilising process.<sup>127</sup> In this case, however, the inclusion of human flesh in what is otherwise a mundane scene of food preparation imparts an uneasy sense of savagery to the crusaders’ behaviour. While this savagery is intended to spook the spies who do not know that this anthropophagical behaviour is a ruse, William attempts to delimit the negative impact cannibalism might have on the crusaders’ reputation in the narrative by emphasising that this scene unfolded ‘as if’ (*quasi*) Bohemond’s contingent were preparing for dinner. This idea has been explored in Chapter Three. Indeed, Guibert of Nogent uses this qualifier to suggest that the Tafurs roasted the flesh butchered from Turkish bodies in full view of the city of Ma’arra ‘as if’ the meat was going to be eaten.<sup>128</sup> As we have seen, Adémar of Chabannes also records

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<sup>126</sup> WT, I, p. 266 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 222): ‘et igne copioso subposito quasi ad opus cene diligenter assari precipit et studiosius preparari, precipiens suis quod si ab aliquibus interrogati essent quidnam sibi cena talis vellet’.

<sup>127</sup> See, for example, FC, pp. 266–267; and BB, p. 93.

<sup>128</sup> GN, p. 311: ‘acsi carnem mandibilem igni apposito torruerunt’.

that another Norman, Roger de Tosny, performed a similar staged act of cannibalism by cutting up and boiling a Muslim prisoner ‘as if a pig’ (*quasi porcum*) during the *Reconquista* of Iberia in around 1020.<sup>129</sup> In each case, ‘as if’ ensures one understands that, although Muslim bodies were being cooked, their flesh was not intended for consumption.

Additionally, it is worth noting that Roger de Tosny’s granddaughter, Godehilde, was the first wife of Bohemond’s fellow crusade leader and later King of Jerusalem, Baldwin of Boulogne (r. 1100–1118).<sup>130</sup> Godehilde travelled to the Holy Land in the company of her husband and his brothers but succumbed to illness at Marash in October 1097. William records her death in Book Three of the *Historia*, claiming that she was a woman ‘worthy of the highest praise for her life and character’.<sup>131</sup> Given William’s interest in the history of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and its kings, it is possible he knew of Roger de Tosny’s man-eating reputation and took inspiration from Roger’s alleged staged cannibalism when writing about Bohemond’s deception. At the very least, the existence of similar accounts of *faux*-anthropophagy being used as a strategy suggests that this episode of staged cannibalism may be as much fictional *topos* as historical reality.

William continues his account of Bohemond’s deception by suggesting that only Bohemond’s men knew that the gastronomically prepared human flesh was not in fact intended for consumption:

[Bohemond’s] people were instructed that if any question arose about the meaning of such a meal, they were to answer that thenceforward, by decision of the chiefs, the bodies of all enemies or spies seized should furnish meat for the tables of the leaders and the people in the same fashion.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Adémar of Chabannes, *Ademarus Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. by P. Bourgain, R. Landes, and G. Pon, *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 129 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), p. 174.

<sup>130</sup> See Alan V. Murray, *The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Dynastic History 1099–1125* (Oxford: Prosopographica et Genealogica, 2000), p. 31.

<sup>131</sup> WT, I, p. 221 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 177): ‘vita et moribus commendabilis’.

<sup>132</sup> WT, I, p. 266 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 222): ‘precipiens suis quod si ab aliquibus interrogati essent quidnam sibi cena talis vellet, responderent quod inter principes convenerat ut quotquot deinceps de hostibus aut eorum exploratoribus caperentur, omens prandiis principum et populi ex se ipsis escas via simili cogarentur persolvere.’

William's description of how the prepared human flesh would be used in the camp is particularly vibrant in this passage. The suggestion that the bodies of the Christians' enemies were intended to 'furnish meat for the tables of the leaders and the people' is triumphant in tone and confirms that this cannibal feast would be available to all levels of the crusading army. This is possibly reflective of the leaders' initiative to ensure that all food resources were shared amongst the army as equally as possible. It is more likely, however, that this sense of triumph is indicative of the abundance that killing Turkish prisoners and spies would afford the Christians in terms of provisions. In this way, William's depiction of an imagined anthropophagical feast parallels the imagery created in the *Antioche's* description of the Tafurs' cannibalistic banquet, where the consumption of human flesh acted as a demonstration of abundance. As Andrew Buck has suggested, it is likely that William had access to a version of the *Antioche*, or at least was aware of and influenced by oral *chanson de geste* traditions that also detailed the venture.<sup>133</sup> It is possible that ideas relating to the value of human flesh as a resource for the crusading army – even when relayed as part of a deception – might have stemmed from depictions of the Tafurs' cannibalistic feast in the *chansons de geste*.

Echoes of these epic poems can also be seen in William's continued emphasis on the spectacle of staged cannibalism. Indeed, William claims that the crusaders unaware of Bohemond's deception soon came to learn by word of mouth that prisoners were being roasted for consumption. It is noted that 'all the members of the expedition ran thither in wonder at the novelty of the idea'.<sup>134</sup> This statement confirms that, much like the Tafurs' strategic cannibalism in the *Antioche* and Guibert's text, Bohemond's staged cannibalism had visual impact: crusaders from other contingents were drawn to the site of the alleged

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<sup>133</sup> Buck, '*Chronicon*', p. 3

<sup>134</sup> WT, I, p. 266 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 222): 'Audientes igitur qui in expeditione errant quod talia in castris domini Boamundi tractarentur, facti admirantes novitatem illuc concurrunt universi.'

anthropophagy because of rumours promulgated by those who had initially witnessed Bohemond's men preparing human flesh 'as if' for consumption.

The success of this initial spectacle is established with the suggestion that Bohemond's culinary preparation of human flesh, and the subsequent rumours of crusader cannibalism, terrified the spies in the Christian camp. Thinking the crusade leaders had ordered that all enemies or spies be captured, killed, cooked, and consumed, the trespassers 'left the camp at once and returned to their own land'.<sup>135</sup> The fact that the spies believed that procuring, processing, and cooking human flesh was indicative of actual Christian cannibalism confirms the success of Bohemond's plan. Here, as in other narratives, cannibalism – or the threat of cannibalism – is established as a successful and effective military strategy.

In his conclusion to the episode, William provides an insight into how leaders of the spies who fled from the Christian camp received news of this alleged crusader cannibalism:

[The spies] reported that [the Christians] surpassed every other nation and even beasts in cruelty. To seize the cities and castles of their enemy, together with all property of every description, to cast into prison, to torture cruelly in enemy fashion, or even to kill did not satisfy them. These Christians must also fill their stomachs with the flesh of their enemies and fatten themselves [*saginentur*] on the fat of their foes.<sup>136</sup>

Here, William questions the morality of the crusaders through the voice of their enemies. It is worth noting in particular that the crusaders are portrayed as acting with avarice: this time, their greed is specifically linked to the material gains acquired through successful warfare. According to this passage, the crusaders' greed also required gastronomic satiation. In this case, William describes the Christians fattening themselves (*saginare*) on

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<sup>135</sup> WT, I, p. 266 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 222): 'Quo facto qui in exercitu errant exploratores deterriti, totum esse serium et sine simulatione quod decretum dicebatur arbitantes, ex eo quod acciderat evidens trahebant argumentum, timentesque ne simile quid eis contingeret a castris egressi redibant ad propria'.

<sup>136</sup> WT, I, p. 266 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 222): 'his qui eos miserant dicentes quoniam populus hic quarumlibet nationem, sed et ferearum exuperat seviciam, cui non sufficiat urbes, castella et omnimodam hostium diripere substantiam et eos vinculis mancipare aut more hostium torquere inclementius aut saltem occidere, nisi etiam et de carnibus eorum ventrum suum impleant et adipe saginentur inimicorum.'

human flesh and fat. Not only does this make direct reference to Bohemond's *faux-cannibalism*, but it also suggests that the crusaders were insatiable gluttons. Indeed, the claim that the crusaders sought to grow fat from eating the bodies of their enemies conjures an image of ravenous overconsumption, one of the five symptoms of gluttony as outlined by Gregory the Great. Thus, in this passage, William presents the crusaders' anthropophagical reputation alongside depictions of the vices of greed and gluttony.

While this imagery furthers an idea of crusader immoderation and cruelty, it is also redolent of the cannibalistic imagery used in Guibert's narrative to emphasise the crusaders' military prowess. As discussed in Chapter Three, Guibert equates physical satiation with the military destruction of an enemy by using the same verb *saginare* to suggest that the crusaders 'grew fat' on the slaughter of Turkish forces.<sup>137</sup> While William is referring to a specific instance of staged cannibalism and Guibert is using a metaphorical hunger to highlight military prowess, the use of cannibalistic imagery to underscore the Christians' determination to dominate their enemies is comparable in both accounts. Like Raymond of Aguilers and Guibert of Nogent, William highlights that the rumours of crusader cannibalism were strategically beneficial for the Christian army because they depicted the crusaders as relentless, cruel, and insatiable when it came to material gains and bloodshed. Indeed, as Jay Rubenstein has observed, that this staged cannibalism solved the Christians' spy problem is mostly forgotten by the end of the scene.<sup>138</sup> Instead, an emphasis is placed on the Turks' fear of the crusaders and their savage determination to emerge victorious.

Finally, it is worth drawing attention to the fact that at no point during William's discussion of Bohemond's staged cannibalism is crusader hunger referenced. This is something Rubenstein highlights in his brief assessment of William's engagement with

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<sup>137</sup> GN, pp. 189–190.

<sup>138</sup> Jay Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', *French Historical Studies*, 31.4 (2011), 525–552 (p. 541).

anthropophagy, definitively concluding that William separates cannibalism from ‘the issue of hunger’ by ‘having Bohemond roast the enemy corpses during the early days at Antioch, well before the worst of the famine had struck’.<sup>139</sup> While it is true that at this juncture in the narrative there is no suggestion that the crusaders were suffering from hunger, I would argue that this episode of staged cannibalism is intrinsically linked to ‘the issue of hunger’ because it is overtly grounded in discourses of consumption. It is, for example, set at dinner time, references are made to processes of culinary preparation, and human flesh is presented as a resource available to ‘furnish the tables’ of all levels of society. While a conscious effort is made to underscore the fact that the gastronomic preparation of human flesh was a deception and not an actual means of assuaging crusader hunger, it is these culinary procedures – mundane if not for the type of meat being prepared – that ensure the success of Bohemond’s deception. Without the visual element of killing, butchering, and roasting human flesh, and the rumours of cannibalism that spread in the aftermath of this spectacle, Bohemond’s plan to root out spies from the Christian camp would not have succeeded. Thus, it is difficult to extract Bohemond’s staged cannibalism and William’s depiction of the event from prevailing vocabularies of consumption because the scene is so deeply rooted in perceptions of food preparation.

#### Survival Cannibalism

Like the first- and second-generation narratives of the First Crusade examined in this investigation, William situates actual crusader cannibalism – as opposed to the staged cannibalism outlined above – in the city of Ma’arra. In the *Historia*, anthropophagy is set against the backdrop of famine and fits more broadly into a discussion about what is clean and unclean to eat. Unlike any of the primary sources addressed previously, however, William emphasises that crusader cannibalism was just one of the problems faced by the crusading force in Ma’arra: the Christians’ time in the city was also marked by their dissent,

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<sup>139</sup> Rubenstein, ‘Cannibals and Crusaders’, p. 541.

disobedience, and disease, drawing together several themes relating to the crusader's physical and moral wellbeing that have been highlighted elsewhere in this chapter. The final section of this chapter explores how William's depiction of man-eating contributes to an image of dissent and disorder in William's account of the capture of the city of Ma'arra.

William notes that after the successful capture of Antioch, the crusaders demanded that the leaders of the campaign resume their journey to Jerusalem. Despite the people's desire to continue their pilgrimage, the leaders decided it would be better to wait until the heat of the summer was over before recommencing their march to Jerusalem so that those crusaders affected by famine and the pestilence William attributed to overconsumption could recover and the army could acquire more horses.<sup>140</sup> For several months the leaders of the campaign and their contingents went their separate ways, but on 1 November 1098 they all returned to Antioch as agreed and prepared to continue their journey to Jerusalem.<sup>141</sup>

Remarkably, William suggests that the leaders' decision to capture Ma'arra on their march south to Jerusalem was made to placate restless crusaders. He notes:

It was necessary that some activity be carried on during this interim, for the insistent clamour of the people, as they demanded that the march to Jerusalem be resumed, was unendurable.<sup>142</sup>

The leaders of the campaign, according to William, directed the crusaders' restless energy towards attacking the city, which they did with gusto. After three days of violently assaulting the walls of Ma'arra, facing abuse from the 'arrogant' citizens of the city who taunted them from the ramparts, the crusaders managed to take several fortified towers. William claims, however, that a group of 'undisciplined' crusaders were unsatisfied with this progress. These men, 'weary of their long privations and the bitter straits of protracted

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<sup>140</sup> WT, I, p. 344 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 300).

<sup>141</sup> WT, I, p. 353 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 310).

<sup>142</sup> WT, I, p. 354 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 310): 'ne nil interim ageretur expugnare proponent: non enim poterant vociferantis populi et iter versus Ierosolimam expetentis clamorem tolerare.'

famine, entered [the city] without the knowledge of their elders'.<sup>143</sup> They found the city empty, its inhabitants having fled or hid, and 'secretly and without noise carried off all the spoils' they could find.<sup>144</sup> The suggestion that their behaviour was secretive and stealthy underscores the fact these crusaders knew their actions were dishonourable. Indeed, while William notes that the leaders of the campaign were able to take the city the following day without any conflict, his narrative focus remains on the actions of the 'undisciplined people' (*plebs indomita*) who had left the city with little booty to be found.<sup>145</sup> In William's view, the capture of Ma'arra was marred by the actions of a group of restless and seemingly opportunistic crusaders.

Although capturing Ma'arra was intended to provide some purpose to the restive crusading army, William suggests that their impatience to move quickly to Jerusalem was only further agitated once the city had been taken. The meeting between Raymond IV of Toulouse and Bohemond at Chastel-Rouge over their claims to Antioch and the newly captured Ma'arra is, for example, cited as the cause of the crusaders' continued unrest. According to William, the crusaders accused the leaders of 'trying to invent excuses for delay' by fighting amongst themselves, while 'the main object of the pilgrimage seemed wholly forgotten'.<sup>146</sup> This interpretation stands in marked contrast to Robert the Monk's account of Raymond and Bohemond's disagreement, whereby Raymond realises that his own petty quarrels were preventing the army from reaching Jerusalem.<sup>147</sup> Robert identifies

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<sup>143</sup> WT, I, p. 355 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 311): 'At vero plebs indomita, longis fatigata laboribus et diutine famis acerbitate vexata, videns quod hostium nemo compareret in minibus, quod civitas sine strepitu tota quiesceret, absque maiorum conscientia in urbam ingressa est et eam reperientes vacuam'.

<sup>144</sup> WT, I, p. 355 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 311): 'clam et sine strepitu universa eius obtinere spolia.' I have altered Babcock and Krey's translation of '*sine strepitu*' to provide a more literal interpretation of the Latin.

<sup>145</sup> WT, I, p. 355 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 311).

<sup>146</sup> WT, I, p. 356 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 313): 'sentiens hoc populus moleste nimium cepit ferre et apud se conqueri quod moras innecterent principes et pro singulis captis urbibus lites inter se suscitarent et iurgia, ita ut principale eorum propositum omnino neglaectum videretur.'

<sup>147</sup> RM, pp. 88–89.



Raymond as the instigator of the army's final push towards the Holy City, a decision that was divinely rewarded with an abundance of food.<sup>148</sup> William's focus on the crusaders' reaction to the leaders' argument ultimately gives the people, and not the campaign leaders, the moral high ground. In this case, the crusaders' determination to fulfil their crusading vow is positioned as more praiseworthy than Raymond and Bohemond's dispute over material assets.

William's initial admiration for the people's commitment to their cause is tempered, however, by the suggestion that in their zeal to continue their pilgrimage some crusaders threatened to destroy Ma'arra so there might be nothing left to 'hinder the accomplishment of their vows'.<sup>149</sup> It is noted that the crusaders acted on these threats in spite of the opposition of the Bishop of Albara while Raymond was away, tearing down walls and towers from their foundations.<sup>150</sup> From this point in the narrative, William is less sympathetic to the crusaders' impatience to arrive in Jerusalem. He presents their restlessness and anger towards the leaders of the campaigns' priorities as a form of disobedience and a lack of perseverance. Indeed, after his account of the crusaders' partial destruction of Ma'arra, William switches his focus to the impact the crusaders' dissent had on Raymond, noting that 'their importunate demands' and 'incessant shouts [...] allowed him no rest'.<sup>151</sup> William's initial description of the crusaders' time in the city of Ma'arra is therefore one of hostility and disunity.

William notes that, to make matters worse, a severe famine was ravaging the army at the same time as the people were calling for the resumption of their march towards Jerusalem. Unlike other accounts of circumstances of dearth experienced during the First

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<sup>148</sup> RM, p. 89.

<sup>149</sup> WT, I, pp. 356–357 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 313): 'Unde convenientes adinvicem ordinaverunt apud se ut, quacumque ex causa absente comite, urbem diruerent, ne de cetero eorum votis aliquod prestaret impedimentum.'

<sup>150</sup> WT, I, p. 357 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 313).

<sup>151</sup> WT, I, p. 358 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 314): 'ita etiam ut clamoribus assiduis et frequenti contestatione id importunius exigerent, requiem penitus denegabat.'

Crusade, William does not provide a list of food prices to emphasise the severity of this famine. Instead, he restricts his assessment of the crusaders' experience of famine to a few sentences. In the first instance, he claims that 'as food failed, many in defiance of custom relapsed to the savagery of wild beasts and began to eat the flesh of unclean animals'.<sup>152</sup> The suggestion that dearth caused some crusaders to act with the 'savagery of wild beasts' recalls how the spies likened the Christians to cruel beasts after Bohemond's staged cannibalism. In this case, however, William's reference to animality is not presented as a marker of the crusaders' fearsome reputation; it is a commentary on the effect extreme hunger had on the behaviour and moral integrity of the crusading force.

Indeed, William specifically makes a connection between the circumstances of dearth experienced at Ma'arra and the crusaders' consumption of animals considered unfit for humans to eat. Here, as with his account of the Antiochene famine, William frames the consumption of unclean animals as a 'defiance of custom' (*contra morem*). While his account of dearth during the second siege of Antioch underscores the idea that the experience of hunger was a legitimate reason to disregard social and ideological distinctions between clean and unclean food, in this case William appears critical of the crusaders' behaviour. William essentially dehumanises the crusaders by suggesting the consumption of unclean flesh was evidence of animality, not a human response to the threat of starvation. This undermines the crusaders' desperate hunger and emphasises the transgressive nature of their consumption. In so doing, this brief assessment of the crusaders' experience of famine further contributes to an overriding sense of disobedience and discontent in William's account of the capture of Ma'arra.

Crucially, the sentence that follows William's discussion of famine goes on to mention crusader cannibalism. Like Guibert of Nogent and Baldric of Bourgueil, William

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<sup>152</sup> WT, I, p. 357 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 314): 'Erat preterea in eodem exercitu tanta famis acerbitas, ut deficientibus alimentis multi contra morem ferarum animos induti as esum inmundorum se converterent animalium.'

questions the veracity of allegations of anthropophagy: 'It is asserted also, though this is scarcely credible, that many, through lack of proper food, fell to such depths that they were eating human flesh'.<sup>153</sup> As cannibalism is only addressed in a reference to hearsay, William provides no further information as to *who* the crusaders were allegedly eating nor any indication as to how this human flesh was prepared for consumption. When read alongside the statement that the crusaders were driven to eat unclean animals in Ma'arra, William's brief reference to crusader cannibalism suggests that its inclusion, even as rumour, was intended to further illustrate the severity of the famine experienced in the city. Indeed, William's reference to cannibalism at this juncture highlights the same practical approach to assuaging hunger as is depicted in other accounts of famine scenarios: after consuming all of the edible foodstuff available to them, the crusaders in Ma'arra were first forced to eat unclean meat and then, at the peak of their desperation, allegedly, human flesh. In this gradational method of avoiding starvation, we see a means of measuring and communicating the severity of the famine at Ma'arra.

Despite presenting anthropophagy as an unverifiable allegation levelled against the crusading force, William ultimately depicts crusader cannibalism as a strategy for survival. If the rumours were to be believed, the crusaders were forced to consume human flesh because of a 'lack of proper food' (*alimentorum inopia*). In this interpretation, William agrees with the depictions of survival cannibalism presented in most of the first-hand and second-generation accounts of the campaign examined in this thesis.<sup>154</sup>

Unlike any of the crusade narratives examined thus far, however, William follows his account of crusader cannibalism with a commentary on the physical effect famine had

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<sup>153</sup> WT, I, p. 357 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 314): 'Dicitur etiam, si tamen fas est credere, quod multi pre alimentorum inopia ad hoc ut carnes humanas ederent prolapsi sunt.'

<sup>154</sup> As demonstrated in Chapter Three, Guibert of Nogent ultimately presents allegations of survival cannibalism as nothing more than hearsay.

on the crusading force. In this case, William makes a connection between unclean foods, the consumption of human flesh, and illness:

Pestilence was rife among the pilgrims also, nor could this be otherwise since the wretched people were subsisting upon unclean and unhealthy food (if that indeed can be called food which is contrary to nature).<sup>155</sup>

Other Latin accounts of the First Crusade acknowledge that famine often went together with the spread of disease, but nowhere else in my corpus of crusade narratives does an author suggest that the crusaders' consumption of what might normally be considered inedible caused illness. This passage once again illuminates William's understanding of health, in which the type of food ingested could have negative effects on the body's overall state of wellness.

Moreover, the proximity of this description of pestilence to William's reference to alleged crusader cannibalism seems to suggest that he includes human flesh in the category of 'unclean and unhealthy foods' (*inmundis et pestilentibus cibis*). This is supported by William's speculation as to whether something can actually be considered food if it is 'contrary to nature' (*contra naturam*). The term *contra naturam* offers a parallel to *contra morem* (contrary to custom) which is used by William to describe the crusaders' consumption of unclean animal flesh. Whereas it was believed to be natural for humans to eat animals (according to custom) because they were given dominion over them by God, consuming human flesh was unnatural because it violated this privilege. Cannibalism confounded the distinction between animal and human, blurring the boundaries between bodies which could be legitimately slaughtered and consumed as food and those which could not.<sup>156</sup> William's inclusion of human flesh in the category of 'unclean and unhealthy

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<sup>155</sup> WT, I, p. 357 (trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 314): 'Sed neque clades deerat in populo, nec merito deesse poterat, ubi tam inmundis et pestilentibus cibis – si tamen cibi dicendi sunt qui contra naturam sumuntur – misera plebs alebatur.' I have altered Babcock and Krey's translation of '*pestilentibus*' from 'noxious' to the more literal 'unhealthy' to highlight the fact that William believed this food to be detrimental to the crusaders' overall health.

<sup>156</sup> Steel, p. 124.

foods' is therefore significant as it not only presents cannibalism as a moral affront to the natural order, but it also suggests that consuming human flesh could be physically detrimental to the health of the 'eater'. Human flesh, like other unclean meat, could cause illness. Much like William's discussion of crusader dissent and responses to famine in Ma'arra, his engagement with the physical and moral effects of illicit eating further underscores the transgressive nature of the crusaders' eating habits during their time in the city.

Thus, William's account of survival cannibalism stands in marked contrast to his depiction of Bohemond's act of staged cannibalism. Whereas human flesh is presented as a plausible resource for the crusading army in Bohemond's deception, in William's account of actual anthropophagy human flesh is identified alongside other 'unclean foods' unfit for consumption. Indeed, Bohemond's staged cannibalism, which is performed without the context of dearth, is presented as a marker of the crusaders' determination to dominate their enemies. This deception is ultimately interpreted as a sanctioned and strategically beneficial use of anthropophagical behaviour. The alleged cannibalism in Ma'arra, on the other hand, is presented as both morally and physically detrimental to the crusaders. While it is noted that anthropophagy – alleged or otherwise – was a regretful but necessary means of ensuring the survival of starving crusaders, William underscores the transgressive nature of cannibalism. That the crusaders may have been driven to consume human flesh serves to demonstrate the severity of the famine experienced in Ma'arra, but it also fits more broadly into William's description of crusader dissent and disobedience in the city. References to cannibalism therefore complement William's depiction of restless, disobedient, and destructive crusaders in Ma'arra after its capture, by further illustrating the breakdown of normal social order.

## Conclusion

The concepts of vice and virtue feature prominently in William's account of the First Crusade, especially in his depictions of the crusaders' food management and eating habits. William is particularly critical of the crusaders' lack of moderation during periods of abundance and dearth, demonstrating his understanding of the importance of food procurement and provisioning in warfare.

According to William, an abundance of provisions in Antioch led the crusading force to act recklessly, needlessly endangering themselves and their horses by consuming more of their resources than was necessary to sustain life. Likewise, William suggests circumstances of scarcity during the second siege of Antioch led some crusaders to shamelessly hoard their own provisions, consuming them greedily in private. References to intemperance, greed, and gluttony feature heavily in these descriptions of overconsumption, illuminating how hunger affected the crusaders' ability to recognise and act with moderation. While William acknowledges that during periods of famine the crusaders were desperate with hunger, his representation of their eating habits brings into question the moral integrity and chivalric identity of the crusading force as a whole. Indeed, William places a distinct emphasis on temperance in his assessment of the crusaders' behaviour, presenting it as not only a morally beneficial virtue, but as an important quality for maintaining the physical health of the crusading force.

Ideas relating to morality and theology in the *Historia* also speak to William's broader understanding of what was considered clean and unclean to eat in the Middle Ages. William draws on scripture, scriptural commentary, and contemporary pastoral guidance to provide a moral assessment of what the crusaders were able to eat at the height of the famines in Antioch and Ma'arra. It is clear that William also drew on pre-existing narratives of the First Crusade to inform his account of crusader hunger as the same types of unclean animals are reportedly consumed by the crusading force in all of the crusade sources examined in this thesis. Furthermore, William's discussion of what the

crusaders were able to eat during famine scenarios suggests that he believed the experience of hunger was a legitimate reason to disregard social and ideological distinctions between clean and unclean food. While William implies that the desperate need for sustenance made the consumption of certain unclean animals and carrion somewhat permissible, the vocabulary of consumption employed by William – including the terms *suffocatum* and *morticinum* which appear in scriptural food prohibitions – makes clear that he considered this behaviour to be ultimately transgressive.

It is within this context of transgressive and unclean consumption that William situates his two depictions of crusader cannibalism. Bohemond's staged cannibalism draws on ideas of illicit eating and perceptions of culinary preparation to present anthropophagy as a strategic performance. Critically, Bohemond's deception is established as a beneficial use of anthropophagical behaviour because it is interpreted by the Christians' enemies as a marker of the crusaders' insatiable appetite for bloodshed.

Representations of survival cannibalism in the *Historia*, on the other hand, function as a shameful reflection of the crusaders' desperation for sustenance. While William notes that anthropophagy – alleged or otherwise – was a necessary means of ensuring the survival of starving crusaders, he also underscores the idea that cannibalism and other forms of unclean eating were both morally and physically detrimental to the crusaders. In this way, references to cannibalism are used to highlight and complement an image of dissent and disorder in William's account of the capture of Ma'arra. This in itself fits more broadly into William's overall criticism of the crusading forces' intemperate and potentially self-destructive behaviour on their journey to Jerusalem.

## Conclusions

While episodes of crusader cannibalism often feature as a gruesome footnote in modern empirical reconstructions of the First Crusade, this thesis has sought to analyse how anthropophagy is represented, understood, and justified in narratives of the campaign by situating depictions of man-eating within the thematic context of hunger. This investigation demonstrates for the first time that medieval discourses of food, hunger, and eating have substantial explanatory force in crusade literature, helping authors communicate the significance of the events of the First Crusade and the role of the campaign's participants to their audiences.

Some general conclusions can be drawn from this investigation by returning to the questions posed in the introduction. First, how do food, food preparation, and eating feature in narratives of the First Crusade? From a practical standpoint, ensuring that the army was well provisioned was key to maintaining the crusaders' fighting capability as well as their overall morale. The relative frequency with which matters pertaining to food and food provisioning is referenced in first-hand, second-generation, and third-generation accounts of the expedition highlights its importance to the crusade and crusade commentators. This thesis has shown that the narrativisation of the price of bread, wine, and meat, amongst other foodstuffs – which appear to be based on lived experience captured in first-hand accounts of the campaign – is repeatedly used as a means of expressing the experience of dearth in accounts of the expedition. The continued use of these lists as rhetorical motifs across time and literary genres suggests that the inflated costs of provisions were not only recognisable indicators of scarcity but had also become embedded in a collective memory of the campaign.

Indeed, this thesis has demonstrated that representations of dearth and circumstances of famine are an entry point for some of the most developed discussions of food, food preparation, and eating in these narratives. The first-hand accounts of the *GF*-



author, Raymond of Aguilers, Fulcher of Chartres, and Peter Tudebode, present the shortage of both food and non-alimentary resources as an unfortunate reality of warfare that had a profound impact on the crusaders' ability to perform basic culinary procedures. The Benedictine monks, Robert the Monk, Baldric of Bourgueil, and Guibert of Nogent, present the experience of famine as an exercise of endurance and an indicator of the crusaders' willingness to suffer in the service of Christ, linking consumption to ideas of devotion. The *Chanson d'Antioche*-poet similarly creates evocative images of the debilitating effects of hunger to highlight the crusaders' perseverance against adversity and confirm their honourable and heroic status in the Old French Crusade Cycle. Finally, William of Tyre uses the context of famine to assess the morality of the crusaders' responses to dearth, drawing attention to the way hunger affected the crusaders' actions and behaviour.

This thesis has also shown that expressions of hunger have metaphorical force in narratives of the First Crusade. The Benedictine chroniclers, for example, use references to hunting, butchery, and harvesting in their descriptions of crusader violence to help rationalise Christian atrocities in the Holy Land. By likening the Turkish forces to animals that can be hunted and slaughtered, crusader violence is interpreted as part of the natural order and as part of recognisable food-production processes that transform animals into meat for consumption. Guibert of Nogent also employs metaphors of bloodthirstiness in his narrative, conflating ideas of 'hunger' and 'thirst' with a desire for action against non-Christians, ratifying violence and bloodshed as appropriate responses to *infideles* in the East. An examination of these alimentary allegories has underscored the fact that, while these metaphors of consumption do not specifically refer to ingestion, they draw on ideas relating to eating and food production to highlight the human body's capacity to consume and to be consumed.

The narratives' engagement with the experience of hunger during circumstances of famine leads us to the second question posed at the outset of this investigation: what do crusaders eat when food is scarce? This thesis has underlined that the descriptions used by

crusade commentators to relay what the crusaders ate during periods of dearth were consistent across texts, genre, and time. All the crusade narratives examined in this thesis report that when normal food provisions ran dry and famine ensued, the crusaders were initially driven to eat vegetation as well as their beasts of burden. Once these foodstuffs had been exhausted, crusade commentators claim that the crusaders were forced to eat things that were considered 'unclean' or abnormal for human consumption, like dogs and rats, animal skin, carrion, and even human flesh. This gradational method of avoiding starvation starts with the consumption of unconventional foodstuff and progresses towards items that evoke more visceral reactions of disgust and pity from crusade commentators. This thesis has demonstrated that, like the itemised lists of food prices, the crusaders' reliance on vegetation, 'unclean' meat and animal by-products, and human flesh for sustenance is included in narrative accounts of the campaign to communicate the severity of the famine experienced by the crusading force on their journey to Jerusalem.

The culinary preparation of food also features as a major component in several of these depictions of dearth and famine. In the first-hand accounts and the *Antioche* especially, normal food-based practices such as skinning and butchering animals, cooking vegetables and meat, and seasoning food are established as markers of civility.<sup>1</sup> In episodes where abnormal foodstuff is eaten to ensure survival – like spiky foliage, animal skin complete with hair, and human flesh – failure to complete these culinary processes attaches a sense of savagery to the crusaders' actions, highlighting the desperation of famine. This thesis also demonstrates that describing *where* 'unclean' food is eaten during periods of dearth helps crusade commentators explain the significance of these episodes of consumption. William of Tyre, for instance, draws attention to the greed and gluttony of

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<sup>1</sup> Vincent Vandenberg, 'Choosing Human Flesh? A Few Medieval Peculiarities and the Debates of Contemporary Research', *Anthropozoologica*, 45.1 (2010), 149–155 (p. 151); and Jean-Claude Mühlethaler, 'De la frugalité de l'ermite au faste de prince. Les codes alimentaires dans la littérature médiévale' in *Manger: Cours public de l'université 1995–1996* (Paris: Payot, 1996), pp. 7–35 (p. 18).

some crusaders by suggesting that they consumed hoarded provisions secretly in secluded places.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, by presenting survival cannibalism as a ‘wicked feast’ held in secret outside the walls of Ma’arra, Baldric of Bourgueil highlights the shameful and self-conscious nature of the crusaders’ actions.<sup>3</sup> Raymond of Aguilers, on the other hand, suggests some starving members of the crusading force eagerly consumed human flesh in public.<sup>4</sup> In this scene, the visibility of the crusaders’ consumption is indicative of their shameless desperation for sustenance. The *Antioche*-poet also emphasises the visual dimensions of the Tafurs’ anthropophagical feast, but in this episode the visibility of the Tafurs’ cannibalism is essential in establishing acts of anthropophagy as a strategic spectacle intended to both assuage hunger and demoralise enemy spectators.<sup>5</sup>

Representations of siege-time consumption fit more broadly into the third question posed at the outset of this investigation: what prevailing discourses surrounding hunger and eating do crusade commentators draw on? An examination of the things consumed during periods of famine in first-hand accounts of the campaign has shown that this practical approach to assuaging hunger had ancient precedents. In the work of Flavius Josephus (*fl.* first century CE), for instance, we see the same foodstuff consumed during a siege-induced famine in Jerusalem in 70 CE as is presented in first-hand accounts of the siege of Antioch in 1098. This suggests that the *GF*-author, Peter, Fulcher, and Raymond – as well as successive generations of chroniclers who used these first-hand accounts to inform their own narratives of the campaign – were drawing on ancient literary models and pre-existing discourses of consumption to communicate the severity of famine experienced during the First Crusade.

Some of the narratives examined also demonstrate an engagement with contemporary theological discourses surrounding appropriate hunger as well as licit and

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<sup>2</sup> WT, I, p. 316.

<sup>3</sup> BB, p. 93.

<sup>4</sup> RA, p. 110.

<sup>5</sup> *Antioche*, p. 319, l. 175.

illicit eating. This is not necessarily surprising given that each of the texts examined in this thesis presents the First Crusade as a divinely sanctioned enterprise, directed and supported by God in accordance with his will. Katy Mortimer has recently shown that first- and second-generation crusade commentators drew on the Bible to present famine and crusader cannibalism as a form of divine punishment.<sup>6</sup> This thesis adds to Mortimer's research by highlighting several other prevailing discourses of consumption beyond the notion of divine punishment that permeate crusade narratives in the *GF*-tradition. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, ideas relating to monastic diet and food management appear to have influenced how the Benedictine chroniclers interpreted the eating habits of the crusading force. Peter the Hermit, for example, is held to the standards of moderation regarding food and drink intake as outlined in the Benedictine Rule, as are the crusaders who the second-generation chroniclers present as monk-like-pilgrims as well as soldiers. The Benedictine chroniclers and the *Antioche*-poet also highlight fasting as a penitential act of self-control that incites divine reward in the form of military aid and an abundance of provisions. This reflects a biblical notion that God will provide for the faithful in times of need and positions crusader hunger – both hunger suffered, and hunger sought deliberately in the form of fasting – as a means of communicating with the divine.

Ideological categorisations of what Christians were permitted to consume also appear in the later texts examined in this thesis. William, for example, draws on contemporary theological discourse in his assessment of the crusaders' moral character, emphasising notions of illicit eating captured in scripture and texts relating to pastoral care. The terms *suffocatum* and *morticinum*, which appear in scriptural food prohibitions, form part of William's vocabulary of consumption, making clear that eating certain 'unclean' animals and carrion was permissible during periods of dearth, but was also ultimately

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<sup>6</sup> Katy Mortimer, 'Digesting Cannibalism: Revisiting Representations of Man-Eating Crusaders in Narrative Sources for the First Crusade', in *Chronicle, Crusade, and the Latin East: Essays in Honour of Susan B. Edgington*, ed. by Andrew D. Buck and Thomas W. Smith (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022), pp. 109–130.

transgressive. These prevailing discourses provide a conceptual framework for discussing food and eating, allowing crusade commentators to communicate and explain the significance of crusader hunger in ways that would be recognised and understood by their audiences.

The final question posed in the introduction to this thesis asks how these vocabularies of consumption inform the form and function of cannibalism in First Crusade literature. By identifying four representations of anthropophagy in the corpus of texts under investigation – survival cannibalism, gastronomic cannibalism, strategic cannibalism, and staged cannibalism – this thesis has illuminated the complex ways crusade commentators used allegations of cannibalism to highlight the effect hunger had on the crusading force during their journey to the Holy Land. An examination of crusader cannibalism in first-hand accounts of the First Crusade has shown that these authors did not condemn anthropophagy. While representations of man-eating vary in first-hand chronicles from secretive to overt, shameful to enthusiastic, all of these accounts present extreme hunger as a legitimate reason to commit cannibalism. This defensive stance is carried into the Benedictine chronicles which similarly present hunger as a powerful motivator of action and cannibalism as a circumstantial act of survival. In their attempt to present the events of the First Crusade within the framework of providential history, Robert, Baldric, and Guibert also present crusader cannibalism as a terrible sufferance endured in the name of God. Aligning anthropophagy with God's will not only legitimises the consumption of human flesh in times dearth but also underscores the crusaders' special relationship with the divine. This thesis has shown that in each depiction of survival cannibalism examined desperate hunger is presented as the motivating factor that drove man to consume man. Without identifying the vocabularies of consumption employed in each text – the ways that matters relating to food and eating are communicated and assigned significance by each crusade commentator – this seemingly mundane factor gets lost in the horror of human flesh consumption.

In Guibert of Nogent's account of anthropophagy, however, narrative focus is shifted away from the allegations of survival cannibalism to staged cannibalism, a strategically beneficial deception in which no consumption takes place. This is a highly significant approach to narrativising cannibalism because it distances the crusading force from the accusation of actual anthropophagy while simultaneously bolstering the Christians' reputation for ferocity.<sup>7</sup> While Guibert's representation of the Tafurs' staged cannibalism appears in the context of dearth, the episode is less about assuaging desperate hunger and more about the spectacle of preparing human flesh for consumption. The strategic benefits of cannibalism are also emphasised in the *Antioche*, but in this case, the Tafurs do consume human flesh. The *Antioche*-poet attempts to mitigate the savage connotations attached to man-eating by transforming what is initially presented as a circumstantial act of survival into a gastronomic spectacle that terrifies and demoralises the enemy while establishing a fearsome reputation for the crusading force. William of Tyre also suggests the threat of cannibalism and performing certain culinary aspects of anthropophagy – just short of consumption – was enough to terrify the Christians' enemies. This staged performance of cannibalism stands in direct contrast to William's depiction of survival cannibalism which, by virtue of its similarity to first-hand interpretations of man-eating, highlights the crusaders' desperate hunger for sustenance.

This thesis has demonstrated that depictions of staged and strategic cannibalism emphasise the way the human body is prepared for consumption. Vincent Vandenberg acknowledges the significance of *how* the human body is cannibalised in medieval literature and suggests that descriptions of survival cannibalism can be split into two categories: the first mimics 'normal' food practice and specifically involves the culinary preparation of human flesh.<sup>8</sup> In these cases, cooking is often presented as a civilising process that

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<sup>7</sup> Jay Rubenstein, 'Cannibals and Crusaders', *French Historical Studies*, 31.4 (2011), 525–552 (pp. 541–542).

<sup>8</sup> Vandenberg, p. 151.

mitigates some of the negative connotations associated with man-eating. The second category does not refer to any kind of food preparation and therefore maintains connotations of animalism and savagery.<sup>9</sup> As demonstrated above, these categories largely map onto how crusade commentators depict the crusaders' consumption of 'unclean' foodstuff during periods of famine. An examination of staged and strategic cannibalism found in the narratives of Guibert, William, and the *Antioche*-poet, demonstrates that Vandenberg's categories cannot usefully be applied to instances of anthropophagy outside the context of survival, however. This investigation has shown that it is the 'civilised' culinary preparation of human flesh that renders these acts of strategic cannibalism savage to onlookers in these cases. Indeed, even in the Tafurs' and Bohemond's staged cannibalism, where no man-eating takes place, the spectacle of preparing human flesh 'as if' for consumption is enough to bolster the crusaders' fearsome reputation. In these staged and strategic acts of cannibalism ideas and discourses surrounding hunger and eating are fundamental to making the Christians' anthropophagy believable to those who witness their actions.

Despite each narrative's rich engagement with what the crusaders ate and how they procured provisions, the form and function of food, eating, and cannibalism have been relatively underexplored in modern scholarship to date. As this investigation shows, looking more broadly at representations of food and hunger illuminates contemporary perceptions of crusader behaviour as it relates to the link between consumption, morality, and piety, as well as contextualising the significance of anthropophagy in these narratives. This approach underscores the fact that personal experience was embedded amongst conjectures and alternative perspectives to narrativise and ascribe significance to food, food management, and eating in accounts of the campaign. Assessing the form and function of discourse of consumption in narratives of the First Crusade fits more broadly into crusade studies' move

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<sup>9</sup> Vandenberg, p. 151.

away from empirical reconstructions of the Crusades and enriches our understanding of how food, eating, and cannibalism were perceived in the medieval period more generally.

This investigation complements and builds on the work of Geraldine Heng, Heather Blurton, Carol Sweetenham, and Katy Mortimer, who all recognise the potential of crusader cannibalism as an entry point to their respective examinations of identity, conquest, redemption, and salvation.<sup>10</sup> My focus on representations of hunger and eating in crusade literature from within the *GF* tradition makes this research distinctive, however. By concentrating on the ways subsequent crusade commentators engaged with and constructed episodes of consumption in their narratives, this thesis makes cannibalism a less discrete object of study and illuminates how medieval authors used prevailing discourses, rhetorical tropes, and allegories to assign significance to and explain the events of the First Crusade. Indeed, by focussing on texts that follow the *GF*-tradition, this investigation has compared depictions of hunger and consumption from a range of crusade narratives written in the hundred years after the crusaders' capture of Jerusalem in 1099. This scope has demonstrated the interconnectedness of this literary tradition, highlighting vocabularies and discourses of consumption that were inherited through a cultural memory of the campaign and those drawn from well-established literary tropes.

This is far from an exhaustive investigation into the form and function of hunger and crusader cannibalism in narratives of the First Crusade, however. It would be illuminating, in the first instance, to examine crusade sources that do not stem from the *GF* tradition to see if the same alimentary tropes and motifs appear in these interpretations of the campaign. Albert of Aachen, for instance, who writes independently of the *GF* tradition,

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<sup>10</sup> Geraldine Heng, *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. 19–113; Heather Blurton, *Cannibalism in High Medieval English Literature* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 59–104; Carol Sweetenham, 'The Count and the Cannibals: The Old French Crusade Cycle as a Drama of Salvation', in *Jerusalem the Golden: The Origins and Impact of the First Crusade*, ed. by Susan B. Edgington and Luis García-Guijarro (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), pp. 307–329; Mortimer, pp. 109–130.



also includes lists of food prices in his accounts of famine and notes that, due to a lack of bread, the crusaders ate camels, donkeys, horses and mules, and even ‘chewed pieces of leather’ which they ‘cooked with pepper, cumin, or some other spice’.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Albert’s depiction of cannibalism is reminiscent of the first-hand and second-generation chronicles examined in this thesis but seems to suggest that eating dogs was a better indicator of the severity of famine than anthropophagy was:

It is extraordinary to relate and horrifying to the ears: these same torments of famine grew so great around [Ma’arra] that – it is wicked to tell, let alone do – the Christians did not shrink from eat not only killed Turks or Saracens, but even dogs whom they snatched and cooked with fire, on account of the scarcity which you have heard.<sup>12</sup>

Identifying the prevailing discourses of consumption Albert drew on to construct these representations of hunger and eating would help contextualise these episodes, furthering our understanding of how medieval authors assigned meaning to the events of the crusade, including crusader cannibalism, in their narratives.

Similarly, Ralph of Caen’s prosimetric *Gesta Tancredi* (1112), which was written independently of the *GF* tradition, also engages with some of the major alimentary and dietary motifs addressed in this thesis in ways that warrant further investigation. In his account of the First Crusade, Ralph describes men deliberately eating poisonous plants to assuage their hunger, and reports that crusaders softened the soles of their shoes in boiling water to eat.<sup>13</sup> The *Gesta Tancredi* also depicts instances of food deception, in which men from Provence ‘sold dog meat to others *as if* it were hare and mule meat *as if* it were goat [emphasis added]’.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, this account presents a unique picture of crusader

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<sup>11</sup> AA, I, p. 157.

<sup>12</sup> AA, I, p. 194.

<sup>13</sup> Ralph of Caen, *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen: A History of the Normans on the First Crusade*, trans. by Bernard S. Bachrach and David S. Bachrach (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 102.

<sup>14</sup> Ralph of Caen, p. 86.

cannibalism at Ma'arra that highlights a difference between how the hungry Christians cooked Muslim adults versus how they prepared Muslim children/young adults for consumption. According to Ralph, 'the adults from among the gentiles were put into the cooking pot and their youth were fixed on spits and roasted'.<sup>15</sup> It is noted that preparing human flesh for consumption was a strange inversion of the natural order that made the Christians look savage, 'like dogs roasting men'.<sup>16</sup> An analysis of these instances of cannibalism within Ralph's broader exploration of crusade cooking, consumption, and cross-cultural interactions would enhance our understanding of how crusade chroniclers employed episodes of eating to shape perceptions of individual crusaders and the overall experience of crusading. It would also be a beneficial comparative exercise to explore how Arabic sources of the First Crusade present hunger and eating in their accounts of the campaign. Does hunger maintain the same sort of metaphorical and explanatory force in these accounts, and what significance (if any) is attached to the accusation of man-eating within the cultural and literary context of these narratives? Examining accounts of anthropophagy from non-Christian perspectives within the thematic context of hunger would allow us to further explore the discourses of consumption that underpin narrative accounts of the campaign.

This methodology also has implications for the examination of hunger and crusader cannibalism in accounts of other crusade movements. My exploration of the links between anthropophagy and discourses of consumption in narratives of the First Crusade offers the necessary context for depictions of crusader cannibalism in accounts of the Third Crusade, for example. As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, the late-thirteenth-century Middle English Romance, *Richard Coer de Lyon* demonstrates a rich engagement with representations of cannibalism. Richard benefits from the restorative powers of cooked human flesh after consuming meat believing it to be pork and serves the prepared flesh of

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<sup>15</sup> Ralph of Caen, p. 116.

<sup>16</sup> Ralph of Caen, p. 116.

Muslims to enemy diplomats during the siege of Acre (August 1189–July 1191).<sup>17</sup> While Richard's anthropophagy has been scrutinised extensively and especially in relation to the socio-political implications of presenting Richard as a cannibal king,<sup>18</sup> I believe there is scope to investigate several aspects of these episodes further within the thematic context of hunger, including: the restorative powers of eating human flesh, particularly the flesh of an enemy; the deception and performance of presenting a human body as a meat sanctioned for consumption; and the power dynamic involved in hosting a banquet of human flesh for unsuspecting guests. Establishing how these motifs function within this late-thirteenth-century romance will shed new light on broader discourses of food, eating, and death in the context of crusading as well as the romance genre more generally.

Finally, I believe that examining acts of cannibalism within the context of hunger and consumption could also be applied to depictions of anthropophagy outside of a crusading context. Modern interpretations of Mongol 'otherness', for example, could be nuanced by focussing on the discourses of consumption used by authors such as John of Plano Carpini, Simon of Saint-Quentin, and Matthew of Paris to describe the Mongols and their eating habits. Indeed, it would be interesting to compare these accounts of the Mongols, which explicitly mention Mongol anthropophagy, with that of William of Rubruck (1220–1293) who does not link the Mongols to cannibalism but includes detailed and positive descriptions of their food and eating.<sup>19</sup> William claims the Mongols 'eat all dead animals indiscriminately', but also suggests that the Mongols' method of preserving meat

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<sup>17</sup> *Richard Coer de Lyon*, ed. by Peter Larkin (Kalamazoo, MI: Published for TEAMs in Association with the University of Rochester by Medieval Institute Publications, 2015), pp. 89–91, l. 3027–3124, and pp. 98–103, l. 3409–3655.

<sup>18</sup> For a starting point, see: Suzanne Conklin Akbari, 'The Hunger for National Identity in Richard Coer de Lion', in *Reading Medieval Culture: Essays in Honor of Robert W. Hanning*, ed. Robert M. Stein and Sandra Pierson Prior (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), pp. 198–227 (pp. 206–214); and L. F. Cordery, 'Cannibal Diplomacy: Otherness in the Middle English Text *Richard Coer de Lion*', in *Meeting the Foreign in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Albrecht Classen (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 153–171 (pp. 160–169).

<sup>19</sup> William of Rubruck, 'The Journey of William of Rubruck', in *Mission to Asia*, ed. by Christopher Dawson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp. 89–223 (pp. 97–100).

without salt is efficient and does not result in an unpleasant smell.<sup>20</sup> He also expresses his own enjoyment of the Mongols' horse sausages – which he asserts are 'better than pork sausages' – and their fermented mare's milk drink called *comos*.<sup>21</sup> It would be interesting to identify whether there is a correlation between the richness of detail about foodways (and the respective authors' participation in such) and ideas about cannibalism in these ethnographies. Indeed, establishing the lenses through which these authors viewed the Mongols' consumption would better ground depictions of Mongol anthropophagy in their own cultural and literary contexts, and would further illuminate how food, hunger, and eating were understood and communicated in the medieval period.

Overall, this study has shown how expressions of hunger and vocabularies of consumption could be used by medieval authors to communicate ideas and complex ideologies to their audiences. Indeed, in crusade narratives from the *GF* tradition, references to hunger, eating and food provide crusade commentators a means of explaining the significance of the events of the First Crusade and the experiences of its participants. In periods of abundance, food and proper food management help mobilise and motivate crusaders and are interpreted as a sign of God's continued support of the venture. In circumstances of dearth, the crusaders' response to hunger and famine are presented as indicators of moral integrity. Representations of crusader cannibalism function within these narratives as a rhetorical means of highlighting the experience of extreme hunger *and* an opportunity to confirm the crusaders' savage 'hunger' to dominate their enemies and reclaim Jerusalem. An examination of vocabularies of consumption brings this into focus. As Robert the Monk observes in his account of crusader cannibalism, at the heart of these complex representations of consumption are crusaders 'desperate with hunger'.

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<sup>20</sup> William of Rubruck, p. 97.

<sup>21</sup> William of Rubruck, p. 97.

## Appendix

The following appendix collates references to episodes of anthropophagy from the main texts cited in this thesis in the original language and translation for ease of comparison.

	Translation	Original
<i>Gesta Francorum</i> <sup>1</sup>	While we were there some of our men could not satisfy their needs, either because of the long stay or because they were so hungry, for there was no plunder to be had outside the walls. So they ripped up the bodies of the dead, because they used to find bezants hidden in their entrails, and others cut the dead flesh into slices and cooked it to eat	Fuerunt ibi ex nostris qui illic non inuenerunt sicuti opus eis erat, tantum ex longa mora, quantum ex districtione famis, quia foris neuierant aliquid inuenire ad capiendum, sed scindebant corpora mortuorum, eo quod in uentribus eorum inueniebant bisanteos reconditos; alii uero caedebant carnes eorum per frusta, et coquebant ad manducandum
Peter Tudebode <sup>2</sup>	Afterward there was such a delay in the city that many were pressed because they did not dare go any distance into Saracen lands, and they could find no booty nearby. As a result the Christians of this land brought back nothing for sale. Consequently, our poor people began to split open the pagan corpses because they found bezants hidden in their bellies. There were others who were so famished that they cut the flesh of the dead into bits, cooked, and ate it.	Postea fuit tam longa mora in civitate quia fuerunt multi astricti fame, ideo quod foras non audebant exire in terram Sarracenorum longe; prope nequiverant aliquid inuenire ad capiendum. Christiani igitur illius terre nichil ferebant ad vendendum. Nostri quoque pauperes ceperunt scindere corpora paganorum, eo quod in ventribus eorum inueniebant reconditos bisantios. Alii quoque, districti fame,

<sup>1</sup> *GF*, p 80.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano*, trans. by John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1974), pp. 101–102; *PT*, pp. 124–125.

		cedebant carnes eorum per frustra, et coquebant, et manducabant.
Fulcher of Chartres <sup>3</sup>	[...] our men suffered from excessive hunger. I shudder to say that many of our men, terrible tormented by the madness of starvation, cut pieces from the buttocks of Saracens lying there dead. These pieces they cooked and ate, savagely devouring the flesh while it was insufficiently roasted.	[...] famem nimiam gens nostra pertulit. Dicere perhorreo, quo plerique nostum famis rabie nimis vexati absceiebant de natibus Saracenorum iam ibi mortuorum frusta, quae coquebant et mandebant et parum ad igem Assata ore truci devorabant.
Raymond of Aguilers <sup>4</sup>	Now the food shortage became so acute that the Christians eagerly ate many rotten Saracen bodies which they had pitched into the swamps two or three weeks before. This spectacle disgusted as many crusaders as it did strangers, and as a result of it many gave up without hope of Frankish reinforcements and turned back. The Saracens and the Turks reacted thus: "This stubborn and merciless race unmoved by hunger, sword, or other perils for one year at Antioch, now feasts on human flesh; therefore, we ask, 'Who can resist them?'" The infidels spread stories of these and other inhuman acts of the crusaders, but we were unaware that God had made us an object of terror. <sup>5</sup>	Interea tanta fames in exercitu fuit, ut multa corpora iam fetentium, que in paludibus civitatis eisdem et amplius ebdomadas iacuerant, populus avidissime comederet. Terrebant ista multos tam nostre gentis homines quam extraneos. Revertebantur ob ea nostri quam plures desperantes de itinere sine succursu de gente Francorum. Sarraceni vero et Turci econtra dicebant: Et quis poterit sustinere hanc gentem que tam obstinate atque crudelis est, ut per annum non poterit revovari ab obsidione Antiochie, fame, vel gladio, vel aliquibus peiculis, et nunc carnibus humanis vescitur? Hec et alia crudelissima sibi in nobis

<sup>3</sup> Fulcher of Chartres, *A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem 1095–1127*, trans. by Frances Rita Ryan and ed. by Harold S. Fink (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1969), pp. 112–113; FC, pp. 266–267.

<sup>4</sup> Raymond of Aguilers, *Historia Francorum Qui Ceperunt Iherusalem*, trans. by John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1968), p. 81; RA, p. 101.

<sup>5</sup> I have altered Hill and Hill's translation of *avidissime* from 'enthusiastically' to 'eagerly' to better illuminate the hunger and desperation of the crusaders, two factors that act as a backdrop to this scene of crusader cannibalism.

		dicebant esse pagani. Etenim dederat Deus timorem nostrum cuctis gentibus sed nos nesciebamus.
Robert the Monk <sup>6</sup>	The Frankish army lingered in Ma'arrat-an-Nu'man for a month and four days [...] They overwintered there for a long and dreary period, which meant they were unable to find anything to eat or take by force. They were so desperate with hunger they ended up – a horrible thing to have to describe – cutting up the bodies of the Turks, cooking them and eating them.	Dietavit autem in illa civitate exercitus Francorum per mensem unum et dies IIII [...] Longo quidem tempore nimiumque prolixo hiemaverunt ibi, quia nil quod ederent, quod raperent, poterat inveniri. Sicque famis iniuria compellente, contigit, quod etiam dictu horribile est, quia corpora gentilium in frusta scindebant et coquebant et comedebant.
Baldric of Bourgueil <sup>7</sup>	For it has been reported and ascertained that many touched with their shameless jaws Turkish flesh, that is to say, human flesh, spitted and roasted on fires. For they would leave the town stealthily, light fires and cook it, and when they had consumed their wicked feasts and thus taken care of their wretched survival, they would return as if they had done nothing of the sort. Nevertheless, word of it became public in the army, but because the famine was extreme, punishment was withheld. But the leaders were beating their breasts and mouths, they shuddered and kept quiet; yet they did not accuse them of a crime because they were suffering that famine readily for God	Relatum est enim et compertum quia multi carnes Turcinas, carnes scilicet humanas, uerutatas et ignibus assas, inuerecundis morsibus tetigere. Exhibant enim furtim a ciuitate, et procul ignibus accensis coquebant; et nefandis dapibus sumptis, sic etenim misere consulebant uite, tanquam nichil egerint huiusmodi reuerebantur. Palam tamen uerbum hoc factum est in exercitu; sed quoniam famas preualebat, ulti suspendebantur. Maiores tamen pectus et os percutiebant et horrentes silebant; nec tamen imputabatur eis pro scelere, quoniam famem illam pro Deo alacriter patiebantur, et inimicis manibus et dentibus inimicabantur.

<sup>6</sup> Robert the Monk, *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade*: Historia Iherosolimitana, ed. and trans. by Carol Sweetenham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); p. 186; RM, p. 88.

<sup>7</sup> Baldric of Bourgueil, *Baldric of Bourgueil: "History of the Jerusalemites": A translation of the Historia Ierosolimitana*, trans. by Susan Edgington with an introduction by Steven Biddlecombe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020), p. 131; BB, p. 93.

	and they were fighting the enemy with their hands and teeth.	
Guibert of Nogent <sup>8</sup>	Some of our men, entirely without resources, finding nothing in nearby areas to satisfy their needs, desecrated the bellies of dead Saracens, daring to probe their internal organs, because they had heard that pagans in serious danger would try to preserve their gold and silver by eating them. Others, they say, cut pieces of flesh from the corpses, cooked them and ate them, but this was done rarely and in secret, so that no one could be sure whether they actually did this. <sup>9</sup>	Ibi quidam ex nostris, dum aliquibus, immo omnibus necessariis indigent, nullis quae direptioni suae forent apta adiacentibus, mortuorum Sarracenorum ventribus temeratis ausi sunt ipsorum intestina rimari, quia audierant aurum argentumque ab eis in arto positum ob custodiam solere glutiri; alii, carni frusta cedentes ex ipsis, coxisse et comedisse feruntur: quod tamen tam rarum adeoque latens extiterit, ut omnibus utrum idem fieri ullo modo potuisset pene dubium sit.
Guibert of Nogent <sup>10</sup>	[...] when pieces of flesh were found among the pagan bodies at Ma'arra, and elsewhere, during a terrible famine, a hideous rumour (based on something that had been done furtively and very rarely) circulated widely among the pagans, that there were some men in the Frankish army who eagerly fed upon [ <i>vescerentur</i> ] the corpses of Saracens. To circulate this rumour among them even more vividly, [the Tafurs] carried the battered corpse of a Turk out in full view of the other Turks, set it afire, and roasted it as if the flesh was going to be eaten [ <i>mandibilem</i> ]. When	[...] cum de paganorum corporibus frusta carni apud Marram, et sicubi alias cum nimia fames urgeret, repperirentur adempta, quod ab his et furtim et quam rarissime factum constat, atrox apud gentiles fama percrebruit quod quidam in Francorum exercitu haberentur qui Sarracenorum carnibus avidissime vescerentur. Unde idem homines, ut potissimum apud illos haec intonisset opinio, Turci cuiusdam vecti corpus intusum ad eorum terrorem palam omnibus, ut dicitur, acsi carnem mandibilem igni apposito torruerunt. Quo illi agnito et verum penitus

<sup>8</sup> Guibert de Nogent, *The Deeds of God through the Franks: A Translation of Guibert de Nogent's Gesta Dei per Francos*, ed. and trans. by Robert Levine (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997), p. 117; GN, p. 254

<sup>9</sup> I have altered Levine's translation of *avidissime* from 'greedily' to 'eagerly' to better reflect the desperation experienced by those forced to consume human flesh.

<sup>10</sup> Guibert de Nogent, trans. by Levine, p. 146; GN, p. 254.



	[the Turks] learned what had happened, thinking the charade was real, they grew even more afraid of the fearlessness of the Tafurs than of our other leaders.	quod fingitur autumantes, iam magis insolentiam Tafuram quam nostrorum quodammodo principum vehementiam formidabant [...]
<i>Chanson d'Antioche</i> <sup>11</sup>	Meanwhile back in the Christian army scarcity was the order of the day. There was little if any food and morale was low. Lord Peter the Hermit was in his tent when the King of the Tafurs came to see him, accompanied by more than a thousand of his followers. All of them had stomachs swollen by hunger. 'My lord,' they said, 'For holy charities sake tell us what to do. In truth, we are dying of hunger and deprivation.' Lord Peter replied: 'That is because you cannot bring yourself to do what needs to be done. Go and fetch those [dead] Turks lying over there on the battlefield. They would taste perfectly alright if you cooked and seasoned them properly.' The King of the Tafurs said, 'You're right, you know.' He left Peters tent and had his beggar army summoned: when all assembled there were more than ten thousand. They flayed the Turks, cutting off the skin, then boiled and roasted the flesh; they ate their fill, although there was no bread to go with it. The pagans were absolutely terrified. Alerted by the smell of meat cooking, they all hung over the walls. The beggars had an audience of twenty thousand pagans, every last Turk sobbing and heartbroken as they watched their own	Crestin son ten l'ost, moult l a grant cierté; N'oren point de vitaille, tot furent esgaré. Dans Pieres li hermites fu ens enmi son tré, Li rois Tafurs i vint, avoec lui son barné, Plus en i ot de mil, tot sont de faim enflé : << Sire, conselliés nos, por sainte carité ! Por voir morons de faim et de caitiveté.>> Et respondi dans Pieres : < C'est par vo lasqueté ! Alés, prandés ces Turs qui la sont par cel pré, Bon ierent a mangier s'il sont quit salé.>> Et dist li rois Tafurs : << Vos dites vérité. >> Del tré Pieron s'en torne, ses ribals a mandé, Plus furent de .x. mil quant furent assamblé. Les Turs ont escorciet, s'en ont le quir osté, En l'eve et el rostier ont le car quisiné ; Assez en ont mangiet, mais de pain n'ont gosté. De cel furent païen durement esfreé ; Por le flair de la car sont al mur acouté, De .xx. mil païens sont li ribaut regardé, K'il n'i un seul Turc qui n'ait des iex ploré ; De lor gent qu'il manjuent ont grant dol demené :

<sup>11</sup> *The Chanson d'Antioche: An Old French Account of the First Crusade*, trans. by Susan B. Edgington and Carol Sweetenham (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 200–201; *Antioche*, pp. 217–219.

	<p>people being eaten. ‘Alas Lord Mohammed! This is appallingly cruel behaviour! Make sure you take vengeance on those who have put you to such shame and insulted you beyond belief by eating your own people. These are not Frenchmen - they are living Devils! May Mohammed curse them and their Christian religion! if that is the sort of thing they are capable of, we shall be humiliated and defeated.</p>	<p>&lt;&lt; Ahi ! Mahomet sire, com grande cruelté !  Quar prent de cels venjance quisi t’ont vergondé,  Quant il te gent manjuent, tot t’ont despersoné,  Ço ne sont pas François, ançois sont vif malfé.  Mahomés les maldie et lor crestiente !  Quar s’il le puent faire, tot sommes vergondé !&gt;&gt;</p>
<p><i>Chanson d’Antioche</i><sup>12</sup></p>	<p>Now the King of the Tafurs along with his numerous companions set to work with a will. They used their sharp keen knives to skin the Turks down on the battlefields; they carved them into joints in full view of the pagans and boiled or barbecued them till they were done to a turn. Then they gobbled them eagerly without bread or any seasoning, saying to each other: ‘This is absolutely delicious - much better than pork or roast gammon . More fool anyone who dies among this kind of plenty.’ The King and his barons &amp; to their hearts content. The smell of roast Turk was so strong that the cry went up all over Antioch: the Franks were eating the Turks they had killed. The infidels crowded up onto the ramparts, while the walls were completely full even of Saracen women. [Garsion addresses his people][...] ‘In the name of Mohammed, look! See how these devils are eating our own people.’ The King of the Tafurs looked up at the assembled infidels, including large numbers of women and girls. He called all</p>	<p>Or est li rois Tafurs auques esvertués,  Et il et sa compaigne dont il i ot assés ;  A lor coutels qu’il ont trençans et afilés  Escorçoient les Turs, aval parmi les prés ;  Voiant païens, les ont par pieces decolpés,  En l’eve et es carbons les ont bien quisinés.  Volentiers les manjuent, sans pain, tos dessalés ;  Et dist li uns a l’autre : &lt;&lt;Molt est cis savourés,  Mius vaut que cars de porc ne que bacons ullés,  Dehés ait qui morra tant com en ait assés.&gt;&gt;  Ricement se conroie li rois et ses barnés.  De Turs que il rostisent est grans li flairs montés,  Par le cit d’Anthioce en est li cris levés  Que li François manjuent les Turs qu’il ont tués.  Païen montent as estres, grans en fu li plentés,  Des païenes meïsmes est tos li murs rasés.  As fenestres plus hautes est Garsions montés,  Et ses fils Sansadonies et ses niés Tsorés,</p>

<sup>12</sup> *The Chanson d’Antioche*: trans. by Edgington and Sweetenham p. 201.; *Antioche*, pp. 219–220.

	<p>his followers together and marched them off to the communal graves. They exhumed the bodies and carried them all up onto a hill; they flung the decomposing ones into the Orontes and skinned the others, hanging the meat to dry in the wind. Count Robert came up to them with Bohemond and Tancred, the highly esteemed duke of Bouillon Count Hugh of Vermandois and the noble and sagacious bishop of Le Puy; all the commanders without exception accompanied them, but every last one in armour and carrying weapons. They all came to a halt in front of the King of the Tafurs and asked him jocularly: 'How's it going?'</p> <p>'In faith,' replied the King, 'I must say I feel very well fed. There is plenty to eat though I wouldn't say no to a drink to wash it down.'</p> <p>'Certainly,' said the duke of Bouillon, 'have a drink'. He had a bottle of good wine from his own private supply presented. The King of the Tafurs had a swig and passed it round.</p>	<p>Bien i ot mil païens que juvenes que barbés.  Garsions lor a dit : &lt;&lt; Por Mahomet veés,  Cil diable manjuent nos gens, or esgardés !&gt;&gt;  Li rois Tafurs regarde, voit païens assablés,  Et dames et puceles dont il i o tassés.  Tot ses ribaus assamble, si les en a menés,  Et vont as tranceries, si les ont desterrés,  Tos ensamble les ont en un mont aportés,  Trestot les porris ont dedent Ferne jetés  Et les autres escorcent, ses ont al vent hallés.  Li quens Robers i vient, Buiemons et Tangrés,  Et li vesques del Pui, qui praus fu et senés,  Et trestot li baron, n'e i a nul remés,  Mais cascuns d'els fu bien fervestis et armés.  Devant le roi Tafur s'est cascuns arestés,  En riant li demandent : &lt;&lt; Comment vos contenés ?  __ Par foi, ce dist li rois, giers sui bien asasés,  Se jou avoie a boire, a mangier ai asés.&gt;&gt;  Dist li dus de Buillon : &lt;&lt; Certes, vos en arés.&gt;&gt;  De son bon vin li fu uns botels présentés,  Li rois Tafurs en but, as autres fu livrés.  Garsions fu as estres del palis acotés ;  Buiemont apela, si qu'il fu escoutés,  Et le conte Huon, ansdels les a només :  &lt;&lt; Sire, dist Garsions, malvais conseil avés  Ki no gent escorciés et les mors desterrés,  Or saciés, par Mhon, durement vilonés.</p>
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		<p>__ Sire, dist Buiemons, ce n'est pas par no grés,  Ainc ne le commandames, n'est par no volentés,  C'est par le roi Tafur qui est lor avoués,  Une gens moult averse dont n'estes pas amés ;  Plus ainment cars de Turs que paons empevrés,  Par nului ne peut estre li rois Tafurs dontés.</p>
William of Tyre <sup>13</sup>	<p>As the shades of evening began to come on apace and throughout the camp the usual preparations for dinner were in progress, Bohemond, mindful of his promise, caused certain Turkish prisoners to be brought forth. He handed them over the headsman with orders that they be strangled. He then had a huge fire built as if for preparing dinner and directed that the bodies, after being prepared with care, should be roasted. His people were instructed that if any question arose about the meaning of such a meal, they were to answer that thenceforward, a decision of the chiefs, the bodies of all enemies or spies seized should furnish meat for the tables of the leaders and the people in the same fashion.</p> <p>The news that these measures were being taken in Bohemond's camp spread through the army. All the members of the expedition ran thither in wonder at the novelty of the idea. The spies who were at that time in the camp were terrified. They believed that what was</p>	<p>[...] circa primum noctis crepusculum, cum alii per 30 castra pro cene apparatu, more solito, essent solliciti, educi precipit Turcos aliquot quos habebat in vinculis, et tradens eos carnificibus iugulari mandat et igne copioso subposito quasi ad opus cene diligenter assari precipit et studiosius preparari, precipiens suis quod si ab aliquibus interrogati essent quidnam sibi cena talis vellet, responderent quod inter principes convenerat ut quotquot deinceps de hostibus aut eorum exploratoribus caperentur, omnes prandis principum et populi ex se ipsis escas via simili cogentur persolvere. Audientes igitur qui in expeditione erant quod talia in castris domini Boamundi tractarentur, facti admirantes novitatem illuc concurrunt universi. Quo facto qui in exercitu erant exploratores deterriti, totum esse serium et sine simulatione quod decretum dicebatur arbitantes, ex eo quod acciderat evidens trahebant argumentum, timentesque ne simile quid eis contingeret a castris egressi redibant ad propria, his qui es miserant</p>

<sup>13</sup> William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, trans. by Emily Atwater Babcock and A. C. Krey, 2 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), I, pp. 222–223; WT, I, pp. 266–267.

	<p>rumoured to have been decreed was actually so, and without pretence, and drew their own conclusions from it. Apprehending that a similar fate might overtake them also, they left the camp at once and returned to their own land. To the chiefs who had sent them they reported that this people surpassed every other nation and even beasts in cruelty. To seize the cities and castles of their enemy, together with all property of every description, to cast into prison, to torture cruelly in enemy fashion, or even to kill did not satisfy them. These Christians must also fill their stomachs with the flesh of their enemies and feast on the fat of their foes.</p> <p>Such were the rumours which penetrated to the farthest parts of the Orient and terrified, not merely neighbouring nations, but even those far remote. The entire city of Antioch trembled also, frightened at the novelty and the cruelty of measure. Thus the zealous efforts of Bohemond brought about the elimination of this pest of spies, and our plans were less often divulged to the enemy.</p>	<p>dicentes quoniam populus hic quarumlibet nationum, sed et ferarum exuperat seviciam, cui non sufficiat urbes, castella et omnimodam hostium diripere substantiam et es vinculis mancipare au more hostium torquere inclementius aut saltem occidere, nisi etiam et so de carnibus eorum ventrem suum impleant et adipe saginentur inimicorum. Exiit ergo sermo iste ad partes Orientis remotissimas et non solum finitimas, verum longe positas exterruit nationes. Civitas quoque tota contremuit, verbi novitate et acerbitate facti perterrita, sicque factum est per stadium et operam domini Boamundi ut hec exploratorum pestis ex parte quiesceret minusque nostra hostibus divulgarentur consilia.</p>
William of Tyre <sup>14</sup>	<p>To add to their troubles, a severe famine was raging in the army at this time, and, as food failed, many in defiance of custom relapsed to the savagery of wild beasts and began to eat flesh of unclean animals. It is asserted also, though this is scarcely credible, that many, through lack of proper</p>	<p>Erat preterea in eodem exercitu tanta famis acerbitas, ut deficientibus alimentis multi contra morem ferarum animos induti ad esum inmundorum se converterent animalium. Dicitur etiam, si tamen fas est credere, quod multi pre alimentorum inopia ad hoc ut carnes humanas ederent prolapsi sunt. Sed neque clades deerat in populo, nec merito</p>

<sup>14</sup> William of Tyre, trans. by Babcock and Krey, I, p. 314; WT, I, p. 357

	<p>food, fell to such depths that they were eating human flesh.  Pestilence was rife among the pilgrims also, nor could this be otherwise, since the wretched people were subsisting upon unclean and unhealthy food (if indeed that can be called food which is contrary to nature).<sup>15</sup></p>	<p>deesse poterat, ubi tam inmundis et pestilentibus cibus - si tamen cibi dicendi sunt qui contra naturam sumuntur - misera plebs alebatur.</p>
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<sup>15</sup> I have altered Babcock and Krey's translation of '*pestilentibus*' from 'noxious' to the more literal 'unhealthy' to highlight the fact that William believed this food to be detrimental to the crusaders' overall health.

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