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Writing and Imagining the Crusade in Fifteenth-Century Burgundy:  
The Case of the Expedition Narrative  
in Jean de Wavrin's *Anciennes Chroniques d'Angleterre*

by

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## Abstract

Scholars have long been attentive to the cultural legacy of Valois Burgundy – a site of remarkable artistic and literary productivity in the mostly desolate cultural landscape of fifteenth-century France. It is only recently, however, that critics have begun to interrogate Burgundian courtly literature with an eye to its narrative complexity and rhetorical and discursive “density,” and to the political and cultural concerns encoded within it. This study emulates and supports these efforts by undertaking a close reading of a remarkable Burgundian chronicle – one which depicts and defends a rare experiment in one of the most ideologically resonant enterprises of the day.

The text, contained in Jean de Wavrin’s vast historical compilation, the *Anciennes Chroniques d’Angleterre*, describes a crusading expedition to Constantinople, the Black Sea, and various points on the Danube in 1444-46. Led by Jean’s nephew Waleran, the *seigneur de Wavrin*, the expedition was largely a failure. The author(s) of the chronicle therefore had a great deal to answer for; yet as the contours of their text reveal, their interests extended well beyond chivalric apologetics. This study analyzes the fascinating narrative tensions which unsettle the expedition narrative, and which offer a window into its varied (and often contending) rhetorical objectives.

It considers, for instance, the tense interplay between two treatments of Waleran’s chivalry: one of which relies on epic and romance themes to depict him as a heroic warrior, and one which reveals his deliberate (and strategic) manipulations

of those codes to preserve and burnish his reputation. It also explores the ways in which “epic” references to earlier crusades and anti-Islamic conflicts, invoked in a manner that tends to ennoble Waleran’s expedition, are truncated and subverted by strategic concerns over the problems of chivalric temerity and the power and sophistication of Ottoman forces.

Together, the study concludes, these findings speak to the discursive complexity of the Burgundian court: a place where courtier-knights “fashioned” themselves strategically, using the very codes which some scholars have associated with “premodern”/medieval corporatism, and where warriors carefully negotiated the discursive margins of the courtly “cult of prowess” in order to articulate pragmatic advice based on lived experience.

## Acknowledgements

Neither this dissertation nor the intellectual journey to which it speaks would have been possible without the encouragement, support and mentorship of Prof. Andrew Gow. Eleven years ago, standing in the doorway of the Henry Marshall Tory Building on a cool spring morning, Andrew offered to help me become an historian. Since that time, he has shared more scholarly wisdom than I could have imagined receiving from *any* one source. I have also benefited from the advice of his colleagues, and my committee members and teachers, Profs. John Kitchen and Dennis Sweeney. Their suggestions both prior to and during the preparation of this dissertation have been both stimulating and instructive.

A number of scholars in Canada, the United States and Europe have also helped me on my way. I have named several of them, and have referred to their specific contributions, in the Introduction below; to this list I should add Drs. Ryan Dunch and Andy Knight, who served on my candidacy committee, and Drs. John Watts and Michael Drolet, who offered valuable encouragement during my visiting studentship at Oxford. Two other scholars, Profs. Steven Hijmans and Sylvia Brown, joined my dissertation committee this spring, and both offered helpful advice and observations – as did my external examiner, Prof. Wim Blockmans. I am deeply indebted to all of these people for many of the insights contained in this dissertation.

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## *Introduction*

### **In search of 'rhetorical and discursive density':**

A critical approach to crusade historiography

A doctoral degree is an apprenticeship, and dissertation-writing is a process of salutary, and systematic, disorientation. One searches for one's scholarly identity in the gaps between landmarks in a crowded field of inquiry. The denser the crowd, the more exacting the search – and the field I have chosen certainly qualifies as “dense.” Fifteenth-century Burgundy, the bustling and ostentatious realms of Duke Philip of Valois, is a *lieu de mémoire* whose painters and writers, wars and rituals continue to inspire scholars around the world to revisit the archives and spill new critical ink. There is something seductive about the subject, and not just because the dukes' political ingenuity and cultural passions rendered them anomalous in the bleak landscape that surrounded them. Some of the greatest medievalists, from Huizinga to Vale and Vanderjagt, have offered provocative analyses of the era, prompting scores of young researchers to follow, and sometimes revisit, their claims. This sort of apprenticeship offers both a challenge and an opportunity; for even as one is inspired by the tradition, one must read and respond thoughtfully to the research, taking care to articulate a thesis that is as critically innovative as it is well-informed. At the same time it is important, in the face of such a dazzling array of cultural artifacts, to avoid magisterial overreach.

My own “apprenticeship” bears this out. After an intense reading program, in which I engaged critically with the tradition of Johan Huizinga and explored some

of most recent literary and political studies of Valois Burgundy, I defended a dissertation proposal with an ambitious title: “Writing and Imagining the Crusade in Fifteenth-Century Burgundy.” The document proposed a fine-grained and theoretically-sensitive study of a wide range of Valois crusading texts. It outlined a plan to examine these texts *both* as repositories of cultural meanings – as reflections of historically-specific ways of seeing the world, of imagining chivalry and devotion – and as sites of self-interested ideological and political intervention. I proposed in particular to examine and assess the uniquely *Burgundian* ways in which Burgundian authors depicted crusading history, Christian chivalry and the infidel “other” in their texts. This was a praiseworthy venture – but as committee members gently informed me, it was also *very* broad in scope. Given the sheer number of relevant studies, and the time constraints I faced, I would do better to ask these questions of a single author, or a single manuscript or compilation.

Many of the scholars whom I contacted during my research trip to northern Europe agreed with this advice.<sup>1</sup> And so, after countless hours of study in the libraries of Paris and Brussels, I opted to undertake a critical study of one of the most famous and complex travel narratives of the fifteenth century, the *Voyage en la terre d’Outremer* (Voyage to the Levant) of Bertrandon de la Broquière. Bertrandon’s narrative, which recounts a journey of pilgrimage and espionage, is an ambiguous, sometimes contradictory, study of Eastern geography and Eastern demographics. It is also a remarkably rich and subtle literary source which received only marginal

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Craig Taylor of the University of York was especially articulate in making this case. I am grateful to him for this and other advice.

critical attention throughout much of the twentieth century. Returning from the archives in the summer of 2007, I began to explore the feasibility of undertaking a book-length critical analysis of the *Voyage*. Then – in a startling reminder of the effects of disciplinary “crowding” – I discovered that such a project was more than just feasible: it was redundant. A doctoral student at Johns Hopkins named Silvia Cappellini had produced a similar study in 1999.<sup>2</sup> Cappellini’s thesis is a masterful and theoretically sensitive study of this very complex text and its uniquely Burgundian representations of “l’autre et l’ailleurs,” the other person and the other place.

The month I spent with Bertrandon, however, was *not* lost time. After studying Cappellini’s work carefully, I decided that it could serve, in broad terms, as a model for a close textual analysis of another Burgundian crusading narrative. I then turned to a unique text that has served as a crucial reference for the most important studies of Burgundian naval diplomacy and crusading policy in recent years (including those of Jacques Paviot, Arjo Vanderjagt, Roger Degryse and Henri Taparel, among others), but has yet to be subjected to a comprehensive critical study. This is the narrative of Waleran de Wavrin’s crusading expedition to Constantinople, the Black Sea, and several Turkish fortresses along the Danube in 1444-46. The text, which spans between 85 and 150 pages in its three French editions, was inserted into a manuscript copy of the *Anciennes Chroniques d’Angleterre* (the Ancient Chronicles of England) at some time around 1470. It may have been written by the chronicler Jean

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<sup>2</sup> Cappellini, “Le Voyage d’Oultre Mer de Bertrandon de la Broquière (1432-1433): Un cheminement éclairé dans l’espace du Levant” (PhD dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1999).

de Wavrin, a prominent courtier and the uncle of the Burgundian captain Waleran; it may have been written by Waleran himself, or it may be the product of a literary collaboration between the two.<sup>3</sup>

Whatever the circumstances of its composition, the narrative is a strikingly rich, ambiguous and sophisticated apologetic for a crusade venture that could have been, and probably often was, read as an embarrassing failure. Even more than Bertrandon's *Voyage*, the Wavrin text presents a special opportunity to consider the ways in which a crusading journey was imagined, rationalized, justified and glorified in an insular culture which regarded crusading as the *nec plus ultra* of chivalric attainment.<sup>4</sup> The narrative, as it happens, is nearly unique in being a lengthy, coherent and fully *Burgundian* chronicle of an actual Valois crusading expedition to the East. For despite the dukes' ideological and diplomatic investments in crusading, which reached their zenith under Philip the Good, the ducal standard seldom arrived in "infidel" lands. There was the disastrous crusade of Nicopolis (1396); there were a few minor excursions in the fifteenth century; and that, despite their sound and fury, is all the Burgundians managed to achieve. Hence,

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<sup>3</sup> I shall consider these possibilities below; see Chapter 2 and Appendix B. For reasons of economy, I shall refer to the narrator of the text simply as "Wavrin" – a marker which keeps open all three of these authorial possibilities. It is worth noting, as we shall see, that the third (collaborative) hypothesis appears the most likely; as such, some of the redactive and rhetorical moves we shall examine may have been Waleran's, while others were Jean's. We can therefore use "Wavrin" to designate a potential *composite* of nephew and uncle, whose rhetorical objectives were probably broadly aligned.

<sup>4</sup> David Wrisley has made the important point that one must take care in describing the Burgundian court as "insular," given its relatively sophisticated engagement with (and exposure to) easterners and to Mediterranean affairs. Still, it is fair, I think, to describe Burgundy as *relatively* insular, compared with the frontier societies of Iberia and the Balkans, whose contact with confessional "others" was necessarily more extensive and complex.

in all the ducal library, which is well-stocked with crusading tales, treatises and themes, there is no comparable historiographical treatment of a *real* Valois expedition.

The Wavrin tract, therefore, is a special text which chronicles a special occasion. And we can safely assume that the political and reputational stakes for its protagonists were extremely high. At least one writer, the normally grandiloquent source for the *Livre des Faits de Jacques de Lalaing*, did not hesitate to dismiss the expedition as a fiasco. Hence it is not surprising, as we shall see, that our narrative functions on one level as a chivalric *apologia*, designed to crown the family's good name with a laurel wreath and to sanitize and rationalize the sometimes questionable behaviour of its famous son. Yet this busy, discordant text also reaches beyond apologetics. As Georges Le Brusque points out in his short essay on the narrative – an article which is, incidentally, nearly the only scholarly study of its “literary” aspects<sup>5</sup> – the prose is often ambiguous and uneven. Some of the tensions and fissures no doubt reflect the process of composition, which probably involved the interpolation of shorter, pre-existing texts into the larger whole. But the ambiguities also offer evidence of multiple rhetorical objectives operating concurrently in a text that targeted courtly readers who shared a variety of different concerns.

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<sup>5</sup> Georges Le Brusque, “Des chevaliers bourguignons dans les pays du Levant: L'expédition de Walleran de Wavrin contre les Turcs ottomans (1444-1446) dans les *Anchiennes Croniques d'Engleterre de Jean de Wavrin*,” *Le moyen âge* 106, no. 2 (2000): 255-75. This essay is adapted from a chapter in Le Brusque's doctoral dissertation, “From Agincourt (1415) to Fornovo (1495): Aspects of the Writing of Warfare in French and Burgundian 15<sup>th</sup> Century Historiographical Literature” (University of London, 2002), to which I shall also refer on occasion.

Hence, in addition to rehabilitating the *capitaine-général* of the Burgundian fleet, the author(s) apparently sought to frame and valorize the duke's expedition as a traditional *saint voyage*, an authentic crusade. And these imaginative efforts were offset by other interests – among them, the author(s)' apparent desire to offer a pragmatic and prescriptive commentary on warfare against the Ottomans, and his/their tendency to inscribe Burgundian political concerns into depictions of the East. The text seems, therefore, to speak precisely, sometimes clearly, sometimes *sotto voce*, to the countervailing interests, concerns and belief systems at work in the florid chivalric culture of late medieval Burgundy. Its troubled memories, politic suppressions, and awkward contradictions speak not just to the interests of *la famille Wavrin*, but to the broader discourses of the late medieval nobility. It is therefore an ideal subject for study, particularly as the Le Brusque essay, for all its scholarly merits, serves only as an entrée into the complexities of the text.

### **The place of the study in the scholarly literature**

Where will such an essay “fit” in this burgeoning field? To study Burgundian culture in any of its forms is to step into an arena that is not only crowded but also rutted with habits of mind and deep-seated scholarly traditions. Though it would be presumptuous to claim that my thesis will in any sense “improve on” earlier notions about the literature of the Valois court, I have tried to model it after certain recent, innovative and sophisticated approaches that help both to elaborate and to add nuance to the work of other scholars. In particular, I have



framed my project as a quest to read for “rhetorical and discursive density” – a wonderfully suggestive phrase that appears in David Wrisley’s 2007 study of the *Mappemonde Spirituelle*, a text that is roughly contemporary to Wavrin’s.<sup>6</sup> The importance of attending to “density” becomes clear, I think, only when one appreciates the range of contemporary approaches to Burgundian culture in their (meta)historical context. Hence I shall pause to consider some facets of the evolution of Burgundian cultural studies in the twentieth century, from the florid essays of Johan Huizinga to two relevant kinds of textual studies undertaken in the past four decades.<sup>7</sup>

Committee members who were present for my comprehensive examinations will recall my efforts to grapple with Huizinga’s claims – both with his high-handed dismissal of Burgundian cultural artifacts as puerile and derivative texts, the vestiges of an empty late-medieval formalism, and with his insights into their remarkable contradictions and ambiguities. The first of these theses, reiterated with a touch of bombast in Raymond L. Kilgour’s *The Decline of Chivalry* (1937), was echoed more subtly, at times tacitly, in a variety of subfields of Burgundian cultural studies throughout the twentieth century. One such field is the collection of studies of Burgundian *historiography*, which has been growing steadily – if unevenly – since the

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<sup>6</sup> Wrisley, “Situating Islamdom in Jean Germain’s *Mappemonde Spirituelle* (1449),” *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007): 326-46 (see 346). On my use of “Wavrin” to denote the final redactor/narrator, see [f.n. 3](#) above.

<sup>7</sup> For an excellent overview of various scholarly approaches to Burgundian history and culture in recent decades, see Graeme Small’s introduction to the 2002 republication of Richard Vaughan’s *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002 [orig. 1970]), xix- li. I shall not attempt to replicate Small’s synthesis, or to touch on all of his categories of analysis, in this brief précis. However, many of the relevant studies he cites will be considered in subsequent chapters.

middle of the century. Until recently, scholars in the field were most attentive to the literary achievements of the “great” Valois history-writers and their precursors: Jean Froissart, Georges Chastellain, and Philippe de Commynes. It is worth noting that Commynes, who abandoned the Burgundian dukes in their twilight years to work for the more politic King Louis XI, was singled out by Huizinga for special praise. A fugitive from the empty formalism and pompous sycophancy of Burgundian letters, he was, the Dutch master enthused, a writer “entirely modern in [his] sober realism.”<sup>8</sup>

It is fair to say that this early characterization has helped to secure Commynes a special place in the scholarly imaginary. Jean Dufournet’s magisterial study of the chronicler – tellingly entitled *La destruction des Mythes dans les Mémoires de Ph. de Commynes* (“The Destruction of Myths in Commynes’ Mémoires,” 1966) – builds expansively upon Huizinga’s claim. It depicts the turncoat historian as the voice of an earthy, no-frills modernity: a writer who shattered artificial conventions and typologies to present a refreshingly ambivalent portrait of courtly and military life. Commynes is, to be sure, a remarkable writer; and I would not presume to challenge the substance of Dufournet’s superb analysis. But it is worth asking to what extent the Huizinga-Dufournet thesis tends to stunt or truncate considerations of earlier histories, which are characterized by comparison as imitative, monochromatic and naïve. To what extent do the presumed virtues of Commynes’

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<sup>8</sup> Johan Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, trans. R. Payton and U. Mammitzsch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 117-18.

“modernism” shape the kinds of questions that scholars tend ask of these “other,” “lesser,” more “medieval” texts?

I have in mind especially the work of less prominent authors and redactors such as Enguerrand de Monstrelet, Jean Le Fèvre de St-Remy, and our own Jean de Wavrin (whom Dufournet describes as a “mere compiler” and a “less intelligent” writer than his contemporaries<sup>9</sup>). And I have no categorical answer to offer, since the recent explosion of interest in Burgundian culture has produced a scholarly harvest so rich that it resists tidy generalizations. What does seem clear, however, is that some of the most fruitful and sophisticated studies of these writers *do* articulate a sublimated form of the Huizinga-Dufournet thesis. Some of the questions they ask, some of their founding assumptions, tend to conflate presumed attributes of “modern” literature – self-awareness, irony, naturalism – with ideas about literary “quality” and intellectual and cultural “maturity.”

Literary scholar Hélène Wolff, for instance, inquires into the historiographers’ techniques of characterization and personal description. Not surprisingly, Olivier de la Marche and his contemporaries are found lacking here; their “backward-looking” and “didactic” histories substitute types for personalities, and “anecdotes” for “disinterested and organized knowledge.”<sup>10</sup> Wolff’s essay is superb, and her argument is unassailable; yet both tend to foreclose on the possibility of reading early Burgundian historiographical texts for *other* kinds of

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<sup>9</sup> See Dufournet, *La Destruction des Mythes dans les Mémoires de Ph. de Comynnes* (Geneva: Droz, 1966), 18.

<sup>10</sup> See Wolff, “La caractérisation des personnages dans les *Mémoires* d’Olivier de la Marche: Identification ou description?” in *Écrire l’histoire à la fin du Moyen Age*, ed. J. Dufournet and L. Dulac. *Revue des Langues Romanes* 97 (1993): 55.

complexity – for evidence of rhetorical tensions, ideological ambiguities and discursive negotiations. And when such tensions are observed, as in Elisabeth Gaucher’s study of Burgundian chivalric biographies, they are sometimes interpreted merely as collisions between decadent noble fantasies and new, pragmatic, and thoroughly bourgeois apprehensions of “reality.”<sup>11</sup> The dichotomy – stark and essential – is Huizinga’s own.

Now, it is important to reiterate the fact that, as concerns these particular limitations in perspective, these otherwise outstanding essays may not be typical of the entire field. Recent studies of Jean Froissart by George T. Diller and Peter Ainsworth, and of Georges Chastellain by Jean-Claude Delclos and Graeme Small, provide models of the kinds of nuanced analysis that I hope to emulate.<sup>12</sup> But it is fair to say that there is room for *more* studies, and more textured studies, of the historiographers who worked in and around the Burgundian sphere...and especially of the early writers and compilers whose “overlooked artistry” has occasioned at least one revisionist essay.<sup>13</sup> Such efforts, moreover, should be predicated on a

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<sup>11</sup> See Gaucher, “Entre l’histoire et le roman: la biographie chevaleresque,” in *Écrire l’histoire*, 15-30. It is important to note that though I shall attempt to problematize the phraseology which distinguishes “nostalgic” from “realist” literature, I shall follow Gaucher closely in observing the narrative tensions which result from attempts to negotiate a variety of concerns and preoccupations against a dominant ideology of martial prowess. See Chapter 5, part 2, below.

<sup>12</sup> George T. Diller, *Attitudes chevaleresques et réalités politiques chez Froissart* (Geneva: Droz, 1984); Peter F. Ainsworth, *Jean Froissart and the Fabric of History* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Jean-Claude Delclos, *Le témoignage de Georges Chastellain* (Geneva: Droz, 1980); Graeme Small, *George Chastellain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy* (Rochester: Boydell & Brewer, 1997).

<sup>13</sup> I have in mind George T. Diller’s “The Assassination of Louis d’Orléans: The overlooked artistry of Enguerrand de Monstrelet” (1984), which is revisionist only in a certain, limited sense. Diller argues that some sections of Monstrelet’s chronicles contain forms of narrative complexity that afford the reader a kind of literary “pleasure.” As concerns the bulk of the text, however, he concurs with the traditional judgment that Monstrelet’s work is unworthy of serious literary analysis. Such claims, and the standards of literary “quality” to which they appeal, do not resonate

healthy skepticism toward the techniques of “othering” underwritten by the Huizinga tradition.

This is how I hope to contribute to the corpus of scholarship on late medieval historiography. But I have not positioned my project exclusively within this subfield of Burgundian cultural studies. I have also sought to engage with the vast and still growing collection of articles and books dedicated to the spectacular and sumptuous *chivalric texts, images and rituals* that emanated from the ducal court. Inasmuch as Wavrin’s text functions as a crusading travel narrative and a chivalric *apologia*, it fits squarely within this tradition; and the many studies of Philip the Good’s and Charles the Bold’s cultural artifacts have provided me with a wealth of insights, tools, and approaches.

Here too the ideas of Johan Huizinga have cast a long shadow over the field – though their reception has been markedly different. Historians of chivalry, many of whom are empiricists and archival scholars, are often inclined to challenge Huizinga’s claims. Their more functionalist approach to medieval subjectivity tends to efface the very alterity which the Dutch master emphasizes; they often read fifteenth-century texts as the creations of “rationally self-interested” subjects, subjects who think like us and (it is tacitly implied) do not deserve Huizinga’s condescension. Their findings are consistently valuable and illuminating. Yet the political models they employ still leave room for other analytical perspectives, other ways of thinking

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with my own concerns; yet Diller’s essay remains very valuable. It points to the possibility of analyzing discursive complexity in the nooks and corners of the early historiographers’ texts – works which have been written off in the past as uniformly derivative and monochromatic.

about and evaluating Burgundian texts, which help to reveal the “local” anxieties and concerns that coexist in the literature with the traces of ducal *realpolitik*.

I shall explain this observation in a moment; but first I must express my admiration for a body of literature which *is* quite expansive in its hermeneutics. These are the studies I shall describe as “social-cultural histories” of Burgundian chivalry: studies whose authors, writing mainly in the 1980s and 1990s, tried to approach Valois texts and rituals on their own terms. In various ways, they argued that the gaudy formalism of Burgundian chivalric literature, far from being the morphine dreams of a culture in its death-throes, was actually an effective medium for expressing serious, contemporary and relevant ideas about the warrior class. Maurice Keen, for instance, suggested that chivalric texts articulated a system of ethics that afforded noblemen a moral and social status equivalent to that of contemporary churchmen.<sup>14</sup> Malcolm Vale likewise found in the didactic literature of the Valois court evidence of complex debates over the nature of true nobility – an issue that has also been explored skillfully by Charity Cannon Willard.<sup>15</sup> Alice Planche and Jean-Pierre Jourdan read the *pas d’armes*, the Burgundians’ elaborate chivalric tournaments, as a means of affirming class solidarity and solidifying personal relationships.<sup>16</sup> And in a number of penetrating essays, Arjo Vanderjagt

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<sup>14</sup> See Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1984), esp. Chs. 6, 10 and 11.

<sup>15</sup> See Vale, *War and Chivalry: Warfare and Aristocratic Culture in England, France and Burgundy at the End of the Middle Ages* (London: Duckworth, 1981), 14-32, and Willard, “The Concept of True Nobility at the Burgundian Court,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 14 (1967): 33-48.

<sup>16</sup> See Planche, “Du tounoi au théâtre en Bourgogne: Le Pas de la Fontaine des Pleurs à Chalon-sur-Saône, 1449-1450,” *Le Moyen Age* ser. 4, no. 30 (1975): 97-128, and Jourdan, “Le thème du Pas et de l’Emprise: Espaces symboliques et rituels d’alliance au Moyen Age,” *Ethnologie française* 22, no. 2 (1992): 172-84.

examined the ways in which Burgundian authors employed both ancient symbology and “modern” ideas (including humanistic notions) to reshape chivalric discourse in the court.<sup>17</sup>

Each of these studies underscores the importance of reading Burgundian literature in its political, social and demographic context. And by illuminating the ways in which social imperatives contributed to its internal logic, and to its sometimes deceptive rhetorical complexity, each urges us to take the text *seriously* (though not necessarily to insist on its “seriousness” in a generic sense; as studies of the famous Burgundian *nouvelles* reveal, comedy played an important role in the life of the court<sup>18</sup>). If my study of Wavrin’s narrative can produce only some minor, local and particular insights to add to this rich scholarly harvest, I will consider my mission accomplished.

One especially important “social imperative,” of course, is political self-interest. Perhaps not surprisingly, political questions have emerged front-and-centre in recent studies of Burgundian romantic literature and iconography, and of the courtly rituals which were derived from them. Since the 1980s, a generation of scholars has interrogated Clifford Geertz’s model of the “theatre state” as a potential heuristic for analyzing texts and images as *primarily* political forms; these writers have used (and have also refined and challenged) Geertzian terms and categories to understand how such forms served ducal interests by securing the loyalty and

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<sup>17</sup> See e.g. Vanderjagt, *The Princely Culture of the Valois Dukes of Burgundy*,” in M. Gosman, A. MacDonald and A. Vanderjagt, eds., *Princes and Princely Culture, 1450-1650*, Vol. I (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 52-79.

<sup>18</sup> See e.g. Judith Bruskin Diner, “The Courtly-Comic Style of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*,” *Romance Philology* 47, no. 1 (1993): 48-60.

stoking the enthusiasm of Burgundian courtiers and burghers. This cultural-anthropological field has proven remarkably fertile. Numerous studies, by scholars such as Peter Arnade, Jesse Hurlbut, Jeffrey Chipps-Smith and Marie-Thérèse Caron, have set out to demonstrate the power of chivalric symbology in the ducal court, and in Philip's cities.<sup>19</sup> In so doing, they have responded directly to Huizinga, offering the Dutch master both plaudits and criticisms. Huizinga, notes Peter Arnade, was a kind of Geertzian symbolologist *avant le mot*: his insights into the ways in which cultural symbols shape and influence collective experiences anticipated the claims of cultural anthropologists working decades later. But he went astray by assuming that the symbols of late medieval court culture were "empty ciphers," detached from the florid realities of the twelfth century in which they had their genesis.

In fact, Arnade writes, symbols are never empty or inert; they function as key cogs in systems of "power relations," and by employing them, late medieval princes (and, in important instances, burghers) were asserting claims for prestige, power and wealth.<sup>20</sup> The fruits of these insights can be found in any number of illuminating studies, from Chipps-Smith's analysis of ducal tapestries as "portable propaganda" to Caron's deconstruction of the politically-resonant *banquet du faisán*. In each case,

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<sup>19</sup> See e.g. Arnade, "Ritual and Representation in the Burgundian Netherlands," in *Realms of Ritual: Burgundian Ceremony and Civic Life in Late Medieval Ghent* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 1-8; Marie-Thérèse Caron, "17 février 1454: le Banquet du Voeu du Faisán, fête de cour et stratégies de pouvoir," *Revue du nord* 78, no. 315 (1996): 269-288; Jesse D. Hurlbut, "The City Renewed: Decorations for the 'joyeuses entrées' of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold," *Fifteenth Century Studies* 19 (1992): 73-84. The concept of the "theatre state" is also explored within the context of two of the most wide-ranging and influential economic, social and political histories of the Valois state: Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier's *The Burgundian Netherlands*, trans. P. King and Y. Mead (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) (esp. 214-25); and Blockmans and Prevenier's *The Promised Lands: The Low Countries Under Burgundian Rule, 1369-1530*, trans. E. Peters (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999) (esp. 132-40).

<sup>20</sup> See Arnade, "Ritual and Representation," 2-3.



the author helps us to understand why the dukes and their apologists chose to emphasize particular mythological themes, or to highlight particular chivalric images, in order to stir, to provoke, or to overawe their audiences.

The potential benefits of this pioneering scholarship for my project are obvious; I too want to decode the “symbolic vocabulary” of a Burgundian text, and to understand how particular chivalric motifs are deployed for political purposes. I have already noted Wavrin’s apparent concern over flattering the duke and rehabilitating the chivalric reputation of his protagonist. Certain imaginative themes and images were clearly indispensable to these efforts, and I am greatly indebted to these scholars for helping me to think about and make sense of Wavrin’s strategic choices.

At the same time, I must guard against the temptation of focussing on the politically self-serving elements of the text *to the exclusion* of its other rhetorical layers. This is what I meant in suggesting that this approach, while richly suggestive, may not offer a fully comprehensive model for my own analysis. Wavrin is not merely a propagandist; his text is not purely “monological” in a Bakhtinian sense. It serves other functions, articulates other priorities, which at times stand in a fascinating tension with its political and hortatory register. There emerges, for instance, a keen interest in the problems and limitations of traditional chivalric behaviour in the face of Turkish martial skill – a sensibility that is sharpened by vague, at times tacit, allusions to the disastrous Burgundian defeat at Nicopolis. To read the narrative in purely monological terms would mean silencing these faint but insistent doubts and

concerns. I want to hear them. I want, in a word, to be as sensitive as possible to the “rhetorical and discursive density” of Wavrin’s text.

In so doing, I shall emulate the work of a number of scholars, including three of the writers mentioned above: David Wrisley, Arjo Vanderjagt and Silvia Cappellini. These people have studied very different sources with very different critical questions in mind, but each of them has grappled with forms of textual complexity that were unexamined by other scholars. My intention to emulate them does not, therefore, involve replicating a particular methodology, but rather adopting a similar critical disposition: one that seeks to penetrate the text at a different depth, and with different interests in mind.<sup>21</sup>

Nor is this to suggest that my study lacks theoretical moorings. It is true that I feel neither competent nor inclined to pull a fashionable theoretical apparatus “off the rack” and use it as a rigid hermeneutic. But in general terms, I believe that my project is concerned with the kinds of insights that Gabrielle Spiegel has set out in her seminal essay “The Social Logic of the Text” (1997). As is probably evident by now, I too have approached the text as a “situated use of language,” “essentially local in origin” and possessing “a social logic of...great density and complexity.”<sup>22</sup> Like Spiegel, I have tried to understand how it reflects the lived experiences – the

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<sup>21</sup> In this regard, a recent study by Catherine Emerson, *Olivier de La Marche and the Rhetoric of Fifteenth-Century Historiography* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), also offers an inspiring and instructive example.

<sup>22</sup> See Spiegel, “The Social Logic of the Text,” in *The Past as Text* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 24.

concerns, preoccupations and anxieties – of its author, in addition to the traces of his discursive environment.<sup>23</sup>

As I intimated above, the ideas and insights of other theorists are also instrumental to my work. I have, for example, relied on the insights of both Hayden White and Mikhail Bakhtin in analyzing the narrative structures of the text.<sup>24</sup> In some cases they apply only partially, even imperfectly, to the analytical context in which I am working. Still, I believe that they serve an important role both as conceptual *provocateurs* and as grounds for careful self-scrutiny.

These, then, are the general ingredients of my project. The specific recipe follows in the final section of this chapter.

### **Support from scholars**

Before summarizing my plan, however, I must recognize the important input I have received not only from my supervisor and committee members, but also from a number of international authorities in the field. First among the latter, undoubtedly, is Prof. Jacques Paviot of the Université de Paris XII (Val-de-Marne), the world's leading scholar of Burgundian crusading. I met with Prof. Paviot while in Paris; and upon learning about my interests in Wavrin in late 2007, he kindly

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<sup>23</sup> For a useful overview of the strengths of Spiegel's approach, see Denise N. Baker, "Introduction," in *Inscribing the Hundred Years' War in French and English Cultures*, ed. D. Baker (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000), 2-3.

<sup>24</sup> See e.g. White, *The Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1978); Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 259-422.

offered his guidance and expertise. He has since provided me with a number of valuable documents and suggestions.<sup>25</sup>

I have also been in contact with other scholars of late medieval Burgundy, of French historiography, and of late medieval crusading – among them, Gabrielle Spiegel, Norman Housley, Craig Taylor, David Wrisley, Livia Visser-Fuchs and Arjo Vanderjagt, each of whom provided valuable feedback. Dr. Visser-Fuchs, who recently (2002) completed a thesis on Jean de Wavrin and is the leading specialist on the oft-overlooked Burgundian chronicler,<sup>26</sup> offered solid encouragement for this project. Though her methodological approach is somewhat different from mine, she provided me with a number of very useful comments and suggestions. Likewise, Profs. Arjo Vanderjagt and David Wrisley are leading by example; their recent essays undertake sensitive and fruitful analyses of Burgundian crusading texts which reveal, among other things, the “rhetorical and discursive density” of these works.<sup>27</sup> And as I suggested above, Prof. Spiegel’s work serves as a shining example of the sort of

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<sup>25</sup> I cannot overstate my indebtedness, moreover, to Prof. Paviot’s numerous political studies of the crusading projects and naval ventures of the Valois dukes. These include the seminal *La politique navale des ducs de Bourgogne, 1384-1482* (Lille: Presses Universitaires, 1995), and *Les ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade et l’Orient* (Paris: Presses de l’Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2003).

<sup>26</sup> Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin: Two Case Studies on the Literary Background and Propaganda of Anglo-Burgundian Relations in the Yorkist Period* (PhD Dissertation, University College London, 2002).

<sup>27</sup> I have in mind, among other texts by these authors, Vanderjagt, “Ritualizing Heritage: Jason and the Argonauts at the Burgundian Feast of the Pheasant (1454),” forthcoming; and Wrisley, “Situating Islamdom” (see citation above). Wrisley’s and Vanderjagt’s work offers vivid testimony to the value of examining Burgundian translations and “expropriations” of ancient and medieval texts and themes, which were undertaken in the service of contemporary rhetorical and political objectives. Both scholars thus employ as a main methodology the *comparison* of Burgundian texts and *remaniements* with ancient and epic sources. But just as importantly, both are sensitive to the *internal* complexity and density of the fifteenth-century works they survey. For a similar intervention in the realm of Arthurian romance, see Jane H.M. Taylor, “The Significance of the Insignificant: Reading Reception in the Burgundian *Erec* and *Cligès*,” *Fifteenth-Century Studies* 24 (1998): 183-97.

scholarship I hope to emulate. Her generosity in offering advice and support will never be forgotten.

Incidentally, Dr. Visser-Fuchs also suggested that I may wish to produce a new, properly annotated edition of the expedition narrative. Three previous editions are available (the most recent being Nicolae Iorga's Gamber edition of 1927), but none of them is particularly detailed in its annotations, and such commentary as exists only faintly anticipates the scholarship recently conducted in the field. Her suggestion is a very good one, particularly as the process of editing and annotating the full middle French narrative offers the best possible immersion into the style, idiom and structure of the text. I have not yet been able, however, to commit to such a lengthy project – partly because the resulting edition, when compiled with my thesis proper, would far exceed the allowable page limit. As a result, I have deferred the preparation of a new annotated edition until a later date.

### **Overview of the study**

The study that follows thus proceeds directly to critical and interpretive questions. In an effort both to understand and to assess the “discursive density” of Wavrin's crusading narrative, it turns on two fundamental claims. First, it argues for the complexity and polyvalence of the text, which tends to belie critical claims concerning the supposedly derivative and sterile character of Burgundian chivalric writing, and which offers numerous insights into ambient political and social concerns. Second, it seeks to demonstrate the rhetorical sophistication of the

Burgundian courtier – not the prince, not the power centre, but the *warrior* himself – which is evidenced by the author’s skillful use of chivalric *topoi* and by his facility in speaking strategically from the margins of courtly discourse. In the following chapters, I shall develop these points incrementally, starting with foundational studies both of the text *and* of its political and cultural contexts.

This is the business of **Chapter 1** (“Waleran’s expedition and Wavrin’s narrative in their political, social and cultural context”), which sets the stage for my reading of the “social logic” of the expedition narrative by examining the political and cultural environment in which Wavrin lived and wrote. It outlines both the enormous political stakes of Waleran’s journey to (and his failure in) the Balkans, and the pressing need to “perform” and record deeds of chivalry in the Burgundian court. Wavrin’s expedition narrative, it argues, can thus be read as a project of justification and ennoblement; the narrator deploys the themes and categories of chivalric virtue not just to rehabilitate, but also to laud, the *seigneur de Wavrin*’s contribution to the crusade project. Yet as my study reveals, this is just one of several rhetorical concerns encoded into the text – concerns which push up against, and often blunt or subvert, one another. This rhetorical complexity reflects, and thus offers important insights into, the political preoccupations and strategic interests which shaped the redaction of the narrative.

The next three chapters consider the causes, forms and implications of this complexity. **Chapter 2** (“Authorship, sources, rhetoric – and textual difference”) examines the literary fundamentals of the text, and considers the reasons it has

attracted scant attention from literary scholars. Offering a brief synopsis of the main sections and emphases of Wavrin's confection, it outlines and assesses the primary reasons for – and sources of – the narrative complexity described above. These are, first, the possibilities of multiple "authorship"; second, the narrator's apparent use and redaction of numerous sources; and third, the great variety of rhetorical goals and objectives which he admits into the text, and which place strong and often countervailing pressures on it. The third of these is clearly the most important for our purposes. Hence I conclude the chapter by offering case studies of two of Wavrin's most important apologetic gestures – his efforts to justify Waleran's failure to prevent the Turks from crossing the Bosphorus, and to temper and mitigate the claims of a courtly rival who acted heroically in Waleran's absence – and consider how these efforts create revealing forms of tension in the text.

The third and fourth chapters of this study are concerned with more complex – and ultimately revealing – forms of narrative ambiguity. **Chapter 3** ("The glory economy and chivalric identity in the expedition narrative"), for instance, examines the tension between the narrator's efforts to depict Waleran as a heroic warrior – a *bon chevalier* – and his revelations concerning the protagonist's canny efforts at chivalric self-fashioning. The first part of the chapter considers how the expedition narrative functions within a cultural ethos concerned with the ascription of honour and renown, and how particular categories of approbation, uttered in the omniscient voice, are used to rehabilitate Waleran's reputation. The second part analyzes what the text betrays: a self-conscious attempt by the nobleman to manipulate these same

codes in his own interest. This double logic hinges on a particular sort of discursive tension: a collision between motifs of chivalry common in the literature favoured by Jean de Wavrin – motifs which represent knightly virtues as timeless and indwelling – and a self-consciously strategic discourse concerned with negotiating purely contingent and symbolic reputational claims in the context of ambivalent, often even unflattering, circumstances. The tension between these “apologetic” and “strategic” modes of writing shines a light on noble anxieties and desires; it also testifies to a form of courtly “self-fashioning” that flourished long before the Northern Renaissance.

**Chapter 4** (“Epic precedents, battlefield pragmatics, and the depiction of warfare in the expedition narrative”) describes both the use *and* the subversion of another form of rhetorical justification: the ennoblement of Waleran’s war efforts through references to earlier crusades. The chapter examines in turn each of the three “memorial frameworks” – epic invocations of struggles against “infidels,” memories of the “Burgundian” crusade of Nicopolis, and references to the exploits of Greek heroes – which are deployed by the narrator and his sources in an effort to elevate and ennoble the crusading efforts of the mid-1440s. It also considers the three political concerns – anxieties over the growth of Ottoman power, concerns over the strategic dangers of chivalric temerity, and an appreciation of the need for new methods and modes of warfare – which tend to subvert the grandeur of these formulations.



The first part of the chapter demonstrates how two accounts of the “Long Campaign” of 1443, though redolent with epic grandeur, are ultimately subverted and problematized by the narrator’s depictions of the Christian retreat from the Zlatitsa Pass – passages that acknowledge, both tacitly and explicitly, the anxieties produced by Ottoman expansion and by deep uncertainties over the viability of a crusade against the sultan. The second part examines how the “epic” depiction of the battle of Varna is both truncated and subverted by the narrator’s apparent interest in criticizing the dangers of chivalric temerity in wars against the Turks – a theme that runs through the expedition narrative and, indeed, through Waleran’s own writings. This interest is also evident in Wavrin’s references to the “Burgundian” crusading loss at Nicopolis in 1396: an ambivalent signifier that the narrator uses both *explicitly* to ennoble Waleran’s journey and *tacitly* to underscore his critique of temerity. Finally, the third part considers Wavrin’s references to Greek myth, which likewise serve to glorify Waleran’s expedition. Yet though the Burgundian fleet sails to the shores of mythic Troy and to magical Colchis – sites laden with symbolic weight in Duke Philip’s court, where membership in the Order of the Golden Fleece was the highest chivalric honour – his references to these mythic precedents are curiously limited and truncated. His silences and gaps here speak as loudly as his utterances; they seem to testify to his recognition of the particular – and particularly prosaic – demands of a new kind of naval warfare.

**Chapter 5** (“How the expedition narrative unsettles the claims of Johan Huizinga – and his interlocutors”) discusses the broader significance of all of these

findings, reflecting on the vivid lessons they offer concerning the discursive culture in which Waleran and Jean de Wavrin lived and wrote. The first part of the chapter draws conclusions about *chivalric self-fashioning* in the Wavrins' world – about the self-interested use of chivalric *topoi* within a dominant discourse of the court. It argues that knights were both able and inclined to use the symbolic vocabulary of chivalry to burnish and enhance their reputations; and as such it tends to revise and qualify other studies which read courtly self-fashioning in later eras as the manifestation of a new, “modern” impulse toward individualism. The second part considers how the sophistication and complexity of the chronicle militates against claims concerning the infantilism and decadence of the knightly class in fifteenth-century Burgundy. Narrators such as Wavrin were not only willing to write, but also fully capable of writing, on the margins of key courtly chivalric discourses in order to articulate the complex and pragmatic concerns that they as warriors were uniquely positioned to convey. This was especially true of those who wrote in various historiographical genres – authors who were content to maintain, and indeed to manipulate, this tension between chivalric idealism and professional pragmatism.

In two appendices, finally, I offer further support – often in a philological or source-critical vein – for the claims made in previous chapters. **Appendix A** considers various arguments in support of the idea that Jean de Wavrin was involved in the redaction of his nephew's fascinating chronicle – probably as its final editor/narrator. **Appendix B** presents evidence to support my claim that he edited several independent sources together, sometimes in surprisingly complex and

sensitive ways. My thesis therefore both begins *and* ends with foundational studies of text and context – a gesture which serves, I hope, to acknowledge the importance of these tasks in ensuring the integrity of my criticism and the strength of my historical insights. The first of my major chapters takes up this challenge, *and* this discussion.

**The stakes of a crusade chronicle:**

Waleran's expedition and Wavrin's narrative in their political, social and cultural context

The narrative complexity of a medieval crusading chronicle results from many factors – not least of which are the varied and often contending rhetorical impulses of its contributing authors and redactors. The push and pull of contradictory claims, the tectonic shifts and fissures between authorial “layers,” all contribute to forms of ambiguity that offer a special window onto the complex ideological and imaginative landscape in which the text was formed. The purpose of this study is to peer through this window – from the inside out, as it were – to observe the cultural and political imperatives at work in the redaction of Wavrin's expedition narrative. This entails a methodology that is largely *inductive*: proceeding from a close reading of the text to an analysis of the contemporary anxieties and preoccupations it seems to encode. Such ambient discourses, which may not be as evident in other kinds of documentary sources, are as “real,” and as historically significant, as anything scholars might claim about Duke Philip of Burgundy and his fighting men.<sup>28</sup> They *tell us* things; and in the process, they both reflect and elicit forms of historical work.<sup>29</sup>

It is also true, however, that conclusions based on such readings are subject to a degree of hermeneutic uncertainty; given the vagaries of discourse and the

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<sup>28</sup> In much of what follows, I am indebted to the work and ideas of Gabrielle Spiegel – especially her theoretical work on the “social logic” of medieval texts and her studies of the ideological contents of medieval French historiography. See Chapters 3 and 4 (below) for a related discussion.

<sup>29</sup> On the use of this term by Sharon Kinoshita, see below, Ch. 4.

problems of reader reception, they retain a “caractère aléatoire,” as Jacques Paviot puts it, that is not as obviously typical of empirical and quantitative analyses.<sup>30</sup> This is by no means a fatal flaw; acknowledging it, in fact, presents a valuable opportunity to critique one’s own scholarly assumptions and capacity for error. I shall aspire to this kind of transparency throughout my study,<sup>31</sup> but for the moment, a single observation will serve as both a starting-point and a rationale for this chapter. In the case of inductive textual readings, one of the most important potential contributors to error is a reader’s insensitivity to the complexity of political events and discursive currents which surrounded and inflected the composition of the text. The challenges of reading with an emphasis on depth of field can make the process of gaining awareness of this social and cultural “breadth” an Herculean task; yet without the latter, the literary scholar runs the risk of conducting a mere thought experiment, and of producing historical claims that are mostly sterile and devoid of history.

It is important, of course, not to overstate this danger. The text itself provides a certain degree of authority upon which one can rely – its rhetorical currents, its emphases and suppressions, speaking to “reality” in ways that neither other sources nor present-centred assumptions about human motives and dispositions can efface. Yet it is undoubtedly true, as Gabrielle Spiegel has

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<sup>30</sup> See Paviot, *Les ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade et l’Orient*, 207. Though Prof. Paviot’s monograph is mainly a political history, his chapter concerning the crusading texts contained in the ducal library is essential reading for anyone interested in the literature of the crusades in the later middle ages.

<sup>31</sup> Indeed, I shall err on the side of being *hypocritical* of my assumptions – a strategy, as some readers have suggested, that tends to temper the force of my arguments. While this may be true, I believe my rhetorical posture is appropriate for a PhD dissertation, the function of which is to present the first scholarly efforts of a newcomer to the field.

demonstrated in her studies, that before one may take the step of gazing “outward” through the textual window to make fine-tuned and original arguments, one must already have an understanding of the cultural and political climate to which it responds and upon which it acts. This entails not only much peripheral reading, but also a certain rhetorical virtuosity in *reporting* one’s knowledge: political narratives, after all, tend to read rather awkwardly in an article or monograph that is also devoted to textual studies of a more theoretical nature. I cannot claim to have found my own solution to this problem, but I shall do my best to follow the model of Spiegel, whose work on the “social logic” of medieval texts reveals, among other things, the compatibility of the two narrative modes when they are presented in separate but closely-related sections.

In this first chapter, then, I shall set the stage for my reading by saying as much as possible, as succinctly as possible, about the environment in which Wavrin’s remarkable chronicle was crafted. I shall speak at length about the politics, and also to some extent the literature and culture, that informed and inspired the Burgundian crusade project. The latter discussion will be rejoined in subsequent chapters, which will consider the relationship between the narrative and the literary and discursive currents which surrounded it. By the end of Chapter 1, I hope to furnish the reader not only with a clear sense of how the politics and ideology of the crusade functioned in fifteenth-century Burgundy, but also with an understanding of why the stakes of a naval expedition – *and* of its chronicle – were remarkably high for a

joust, courtier, pirate, commander, and, by all signs, a rather sensitive and introspective nobleman named Waleran de Wavrin.

### **The politics of crusading in Burgundy: From Philip the Bold to Philip the Good**

The story of the stunning rise of the Valois house of Burgundy – from a cadet branch of the French royal family to a dominant cultural and political force in fifteenth-century Europe – has been told many times.<sup>32</sup> For our purposes, it is sufficient to note that crusading politics played a key role in this meteoric movement: contributions to the “saint voyage” underwrote Duke Philip the Bold’s efforts at self-aggrandizement in the court of Charles VI in the late fourteenth century, and they were a key tactic in his grandson’s pursuit of special princely status (and a longed-for, but never achieved, royal crown) in the fifteenth.<sup>33</sup> Few scholars would quarrel with these claims<sup>34</sup>; but historians have differed over other aspects of the Burgundians’ *Kreuzzugspolitik*. The most troublesome questions centre upon its *origins* – that is to say the dukes’ primary motives for reading, preaching, negotiating, and financing crusading – and on the *consistency* of crusading politics over time.

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<sup>32</sup> Classic treatments include, among others, Johan Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*; Joseph Calmette, *The Golden Age of Burgundy: The Magnificent Dukes and their Courts*, transl. Doreen Weightman (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1963); Otto Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, transl. Malcolm Letts (London: Kegan Paul, 1929); W. Blockmans and W. Prevenier, *The Burgundian Netherlands* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986); Bertrand Schnerb, *L’État bourguignon* (Paris: Perrin, 2001); and the important biographies of all four Valois dukes published by Richard Vaughan between 1962 and 1973.

<sup>33</sup> See e.g. Paviot, *Les ducs*, 117.

<sup>34</sup> Note, however, Jean Richard’s suggestion that Philip’s crusading passions were detached from self-interested political concerns: “Contrastant avec l’égoïsme sacré de tant de princes du XVe siècle, le duc Philippe a su dépasser l’étroite vision de ses intérêts immédiats pour s’élever à la notion d’un intérêt supérieur de l’Europe chrétienne....” See “La croisade bourguignonne dans la politique européenne,” in *Publication du Centre Européen d’Études Burgundo-médiannes no. 10: Rencontres de Fribourg* (Geneva: CEEB, 1967), 44.

Indebted, perhaps, to the presentist narratives of Johan Huizinga, some political historians have viewed crusading as a stable discourse, the outgrowth of a medieval “mentalité,” which tended to manifest itself in psychological and political continuities over the course of the Valois era.<sup>35</sup>

Others, however, have taken a different approach. Jacques Paviot’s monumental *Les ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade et l’Orient* (2003), the most comprehensive study of the primary source evidence, argues that changing political circumstances contributed to key differences and ruptures in crusading policy.<sup>36</sup> His focus on incongruities in the political realm is consistent with my interest in the fissures and ambiguities reflected in contemporary texts; it also contributes to an analysis that is especially rich in qualifications and free of vapid generalizations. In the relatively brief summary that follows, I shall therefore follow the broad contours of Paviot’s account of the politics of crusading in the court of Burgundy. I shall rely on its analysis and interpretation of primary source documents from Burgundian, Venetian, papal and other archives, supplementing it where necessary with other scholarly opinions.

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<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Constantin Marinesco’s influential article “Philippe le Bon, Duc de Bourgogne, et la Croisade,” which argues that Duke Philip’s crusading passions reflected an “état d’esprit qui avait, quelques siècles auparavant, rendu possibles les prouesses des anciennes croisades, les ‘gesta Dei per Francos,’” and which rendered him susceptible to political manipulation by more “modern” minds. (Marinesco’s article appeared in two parts: the first in *Actes du VI<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d’Études Byzantines* (Paris: EHS, 1950), 147-68, the second in *Bulletin des Etudes Portugaises et de l’Institut français au Portugal* (t. 13, 1949): 3-28. This citation appears in Pt. II, p. 24-5.)

<sup>36</sup> Prof. Paviot frames his project, in fact, in terms of a broad critique of structuralist historiography: “Il ne s’agit pas là d’un phénomène historique mettant en jeu des groupes importants ou des structures, mais des individus qui d’une manière non continue, ont suivi un certain idéal de croisade. Ainsi, ce travail s’inscrit en grande partie dans l’histoire politique” (*Les ducs*, 12).



*Philip the Bold and the 'saint voyage.'* I begin with his claim that Duke Philippe "le Hardi," a key figure in the regency of the unstable Charles VI,<sup>37</sup> had no long-standing interest in the crusade, and that he paid limited attention to calls for holy warfare until they surfaced as an important political current in the Parisian court.<sup>38</sup> It was only in the years around 1393, when the Hungarians requested aid against Ottoman expansion and his royal nephew was seized with crusading enthusiasm, that Philip involved himself heavily in the project, "because of a wish to control the crusading impulses of his nephew...the king."<sup>39</sup> From that point, Paviot notes, the seasoned prince took the reins of French crusading diplomacy; he joined Louis d'Orléans in sending a preparatory embassy to Hungary in 1395, and when the king resolved to send a crusade in May of that year, it was Philip, rather than the stalwart Louis or the "knight of the passion" John of Gaunt, who became the chief architect of the project.<sup>40</sup>

Meeting at a *de facto* war council in his Parisian residence, the duke resolved, among other things, that his son Jean de Nevers should win his chivalric spurs in the

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<sup>37</sup> Philip, the first of the Valois dukes of Burgundy, was awarded the appanage by his father, Jean II le Bon, in recognition of the courage he showed as a young teenager at the Battle of Poitiers (1356). He took a prominent role on the council of regents for his underage nephew, King Charles VI, from 1380-88; he was also principal regent between 1392 and 1402, a period of mental instability for the young king. On Philip's role in the royal court during these years, see e.g. Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Bold: The Formation of the Burgundian State* (London: Longmans, 1962), 39-58.

<sup>38</sup> Paviot notes, for instance, that Philip took a more limited role in the French response to a Genoese response for aid against the Berbers in 1390 than did other members of the court; and he was not among those who gave their support to the Order of the Passion, a transnational crusading order proposed by the crusade advocate and statesman Philippe de Mézières. See *Les ducs* 20, 30. Note, however, that other authors interpret Philip's attitude differently: see e.g. Schnerb, *L'État bourguignon*, 115-16, and Jean Richard, "La Bourgogne des Valois, l'idée de croisade et la défense de l'Europe," in *Le Banquet du Faisan. 1454: l'Occident face au défi de l'Empire ottoman*, ed. M.T. Caron and Denis Clauzel (Arras: Artois Presses université, 1997), 19.

<sup>39</sup> "Par la volonté de contrôler les désirs de croisade de [son] neveu...le roi" (my transl.): *Les ducs*, 23.

<sup>40</sup> *Les ducs*, 31.

course of his eastern adventures. The count was named the titular head of French forces, and he and a coterie of Philip's intimates and vassals formed a spectacularly dressed and well-armed contingent of the larger army.<sup>41</sup> The catastrophic outcome of the crusade, which saw a wholesale slaughter of French forces outside the city of Nicopolis, is well-known, and we shall consider the details below in our study of Wavrin's apparent critique of chivalric temerity.<sup>42</sup> For now it is sufficient to note that the loss shocked and dismayed the French nobility – and cost the country dearly. Jean de Nevers, Enguerrand de Coucy, the marshal Boucicaut and a few other crusade leaders were spared and taken prisoner by the sultan, and Philip, for his part, was engaged in raising and paying his son's ransom.<sup>43</sup> The total negotiated for the release of Jean de Nevers and two other knights – Henri de Bar and Jacques de Bourbon – was a remarkable 187,000 gold florins, advanced to the duke by a group of Cypriot and Italian allies; even with their aid, the heir to the duchy of Burgundy made it back to his territories only in February of 1398.<sup>44</sup>

Upon his return, John was given a hero's welcome; he appeared in spectacular processions in the cities of Dijon, Arras, Lille, Ghent, Bruges and Tournai, among others.<sup>45</sup> The duke thus succeeded, as Paviot notes, in "transforming the return of his son from a disastrous military defeat into triumphal entries in the

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<sup>41</sup> See *Les ducs*, 36.

<sup>42</sup> On the crusade of Nicopolis and its consequences, see e.g. A.S. Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (London: Methuen, 1934); Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades: From Lyons to Alcazar, 1274-1580* (Oxford: OUP, 1992), 49-79; Bertrand Schnerb, *L'État bourguignon*, 119-24; Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 59-78.

<sup>43</sup> On the details of these negotiations, see *Les ducs*, 42-9.

<sup>44</sup> See *Les ducs*, 47-9.

<sup>45</sup> For a full list of these triumphal entries, see Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 76.

territories to which he was heir."<sup>46</sup> In so doing, Philip infused the memory of Nicopolis with a certain ambiguity which played out, as we shall see, over the course of his grandson's reign.<sup>47</sup> But while members of his court (and that of his son Jean "sans Peur," who succeeded him as duke in 1404) seem to have taken up crusading as a chivalric duty for years after Nicopolis, Philip distanced himself from Eastern affairs, "put off as he was," for the remainder of his reign.<sup>48</sup> The royal court continued to hear embassies and debate the crusade; but neither Duke Philip the Bold nor his son John expended any more political or diplomatic capital on the *saint voyage*. As far as Burgundian policy was concerned – if not Burgundian chivalric ideology, as the contents of Philip's and Jean's libraries suggest – the crusade was eclipsed by other concerns.<sup>49</sup> The internecine conflict between the Armagnac and Burgundian factions, which precipitated the assassination of John the Fearless in 1419, absorbed virtually all of their attention.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> "Le duc de Bourgogne a réussi à transformer le retour de son fils d'une désastreuse défaite militaire en entrées triomphales dans les domaines dont il était l'héritier": *Les ducs*, 49. For other perspectives on the ceremonial surrounding John's homecoming (and its political uses), see Schnerb 123-4; Housley, *The Later Crusades*, 79; and Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 76.

<sup>47</sup> See Chapter 4, Part 2 (below).

<sup>48</sup> "Échaudé qu'il fut": see *Les ducs*, 49-50 and 56-7.

<sup>49</sup> On the culture of chivalry and crusading in the Burgundian ducal court, see below. It is important to emphasize that the shifts in ducal priorities which Paviot identifies do *not* support the contention that crusading played a less prominent role in Burgundian chivalric ideology and identity politics during this period – though, of course, ideas about and representations of crusading may have changed and evolved. Another article by Paviot, this one concerning crusading as a chivalric "ideal," reveals that, despite rather uneven financial support from Philip the Bold and John the Fearless, knights in their realms appear to have been keen to make their names as crusaders in a number of arenas. See "La croisade bourguignonne aux XIVe et XVe siècles: Un idéal chevaleresque?" *Francia* 33, no. 1 (2006): 32-3; and see my discussion below.

<sup>50</sup> On the emergence, and consequences, of the Burgundian-Orléanais rivalry at the court of France, see Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 55-8. For a classic study of these events, see Jacques d'Avout, *La querelle des Armagnacs et des Bourguignons* (Paris: Gallimard, 1943).

*Crusading politics under Philip the Good.* All of this changed with the ascent of John's son Philippe "le Bon," a man who was in his day not only the most ardent crusading prince in France, but in all of Latin Europe. Philip's interest in the *saint voyage* was evident from the start of his reign: the chronicler Georges Chastellain tells us that the English king Henry V, with whom Philip allied himself in the Treaty of Troyes (1419), "s'associa au jeune duc de Bourgogne, parce que en luy véoit matière semblable à la sienne: c'estoit du voyage en la Sainte-Terre par chrestien effort."<sup>51</sup> The alliance between an Angevin king and a Valois duke with "semblable" chivalric interests seems to have renewed hopes for an Anglo-French crusade; Henry and Philip initiated their project by sending Guillebert de Lannoy, a prominent courtier, on a reconnaissance mission to the Holy Land.<sup>52</sup> The king died before Lannoy returned from the East, thereby scuttling Philip's crusading plans for the first of many times. But the duke's passion for the Holy Land was undiminished, and during the 1420s he sent and supported a number of pilgrimages to the East.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Henry "allied himself with the young duke of Burgundy, because he saw that he had interests similar to his own – that is, a crusade to the Holy Land through Christian effort" (my transl.): *Oeuvres de Chastellain*, t. 1, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, 334; cited in *Les ducs*, 63.

<sup>52</sup> Lannoy's travels gave rise to the first major Burgundian report on the lands of the Levant; his *Voyages et Ambassades*, like Bertrand de la Broquière's *Voyage en la terre d'Outremer*, stands among the monuments of fifteenth-century Burgundian travel writing. See Anne Bertrand, "Guillebert de Lannoy (1386-1462): Ses 'Voyages et Ambassades' en Europe de l'Est," *Publication du Centre Européen d'Études Bourguignonnes* (XIVe-XVIe s.) 31 (1991): 79-93; Rachel Arié, "Un seigneur bourguignon en terre musulmane au XVe siècle: Ghillebert de Lannoy," *Le Moyen Age* LXXXIII, no. 2 (1977): 283-302; Henri Taparel, "Les voyageurs et les Turcs," in *Le duché Valois de Bourgogne et l'Orient Ottoman au XIV et XVe siècle* (These de 3e cycle, Université de Toulouse le Mirail, 1982), 179-86; N. Iorga, *Les Voyageurs Français dans l'Orient Européen* (Paris: Boivin, n.d.), 15-16. On the relationship between the Lannoys and the Wavrins, see Marie-Thérèse Caron, "Enquête sur la nobless du Baillage d'Arras," *Revue du Nord* 77, no. 310 (1995): 407-26 (esp. 415).

<sup>53</sup> See *Les ducs*, 66-7.

During the early part of his reign, Philip also evinced a clear interest in being *recognized* as a crusading prince – even if the necessary targets were not just the infidels of *Outremer* but the more prosaic heretics of Bohemia. Beginning in 1424, Philip negotiated repeatedly with Pope Martin V to participate in the struggle against the Hussites, and in 1428 he commissioned a report from Lannoy on the prospects of a Bohemian crusade.<sup>54</sup> The diplomatic maneuvering continued until 1433; in the end, Philip never actually took up arms, “giving the impression that he wished most of all to achieve a royal title and the image of a defender of the faith.”<sup>55</sup> There is no reason, of course, to doubt the duke’s good faith or his sincerity in these negotiations. But it does seem clear, as Paviot remarks, that the Eastern Mediterranean held a more prominent place in his crusading imagination, and that the Hussite episodes provided a mere interlude in a series of activities that focussed on the reclamation of holy places from Islam.<sup>56</sup>

How are we to account for this enduring – if malleable – passion for the East, which revealed itself so early in Philip’s reign? Scholars have long suggested that the duke was consumed with a desire to avenge his father’s defeat and captivity at the hands of the sultan – a claim for which, as Paviot points out, there is surprisingly little textual support (to Jean-Marie Cauchie’s claim that Nicopolis was “un

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<sup>54</sup> The document, entitled *Avis à la correction, c’est ce que il semble que monseigneur le duc de Bourgogne a à faire et pourvøoir se Dieux lui donne la grâce et volenté de aller à puissance d’armes à ceste saison nouvelle, sur les desloyaulx incrédules ou royaume de Béhaigneque l’en appelle Housses*, is published in *Oeuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy: Voyageur, diplomate et moraliste*, ed. C. Potvin (Louvain: Lefever, 1868), 228-49. Cited and discussed in *Les ducs*, 68-9.

<sup>55</sup> “Donnant plutôt l’impression de vouloir se mettre en rêvant à un titre royal et propager l’image de défenseur de la foi”: *Les ducs*, 71.

<sup>56</sup> *Les ducs*, 72.

fondement capital de son 'reve' de croisade," he responds delicately: "Cela reste encore à prouver"<sup>57</sup>). Others have argued that his wife Isabel, the Portuguese *infanta* and sister of Henry the Navigator – an anti-Islamic warrior – exerted a profound influence on Philip's dreams and policies.<sup>58</sup> This is certainly true to some extent; as we shall see, some Burgundian ships were constructed and navigated by Isabel's Portuguese protégés, and our own Waleran de Wavrin spent time in her service shortly before he was appointed to lead the ducal fleet.<sup>59</sup> Yet here too, as Paviot notes, we must resist the temptation to overstate the case. Philip and Isabel were not married until 1430, and "if we simply consider the chronology, Philip was interested in the crusade before he married Isabel of Portugal"; after their *de facto* separation, moreover, "he continued to be interested in it."<sup>60</sup>

The precise reasons for Philip's early and enduring passion for the crusade are therefore more elusive than scholars have suggested. It might be safest to suggest that his attachments to contemporary chivalric ideology, in which pilgrimage and crusade were privileged signifiers, combined with a series of political

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<sup>57</sup> "A principal source of his crusading 'dream,'" "that remains to be proven" (my transl.): *Les ducs*, 13. Jean Richard likewise links Philip's memories of his father to his crusading zeal; see Richard, "Louis de Bologne, patriarche d'Antioche, et la politique bourguignonne envers les états de la Méditerranée orientale." *Publication du Centre européen d'études Burgundo-Medienes: Rencontres de Milan* (Basel: CEEBM, 1980): 63-9; and "La Bourgogne des Valois," 20.

<sup>58</sup> The seminal study with respect to Isabelle's role in Philip's crusading projects is Werner Schulz's *Andreaskreuz und Christusorden: Isabella von Portugal und der Burgundische Kreuzzug* (Freiburg/Schweitz: Universitätsverlag, 1976). For other useful discussions of Isabel's influence, see Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. I)," esp. 149-55, and Charity Cannon Willard, "Isabel of Portugal and the Burgundian Crusade," in B.N. Sargent-Baur (ed.), *Journeys Toward God: Pilgrimage and Crusade* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1992), 205-14. Paviot cautions, however, that the latter source is "rempli d'erreurs"; see *Les ducs*, 62, f.n. 15.

<sup>59</sup> On Waleran's service to Isabel, see Schulz, 147-8; and see below.

<sup>60</sup> "Si l'on regarde simplement la chronologie, Philippe le Bon n'a pas attendu d'épouser Isabelle de Portugal pour s'intéresser à la croisade"; "il a continué à s'y intéresser": *Les ducs*, 62.

incentives and opportunities – from his contacts with Henry V onward – to produce an evolving *Kreuzzugspolitik* in the Burgundian court. Such contacts continued into the 1430s, when Philip came under the influence of a local Hospitaller, Foucaut de Rouchechouart, who convinced him not only to purchase and arm a *caraque* for use against the infidels, but also to sponsor an important new pilgrimage to the Holy Land and embassy to the pope. This was the expedition which gave rise to Bertrandon de la Broquière's *Voyage en la terre d'Outremer*, one of the most important (not to mention curiously ambiguous and nuanced) western travelogues of the fifteenth-century.<sup>61</sup> Bertrandon's depiction of the Ottoman Turks and other Levantine peoples, derived from a spectacularly daring mission in which the Burgundian disguised himself in local raiments and travelled across the breadth of Syria and Anatolia, seems to have influenced later accounts – including, quite possibly, Wavrin's own description of Sultan Murad and his court.<sup>62</sup>

Though Bertrandon's report was not edited for the ducal court until the 1450s, the years after his voyage saw numerous diplomatic ventures intended to promote the crusade project. Philip probably spoke with the Cypriot Cardinal Hugh de Lusignan while he attended the wedding of Louis of Savoy and Anne of Cyprus in 1434; if so, they must have considered potential Burgundian contributions to the

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<sup>61</sup> The best study of the *Voyage* I have yet encountered is Silvia Cappellini's 1999 doctoral thesis, "The 'Voyage d'outre mer' by Bertrandon de la Broquière (1432-1433): An Enlightened Journey in the World of the Levant" (Johns Hopkins), which offers both a new critical edition of the text and a detailed and brilliant study of its rhetorical and discursive contours. For useful discussions of the *Voyage*, see also Taparel, *Le duché*, 186-96; Iorga, *Les Voyageurs*, 17-20.

<sup>62</sup> See Appendix B.

security of the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>63</sup> There were diplomatic exchanges with the Franciscan Albert of Sarteano, who called upon the duke not only to send funds to the convent of Mount-Sion in Jerusalem – a cause to which Philip devoted himself, with striking piety, for much of his life – but also to lead a crusade to the Holy Land, “fighting gladly out of the passion to spread the Christian religion.”<sup>64</sup> And Albert seems not to have been the only prelate with high hopes for Philip; Pope Eugenius himself, who had been agitating for the reconquest of the Ottoman Balkans from the beginning of his reign,<sup>65</sup> sent an emissary to Burgundy in 1437 to stir the duke’s crusading zeal.<sup>66</sup>

That same year, Jean Germain, the bishop of Chalon-sur-Saône and chancellor of Philip’s chivalric order, the *Toison d’or*, pronounced a stirring sermon before the ducal court at Hesdin. Recalling “the words of the pope to the duke, the duchess and the court,” Germain reflected on the achievements of “the pilgrims of France in the time of Godfrey of Bouillon,” and of the count of Flanders, Philip’s titular ancestor.<sup>67</sup> All of this seems to have made an impression on the duke: later that year, he began construction on crusading vessels at Sluis, Antwerp and

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<sup>63</sup> See *Les ducs*, 79-80.

<sup>64</sup> “Voir le duc en Terre sainte...combattre heureusement pour le zèle d’accroître la religion chrétienne”: *Les ducs*, 81.

<sup>65</sup> Eugenius IV reigned from 1431 to 1447. On his life and work, see Joseph Gill, *Eugenius IV: Pope of Christian Union* (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1961).

<sup>66</sup> The embassy was led by the pope’s physician, André de Palazago; see *Les ducs*, 83.

<sup>67</sup> “Les paroles du pape au duc, à la duchesse, à la cour”; “les pelerins de France du temps de Godeffroy de Bouillon”: *Les ducs*, 83-4. The text from Germain’s speech, cited in *Les ducs*, is excerpted from J. Mangeart, *Catalogue descriptif et raisonné des manuscrits de la bibliothèque de Valenciennes* (Paris-Valenciennes), app. XXXIII, 687-90.



Brussels,<sup>68</sup> and in 1438, he declared himself committed to an expedition against the Turks. All that was standing in its way, his ambassadors told Eugenius in Ferrara, was unity between the eastern and western churches.<sup>69</sup> That came soon enough, in July 1439; and in March 1441, just months after Sarteano had urged him again to follow the example of his ancestors, Philip the Good finally became a crusading prince in deed as well as in word.<sup>70</sup>

His actions were inspired by dire news: it was said that the sultan of Egypt was threatening the Knights Hospitaller at Rhodes.<sup>71</sup> Philip appointed Geoffroy de Thoisy, an inexperienced seaman but a veteran pilgrim who had accompanied Bertrandon to the Holy Land in 1432, to command a rescue fleet of seven ships.<sup>72</sup> The duke attended Geoffroy's departure from Sluis with great pomp on the eighth of May. The fleet cruised the Portuguese coast and the western Mediterranean in the early summer, but it was seriously delayed in Provence and Liguria – partly because local lenders refused to honour a *lettre de change* signed by the duke.<sup>73</sup> As a result, the fleet only reached Rhodes in December, far too late to help the Hospitallers. Geoffroy and his men rested on the island until the new year; then they set sail for the west “sans avoir accompli quelque fait notable.”<sup>74</sup> It was a flaccid effort at best – yet it seems not to have discouraged the duke or his allies at the Vatican, who had

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<sup>68</sup> On the preparation of the Burgundian ships, see Henri Taparel, *Le duché*, 95-6; and Taparel, “Geoffroy de Thoisy: Une figure de la croisade bourguignonne au XVe siècle,” *Le Moyen Age* 94, no. 3-4 (1988): 384-6.

<sup>69</sup> See *Les ducs*, 85-6.

<sup>70</sup> On Sarteano's appeal, see *Les ducs*, 87-88 and f.n. 146.

<sup>71</sup> See *Les ducs*, 89.

<sup>72</sup> On the life and career of Geoffroy de Thoisy, see Taparel, “Thoisy,” 380-93; Taparel, *Le duché*, 94-5; and P. Thoisy and E. Nolin, *La Maison de Thoisy au Duché de Bourgogne*, Vol. 1 and 2 (Dijon: 1948-64).

<sup>73</sup> Taparel, *Le duché*, 101.

<sup>74</sup> “Without having accomplished any notable deed” (my transl.): *Les ducs* 90.

high hopes that Burgundy might yet emerge as a naval power in the struggle against the infidel.<sup>75</sup>

The pope's resolve here was not surprising, considering that naval forces were an important part of his plans for the reconquest of the Balkans. Following a program proposed by Jean de Torzello, a councillor to the Greek emperor, he sought to coordinate a pincer-style attack on Ottoman Rumelia, with land troops sweeping southward from Belgrade and a strong fleet in the Bosphorus defending the continent from Turkish reinforcements in Anatolia.<sup>76</sup> Philip's role in all of this was clear: he was to contribute men, ships and armaments to the fleet. He began this work as something of a free agent, contracting with the Genoese in the fall of 1442 to construct a number of galleys in Nice.<sup>77</sup> Then, at a November meeting with the German Emperor Frederick III in Besançon, he received letters from the pope encouraging these efforts and reporting János Hunyadi's inspiring victories over the Ottomans in the Ialomita Valley.<sup>78</sup> The papal legate Juan de Capistrano, charged with the task of "keeping the duke of Burgundy in his camp," was also present for

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<sup>75</sup> For useful summaries of Thoisy's first expedition to Rhodes, see Paviot, *La politique navale*, 108-11; Henri Taparel, "L'expédition de Rhodes en 1441," in *Le duché*, 92-106; Taparel, "Thoisy," 385-6; Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. I)," 154-6; Roger Degryse, "Les expéditions bourguignonnes à Rhodes, Constantinople et Ceuta," *Revue de la Société dunkerquoise d'histoire et d'archéologie* 21 (1987): 39-40.

<sup>76</sup> On Torzello's plan, see *Les ducs*, 92.

<sup>77</sup> See *Les ducs*, 94-5.

<sup>78</sup> *Les ducs*, 93. János Hunyadi, the voivode of Hungary, earned a reputation for crusading heroism as a consequence of these and other victories. I shall discuss the Ialomita Valley conflict, which is described in the expedition narrative, in detail below. For a useful English-language study of Hunyadi's life and career, see Joseph Held, *Hunyadi: Legend and Reality* (New York: Columbia UP, 1985).

the meetings; he almost certainly encouraged (and talked strategy with) both Philip and his chief crusade advocate, Jean Germain.<sup>79</sup>

The duke was thus actively involved in Eugenius's plans long before the crusade bull of 1 January 1443, and several months before the Greek ambassador Theodore Karystinos arrived at his court to beg for help against the Ottomans.<sup>80</sup> Wavrin, who frames this embassy – probably for rhetorical reasons – as the primary catalyst for Philip's naval project, notes that the duke appointed Waleran de Wavrin as his lieutenant-general in the Mediterranean around this time.<sup>81</sup> But though Philip continued his crusade diplomacy through the autumn of 1443,<sup>82</sup> he was distracted by a war in Luxembourg<sup>83</sup>; it wasn't until early in the following year that he resumed

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<sup>79</sup> "Conserver le duc de Bourgogne dans son camp": *Les ducs*, 93. The definitive source on Juan de Capistrano's diplomatic efforts in Burgundy is Hugolin Lippens' "S. Jean de Capistran en mission aux États bourguignons, 1442-43: Essai de Reconstitution de ses voyages et negociations à l'aide de documents inédits," *Archivum franciscanum historicum* XXXV (1942): 113-32, 254-95. See also *Les ducs*, 92-4.

<sup>80</sup> The Karystinos embassy took place in Chalon-sur-Saône between 26 June and 10 July. It is recounted in the *Mémoires* of Olivier de la Marche, in the *Liber de Virtutibus* of Jean Germain, in the anonymous chivalric biography *Le Livre des faits de Jacques de Lalaing*, and in Wavrin's expedition narrative. See *Les ducs*, 96-7 (and f.n. 202-5). For more on the diplomacy preceding the Burgundian expedition, see Taparel, *Le duché*, 107-9; Taparel, "Un épisode de la politique orientale de Philippe le Bon: les Bourguignons en Mer Noire (1444-46)," *Annales de Bourgogne* 55, no. 217 (Jan-Mar 1983): 6-8; Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. I)," 156-7.

<sup>81</sup> The *Livre des faits* also mentions Wavrin's appointment in its account of the Karystinos embassy; Olivier de la Marche does not. See *Les ducs*, 98. I shall consider the significance of errors in Wavrin's chronology in Chapter 2 and Appendix A, below.

<sup>82</sup> Notably, Philip tried to establish a crusading alliance with Alfonso V, king of Aragon and Naples. On this overture see *Les ducs* 98-9, and Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. I)," 156-7. On Philip's relations with Alfonso in general, see Yvon Lacaze, "Politique 'Méditerranéenne' et projets de croisade chez Philippe le Bon: De la chute de Byzance à la victoire chrétienne de Belgrade (mai 1453 – juillet 1456) (Pt. I)," *Annales de Bourgogne* XLI, no 161 (Jan-Mar 1969): 21-5. [Part II of Lacaze's important study, cited below, was published in the subsequent issue of *Annales de Bourgogne* (no. 162, Avr-Juin 1969, p. 81-132).] See also Wim Blockmans, "Burgundy and its Strategic Link to the Mediterranean," in *A la búsqueda del toisón de oro* (Valencia: Generalitat Valenciana, 2007), 605-8. It is also important to note that Philip reached an agreement with Venice – doubtless at the request of the pope and *not* Waleran de Wavrin, as Wavrin claims – in May 1443 for the lease of four galleys that he wanted to add to his fleet. See Paviot, *La politique navale*, 115, and *Les ducs*, 95.

<sup>83</sup> *Les ducs*, 97; on the Luxembourg conflict, see Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 274-82.

his diplomatic and military efforts in earnest. The remarkable – and remarkably disappointing – venture that followed is, of course, the subject of Wavrin's expedition narrative. Because of its importance to our study, I shall take a detour from our abbreviated political narrative to consider it in detail.<sup>84</sup>

*The Wavrin expedition: an overview.* News of more victories by János Hunyadi and his suzerain, the impetuous King Wladyslaw of Poland and Hungary, in late 1443 and early 1444 appear to have inspired prelates and princes to push even harder for a new offensive against Sultan Murad.<sup>85</sup> Philip, freed from his obligations in Luxembourg, was in the vanguard of this movement: by February, he was corresponding with the Venetians about the four galleys he sought to lease from them.<sup>86</sup> He resolved that these ships, together with six others – his large ship (*nave*) and caravel, which were at port in Villefranche, and the three galleys and one galliot he was having built in Nice – would form his crusading fleet.<sup>87</sup> Waleran was

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<sup>84</sup> For this summary, I shall rely especially on the recent work of Jacques Paviot (*La politique navale, Les ducs*, and a number of essays). I shall also consult Taparel, "Un épisode"; Taparel, *Le duché*, 107-30; Heribert Müller, *Kreuzzugsplane und Kreuzzugspolitik des Herzogs Philipp des Guten von Burgund* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 32-7; Degryse, "Les expéditions"; Nicolae Iorga, "Les aventures 'sarrazines' des français de Bourgogne au XVe siècle," in *Mélanges d'histoire générales* t. 1 (Cluj: Univ. of Cluj, 1927-38): 7-29; Sergei Karpov, "Une ramification inattendue: Les Bourguignons en mer Noire au XVe siècle," in M. Balard & A. Ducellier (eds.), *Coloniser au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1995), 186-9, 217-18; Schulz, *Andreaskreuz*, 145-50; Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. II)"; Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 271-3; and Johanna D. Hintzen, *De Kruistochtplanen van Philips den Goede* (Rotterdam, 1918).

<sup>85</sup> These "victories," it must be noted, were in fact far from decisive; the decimated and demoralized crusader army which returned to Buda after having failed to cross the Zlatitsa Pass was hardly a triumphant company. As I shall argue below, the task of presenting the so-called "Long Campaign" as an unambiguous Christian victory imposed a heavy rhetorical burden on contemporary writers; see Chapter 4, Part 1. On the events of the Long Campaign, see below.

<sup>86</sup> *Les ducs*, 99.

<sup>87</sup> A galley is "a large medieval vessel with a single deck propelled by sails and oars with guns at stern and prow"; a galliot is simply a lighter, smaller galley, while a caravel is "a small, highly

formally appointed as its captain-general in April 1444; he was also assigned the task of commanding the ships being fitted at Venice.<sup>88</sup> But progress on that front was disappointingly slow. When the *seigneur de Wavrin* arrived in the city in May, he discovered that the galleys were not yet ready – nor were those being fitted for Cardinal Francesco Condulmer, the supreme commander of the combined Venetian, Burgundian and papal fleet.<sup>89</sup> Waleran and his allies were only able to set sail at the end of June and the beginning of July.<sup>90</sup> These delays jeopardized their two-phased mission, which involved not only blocking the Straits of the Dardanelles against a Turkish incursion, but also sailing up the Danube to help the Hungarian army across the water.<sup>91</sup> It was an inauspicious start that testified, as Livia Visser-Fuchs has pointed out, to the remarkable challenges of coordinating an international expedition in the fifteenth century.<sup>92</sup>

The two Burgundian ships docked at Villefranche, which were committed to various commercial and mercantile duties, were even more seriously delayed: they

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maneuverable, two- or three-masted lateen-rigged ship, created by the Portuguese and [used] for long voyages of exploration” (see [wordnet.princeton.edu](http://wordnet.princeton.edu) and [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)). Cf. Paviot, *La politique navale*, 113-15.

<sup>88</sup> The fleet at Villefranche was to be commanded by the Portuguese courtier Martin Alfonso de Oliveira, a member of Duchess Isabel’s family. The galleys at Nice were to be commanded by Geoffroy de Thoisy, his cousin Jacot de Thoisy, and the Hospitaller Renaud de Confide. Wavrin was accompanied to Venice by the Castilian knight (and hero of the *Pas de l’Arbre de Charlemagne*) Pedro Vázquez de Saavedra, the Picard knight Gauvain Quiéret, lord of Dreuil, and others. See *La politique navale* 114-15; Taparel, “Un épisode,” 10-11; and Adrien Huguet, “Un Chevalier Picard à la Croisade de Constantinople, 1444-45: Gauvain Quiéret, seigneur de Dreuil,” *Bulletin trimestriel de la Société des antiquaires de Picardie* 38 (1939): 35-50.

<sup>89</sup> On the outfitting and preparation of the fleets at Nice, Villefranche and Venice, see Taparel, *Le duché*, 110-13 and 113-16 respectively; and Taparel, “Un épisode,” 8-13.

<sup>90</sup> The papal fleet had departed by 22 June; the ship which carried Wavrin and Vázquez, for its part, didn’t lift anchor until 6 July, and the remaining three Burgundian ships set sail on 7 and 8 July. *La politique navale* 116.

<sup>91</sup> See *Les ducs* 103.

<sup>92</sup> Personal e-mail, 12 Dec 2007. It is worth noting that, notwithstanding the delays, Wavrin’s fleet departed Venice in great pomp; see Taparel, *Le duché*, 116.

did not leave France until November.<sup>93</sup> Only Geoffroy de Thoisy managed to set sail in May. Departing from Nice, the *seigneur de Mimeure* decided not to travel directly to Corfu, where he was supposed to wait for Waleran and the rest of the crusader fleet.<sup>94</sup> Instead he began a series of raids on enemy merchants, seizing several ships along the North African coast.<sup>95</sup> These piratical ventures, which proved to be more successful than his later *guerres de course*, were not the only detours that would prevent Thoisy from supporting the Burgundian blockade of the Straits in October. While he was in Lampedusa<sup>96</sup>, the energetic captain got word from his commander that Rhodes and its Hospitallers were once again in jeopardy. Waleran had been asked by the pope to intervene in their defence, but he was forced to decline by the Venetians, who were allies of the Mamluk sultan.<sup>97</sup> Instead he sent Geoffroy, over whose ships the *Serenissima* had no claim.

Geoffroy's intervention in Rhodes, which took place in early August, was the only unambiguously successful segment of the expedition – as Jean Germain's celebration of the battle tacitly reveals.<sup>98</sup> Arriving before the sultan's fleet, Thoisy

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<sup>93</sup> On the Villefranche fleet, see Taparel, "Un épisode," 17-18.

<sup>94</sup> There is actually some ambiguity in the sources (including those attributed to Thoisy) concerning whether the Nice fleet was supposed to meet up with Waleran in Corfu or in Venice; see Paviot, *La politique navale*, 116.

<sup>95</sup> See Taparel, *Le duché*, 116; and Taparel, "Un épisode," 14.

<sup>96</sup> Located approximately halfway between Sicily and the northern coast of Africa in the central Mediterranean.

<sup>97</sup> *Les ducs*, 100. While the Burgundian defence of Rhodes is recounted both in Wavrin's chronicle and in a report, probably by Thoisy himself, now housed in the Bibliothèque nationale (ms. fr. 1278), only the chronicle reports Waleran's role in the affair. Paviot suggests that this may reflect "quelque jalousie," on Thoisy's part, "vis-à-vis du chef de l'expédition" (*Les ducs*, 101). For a full discussion of these sources, see below, Chapter 2 and Appendix A.

<sup>98</sup> His *Liber de Virtutibus*, which as we shall see in Chapter 3, focuses its description of the expedition almost exclusively on the victory at Rhodes. The *Liber* is published in *Chroniques relatives à l'histoire de la Belgique sous la domination des ducs de Bourgogne*, t. 3, ed. Kervyn de

discovered that the Catalan sailors stationed there to defend the Hospitallers were seeking higher wages, probably as an excuse to avoid the Egyptian onslaught. In an eloquent – and haughtily chivalric – speech, he shamed them into negotiating with the grand master.<sup>99</sup> Then he sailed off with his own crews to find the Egyptian fleet, which was docked at nearby Kastelorizon; firing on the sultan's ships, he swiftly retreated when they raised their anchors. Shortly afterward, on 10 August, the Muslim force began its assault on the city of Rhodes. Geoffroy and his men took part in the defence, and they distinguished themselves in a dangerous sally to the nearby St. Nicholas breakwater, seizing artillery that was threatening the port of Rhodes. The Mamluks' fleet finally retreated after a decisive battle in mid-September that claimed the life of its commander.<sup>100</sup>

There is little doubt, as Henri Taparel writes, that even if the Burgundian sources exaggerated or simplified their claims, "the military intervention of the ducal fleet must have been a decisive help in repulsing the attacks of the Turko-Mamluk fleet."<sup>101</sup> But Geoffroy's heroism came at a cost: detained in Rhodes, he could not help his *capitaine-général* defend the Straits against an Ottoman incursion. Waleran,

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Lettenhove (Brussels: Hayez, 1870), 68-74. See Chapters 2 and 3 for discussions of the reputational consequences of this victory for both Geoffroy and Waleran.

<sup>99</sup> For Wavrin's and Thoisy's versions of this speech, see William Hardy (ed.), *Recueil des Croniques et Anciennes Istioires de la Grant Bretagne, a Present Nomme Engleterre, par Jehan de Waurin* (London: HMSO, 1891), no. 39, vol. 5, p. 35 [hereafter I shall use "Wavrin-Hardy" with the page number alone to cite excerpts from the expedition narrative, and "Wavrin-Hardy" with the series, volume and page number to cite excerpts from the larger *Anciennes Chroniques*]; and Iorga, "Les aventures 'sarrazines,'" 31. There are important differences between the two versions, which I shall consider in Chapter 2, below.

<sup>100</sup> For various scholarly summaries of these events, see *Les ducs* 100-1; *La politique navale* 116; Taparel, *Le duché*, 116-19; Taparel, "Un épisode," 14-15; Degryse, "Les expéditions," 41; Iorga, "Les aventures 'Sarrazines,'" 9-10.

<sup>101</sup> "L'appui militaire des effectifs de la flotte ducale dût être d'un secours décisif pour repousser les assauts des armées turco-mamlukes": Taparel, "Un épisode," 15.

for his part, followed a less circuitous course. Leaving Venice in July, he docked in Ragusa and then Corfu, where the hoped-for reinforcements from Villefranche did not materialize.<sup>102</sup> He then sailed to the Straits of Dardanelles, where – believing he was in the precincts of ancient Troy – he imitated the landing of Agamemnon and Achilles by skirmishing with the Turks.<sup>103</sup> He met his papal and Venetian allies at Gallipoli, travelled to Constantinople, and received his first assignment: he and some Greek and Ragusan captains were to prevent the Ottomans from crossing the Straits near the mouth of the Black Sea, while the remainder of the fleet blockaded Gallipoli.<sup>104</sup>

It was a nearly impossible task. The Turks held territories on both sides of the Straits, whence they could fire on the Christian galleys. The Genoese, who were the Ottomans' trading partners, seem to have furnished them with transport ships.<sup>105</sup> Finally, if we are to believe Wavrin's report, the Christian fleet was subdued by a terrible storm which prevented them from rowing upstream and encountering their foes.<sup>106</sup> Thus Waleran could only watch helplessly as Murad and his men began to cross into Europe – passing the first obstacle on their way to a decisive and bloody victory against the Christian land forces on 10 November. It is hardly surprising, as

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<sup>102</sup> *Les ducs*, 102.

<sup>103</sup> I shall consider the cultural and political implications of this mythic *imitatio* in Chapter 4.

<sup>104</sup> Gallipoli is located on the southwest corner of the Straits. The sites defended by the Christians were the two points where Anatolia is most narrowly separated from the Balkans; thus they were the most logical sites for a blockade.

<sup>105</sup> For a useful discussion of the role of the Genoese in fifteenth-century crusading politics, see Jacques Paviot, "Gênes et les Turcs (1444, 1453): Sa défense contre les accusations d'une entente," in *La Storia dei Genovesi: Atti del Convegno di Studi sui ceti Dirigenti nelle Istituzioni della Repubblica di Genova* 9 (1989): 129-37.

<sup>106</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 47-51.



we shall see, that Wavrin devotes a great deal of rhetorical effort to justifying the captain-general's actions here.<sup>107</sup>

Whatever his own feelings about the fiasco, as Paviot notes, Waleran seems to have been uncertain what to do next; he and Cardinal Condulmer deliberated over whether to return the costly Venetian galleys to the *Serenissima*.<sup>108</sup> But when reports of the disaster of Varna – and rumours about the fate of King Wladyslaw – surfaced, a new crusading adventure took shape. The allies resolved to cruise the Black Sea in an effort to confirm (spurious) claims that the king had survived the battle.<sup>109</sup> They also planned to offer the Hungarians their support for a new offensive against the Ottomans in Greece. The Burgundian fleet, finally at its full strength<sup>110</sup>, split up again and departed after Easter; Wavrin and Vázquez cruised the western coast of the Sea, while Thoisy and Oliveira headed eastward. Waleran hoped to meet his companions in the Genoese port of Caffa on the northern coast of the Black Sea; and indeed the Burgundian sailors would have numerous adventures there, though *not* the sort they anticipated.

Caffa, it turned out, was hostile to Duke Philip's men, who engaged in piracy that was harmful to Genoese interests in the region.<sup>111</sup> The eastern fleet, under

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<sup>107</sup> See Chapter 2, below.

<sup>108</sup> See *Les ducs*, 103-4; Taparel, "Un épisode," 17.

<sup>109</sup> See *Les ducs*, 104-5.

<sup>110</sup> Geoffroy de Thoisy and the Nice fleet arrived in Constantinople in late October; Martin de Oliveira arrived with the ships from Villefranche in March. It is important to note that by the time of its arrival at the Golden Horn, the grand nave was in need of repairs – and caused Waleran to expend personal funds in the effort. See Jacques Paviot, "'Croisade' bourguignonne et intérêts génois en mer Noire au milieu du XVe siècle," in *Studi di Storia Medioevale e di Diplomatica* 12-13 (1992): 137.

<sup>111</sup> For the most important recent discussions of the Burgundians' piratical activities in the Black Sea region, see Paviot, "Intérêts génois"; Paviot, "La piraterie bourguignonne en mer Noire à la moitié

Thoisy, was especially culpable in this regard; but Waleran was involved too. Facing mounting financial pressures, the *capitaine-général* outfitted a galliot under the command of a local pirate, one Giacomo de Biglia, ordering him to seize the goods and property of local Turks.<sup>112</sup> Biglia's ventures were spectacularly unsuccessful; he was stripped of his booty by the Genoese in Pera, and was later imprisoned and nearly killed in Caffa.<sup>113</sup> For his part, Thoisy burned Turkish castles and seized ships along the Anatolian coast. He seriously overreached, however, by launching a raid on "Vati" (modern Batumi or Poti, Georgia), where he was ambushed and captured.<sup>114</sup> Released through Waleran's intervention, he promised not to attack the locals any more; but he did seize four hundred Tartars and a transport ship near Copa, on the northern coast of the Sea. Then in Caffa, he was unceremoniously stripped of his booty – which played a more important and complex role in the Geneose-sanctioned economy than the Burgundians could imagine.<sup>115</sup>

The resulting tensions between the Genoese and the Burgundian sailors endured for decades; Waleran was still struggling to regain Biglia's galliot, which he had financed himself, from the Caffans decades later.<sup>116</sup> At the time, however, much as "la fortune ne...fu pas trop bonne" for the western adventurers, the *capitaine-*

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du XVe siècle," in *Horizons marins, itinéraires spirituels (Ve-XVIIIe siècles): Études. Vol. 2: Marins, Navires et Affaires* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1987): 203-14; Sergei Karpov, "Une ramification inattendue," 186-9, 217-18.

<sup>112</sup> See "Intérêts génois," 107-8; "La piraterie," 205; "Une ramification inattendue," 188. (In the latter source, Karpov notes that Biglia "fut le compagnon d'un pirate rebelle génois Giovannia Fontana.")

<sup>113</sup> See "Intérêts génois," 139-40; "La piraterie," 106.

<sup>114</sup> On this adventure, see especially Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. I)," 160-2.

<sup>115</sup> It is worth noting that Waleran, too, was deprived of booty in Caffa; having recently seized three Turkish ships laden with grain, "il y fut froidement accueilli par les Génois qui lui enlevèrent aussitôt une partie de son butin" (Taparel, "Un épisode," 20).

<sup>116</sup> See e.g. "Intérêts génois," 143.

*général* didn't tarry long in the region.<sup>117</sup> Having sent Vázquez to offer his aid to the Hungarians, he hurried away from Caffa to meet his comrade in the Danube port city of Braila. This time, the news was good: Hunyadi had promised to meet his Christian allies at Nicopolis, where a new offensive against the Ottomans would be undertaken. The Burgundians hastily assembled a crusading fleet of eight ships under the command of Cardinal Condulmer; Geoffroy de Thoisy and Gauvain Quiéret had already left the region, but Renault de Confide and Geoffroy's cousin Jacot remained with the fleet.<sup>118</sup> They were joined by the forces of Vlad Dracul, the Wallachian voivode, whose contingent included forty or fifty small boats and a sizable land force which planned to follow the fleet along the north shore of the Danube.<sup>119</sup>

It was now the end of July, and Hunyadi's forces were not expected in Nicopolis until early September. The three commanders – Condulmer, Dracul and Waleran – therefore decided to assault and capture Turkish positions along their route on the Danube. They had reasonably good luck in this, narrowly missing an ambush by a massive Ottoman force in the city of Silistra ("Triest"), and succeeding in capturing the important castles of "Turquant," "Georgie" and "Roussico," which

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<sup>117</sup> "Luck was not very good" (my transl.). This rueful remark appears in a 1461 "requête" to the duke, attributed to Geoffroy de Thoisy and now housed in Lille's Archives du Nord (B 17692). The full text is published in Constantin Marinesco, "Du nouveau sur *Tirant lo Blanc*," *Estudis Romanics*, t. IV (1953-54): 202-3.

<sup>118</sup> Four of the galleys were associated with the papal fleet, and four with the Burgundian contingent. For useful discussions of the composition of the Danube fleet, see *Les ducs*, 106-7, and *La politique navale*, 119-20.

<sup>119</sup> *Les ducs*, 106-7.

were given to the eager Wallachian voivode.<sup>120</sup> Along the way, they tried to promote a pretender to the Ottoman throne, who failed to convince local sailors to switch their allegiance; they resorted to bitter infighting over the bodies of captured and executed Turks; they played tricks on and mocked their enemies; and they “saved the souls” of thousands of Bulgarian Christians, who fled across the Danube under their supervision.<sup>121</sup> We shall consider the rhetorical strategies and ideological countercurrents at work in Wavrin’s detailed accounts of these adventures in Chapter 3 (below).

For now, it is sufficient to note that it was a rougher and more battle-scarred papal-Burgundian fleet which met up with the Hungarians near Nicopolis on 14 September. After failing to capture a tower near the city, the Christian forces came face-to-face with the Turks near a town, destroyed during the first Crusade of Nicopolis, located at the confluence of the river Olt. Waleran and his allies were keen for combat, but Murad’s men suddenly retreated – bringing the Christians’ months-long quest for vengeance to an abrupt (and rather unceremonious) end. The Hungarian voivode simply refused to advance, arguing that the Ottomans’ scorched-earth tactics would soon render the Christian forces vulnerable to ambush. There was, moreover, the question of the galleys: winter was coming, the water would soon freeze, and the ships would be easy targets if they were not moved from the

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<sup>120</sup> Paviot identifies these as “Tutrakan,” “Giurgiu,” and “Ruse” respectively in his French-language study; see *Les ducs*, 107 and *La politique navale*, 120.

<sup>121</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 75-8, 84-6, 112-14, 104-5, and *passim*. For a useful discussion of these events with special emphasis on the Wallachian perspective, see Radu R. Florescu, “Vlad II Dracul and Vlad III Dracula’s military campaigns in Bulgaria, 1443-1462,” in *Dracula: Essays on the Life and Times of Vlad Tepes*, ed. Kurt W. Treptow (New York: Columbia, 1991), 109-11.

Danube. Dismayed and disconsolate, Condulmer and Waleran had no choice but to follow Hunyadi's advice.<sup>122</sup>

Within a few months, the *seigneur de Wavrin* was back in Burgundy, bearing indulgences for the church at Lillers and relics from Constantinople – crusading gifts from the pope and the emperor respectively. Despite these marks of approbation, and despite Duke Philip's "honourable" reception of his captain, it is clear that the Burgundian court did not find much in the adventures of its crusading sailors to inspire commentary or praise; the project had evidently resulted, as Paviot puts it, in "no honourable or brilliant deeds."<sup>123</sup> As we shall see in Chapter 3, textual evidence from the period suggests that Waleran's adventures were probably received coolly in some quarters; and given Philip's investments, both financial and reputational, in the performance of his galleys, it is clear that Waleran and his chronicler faced significant challenges in representing the adventure in ways that redounded to the glory of the *capitaine-général*. The political stakes of the chronicle, then, were extraordinarily high – a fact that seems especially vivid given Jacques Paviot's claims that the failure of the expedition contributed to an important change in Duke Philip's crusading politics, and that the period just prior to and following Waleran's adventure saw a dramatic expansion in the number and scope of literary

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<sup>122</sup> See *Les ducs*, 107; *La politique navale*, 120-1; Taparel, "Un épisode," 24; Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 272.

<sup>123</sup> "Aucune d'action d'honneur ou d'éclat": *Les ducs*, 109.

representations of crusading chivalry in the court.<sup>124</sup> I shall review each of these claims in the sections that follow.

*Crusading politics after 1450.* Though the underwhelming results of the Wavrin expedition seem to have disappointed the duke – and probably helped to convince him to modify his crusading policies in the longer term<sup>125</sup> – his habits and strategies did not change overnight. Between 1446 and 1449, Philip increased his traditional support for pilgrimages and pious works in the Holy Land. He also established a new shipbuilding workshop in Antwerp, where four vessels were built and outfitted with an eye to a renewed expedition “a lencontre des infidelz.”<sup>126</sup> We are not certain about Philip’s specific intentions for the fleet, but we do know that its commander, Geoffroy de Thoisy, set out for Rhodes in April 1449. Unfortunately for the *seigneur de Mimeure*, his new venture ended quickly (and with a touch of pathos): the capture of a fleet by the English prompted Duke Philip to recall his warships in case a war ensued.<sup>127</sup> Another year, it seemed, brought another unfavourable political constellation – and another disappointing setback.

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<sup>124</sup> See *Les ducs*, 117-18. As concerns the timing of Wavrin’s chronicle vis-à-vis other literary representations of chivalry and crusading in Burgundy – a subject to which I shall return below – it is worth noting the strong possibility that while some components of the chronicle were crafted, at least in a seminal form, soon after Waleran’s return in 1446, other components may well have been added in subsequent decades (perhaps even as late as the late 1460s, when the text was readied for inclusion in Wavrin’s *Anciennes Chroniques*). The chronicle may therefore be read as a kind of cosmopolitan “blend” of themes and formulations common to the Burgundian court in the mid-to-late-fifteenth century.

<sup>125</sup> See below and *Les ducs*, 117.

<sup>126</sup> “To combat the Infidels” (my transl.): From a document in the ducal *chambre des comptes*, preserved in Lille’s Archives du Nord (B17689, no. 17); cited in *La politique navale*, 124.

<sup>127</sup> *La politique navale*, 125.

Philip the Good never lost his interest in shipbuilding and Levantine naval politics; the Burgundian standard, in fact, fluttered over the Mediterranean almost constantly between 1441 and 1468.<sup>128</sup> But by the jubilee year, Paviot writes, the duke seems to have realized that the means he had previously employed “had not achieved all of the hoped-for results.”<sup>129</sup> Wavrin’s and Thoisy’s expeditions had produced few feats of arms worthy of historical panegyric; Latin Christendom had not taken notice of the duke’s pious heroism, and he was not yet pre-eminent among Christian princes.<sup>130</sup> Hence, Paviot argues, Philip opted to blend the more rudimentary diplomacy of his earlier reign with new promotional techniques both inside and outside his domain: aggressive diplomatic overtures to impress the great courts of Europe, and spectacular ceremonial appeals to secure the enthusiasm of his own courtiers and aristocrats.<sup>131</sup> This latter effort was buoyed by the literary renaissance then blooming in the Burgundian court – a passion for the *remaniement* of traditional chivalric romances, and for the performance of *pas d’armes* and other ceremonies that were redolent with chivalric symbolism.<sup>132</sup> The duke’s leading *écrivains* told stories that flattered Burgundian self-perceptions and excited the chivalric imagination; they also served to underwrite ducal crusading policies.

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<sup>128</sup> See *La politique navale*, 134-39, for Paviot’s detailed overview of “La bannière de Bourgogne en Méditerranée” during this period.

<sup>129</sup> “Les moyens employés jusqu’à 1449 ne lui avaient pas apporté toutes les satisfactions souhaitées”: *Les ducs* 117.

<sup>130</sup> *Les ducs*, 117.

<sup>131</sup> *Les ducs*, 118.

<sup>132</sup> Both of these literary practices, as we shall see, came into vogue in the mid-1440s, around the time that Waleran de Wavrin was planning and conducting his expedition. They became even more popular in the 1450s and 1460s, the period during which the present version of the expedition narrative may have been compiled and redacted.

Philip thus resolved to use all of the diplomatic and cultural tools at his disposal to position himself as the leading defender of the faith.<sup>133</sup> The first such performance took place in 1451, at the chapter meeting of the *Toison d'Or* in Mons. Standing before his assembled knights, the duke revealed his intention to take part personally in a crusade against the “infidels,” provided that the King of France would safeguard his estates. The announcement was prefaced by a fiery sermon by Jean Germain – then Philip’s leading crusade advocate – who reminded the assembled faithful of the great crusading victories of the past, from Godfrey of Bouillon to János Hunyadi.<sup>134</sup> Philip’s vow to follow in the footsteps of these worthies was met, Germain later reported, with tears and great moans. We have no reason to think that the *Toison* knights’ emotional outbursts were insincere; but as Paviot observes a bit sardonically, they may be partially explained by the fact that the statutes of their chivalric order required them to serve the duke in any crusading venture he should undertake.<sup>135</sup>

In any case, the knights did offer their support, resolving that Philip should follow up this resolution by sending embassies to the great courts of the Latin west, exhorting princes to participate in his crusading project. Four such parties – to Pope Nicholas V, King Charles V of France, King Henry VI of England, and to the courts of Hungary and Poland – were organized; three of them – all, that is, but the embassy

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<sup>133</sup> “Défenseur de la Chrétienté”: *Les ducs*, 117.

<sup>134</sup> Though there are no extant copies of Germain’s address at Mons, it is incorporated into his *Liber de virtutibus*. See *Les ducs*, 121.

<sup>135</sup> *Les ducs*, 122; see also Lacaze, “Politique (Pt. II),” 81-2. For the statutes of the *Toison d'Or* – as well as detailed information on the order’s various meetings and deliberations – see Sonja Dünnebeil (ed.), *Die Protokollbücher des Ordens vom Goldenen Vlies, Bd. 1: Herzog Philipp der Gute, 1430-1467* (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2002).



to Rome – were spectacularly unsuccessful. Paviot describes these failures in detail, noting that the warring kings of England and France declined to participate because of their mutual hostilities. Other kings, including Casimir of Poland and Alfonso V of Naples, were also cool to the proposal, which appeared impractical and unmoored from the imperatives of contemporary politics.<sup>136</sup> This, writes Paviot, was precisely the problem with Philip's venture; accosting the princes of Europe with "his personal convictions," he learned both that he could not be the "arbiter of Europe" and that he could not lead a crusade without papal direction.<sup>137</sup> It was, one imagines, a bitter pill for the pious duke.

But then things changed – dramatically. On 29 May 1453, Constantinople fell to sultan Mehmet II and his Ottoman armies. The loss of Christendom's eastern empire produced a psychological shock in the West; suddenly a holy war against the Turks seemed not only politically but also morally inescapable.<sup>138</sup> Pope Nicholas vested special hopes in the Duke of Burgundy, whose earlier overtures now seemed prescient.<sup>139</sup> He requested Philip's support in November, sending him, among other things, a highly incendiary (and apocryphal) letter said to be from Sultan Mehmet

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<sup>136</sup> For summaries of these embassies, see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 123-7; Lacaze, "Politique (Pt. II)," 83-5; Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. II)," 165.

<sup>137</sup> "Ses propres convictions personnelles"; "l'arbitre de l'Europe": *Les ducs*, 127.

<sup>138</sup> On the diplomatic activities of the western powers immediately before and after the fall of Constantinople, see Lacaze, "Politique (Pt. II)," 85-9. For an insightful discussion of "loss" and its articulation in Burgundy after 1453, see David J. Wrisley, "The Loss of Constantinople and Imagining Crusade at the Fifteenth-Century Court of Burgundy," *Al-Abhath* 55-6 (2007-08): 85-112.

<sup>139</sup> For a classic study of the relationship between Philip's crusading policy and the siege and fall of Constantinople, see Armand Grunzweig, "Philippe le Bon et Constantinople," *Byzantion* 24 (1954): 47-61.

II.<sup>140</sup> The duke sprang into action; he sent the pope four galleys<sup>141</sup> and notified King Charles of his intention to undertake the “saint voyage” in person.<sup>142</sup> He also set out to inflame the crusading zeal of his own noblemen by organizing one of the most spectacular ceremonies of the later middle ages.

This was the famous *banquet du faisan* (“Banquet of the Pheasant”), a dazzling pastiche of literary symbolism, chivalric ceremony, conspicuous consumption and political suasion staged in Lille in February 1454.<sup>143</sup> Scholars have analyzed this important event in detail, and I shall have more to say about it in Chapter 3; for now it is sufficient to note that Philip spared no expense in captivating, thrilling and cajoling his noble guests, who travelled to Lille from his various territories.<sup>144</sup> His planning committee<sup>145</sup> crafted a fantastic program of jousts, table decorations, plays and musical performances; the life of Hercules was represented on tapestries, the adventures of Jason were performed in an intricate drama, and various heroes of romance, crusading symbols, and exotic beasts were depicted in the *entremets*.<sup>146</sup> At

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<sup>140</sup> This fascinating document has been preserved in a number of contemporary chronicles, including Jean de Wavrin’s *Anciennes Chroniques d’Angleterre* (ed. Hardy, 39, 5, p. 359-61).

<sup>141</sup> This too is reported in a document contained in Wavrin’s *Anciennes Chroniques*; see Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, 240-3.

<sup>142</sup> The king, notes Lacaze, indicated his approval for the project, though he himself was reluctant to participate. On this embassy see Lacaze, “Politique (Pt. II),” 91-2.

<sup>143</sup> There are several accounts of the spectacular festivities at Lille, including lengthy passages in the chronicles of Mathieu d’Escouchy and Olivier de la Marche. A short summary is also included in Jean de Wavrin’s *Anciennes Chroniques*; see Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 240-3.

<sup>144</sup> Key studies of the *banquet du faisan* include: Marie-Thérèse Caron, “Le Banquet du Voeu du Faisan”; Caron and Clauzel, *Banquet du faisan*; Agathe Lafortune-Martel, *Fête noble en Bourgogne au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle: Le Banquet du Faisan (1454): Aspects politiques, sociaux et culturels* (Montréal: Bellarmin; Paris: Vrin, 1984); Otto Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, 135-53; Caron, *Les voeux du faisan, noblesse en fête, esprit de croisade: Le manuscrit français 11594 de la Bibliothèque nationale de France* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003).

<sup>145</sup> Jean de Lannoy, Jean Boudaut, and Olivier de la Marche; on the work of these men, see *Les ducs*, 128.

<sup>146</sup> For a useful (and succinct) overview of these features, see *Les ducs*, 130-3.

the climax of the evening, a “woman” representing “Sainte Eglise” – held captive by a giant dressed in Saracen garb – approached the duke to receive his crusading vow.<sup>147</sup> It was read aloud, after which other noblemen submitted their own promises to join the Duke of Burgundy on his “saint voyage.”

The banquet was a successful, if vaguely controversial, “founding event” of Philip’s crusading project, and he followed it by approaching the estates of his realm for financial aid.<sup>148</sup> But the key test for both the duke and the pope remained the problem of uniting the fractious, and still politically distracted, western monarchs in a common effort. Three imperial diets – at Regensburg (1454), Frankfurt (1454) and Wiener Neustadt (1455) – were organized to bring the kings and princes together; their successes were modest at best. Philip himself attended the first meeting, which was dominated by the bellicose Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the future Pope Pius II.<sup>149</sup> Delegates agreed that there should be a five-year truce among Latin Christians and that a combined land and sea assault should be organized. The details were to be finalized in Frankfurt in the autumn; but that meeting, which Emperor Frederick declined to attend, ended in fractiousness, with German delegates claiming the crusade project was only a scheme to tax them.<sup>150</sup> The subsequent diet at Wiener Neustadt generated more verbiage, but no more tangible results.

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<sup>147</sup> “Holy Church.” The “woman” representing Saint-Eglise, speaking in a falsetto voice, was none other than a disguised Olivier de la Marche, one of Philip’s leading courtiers and a memorialist of the Valois duchy. See *Les ducs*, 132.

<sup>148</sup> The phrase, “événement fondateur,” is Paviot’s. See *Les ducs*, 139-43.

<sup>149</sup> On the diet of Regensburg, see *Les ducs* 136-8 and Lacaze, “Politique (Pt. II),” 95-6.

<sup>150</sup> On the diet of Frankfurt, see *Les ducs* 138 and Lacaze, “Politique (Pt. II),” 98.

Undaunted, Philip continued to press forward with his crusading plans – even after the death of Pope Nicholas V in March 1455. The new pope, Calixtus III, was also a crusade partisan; he confirmed Nicholas’ bull and set a departure date of 1 March 1456.<sup>151</sup> But then a new setback forced the duke to temper his plans: King Charles VII, who had always been ambivalent about the crusading project, adopted less hypocritical, more hostile language. Replying to a Burgundian embassy requesting that the king safeguard Philip’s estates and contribute soldiers and funds to the crusade,<sup>152</sup> Charles said he would protect ducal territories only if Philip surrendered his towns on the Somme as surety. Men and money, moreover, were out of the question. It was a devastating reply, and when his ambassadors returned, the duke realized that he could not depart on crusade until after the elderly king’s death.<sup>153</sup>

In the meantime, Philip continued to do whatever he could to promote the project, raising funds from his estates, commissioning advisory tracts, and pursuing continental diplomacy.<sup>154</sup> Pius II, who succeeded Calixtus in 1458, organized a new crusading congress at Mantua in the following year; Philip’s ambassadors declared

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<sup>151</sup> See *Les ducs* 145. On Calixtus’ diplomacy during this period, see Lacaze, “Politique (Pt. II),” 111-16.

<sup>152</sup> This embassy, led by Philip’s chancellor, Nicholas Rolin, and Antoine de Croÿ, was one of several diplomatic overtures to various European courts made by the duke during this period; on these, see Lacaze, “Politique (Pt. II),” 105-11.

<sup>153</sup> *Les ducs*, 146.

<sup>154</sup> On Philip’s fundraising, see *Les ducs*, 148-9. The advisory tracts commissioned by Philip in the period 1455-56 included Bertrandon de la Broquière’s *Voyage* and Jean Miélot’s translations of Raymond Étienne’s *Directorium ad passagium faciendum* (ca. 1332), and Burchard of Mont-Sion’s thirteenth-century *Descriptio terrae sanctae*. These texts are contained in a number of Burgundian compilations, including a *Recueil d’Orient* (Paris Arsenal no. 4798) which belonged to Jean de Wavrin. The magnificent illuminated compilation owned by Philip the Good (BN fr. 9087) is the subject of an important recent study by David J. Wrisley; see “The Loss of Constantinople,” 85-112.

him ready to provide the support he had pledged in Frankfurt.<sup>155</sup> The pope proclaimed a three-year crusade in 1460, and the following year brought renewed hopes that a *passagium* might indeed be possible. In January, Philip received a crusading embassy from the great potentates of the East. Coordinated by the Franciscan Louis of Boulogne, it included representatives – real or contrived – of the kings of Persia, Georgia, Mesopotamia, and Armenia, the emperor of Trebizond, the Turkmen khan, and the mythic Prester John.<sup>156</sup> However authentic its claims, the mission seems to have stoked Philip's enthusiasm; he welcomed the "Magi" warmly and offered Louis his firm commitment for crusading support.<sup>157</sup> Then in June, the King of France died; Charles was succeeded by the Burgundian partisan Louis XI, who had appeared enthusiastic about the crusade during the years he took refuge with his uncle Philip. The duke expected, with good reason, that the dauphin would be less obstructionist than his estranged father.<sup>158</sup>

Louis' ascent to the throne proved, however, to be another false dawn for Philip's crusading hopes. The duties of the realm "would completely modify his point of view"; he now had "other priorities, more pressing and more urgent," and Philip's crusading project remained politically undesirable in Paris.<sup>159</sup> The duke took

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<sup>155</sup> See *Les ducs*, 155, and Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. II)," 17.

<sup>156</sup> Paviot identifies these various potentates; see *Les ducs*, 157. The most comprehensive study of this fascinating mission remains that of Jean Richard: "Louis de Bologne," 63-9.

<sup>157</sup> *Les ducs*, 158. The oration pronounced before Philip, which was probably penned by Pius II himself, bore little allegorical subtlety in its title: *Ecce Magi venerunt ab Oriente ad stellam* ("Behold the Magi who came from the Orient seeking the star," my transl.). See *Les ducs*, 157.

<sup>158</sup> As Paviot notes, "Le dauphin avait joué (ou s'était-il laissé gagné par l'esprit chevaleresque qui régnait à la cour de Bourgogne?) avec l'idée de favoriser l'expédition rêvée par Philippe" (*Les ducs*, 158).

<sup>159</sup> "Allait modifier complètement son point de vue"; "autres priorités, plus proches et plus urgentes": *Les ducs*, 160.

the setback bitterly, and his courtiers became restive.<sup>160</sup> Luc de Tolentis, an ambassador sent by Pope Pius to continue crusade negotiations with Philip, reported in the spring of 1463 that the *saint voyage* had produced sharp tensions between ducal counsellors: some feared it would put too much strain on the elderly duke, and some – worried about the temperament of his mercurial son Charles – thought the duchy would succumb to tyranny. Philip himself seems to have fallen into a dark mood, telling courtiers that his misfortunes were a “sign from God” that he had failed to fulfill his vow. They should prepare themselves, he said ominously, to go to the aid of the pope.<sup>161</sup>

The year 1463, however, brought one final burst of enthusiasm for the crusading project.<sup>162</sup> At a conference in St-Omer, the English and French agreed to a one-year truce and further peace negotiations – effectively removing the most important obstacle to a Latin (or at least a French) *passagium*. Philip sent a new embassy, composed of his crusade advocate and *Toison d’Or* chancellor Guillaume Fillastre, Simon de Lalaing, Geoffroy de Thoisy and our own Jean de Wavrin, to negotiate with the pope.<sup>163</sup> His men agreed that the expedition should depart the following May, and they signed a treaty of alliance with both Rome and Venice.<sup>164</sup> In the autumn, Philip promised to cede his Somme towns to Louis in exchange for the

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<sup>160</sup> It is worth noting, however, that Philip continued to do all he could, diplomatically and militarily, to promote the crusade during this period. On his missions to Milan and his negotiations with Pope Pius, see *Les ducs*, 160-2.

<sup>161</sup> *Les ducs*, 162-3.

<sup>162</sup> On the events of 1463-4, see *Les ducs*, 163-76; Taparel, *Le duché*, 140-67; Marinesco, “Philippe le Bon (Pt. II),” 17-25.

<sup>163</sup> *Les ducs*, 164.

<sup>164</sup> *Les ducs*, 164-5. On these negotiations, see also Marinesco, “Philippe le Bon (Pt. II),” 17.

king's protection during his absence. Having thus secured both papal and royal support, he convoked a series of meetings with his internal constituents, the estates and the nobility, to gain financial and military aid.<sup>165</sup>

One of these encounters – a December meeting between Philip and his noblemen in Bruges – was particularly colourful. Standing before the assembly, the duke announced his agreement with the pope, recalled the participants' nearly ten-year-old vows to march behind him, and asked about their intentions. The response was not altogether positive; some guests, as chroniclers noted, seemed uncomfortable with their chivalric obligations.<sup>166</sup> This reticence provoked further meetings and further appeals; it no doubt explains the particular emphases of the *Epistre à la Maison de Bourgogne sur la Croisade*, a text read at an assembly of the Estates-General in Lille the following spring. Among other things, as Jean Devaux has noted, the *Epistre* depicts the fulfillment of crusading vows as a sacred duty.<sup>167</sup> Jean Molinet's provocative *Complainte de Grèce*, written with the same audience in mind, argues in even grander terms, depicting the Ottomans as the biblical Antichrist and raising eschatological hopes for the mission.<sup>168</sup>

Nor was the flurry of local writing that accompanied the crusade plans of 1463-1464 limited to hortatory texts. Duke Philip, clearly believing himself to be on the cusp of a world-historical journey, sought strategic advice from his counsellors –

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<sup>165</sup> On these meetings, see *Les ducs*, 166-8. The Burgundian *indiciaire* Georges Chastellain is a particularly important source on these events.

<sup>166</sup> *Les ducs*, 166-7.

<sup>167</sup> See Devaux, "Le saint voyage de Turquie: Croisade et propagande à la cour de Philippe le Bon (1463-1464)," in *A l'heure encore de mon écrire: aspects de la littérature de Bourgogne sous Philippe le Bon et Charles le Téméraire*, ed. Claude Thiry (Louvain-la-Neuve: Les Lettres Romanes, 1997), 64.

<sup>168</sup> See Devaux, "Le saint voyage," 64.

most notably the crusade veterans Geoffroy de Thoisy and Waleran de Wavrin. Their tracts, as we shall see, offer clear insights into the challenges facing the Burgundian mission; they also underscore the temperamental and ideological differences between the two warriors. Thoisy's *Avis...pour recouvrer Constantinople*,<sup>169</sup> which offers key suggestions which were also elaborated in his longer tract, the *Advis pour faire conquête sur le Turcq*,<sup>170</sup> argues for a direct sea-based attack on Gallipoli and Constantinople, delivering "a mortal blow" against the Ottoman sultan and ending his hegemony in the Balkans.<sup>171</sup> Waleran's text, which was clearly written in response to Thoisy's, rejects large parts of his comrade's plan and calls for a more guarded approach. A land force *must* coordinate with the naval expedition, he notes, observing sardonically that western ships and their crews could easily capture Gallipoli – if it were not for the 30,000 Turks guarding it. The duke should also check

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<sup>169</sup> This text, explicitly attributed to Geoffroy de Thoisy, is retained in the collection of crusading documents belonging to the Lannoy family (BN fr. 1278) which also contains Thoisy's account of the defense of Rhodes, cited above. It was edited by Monica Barsi in "Le 'passage d'outremer': un segment de l'actualité à la cour de Philippe le Bon," in *Actes du Ier Colloque de littérature en moyen français*, Università Cattolica (Milano, 5-9 maggio 1997), *L'Analisi linguistica e letteraria I* (1998), 31-46. It is worth noting that while Jacques Paviot dates this text to the period 1463-4 (*Les ducs* 169), Barsi, following Müller and Grunzweig, suggests that it was probably crafted in 1455. See Barsi, "Constantinople à la cour de Philippe le Bon (1419-1467): Comptes rendus et documents historiques," in *Sauver Byzance de la Barbarie du Monde*, ed. L. Nissim and S. Riva (Milan: Cisalpino, 2004), 160-9.

<sup>170</sup> Though we cannot be certain about the authorship of this text, scholars believe Geoffroy de Thoisy participated (and took a leading role) in its redaction. Constantine Marinesco has argued convincingly that it could not have been crafted prior to 1463; see "Philippe le Bon (Pt. II)," 19, f.n. 1. The text appears in two editions: A.J.G. Le Glay, "Sur la Croisade projetée en 1453," *Compte Rendu des Séances de la Commission Royale d'Histoire, ou recueil de ses bulletins*, ser. 3, t. II (Brussels: Hayez, 1861), 213-18; and Jules Finot, *Projet d'expédition contre les Turcs préparé par les Conseillers du duc de Bourgogne Philippe le Bon* (Lille: L. Quarré, 1890), 24-35.

<sup>171</sup> "Un coup mortel": Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. II)," 19.



his eagerness to set out, waiting for a year until his ships and supplies are fully prepared.<sup>172</sup>

By calling for a delay, Waleran was (no doubt unwittingly) supporting the obstructionist efforts of a faction in Philip's court led by the Croÿ family, who loathed the duke's son Charles and feared his regency. King Louis, no friend of the *comte de Charolais*, likewise did everything he could to delay the expedition. After a few diplomatic overtures, the king ordered a one-year stay on the crusade.<sup>173</sup> Pope Pius, not surprisingly, was enraged; he demanded that duke to recall his public vow and published a bull of excommunication against sovereigns who hindered the crusade. But Philip was compelled to obey, as Fillastre explained delicately to the Estates-General in March.<sup>174</sup> The duke therefore revised his plans once more: he would meet Pius in Italy in June of the following year, and in the meantime he would send his son Anthony, the Bastard of Burgundy, with a fleet and an advance force.<sup>175</sup>

Philip then ordered ships armed at Sluis, Marseille and Pisa; Jacot and Geoffroy de Thoisy took care of those in the Mediterranean ports.<sup>176</sup> Anthony, for his part, set sail from Flanders in late May. Cruising around Iberia, he set a course for the Portuguese colony of Ceuta, in North Africa, to offer help against a Muslim

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<sup>172</sup> I shall consider this text in more detail below. For useful discussions of all three of these texts, see Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. II)," 17-21; *Les ducs* 169; Taparel, *Le duché*, 151-5; Barsi, "Constantinople," 160-9.

<sup>173</sup> On the diplomatic and political tactics of the house of Croÿ and of King Louis XI, see *Les ducs*, 169-71.

<sup>174</sup> See *Les ducs*, 171.

<sup>175</sup> *Les ducs*, 171.

<sup>176</sup> *Les ducs*, 171. On Anthony's fleet, see Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon (Pt. II)," 19-24.

siege.<sup>177</sup> Then, *en route* to Marseille, his fleet was nearly overwhelmed by a storm; when the Burgundians finally arrived at the Provençal port in July, their ranks were decimated by an epidemic. The fleet never reached Ancona, where Pope Pius II died in despair on 15 August.<sup>178</sup> Philip the Good's last crusading project was dissolved soon afterward, and the "grand duc d'Occident" never again made an effort to undertake the "saint voyage." He died in 1467, regretting to the end his failure to follow in the footsteps of his storied ancestors.<sup>179</sup>

This story of Philip the Good's passionate crusading ambitions and brusque regional politics, with its ultimately tragic narrative arc, offers insights into the pressures Waleran de Wavrin must have been under during those fateful months in 1444 and 1445 – and into the rhetorical imperatives faced by the author(s) and redactor(s) of his remarkable crusading narrative. The duke's enduring interest in the East as a site of pilgrimage and piety; his high-profile and high-risk political overtures both before and after the ideological "turning point" of 1450; his investment of vast sums of financial and political capital in crusading fleets and crusading diplomacy; and his tendency to reward those who served his crusading interests well (*viz.* Thoisy) and punish those who did not (*viz.* Germain) all speak to the extraordinarily high stakes involved in both leading a crusading expedition and *representing* that leadership to posterity.

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<sup>177</sup> Taparel, *Le duché*, 159-60. Jean de Wavrin's *Anciennes Chroniques* contains a document describing these events; see Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 437-40.

<sup>178</sup> For a useful overview of events in Ancona, see Taparel, *Le duché*, 161-2.

<sup>179</sup> Paviot notes, for instance, that when Fillastre mentioned his crusading vow to Philip, "le vieux duc se mettait à pleurer"; see *Les ducs*, 175.

Yet these situational imperatives represent only one facet of a still more complicated political story. Waleran de Wavrin, a rising star in the Burgundian court – descendant of the Counts of Flanders, hero of the siege of Calais, distinguished jousting and confidant of duchess Isabel<sup>180</sup> – pursued his fortune in a courtly context that was not just politically charged but also redolent with symbolic and imaginative contents. Part of the *seigneur de Wavrin's* task therefore involved performing *gestes* which satisfied the norms of chivalric conduct articulated in the literature which was so important to the duke and his court. And if I am right in thinking that his uncle Jean de Wavrin, the seasoned soldier and chronicler who included the expedition narrative in his massive historical compendium, played a role in redacting Waleran's story, then he too acted within this exacting cultural environment.<sup>181</sup> He sought (and found) ways of representing the Wavrin expedition that ennobled it in specifically chivalric terms. Together with his nephew, who no doubt contributed much to the narrative, he set out to defend the family's honour *symbolically*.

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<sup>180</sup> On the life and career of Waleran de Wavrin, see M. Yans, "Wavrin ou Waurin (Jean de)," in *Biographie nationale*, t. 27 (Brussels: Bruylant, 1938), 129-32; Schulz, *Andreaskreuz*, 145-50; Jacques Paviot, "Wavrin, Waleran de," in *Lexikon des Mittelalters* t. 8 (Munich: LexMA, 1997), 2081-2. On Waleran's position and status within the "aristocratie interrégionale," see Marie-Thérèse Caron, "Enquête," 415, and Hans Cools, "Le prince et la noblesse dans la châtellenie de Lille à la fin du XVe siècle: un exemple de la plus grande emprise de l'Etat sur les élites locales?" *Revue du Nord* 77, no. 310 (1995): 387-406.

<sup>181</sup> On the life and career of Jean de Wavrin, see Antoinette Naber, "Jean de Wavrin, un bibliophile du quinzième siècle," *Revue du Nord* 69, no. 273 (Avr-Juin 1987): 281-93; "Jean de Wavrin," in *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: Le Moyen Age* (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 861-2; Livia Visser-Fuchs, "Waurin, Jean de," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 57 (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 764. On the *Anciennes Chroniques d'Angleterre*, see esp. Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, and Alain Marchandisse, "Jean de Wavrin, un chroniqueur entre Bourgogne et Angleterre, et ses homologues bourguignons face à la guerre des Deux Roses," *Le Moyen Age: Revue d'Histoire et de Philologie*, t. CXII (2006): 507-27.

I shall devote a good deal of space to these claims in subsequent chapters. For the moment, however, it is important to offer a preliminary sketch of the culture of chivalry – the literary, symbolic and artistic underpinnings of noble identity – in fifteenth-century Burgundy, and to consider the special place of crusading in that complex of themes and ideas.

### **Chivalric culture and the crusading ideal at the court of Burgundy**

The first point to make is an historiographical one: Burgundian chivalric culture has received an unusually rough reception at the hands of modern scholars. Johan Huizinga's monumental study of late medieval culture, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages* (1919), famously derided Philip's court as a site where "vain illusions" of chivalric virtue captivated credulous and hypocritical men. "Everywhere lies shine through the holes in the stately knightly dress," he wrote. "Reality continuously denies the ideal. Therefore it withdraws further and further back into the sphere of literature, festival, and play; only here the illusion of the beautiful knightly life remains."<sup>182</sup> Five decades later, R.L. Kilgour echoed the Dutch scholar's assessment, charging that Burgundian chivalry was decadent, stagnant, derivative: "Whatever vitality dying chivalry had possessed at the beginning of the century," he claimed, "was sapped by the constant round of banquets and jousts, each more artificial than the last."<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Johan Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, 115.

<sup>183</sup> Raymond Lincoln Kilgour, *The Decline of Chivalry as Shown in the French Literature of the Late Middle Ages* (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1966), 229.

Huizinga's and Kilgour's formulations – the former sensitive and nuanced, the latter bombastic, but *both* premised on a presentist conception of the knight as puerile and ethically primitive – continue to inform studies of Burgundian court culture. More recently, however, several scholars have rejected this reductive moralism by rethinking chivalric ideas and symbology as political tools – as means of glorifying ducal politics, enhancing princely splendour, and manufacturing the consent of noblemen and burghers in Valois territories.<sup>184</sup> Such studies, which draw upon the theories of Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner, reveal a great deal about the power of chivalric symbology; they also offer the signal benefit of reading medieval “others” as rational, thinking agents.<sup>185</sup> Yet in revisiting Huizinga this way, it is important not to dispense unwittingly with his most important insights. Chivalric culture, as he suggested, was not a purely utilitarian system; it was not just a syntax of political suasion. It was also a primary ideological and cultural framework – a way of imagining and categorizing oneself and others, and of evaluating the world and one's place in it.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> One of the finest such studies, Peter Arnade's *Realms of Ritual* (1996), argues among other things that ritual, founded upon chivalric symbology, “was basic to [the court's] private and public faces, emphasizing the state leaders as the source of appropriate behavior. Ritual made the duke, the duchess, and their retinue...politically supreme yet eminently malleable: it constantly fashioned them from one thing into another.” See *Realms of Ritual*, 29.

<sup>185</sup> For an especially insightful and nuanced study of ritual in the Burgundian court, see Arjo Vanderjagt, “Ritualizing Heritage: Jason and the Argonauts at the Burgundian Feast of the Pheasant” (forthcoming).

<sup>186</sup> With this in mind, it is worth noting that Huizinga distinguished his work from that of historians who restricted their studies to administrative and economic documents, arguing that this produced a partial understanding of culture and its effects on the political realm. See *Autumn*, 103-4.

Thus the Burgundians read, and watched, and listened to, and performed chivalric ideas with remarkable alacrity.<sup>187</sup> A number of sources testify to this enduring interest. By the time of Waleran's journey, the Burgundian ducal library contained numerous texts related to chivalry; epics and romances "d'inspiration médiévale," including numerous *chansons de geste* and Arthurian tales, seem to have appealed to generations of audiences.<sup>188</sup> The library was also stocked with histories lauding heroes of the past, and with treatises extolling knightly virtues.<sup>189</sup> These textual sources were reinforced by images: courtiers, many of whom were descended from families with rich armorial histories, could admire the *beau gestes* of their mythic forebears – heroes ranging in temperament from Charlemagne and Guillaume d'Orange to the crusading Swan Knight, the biblical freedom-fighter

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<sup>187</sup> Here it is important to acknowledge the claims of Georges Doutrepoint, whose masterwork *La Littérature française à la cour de Bourgogne* (1909) actually predates and anticipates Huizinga's study, that the practice of chivalry in the Valois court was superficial, even insincere: "Vie chevaleresque, esprit chevaleresque, l'on sait déjà que ce sont des expressions qui ne peuvent pas être employées pour la cour de Bourgogne sans être accompagnées de certaines réserves. Cet esprit qui s'affirme dans une institution comme celle de la Toison d'or, dans les fêtes à spectacles, dans le goût qu'on manifeste pour les récits et les jeux de chevalerie, dans l'amour des aventureuses prouesses, dans la pratique des joutes et tournois, a plus d'éclat extérieur que de solidité et intensité" (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970), 517. In the chapters that follow I shall try to refine these claims – arguing that the sophisticated warriors of the Burgundian court did engage in behaviour, and in debate and criticism, which problematized elements of chivalric ideology. I shall maintain, however, that chivalry remained a primary reference point, a source of cultural and ideological coherence, with which their relationship was *not* purely cynical. See Chapters 3, 4 and 5, below.

<sup>188</sup> On traditional chivalric literature in the Burgundian ducal library, see Doutrepoint, *La littérature*, 8-69.

<sup>189</sup> On histories, see Doutrepoint, *La littérature*, 403-55; on the treatises and other "oeuvres profanes," see 265-328. On Duke Philip's special interest in historical texts, see also Wim Blockmans, "Manuscript acquisition by the Burgundian Court and the Market for Books in the Fifteenth-Century Netherlands," in *Art Markets in Europe, 1400-1800*, ed. M. North and D. Ormrod (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 7-18.

Judas Maccabeus and the Greek hero-knight Jason – on sumptuous tapestries commissioned and displayed by the dukes.<sup>190</sup>

Most importantly, perhaps, Burgundian knights *performed* their chivalry by taking part in solemn public ceremonies and in elaborate jousts and tourneys. The most prominent of Philip the Good's vassals were granted membership in the order of the *Toison d'or* (the "Golden Fleece," a theme reflecting the duke's devotion to the medieval redaction of Jason's voyage to Colchis); they participated in spectacular chapter meetings and wore the collar of the order ostentatiously on their chests.<sup>191</sup> Lesser knights, too, had a chance to win glory in public displays of chivalry.

Waleran de Wavrin was himself a seasoned and successful joustier; his impressive showings at the tournaments of St-Omer and Bruges in 1440, and at one in Besançon in 1442, earned the unqualified approbation of his peers.<sup>192</sup> As the anonymous author of the *Livre des faits de Jacques de Lalaing* notes stoutly, the "seigneur de Wavrin...pour le temps de lors on tenoit pour un moult vaillant joustier."<sup>193</sup> There is little doubt that these victories aided Waleran in his ascent through the ranks of the Burgundian nobility.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> See Doutrepont, *La littérature*, 117-19.

<sup>191</sup> The *Toison d'or* was founded in 1430 during the wedding of Duke Philip and Isabel of Portugal. For more on this chivalric order, see *L'ordre de la Toison d'or, de Philippe le Bon à Philippe le Beau (1430-1505): idéal ou reflet d'une société?* (Brussels: Royal Library of Belgium, 1996).

<sup>192</sup> The jousts at St-Omer accompanied the marriage of the Duke of Orleans and the niece of the duke of Burgundy (Nov. 1440); the tournament of Sainte-Croix, in Bruges, took place in December of that same year. On these events see Yans, "Waleran," 133. On the tournament at Besançon, see "Le Livre des faits du bon chevalier messire Jacques de Lalaing," in *Georges Chastellain: Oeuvres*, t. VIII, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints 1970), 35 and f.n. 1.

<sup>193</sup> "The Lord of Wavrin...was considered at that time to be a very valiant joustier" (my transl.): "Le Livre des faits," 35.

<sup>194</sup> Werner Schulz describes Waleran's political and chivalric activities during this period, noting his close connections with Duchess Isabel; see *Andreaskreuz*, 147-9.

The *seigneur de Wavrin*'s efforts here point to another important observation about Burgundian chivalric culture: it *evolved*. The period of his crusading adventures seems to have coincided with a new emphasis on more elaborate ceremonial displays of chivalry, and on indigenous literary projects celebrating the deeds of great knights.<sup>195</sup> The *pas d'armes*, a combined knightly tournament and dramatic performance in which participants adopted *personae* and followed elaborate rules, was imported from Castille at precisely this time.<sup>196</sup> The first major Burgundian *pas*, the *Arbre de Charlemagne*, was conducted at Dijon in July 1443 – just days after the Karystinos embassy had brought pleas for help from the Greek emperor, prompting Waleran and the duke to plan their crusade strategy.<sup>197</sup> One of the most prominent jousts at the *Arbre*, Pedro Vásquez de Saavedra – known to the expedition chronicler as “Pietre Vast” – followed up his success in the lists by joining Waleran's naval campaign. The chivalric glory he gained in the first of these

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<sup>195</sup> On the evolution of Burgundian courtly ceremonial from the middle of the century, see Arjo Vanderjagt, “The Princely Culture of the Valois Dukes of Burgundy,” 64 and *passim*.

<sup>196</sup> For a cogent and insightful study of the social uses and effects of the Burgundian *pas d'armes*, see Alice Planche, “Du tournoi au théâtre en Bourgogne: Le Pas de la Fontaine des Pleurs à Chalon-sur-Saône, 1449-1450,” *Le Moyen Age*, ser. 4, t. 30 (1975): 97-128.

<sup>197</sup> On the *Arbre de Charlemagne*, see esp. R. Coltman Clephan, *The Medieval Tournament* (London: Dover, 1995), 57-61. Clephan reports that the *pas* began in Dijon on 11 July, when Duke Philip “took his seat...holding a white wand or bâton in his hand as judge” (58); as noted above, the Karystinos embassy occurred at Chalon-sur-Saône at some point between 26 June and 10 July. On Duke Philip's courtly itinerary during this period, see Herman Vander Linden, *Itinéraires de Philippe le Bon, duc de Bourgogne (1419-1467) et de Charles, comte de Charolais (1433-1467)* (Brussels: Palais des Académies, 1940), 219. On the literary ingredients of the *Arbre* and other *pas d'armes*, see Annette Linder, “L'influence du roman chevaleresque français sur le pas d'armes,” *Publication du Centre Européen d'Études Bourguignonnes (XIVe-XVle siècles)* 31 (1991): 67-79 (esp. 68-9).



ventures must have seemed a mere prelude to the prestige potentially afforded by the second.<sup>198</sup>

It is worth noting that another remarkable, and emblematic, chivalric performance took place at roughly the same time as Waleran was sailing on the Danube. In late 1445, one of Philip's young vassals, a Hainault knight named Jacques de Lalaing, set out in search of glory.<sup>199</sup> Having broken lances (and ladies' hearts) at a tournament before King Charles VII in Nancy, Jacques sought new adventures in the courts of Iberia, France and Britain. He found only a few willing adversaries (among them, the Earl of Douglas), but made the most of these bone-crushing encounters.<sup>200</sup> Returning home to Chalon-sur-Saône, Jacques hosted a spectacular year-long *pas d'armes*, the *Fontaine aux Pleurs* ("Fountain of Tears"), at which he fought a number of opponents. As scholars have noted, Jacques' knight-errancy recalled the *beau gestes* of real-life worthies such as Jean de Werchin and Jean de Boniface; his *pas* was inspired by the fourteenth-century romance *Ponthus et*

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<sup>198</sup> For more on Vázquez's chivalric career, see Dominique de Courcelles, "Le Roman de Tirant lo Blanc et le voeu du faisan: Le pouvoir de la parole entre politique et littérature," in Caron & Clauzel, *Le Banquet*, 182-3. Another of Waleran's comrades, the Picard knight Gauvain Quiéret, likewise saw the need to distinguish himself in chivalrous activity – in his case, in deeds of war. On Gauvain, see Adrien Huguet, "Un Chevalier Picard à la Croisade de Constantinople: Gauvain Quiéret, seigneur de Dreuil," *Bulletin trimestriel de la Société des antiquaires de Picardie* 39 (1939): 35-50 (esp. 50).

<sup>199</sup> The period in question is 1445-50.

<sup>200</sup> One of the best overviews of Jacques de Lalaing's life, and of the *Livre des faits* dedicated to him, is Colette Beaune's introduction to the excerpts from the *Livre* (translated into modern French) in D. Régnier-Bohler (ed.), *Splendeurs de la cour de Bourgogne: Récits et chroniques* (Paris: Laffont, 1995), 1193-1203. See also Jean Rychner, *La littérature et les moeurs chevaleresques à la cour de Bourgogne* (Neuchâtel: U. of Neuchâtel, 1950), 13-24. Not surprisingly, given Jacques' chivalric pretensions and the details of his unceremonious death (by cannonball) at the hands of rebellious burghers at Ghent in 1453, he is a target for modern historians seeking a symbol for the "decline" of Burgundian chivalry. See e.g. Kilgour, *Decline*, 266; Huizinga, *Autumn*, 116; Rychner, *Littérature*, 24-5.

*Sidoine*.<sup>201</sup> Taken together, as Jean Rychner writes, his career offers powerful testimony to the influence of chivalric themes in the Burgundian ethos. “For the Burgundian noblemen who read them,” he notes, chivalric texts “did not remain a dead letter, but served as a second catechism. Their morality and manners followed the precepts contained within.”<sup>202</sup>

In light of all of this chivalric *imitatio*, it is perhaps not surprising that the mid-1440s also witnessed the birth of a new literary “industry” in the Burgundian court: the *remaniement* of verse romances into contemporary prose, and the compilation of original chivalric works based on earlier models.<sup>203</sup> Jean Wauquelin was one of the first Burgundian authors to undertake this cultural translation; his *Girart de Roussillon*, a prose adaptation of the epic adventures of a saintly Burgundian duke, appeared at the court in 1447.<sup>204</sup> Several romances followed in its wake<sup>205</sup>, and by 1450, this literary activity was simmering in the immediate precincts of Jean de Wavrin. The *seigneur de Forestel*, a bastard son of Waleran’s grandfather Robert, was in fact an important catalyst in the movement: in addition to compiling the *Anciennes Chroniques d’Angleterre*, he had close ties to a literary *atelier* which produced a number of “indigenous” chivalric romances, including *Gillion de Trazegnies* (1450),

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<sup>201</sup> Beaune, “Introduction,” 1200-01; Rychner, *Littérature*, 17.

<sup>202</sup> “Pour les seigneurs bourguignons qui les lisent”; “ne vont pas rester lettre morte: ils seront pour eux un second catéchisme: leur morale et leurs moeurs en suivront les préceptes”: Rychner, *Littérature*, 13.

<sup>203</sup> On this phenomenon, see especially Georges Doutrepoint, *Les mises en prose des épopées et des romans chevaleresques du XIVe au XVe siècle* (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1969 [orig. 1939]).

<sup>204</sup> On *Girart de Roussillon*, see Doutrepoint, *Mises en prose*, 109-14.

<sup>205</sup> Notably *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople* (1448), *Alexandre le Grand* (1448), and *L’histoire de Charles Martel et de ses successeurs* (1448); see Doutrepoint, *Mises en prose*, 356.

the *Comte d'Artois* (ca. 1453-67), *Gilles de Chin* (ca. 1458-67), and *Jean d'Avesnes*.<sup>206</sup> We shall consider the ideological resonances between these works and Wavrin's expedition narrative – texts which articulate notions of chivalry and virtue that were prominent in the circle of *la famille Wavrin* – in detail below.

For the moment, it is important to emphasize just two key points. The first is that this burgeoning cultural activity – the texts and ceremonies preceding Waleran's journey and the literary productions immediately following it – both articulated and reflected the heavy cultural pressures, the weight of expectations, shouldered by men such as the *seigneur de Wavrin*. Far from being in decline, chivalric ideology was alive, potent, dynamic – inspiring creative activity, defining the terms of noble life and work, framing the standards of social approbation and rejection. And in Waleran's case, this pressure could only have been enhanced by the fact that *crusading*, the “saint voyage,” was perceived as a highly prestigious chivalric enterprise. “Inscribed within the chivalric ideal,” as Jacques Paviot writes, holy warfare was “a necessary aspect of the formation of the young nobleman”<sup>207</sup>; it was also a major knightly attainment. It was formulated as such, by authorities secular

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<sup>206</sup> On Jean's relationship with these works – some of which, scholars have suggested, he may have written himself – see Appendix A below. See also F.M. Horgan, “A Critical Edition of The Romance of Gillion de Trazegnies” (PhD Thesis, Univ. of Cambridge, 1985), xii-li; Élisabeth Gaucher, *La biographie chevaleresque: Typologie d'un genre (XIIIe-XVe siècles)* (Paris: Champion, 1994), 225-7.

<sup>207</sup> “[I]nscrite dans l'idéal chevaleresque”; “un aspect nécessaire de la formation du jeune noble”: Paviot, “Idéal chevaleresque?”, 33.

and Cistercian, centuries before the Burgundian moment; and it continued to bear this ideological weight under all four Valois dukes.<sup>208</sup>

This was true, indeed, even during those periods when Philip the Bold and John the Fearless did not exhibit a strong political orientation toward the East. As Paviot has shown in a fascinating study of crusading grants and requests, “we must conclude that the spirit of crusading was alive amongst the nobles who surrounded Philip the Bold, in particular, and John the Fearless.”<sup>209</sup> And though fewer Burgundian knights actually took the cross during Philip the Good’s reign<sup>210</sup>, crusading flourished as a sanctioned ideology under the third Valois duke, who

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<sup>208</sup> On the traditional privileging of the crusade in chivalric ideology, see Elspeth Kennedy, “Geoffroi de Charny’s *Livre de Chevalerie* and the Knights of the Round Table,” in *Medieval Knighthood V*, ed. S. Church (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995), 221-42 (esp. 235-6); Jane H.M. Taylor, “The Pattern of Perfection: Jehan de Saintré and the Chivalric Ideal,” *Medium Aevum* 53, no. 2 (1984): 254-62 (esp. 256-7); and Norman Housley, “One man and his wars: The depiction of warfare by Marshall Boucicaut’s biographer,” *Journal of Medieval History* 29, no. 1 (2003): 27-40 (accessed online 17 April 2007 at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com); see especially 4 [in digital pagination]). For an example of the strong moral emphasis placed on crusading by some Burgundian authors and warriors, see Hugues de Lannoy’s treatise “L’instruction d’un jeune prince,” in *Oeuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy. Voyageur, diplomate et moraliste*, ed. Charles Potvin (Louvain: Lefever, 1878), 413-25. None of this is to suggest, of course, that crusading ideology was static throughout the late medieval period. Jacques Paviot has noted that fourteenth and fifteenth-century warriors frequently regarded anti-Islamic warfare as an exoticized form of chivalry, rather than as a form of penitence or devotion, and that authors often recounted crusading deeds “sur le même pied” as other great feats of arms (see e.g. Paviot, “Noblesse et croisade à la fin du moyen âge,” *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales* 13 (2006): 69-84). Nonetheless, as Lannoy’s text makes clear, warfare against infidels and the defence of the faith were regarded as especially prestigious chivalric achievements by key thinkers and authors in the Burgundian ethos.

<sup>209</sup> “On ne peut que conclure à une vitalité de l’esprit de croisade parmi les nobles qui entouraient Philippe le Hardi, surtout, et Jean sans Peur...”: Paviot, “Idéal chevaleresque?”, 59.

<sup>210</sup> See Jacques Paviot, “Burgundy and the Crusade,” in *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century: Message and Impact*, ed. Norman Housley (Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 77. C.A.J. Armstrong has suggested that the majority of Philip’s knights were “tepid” in their support for – and even “suspicious” of – his crusade project; but even if this was at times true on the political level, it does not unseat our claims concerning the ideological weight of the crusading ideal under Philip’s principate. On elements of political resistance to the crusade, see Armstrong, “The Golden Age of Burgundy: Dukes that Outdid Kings,” in *The Courts of Europe*, ed. A.G. Dickens (London, 1977): 55-75 (esp. 61), and Andrew Glen Heron, “Il faut faire guerre pour paix avoir’: Crusading propaganda at the court of Duke Philippe le Bon of Burgundy (1419-1467) (PhD dissertation, Cambridge University, 1992), 4-6. For a related discussion, see Devaux, “Le saint voyage.”

inherited and commissioned numerous epics, romances, histories, treatises and other chivalric texts which were concerned thematically with the crusade and with anti-Islamic warfare.<sup>211</sup> From Guillaume d'Orange to the Chevalier du Cygne, from William of Tyre's account of the battle of Antioch to Geoffroi de Villehardouin's tale of the capture of Constantinople, the greatest heroes and deeds of chivalry very often *were* the *matière* of crusading.<sup>212</sup> The strength of this association was confirmed in Waleran's time, and in his family circle; among the narratives crafted and rewritten for Duke Philip and his courtiers, a great many – *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople* (1448), *Charles Martel* (1448), *Gillion de Trazegnies* (1450), *Gilles de Chin*, and *Petit Jehan de Saintré* (ca. 1456-60) among them<sup>213</sup> – depicted anti-Islamic warfare, and the Levantine and Iberian territories on which it occurred, as key proving grounds for chivalric knighthood.<sup>214</sup>

With these discursive currents in mind, and recalling the prominence of crusading policy in Duke Philip's politics, we can only imagine what an exciting career opportunity the Mediterranean expedition must have presented to Waleran de

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<sup>211</sup> See "La croisade et l'Orient dans la bibliothèque des ducs de Bourgogne," in Paviot, *Les ducs*, 201-38; Doutrepon, *La littérature*, 8-116 and 236-64.

<sup>212</sup> For a discussion of this tradition and its resonances in later Burgundian historiography, see Jean Devaux, "Le culte du héros chevaleresque dans les mémoires d'Olivier de la Marche," *Publications du Centre Européen d'Études Bourguignonnes* (2001): 64-5.

<sup>213</sup> For extensive bibliographical information on these texts (including dates of composition), see [www.arlima.net](http://www.arlima.net).

<sup>214</sup> For useful discussions, see Danielle Quérue, "Le *Roman du Comte d'Artois*: Ecriture romanesque et propagande politique," *Arras au Moyen Age: Histoire et Littérature*, ed. M.M. Castellani and J.P. Martin (Arras: Artois Presses Universitaires), 137-49 (esp. 148-9), and Jane Taylor, "La fonction de la croisade dans *Jehan de Saintré*," *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales (XIIIe-XVe s.)* 1 (1996): 193-204 (esp. 194-5). It is also important to point out how many of the romances and other Burgundian confections contained in Jean de Wavrin's library were specifically concerned with crusading. On this, see Antoinette Naber, "Les manuscrits d'un bibliophile bourguignon du XVe siècle, Jean de Wavrin," *Revue du Nord* 72, no. 284 (Jan-Mar 1990): 23-48 (esp. 38-40).

Wavrin, who was only 26 years old when he set sail from Venice in July 1444. Yet as he quickly learned in the churning Straits and on the freezing Danube, high stakes can produce spectacular failures; and we *do* get a clear if oblique sense of the disappointment that met Waleran's homecoming in early 1446. Courtiers were clearly aware, as one writer put it, that the Burgundian fleet and its sailors "ne profitèrent guère à la chestienté, ne aussi ne fut faite chose qui fust à leur profit."<sup>215</sup> Such criticism demanded a response from the Wavrins – and as my reading of their expedition narrative will demonstrate, the text serves in the first instance as a project of justification and ennoblement. Carefully deploying the themes and categories of chivalric virtue as they were understood in the Burgundian court, Waleran (the witness) and, I believe, Jean (the redactor) set out not just to rehabilitate, but also to laud, the *seigneur de Wavrin's* contribution to Duke Philip the Good's crusading project.

There is a fascinating trail to follow here, and I shall do my best to explore it in its entirety. Yet it is important to stress that this study will *not* be limited to analyzing the rhetoric of self-aggrandizement in the expedition narrative. Such

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<sup>215</sup> "Did not benefit Christianity, nor did anything to their own benefit" (my transl.): "Livre des faits de Jacques de Lalaing," 34. Antoinette Naber has even suggested that the failure of the expedition prevented Waleran, an "écuyer banneret" (banneret-squire), from earning the formal title of "chevalier" (knight); see "Jean de Wavrin, un bibliophile," 284, n. 12. (Note, however, that a 1475 administrative list does ascribe the title "messire" to Waleran; see Cools, "Le prince," 404.) I shall consider the evidence concerning contemporary reactions to the Wavrin expedition in more detail in Chapter 3 (below). For now it is important to note, à propos of Naber's observation, that I use the terms "knight" and "knightly" in a non-restrictive and generic sense throughout this study. Waleran belonged to a caste and profession whose members aspired to knightly status and modelled knightly virtues; I shall therefore describe him in the same terms as men such as Geoffroy de Thoisy, who were formally dubbed.

strategies, of course, are hardly surprising in their context, and studied in isolation they offer only limited insights into the concerns, preoccupations, and discursive facilities of these fifteenth-century fighting men. Things become much more interesting, however, when we begin to identify *other* rhetorical imperatives at work in the text. These separate, sometimes contending concerns and interests – about the political demands placed upon a crusade leader, about the fearsome power of the Ottoman foe, about the need for caution, *mesure* and new military strategies – press in on the text, unsettling its clean panegyrics, problematizing its claims, blunting its thrust.

This blending of rhetorical concerns and emphases is most clearly revealed in the tensions and ambiguities, the points of unevenness and contradiction, which periodically disturb Wavrin's narrative. In this study, therefore, I am keenly interested not only in their rhetorical achievements, but also in the narrative and textual *differences* which emerge within their chronicle. My analysis of this phenomenon begins in the next chapter, which provides an introduction both to the expedition narrative and to its main sources of tension and ambiguity: composite authorship, source redaction, and rhetorical multivocality. In the two subsequent chapters, I shall expand on this last point, undertaking close readings that consider how the author(s)' contending rhetorical objectives create important and revealing fissures between chivalric apologetics on one hand, and personal and strategic concerns, anxieties and arguments on the other.

What I *will not* do, in making these arguments, is to adopt a tone of modernist condescension or conceit. Quite the contrary: I shall argue that this narrative difference is the mark of a certain kind of cultural sophistication. For while the author(s)' culture requires them to articulate and justify their actions in terms of the "cult of prowess" that surrounds them, they as members of a military caste have a more subtle knowledge of the pragmatics of warfare and the political exigencies of a campaign – and they have an apparent need to express this knowledge. Hence they speak subtly and skillfully, both within *and* from the margins and perimeters of Burgundian chivalric ideology. In my concluding chapter, I shall consider the properly *historical* significance of this narrative complexity, reflecting on the ways in which it prompts us to rethink our perspectives upon (and our stereotypes concerning) the supposedly facile and derivative character of Burgundian courtly discourse.

This is an ambitious plan. But as it rests upon close readings of a complex narrative, it must start simply and modestly, by enumerating and considering certain fundamentals of the text. That is the business of my next chapter.



**Making a Burgundian crusading chronicle:**

Authorship, sources, rhetoric – and textual difference

“Or vous lairons ung petit des besongnes d’Angleterre..., si traiterons une incidence dune voyage quy environ ce tempz fut fait par le seigneur de Wavrin en terre de Sarrazins ainsi que vous orez.”<sup>216</sup> With these words, probably written around 1470, Jean de Wavrin introduced a long digression – and a late addition – into the already uneven and geographically variegated final volume of his *Anciennes Chroniques d’Angleterre*.<sup>217</sup> The narrative that follows, which appears in just one of the three extant copies of the *sixiesme volume*,<sup>218</sup> is remarkable by any measure. It is the longest, most detailed, most thematically ambiguous, and most ideologically fraught crusading chronicle written by a Burgundian hand in the era of the Valois dukes. It recounts significant crusading ventures of the mid-fifteenth century – the Hungarian

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<sup>216</sup> “Now we shall leave off for a short while speaking of the affairs of England..., to consider a voyage that was taken by the Lord of Wavrin into the land of the Saracens around this time, as you will hear” (my translation). *Recueil des Croniques et Anchiennes Istories de la Grant Bretaigne, A Present Nomme Engleterre, par Jehan de Waurin, Seigneur de Forestel*, ed. William Hardy, in *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores* ser. 39, vol. 5 (London: HMSO, 1891), 4. This is one of three major English- and/or French-language editions of the expedition narrative. The others are Émilie Dupont, *Anchiennes Chroniques d’Engleterre par Jehan de Wavrin, Seigneur du Forestel: Choix de Chapitres Inédits* t. III (Paris: Renouard, 1863), 2-162, and Nicolae Iorga, *La campagne des croisés sur le Danube* (1443) (Paris: Gamber, 1927). For the sake of economy, I shall follow Livia Visser-Fuchs’ convention, referring to these to editions as Wavrin-Hardy, Wavrin-Dupont and Wavrin-Iorga respectively. In the case of Wavrin-Hardy, I shall cite excerpts from the expedition narrative in the format “Wavrin-Hardy, 1,” and other excerpts from the *Anciennes Chroniques*, some of which occur in other volumes, in the format “Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 1.”

<sup>217</sup> For these and a great many other observations concerning Wavrin’s manuscript, I am deeply indebted to Livia Visser-Fuchs’s brilliant and sensitive study of the *Anciennes Chroniques*: *Warwick and Wavrin: Two case studies on the literary background and propaganda of Anglo-Burgundian relations in the Yorkist period* (see reference above).

<sup>218</sup> The narrative appears in Paris BnF fr. 84 (see below). Two “pirated” redactions of the sixth volume, from which the expedition story is absent, occur in Paris BnF fr. 20358, and Vienna ÖN 2546. See Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 331.

“Long Campaign,” the Crusade of Varna, and Waleran de Wavrin’s subsequent expedition to the Balkans – with a vividness and, often, a level of rhetorical sophistication that are comparable to the most important French accounts of the disaster at Nicopolis fifty years earlier.<sup>219</sup> It provides unique testimony to facts and events of Waleran’s colourful but ultimately fruitless naval adventures. And yet, as Robert Schwoebel and more recently Georges Le Brusque have remarked, it has been largely ignored by literary scholars of late medieval historiography.<sup>220</sup>

This oversight, though regrettable, is understandable in light of the critical prejudices I discussed in my introduction.<sup>221</sup> Nestled within a collection of copied, borrowed and lightly-redacted texts – those *Anciennes Chroniques* which Jean de Wavrin compiled, as Livia Visser-Fuchs has shown, in the manner of a dilettante<sup>222</sup> – the expedition narrative may be overlooked by scholars in search of authors whose “originality” seems also to recommend their work for its depth and accuracy. A Jean Dufournet, who has derided Wavrin for his slavish imitation and lack of

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<sup>219</sup> I have in mind especially the chronicles of Jean Froissart and the Religieux de Saint-Denis. The 1396 battle of Nicopolis, which was led by John of Nevers, son of Duke Philip the Bold of Burgundy (see Chapter 1 above), occurred before the formation of an “indigenous” Burgundian historical culture – though Froissart is considered to have been a primary exemplar for several of the historians writing in or known to the Burgundian court. His *Chroniques* were themselves well-known there. See Laetitia LeGuay, *Les princes de Bourgogne lecteurs de Froissart: les rapports entre le texte et l’image dans les manuscrits enluminés du livre IV des Chroniques* (Turnout: Brepols, CNRS, 1998).

<sup>220</sup> See Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453-1517)* (Nieuwkoop: de Graaf, 1967), 67; cited in Georges Le Brusque, “Des chevaliers,” 258. A notable exception, in addition to Le Brusque’s and Agrigoroaei’s essays, is Danielle Quérue’s “La survivance de l’esprit de croisade au XV siècle : le témoignage des chroniqueurs bourguignons” (*Revue de l’Institut catholique de Paris* 22 (1987): 89-97), which offers a very brief treatment of the text. This is in stark contrast, as I suggested above, to the very extensive use to which political and diplomatic historians have put the expedition narrative. The work of Henri Taparel, Roger Degryse, Arjo Vanderjagt and especially Jacques Paviot bears witness to the importance of the text as a source of unique facts on the context and the conduct of Waleran de Wavrin’s expedition.

<sup>221</sup> See my discussion of scholarship on Burgundian historiography and the Huizinga-Dufournet thesis in the introduction, and again in Chapter 5 (below).

<sup>222</sup> On Wavrin’s method, see below and Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 233-63.

“intelligence,” would expect to find nothing of value in the *Anciennes Chroniques*.<sup>223</sup>

Put off by what he regards as the derivative character of the work as a whole, he would be disinclined either to recognize or to examine its anomalous parts.

The “anomalous” status of our narrative also explains why those who *are* sensitive to the historical value of Wavrin’s endeavours tend to set it on the periphery of their analyses. Unlike much of the *Anciennes Chroniques*, it reveals nothing about Wavrin’s anglophilia or the history of Anglo-Burgundian relations; it therefore does not speak to the research interests of Alain Marchandisse, and it only indirectly concerns those of Visser-Fuchs.<sup>224</sup> Moreover, the narrative raises puzzling questions of genre and authorship that invite categorizations which may tend to obscure its fascinating complexity. Visser-Fuchs has suggested that the text should be read primarily as a “newsletter,” an eyewitness summary of a contemporary event written by either by a participant – in this case, by Waleran himself – or by a travelling scribe. This is an attractive thesis which speaks both to Wavrin’s compositional method and to the manuscript evidence: several other self-contained texts, dealing with events such as the Portuguese conquest of Arzilla in 1471 and the return of Edward IV to England after his exile in Burgundy, were interpolated in the sixth volume.<sup>225</sup> Visser-Fuchs examines and parses these sources in detail; and based

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<sup>223</sup> See Dufournet, *La Destruction des Myths*, 10.

<sup>224</sup> See Marchandisse, “Jean de Wavrin, un chroniqueur.” On Visser-Fuchs, see [f.n. 217](#) above.

<sup>225</sup> See Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 264-86; also Visser-Fuchs, “Jean de Wavrin and the English newsletters: the Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire,” *Nottingham Medieval Studies* xlvii (2003): 217-35. In some cases, such as the Arzilla passage, there is limited editorial intervention in the source text(s); in others, such as the account of Edward IV’s “arrival,” which was apparently based on several sources, including an earlier Burgundian redaction of a letter produced by Edward’s signet office in London, Wavrin appears to have “enlivened” the text with

on her findings, it is not hard to imagine that Wavrin might have obtained an expedition account from his nephew – the very person to whom he dedicated the *Anciennes Chroniques* – and inserted it into a late version of the compilation.<sup>226</sup>

I shall consider the evidence supporting this thesis, as well as the internal features that urge certain qualifications to it, in my section on authorship and composition. For the moment, however, I must return to the question of categorization. Despite the great value of Visser-Fuchs' insights into Wavrin's use of contemporary reports in his writing, I am not sure that her definition of the newsletter as a genre – an attempt, as she puts it, to record contemporary events in an “accurate and trustworthy” way, but not “consciously...to ‘make history’ in a literary sense” – is nuanced enough to inform her own sensitive studies of the rhetorical texture of Wavrin's sources.<sup>227</sup> It certainly poses problems for my reading of the expedition narrative. Whether or not one accepts the claim that the author/redactor aspired to some recognizable ethic of “objectivity,” the contours of his narrative are certainly more complex, variegated and ambiguous than the newsletter hermeneutic may allow us to imagine.

The text is embroidered, in the first place, with a variety of *topoi* and conventions that are common to late medieval historiography: epic and romance

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details and additions (see *Warwick and Wavrin*, 282-83, and Visser-Fuchs, “Edward IV's ‘memoir on paper’ to Charles, Duke of Burgundy: the so-called ‘Short Version of the Arrivall,’” *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 36 (1992): 167-227 (esp. 182)).

<sup>226</sup> See Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 212-13.

<sup>227</sup> Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 264. Certainly Wavrin's *own* embellishments of some of his newsletter sources seemed to entail a self-consciously literary exercise in historiography; see, further to [f.n. 225 above](#), Visser-Fuchs' notes on Wavrin's “romantic” tone and “fictional commonplaces” (*Warwick and Wavrin*, 283).

themes, traditional forms of direct discourse,<sup>228</sup> episodic *entrelacement*, narrative interventions. This literary substructure, to be sure, is neither even nor consistent; there are striking differences between episodes, probably because they were drawn and adapted from different textual sources.<sup>229</sup> In particular, as Georges Le Brusque has noted, the accounts of Waleran's experiences in the Balkans tend to be related in a more naturalistic manner than the contextual episodes that precede them.<sup>230</sup> But these passages too make use of numerous literary themes and tropes; and like all of the episodes included in the narrative, they demand the sort of fine-grained textual analysis upon which Visser-Fuchs' definition tends to foreclose.

Moreover, by framing the definition as she does – distinguishing between historical accounts that are meant merely to be factual and those that contain more self-consciously literary elements – Visser-Fuchs posits a dichotomy between typological and realist writing that merits scrutiny. As I shall argue in my critique of Georges LeBrusque's work, such distinctions may be perfectly useful in comparing and evaluating the narrative modes and techniques of different authors. But they may also tend to obscure the fact that *all* historical exposition, whether or not it happens to deploy particular fictional conventions, necessarily involves rhetorical strategies of ordering, continuity, emphasis and suppression.<sup>231</sup> All such writing, in

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<sup>228</sup> On the possibility that the expedition narrative includes speeches "in the Livian and Tacitean tradition," see Georges Le Brusque, "From Agincourt (1415) to Fornovo (1495): Aspects of the Writing of Warfare in French and Burgundian 15<sup>th</sup> Century Historiographical Literature" (PhD thesis, King's College London, 2001), 197.

<sup>229</sup> See my discussion on source redaction below and in Appendix B.

<sup>230</sup> Le Brusque, "From Agincourt to Fornovo," 201.

<sup>231</sup> For the classic discussion of narrativity in historical writing, see Hayden White, "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact," in *The Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978), 81-100.

a word, is “literary”; no narrative text, and certainly not Wavrin’s, can (or should) be regarded as naively realist.

Nor are the compositional strategies an author employs ever “innocent” in a political, ideological or discursive sense. They are closely linked to the historical and social circumstances in which she writes: her beliefs about and intentions for her audience, her rhetorical objectives and apologetic goals, and the discursive environment which provides her with language, metaphor and ways to make sense of the world. This is, to borrow again from Gabrielle Spiegel’s important essay, the “social logic” of the medieval text. Attempting to understand this logic is not just an exercise in critical aesthetics, but a properly *historical* endeavour – one that tries, through deep and careful reading, to cast a new light on the cultural and political milieu in which a text is produced. It is the approach that I propose to take to my study of the complex and thematically ambiguous expedition narrative.

Doing so, as I suggested in my introduction, will involve me in two broad areas of inquiry: first, trying to understand the political and social imperatives underlying the rhetorical strategies, the suppressions, omissions and emphases, that appear in the text; and second, reading for and analyzing the traces of ambient discourses – ways of looking at and narrating events that reveal peculiarly “Burgundian” concerns and preoccupations – that one finds within it. This will require close attention to the sites of narrative tension, ambiguity and difference to which I referred above – for it is there, where the discursive garment gapes, that the pressures of contrary rhetorical and redactive motion are most evident. It will also

demand that I attend to the historical context of the work and to the circumstances of its composition; for without doing so, I would run the risk of producing a kind of naïve formalism that is unmoored from the culture which I am seeking to interrogate.

This all entails a somewhat systematic and empirical approach to my project – one that is already well underway. Having reviewed the *social* context and political stakes of the narrative in Chapter 1, I shall now move on to consider its *textual* fundamentals. In the pages that follow, I shall offer a brief synopsis of the expedition narrative, tracing its complex narrative arc over a collection of episodes which seem riven by ambiguities, repetitions and suppressions. I shall then consider the reasons for and critical implications of these textual differences. Three sources – mixed authorship, multiple source redaction, and the interplay of different, often contending rhetorical objectives – appear to offer the best explanations; the latter, as we shall see, also provide us with oblique evidence of significant political acuity and discursive sophistication within the text. For this very lack of closure, these very seams and sites of aporia, testify to the skills of at least one Burgundian chronicler, and probably also one Burgundian warrior, to speak both within *and* on the margins of contemporary chivalric discourse. I shall pursue this argument in more detail below; now, however, it is time to turn to Wavrin's story.

### **‘Une incidence d’un voyage’: A brief synopsis of the narrative**

The narrative of Waleran de Wavrin’s excursion into the Black Sea and Danube occupies some 104 manuscript pages<sup>232</sup> in the “Gruuthuse” redaction of the *Anciennes Chroniques d’Engleterre* – the only complete version of the *Chroniques* in existence.<sup>233</sup> As such it qualifies as the longest indigenous Burgundian crusading chronicle; and – what is more exciting for historians of late medieval crusading and warfare – it devotes just less than half of its text to a first-hand account of Waleran de Wavrin’s expedition to the Black Sea and Danube in 1445, a campaign which seems not to have been described comprehensively or in detail by any other western writer. Though the full text is divided into eighteen chapters,<sup>234</sup> the lengthy Black Sea/Danube section, which extends from the mid-point to the end of the narrative, contains only five chapter breaks. This suggests the possibility that some of the earlier breaks mark editorial “seams” between materials drawn or adapted from other sources – materials which are tightly interwoven to provide a kind of geopolitical context for Waleran’s adventures.

Not all of these chapter breaks necessarily constitute shifts in source materials, however; in fact, a detailed synopsis of each of the chapters in isolation might actually *obscure* the text’s narrative infrastructure. With this in mind, I have

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<sup>232</sup> The narrative stretches to 160 pages in the Wavrin-Dupont edition, to 115 pages in Wavrin-Hardy, and to 88 pages in the more condensed Wavrin-Iorga.

<sup>233</sup> The “Gruuthuse redaction,” so named by Visser-Fuchs because it was contained in the library of Louis de Gruuthuse, a prominent Burgundian courtier and bibliophile, is held by the manuscripts department of the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris (BN fr. 74-85); the expedition narrative appears in BN fr. 84. For a detailed overview of the various manuscript versions of the *Anciennes Chroniques*, see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 322-29.

<sup>234</sup> Volume 6, Book 1, Chapters II to XIX. As noted above, Chapter I of this book is devoted to a short précis of events in England in 1450. See Wavrin-Hardy, 3-4.



surveyed the text and divided it into thematic parts – each of which, owing to differences in sources and subject matter, offers insights into the editor’s techniques of composition. The first part, which provides a geopolitical context for the events on the Bosphorus and the Danube, recounts events of 1442-43 that occurred prior to, or outside the ambit of, Waleran’s expedition to the East. It appears to rely on a number of sources, written and (perhaps) oral, which are “foreign” to the redactor’s area of expertise; he weaves them together carefully, if at times unevenly.<sup>235</sup>

The second and central part of the narrative describes the events surrounding the ill-fated crusade of Varna in autumn 1444 – a campaign preceded by a series of miscalculations, perjuries and failures. It is here that the Burgundians, who participated peripherally in the Varna project, are introduced to the narrative; the redactor relies extensively on Waleran’s first-hand testimony to tell their story, which is blended deftly with other reportage. Not surprisingly, given Duke Philip’s substantial investments in both the military infrastructure and the ideology of the disastrous venture, the chapters contained in this section are notable for their exculpatory language and their strategies of self-promotion.

Such tactics continue to be employed in the third, and longest, part of the text, an account of the *capitaine-général*’s mini-crusade with the forces of Vlad Dracul and János Hunyadi on the Black Sea and the Danube River in 1445. But this part is also fascinating for its attention to naturalistic detail, to chivalric strategy, and to the psychology of naval warfare – and for the tensions and ambiguities that result from

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<sup>235</sup> When examined critically, therefore, this part of the text yields especially helpful insights into the narrator’s preferred redactive and historiographical methods. See below and Appendix B.

the “collision” of these interests with the narrator’s apologetic imperatives. With this in mind, I shall mine this section for some of my most important insights into the rhetorical and discursive complexity of the text<sup>236</sup> – the narrative multivocality which puts the lie to critical prejudices concerning the supposedly derivative, arid and typological character of Burgundian composition in general, and of Jean de Wavrin’s texts in particular.

In order to avoid creating unnecessary rhetorical tensions in *my own* text, of course, it is important not to tarry long in the realm of pure description. Hence I shall present a highly abbreviated synopsis, intended to familiarize the reader only with the broad contours of the narrative. Later, when my analysis calls for more detailed descriptions of particular passages, I shall provide these together with the appropriate critical reflections.

*Part 1: Geopolitical context (Ch II-V, VII-VIII).*<sup>237</sup> Wavrin opens his narrative with a compelling tale of treachery: Sultan Murad, who is jealous of the chivalrous lord of Wallachia (Vlad Dracul), first invites him to a banquet then treacherously imprisons him.<sup>238</sup> Murad takes this opportunity to wage war on the Vlachs, who appoint János Hunyadi, a lord of Transylvania, as their captain. Taking refuge in the mountains, the Vlachs wait for the arrogant Turks to divide their forces, then they

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<sup>236</sup> I am grateful to David Wrisley for this formulation, which appears, as I noted above, in his superb 2007 study of Jean Germain’s *Mappemonde Spirituelle*. See Introduction (above).

<sup>237</sup> Chapter I of Volume 6 of the *Anciennes Chroniques* is devoted to matters unrelated to the Crusade of Varna; the expedition narrative begins in Chapter II.

<sup>238</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, The story of Dracul’s alleged imprisonment at the hands of the sultan seems to have produced as much controversy and confusion among contemporary sources as among modern historians. See Appendix B.

attack the Turkish camp and ambush the returning raiders (Ch II).<sup>239</sup> The vengeful sultan plots another attack; once again, his raiders penetrate deep into Wallachian and Transylvanian territory. This time Hunyadi's forces ambush them as they are returning, laden with booty, across the Danube. The sultan is so enraged by his losses that he cuts off his commander's head (Ch III).<sup>240</sup>

Hunyadi is then summoned to a Hungarian parliament at Buda, where he is named voevode, or captain, of Hungary (Ch IV).<sup>241</sup> The council also sends an embassy to Poland begging the young King Wladyslaw to take the throne of Hungary, vacant because the infant King Ladislas is being held by the German Emperor.<sup>242</sup> Wladyslaw agrees, and with the aid and support of a new papal legate (Cardinal Caesarini), he embarks on a crusade south of the Danube. The Christians defeat the Turks in a dramatic victory, but they fail to capitalize on it by pursuing Murad's forces further south (Ch V).<sup>243</sup> Following a brief detour to the Burgundian court (Ch VI, discussed in Part II below), the scene returns to Adrianople, where the sultan, shocked and aggrieved by his losses, decides to release Dracul on a promise never to make war on him again (Ch VII).<sup>244</sup>

Then, in an apparent repetition of the events of Chapter V, the Hungarian King and the Legate organize another crusade to the south. Once again they defeat

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<sup>239</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 5-8. This seems to be an account of the battle of Gyulafahérvár (23 March 1442); see Appendix B.

<sup>240</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 9-12. This seems to be an account of Hunyadi's momentous victory in the Ialomita valley in September 1442. See my discussion in Appendix B.

<sup>241</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 12-13. See Appendix B.

<sup>242</sup> This account of Wladyslaw's coronation, which occurred in 1440, introduces an important chronological distortion into the narrative. See Appendix B.

<sup>243</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 13-19. This is the first of two accounts of the Hungarians' so-called "Long Campaign" of 1443. For a full discussion, see Appendix B.

<sup>244</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 23-5. See Appendix B.

the Turks in a clamorous and bloody encounter; but this time, as they try to pursue their enemies across the mountains, they are stalled by a bitter storm that kills more than half of them. Returning to Buda, they decide that the Legate should announce their great victories to all Christendom, but should “keep quiet” about their dramatic losses in the Pass (Ch VIII).<sup>245</sup>

*Part 2. The crusade of Varna (Ch VI, IX-XIV).* Chapter VI, which is inserted between the two accounts of the Hungarian “Long Campaign,” shifts the action to the Burgundian court. Notified by the pope of the recent Christian victories,<sup>246</sup> Duke Philip is “overcome by the desire” to aid Christendom. At the urging of the Greek ambassador to help guard the Bosphorus, he appoints Waleran de Wavrin as his captain-general, and decides (on Waleran’s advice) to lease an additional four galleys from the Venetians (Ch VI).<sup>247</sup> Later (in Chapter IX), Duke Philip receives another appeal from the pope, but he cannot respond until he has dealt with the Duke of Saxony’s incursion into his “aunt’s” territories in Luxembourg.<sup>248</sup> He finally takes action after Christmas (1443), dividing his fleet into two segments: Waleran goes to Venice to oversee the arming of the leased galleys, and other courtiers head to Nice and Provence, where his own ships are being armed.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 25-30; see Appendix B.

<sup>246</sup> Though Wavrin positions this episode after the first account of the Hungarian Long Campaign, the victories that Philip actually heard about in the late autumn of 1442 were those of János Hunyadi in the Ialomita Valley. See below.

<sup>247</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 19-23. See below for a more detailed overview of this episode.

<sup>248</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 31-2.

<sup>249</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 32.

The Nice contingent, responding to another papal plea sails to Rhodes to help defend the island against a Mamluk incursion. The Burgundians distinguish themselves in a series of encounters; Geoffroy de Thoisy is knighted for his valour.<sup>250</sup> Meanwhile, Waleran sails for Constantinople; en route, he re-enacts the landing of Achilles and the Greek princes by skirmishing with Turks near the site of ancient Troy (Ch IX).<sup>251</sup> The action then shifts to Buda, where young King Wladyslaw, having heard no news from Rome, forges a peace treaty with the sultan. Upon his return the papal legate, Cardinal Caesarini, is outraged at this news; he orders the Hungarians to revoke the treaty and preaches a crusade throughout their lands. The king assembles an army in the autumn (of 1444), and prepares to march southward (Ch X).<sup>252</sup>

Back on the Bosphorus, Waleran and his allies are perplexed when a Turkish envoy provides them with proof of the truce; their concerns are alleviated, however, by a messenger from the legate who tells them to ignore it (Ch XI).<sup>253</sup> Hearing that the Turks plan to use Genoese aid to occupy both shores of the Bosphorus, Waleran and his Ragusan ally inspect the Straits. They conclude that such a tactic will make it impossible for the fleet to guard them; but despite their entreaties, the Greek emperor refuses to defend the European coast. The Turks carry out their plan, and they begin their crossing one evening in October. The Christian fleet, harried on

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<sup>250</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 33-8. See below for a more detailed overview of this episode.

<sup>251</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 38-41. On Wavrin's use, and suppression, of classical precedents in the expedition narrative, see Chapter 4 (below).

<sup>252</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 41-4.

<sup>253</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 44-7. For a detailed overview and discussion of this section, see below and Chapter 3.

both sides by artillery and stalled by a “diabolical” tempest, can do little more than watch them pass. A Turkish envoy, speaking with Waleran, vows they will avenge the Hungarians’ perjury (Ch XII).<sup>254</sup>

Murad’s men then travel to Adrianople to meet their comrades; in early November, the full Turkish force confronts Wladyslaw’s army at the Black Sea port of Varna. Things begin well for the crusaders, who await the Turks on a plain at the foot of the mountains (Ch XIII)<sup>255</sup>; a Turkish commander, “Caraiabay” (Karaca Bey), leads his forces in a headlong rush down the mountainside. Hunyadi charges them heroically, killing the bey and several of the leading attackers by himself. The Turks take flight and a multitude are killed. But then the headstrong Polish king – urged on by Hungarian knights who are jealous of Hunyadi’s success, and heedless of Hunyadi’s own words of caution – leads a charge up the mountain. He is overwhelmed and killed by the Turks, and the Christians are forced to retreat (Ch XIV).<sup>256</sup>

*Part 3. Adventures on the Black Sea and the Danube (Ch XV-XIX).* In the aftermath of the disaster, Waleran and his allies winter at Constatinople. After Easter, they set out in search of the young Hungarian king, who is rumoured to have survived; they also send an ambassador, Pedro Vásquez de Saavedra, to propose a new crusade project to Hunyadi. Waleran sails by the site of mythic Mangalia, built

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<sup>254</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 47-51. See below for a detailed discussion of this section.

<sup>255</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 51-4.

<sup>256</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 54-7.

by the Amazon Queen Penthesilia (Ch XV)<sup>257</sup>; he also seizes some Turkish merchant vessels laden with wheat, and urges the emperor of Trebizond to secure the release of Thoisy, who has been captured as a result of his own piracy in the Black Sea.<sup>258</sup>

The Hungarian lords (remarkably) agree to the Burgundians' proposal, undertaking to meet Waleran at Nicopolis in September. In view of this, Waleran, the Cardinal of Venice, and their Wallachian allies agree that the western fleet, now in the Black Sea, has ample time to attack Turkish strongholds on the shores of the Danube, en route to Nicopolis.<sup>259</sup>

The first if these is the city of "Triest" (Silistra). On their approach to the city, Waleran and the Wallachians are angered by the delays – and the seeming complacency – of the Cardinal of Venice. But he has learned that at least 30,000 Turkish cavalry are waiting ambush the crusaders, so the attack is called off.<sup>260</sup> A Turkish prince and enemy of the sultan tries, but fails, to win the local "subashis" to Waleran's cause.<sup>261</sup> The captain-general then leads an advance mission to seek a safe haven up the river. He arrives near the castle of "Turquant" (Tutrakan), and is persuaded by Dracul to attack the Turkish guard there. Despite his misgivings over the cardinal's delay, Waleran successfully storms and captures the castle; his men kill the subashi after lighting a spectacular fire under his tower keep. A conflict over the

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<sup>257</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 57-66.

<sup>258</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 66-7.

<sup>259</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 67-72.

<sup>260</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 72-5.

<sup>261</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 75-8.

spoils erupts between the westerners and the Vlachs<sup>262</sup>, but this is only the beginning of Waleran's problems. When the cardinal finally arrives, he is furious that the captain has attacked Tutrakan without his permission. After a tense exchange – which Waleran manipulates to his advantage – the two men are reconciled (Ch XVI).<sup>263</sup>

Two days later, the Christian fleet lays siege to Giurgiu. The overzealous Vlachs burst a Christian bombard, and Waleran – anxious to prove his valour – carries firewood and badly aggravates an injury he had suffered at Tutrakan.<sup>264</sup> Dracul is anxious to take the castle intact, so he convinces the Christian lords to accept the Turks' surrender. But his son reveals their vengeful plan to the ailing Waleran: having sent the Ottomans away with a safeconduct, the Vlachs will ambush them on the other side of the Danube (Ch XVII).<sup>265</sup> Dracul then begs the Christian lords to seize the castle of "Roussico" (Ruse), two hours down the river. The Turks who are stationed there flee immediately; and in their wake, a large number of Bulgarian Christians come to be rescued and transported to Wallachia.<sup>266</sup>

The fleet next moves on to Nicopolis, where the Christians launch an unsuccessful siege of the tower. Hunyadi's Hungarians meet up with them during the siege, and the voevode comes to pay his respects to Waleran in his sick bed.<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 78-86. See my discussion in Chapter 3 (below) of the implications of this passage for Waleran de Wavrin's chivalric leadership.

<sup>263</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 87-92. On Wavrin's strategic "framing" of this exchange, see Chapter 3 (below).

<sup>264</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 92-8. On the implications of Waleran's concern over chivalric display, even in a purely symbolic form, see Chapter 3 (below).

<sup>265</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 98-102. On Waleran's efforts to avoid perjury, see Chapter 3 (below).

<sup>266</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 102-5.

<sup>267</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 105-10.



The lords resolve to travel upstream so they can give battle to the sultan's forces on land; on the way, they trick the pursuing Ottomans into fleeing by launching a mock night-attack.<sup>268</sup> When they reach their landing-point, the Turkish forces once again withdraw into Bulgaria, forcing Hunyadi to make a difficult decision: the Christians must withdraw, lest they become vulnerable to ambush and scorched-earth tactics.<sup>269</sup> Waleran and the Cardinal, dejected, agree to sail back to Constantinople before the river freezes. On his return, Waleran is fêted and welcomed not only by the Greek emperor – who gives him relics for the church at Lille – but also by the doge of Venice, the Pope, and Duke Philip himself.<sup>270</sup>

#### **Sources of textual difference: Authorship, redaction, rhetoric**

So ends our tale, returning to the theme of the chivalric feast with which it started. There is a pleasing narrative symmetry here which testifies to Wavrin's skills as a redactor and storyteller. But lest I overstate the "closure" of the text, it is important to note that my filtered and distilled summary tends to mask a great deal of unevenness, repetition, awkwardness and ambiguity in Wavrin's sprawling confection. From the perspective of our analysis, these are *salutary* things. Far from marking the chronicler's ineptness or naivety, they offer points of entry into his enterprise: sites where, as Sharon Kinoshita puts it, he has conducted particular

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<sup>268</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 110-14. On the night attack and the "performance" of chivalry in the Burgundian ethos, see Chapter 3 (below).

<sup>269</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 114-17. On Hunyadi's speech, which functions in the narrative as part of a larger critique of temerity against the Ottomans, see Chapter 4 (below).

<sup>270</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 117-19.

kinds of literary and historical work.<sup>271</sup> I shall expend a lot of intellectual energy in analyzing this work, so it makes sense first to establish the *sources* of this disparity.

Whence comes the chaos that threatens Wavrin's literary order?

The answer lies in three places. One of these has been well-chronicled by Livia Visser-Fuchs in her superb study of the *Anciennes Chroniques*: the expedition narrative, like the larger collection in which it is compiled, seems clearly to be a *redacted* text which blends a number of independent textual sources into a single, fluid (but often uneven) chronological framework. These include two separate accounts of the Hungarian "Long Campaign" of 1443 (presented in Chapters V and VIII) and an independent report on the Burgundian defence of Rhodes (presented in Chapter IX), among others. Moreover, despite Visser-Fuchs' suggestion that Jean de Wavrin normally edited his sources very lightly, there is strong evidence to suggest that our text's account of Hunyadi's wars and Dracul's capture (appearing in Chapters II and III) may have been crafted from a *number* of contemporary sources, which the narrator reframed and distilled in a fashion particularly pleasing to Burgundian audiences. Substantiating these claims takes a good deal of space; I have therefore devoted a full appendix to the task (Appendix B, below).

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<sup>271</sup> The phrase appears in Kinoshita's important essay, "Brave New Worlds: Robert de Clari's *La Conquête de Constantinople* (Ch 5)," in Kinoshita, *Medieval Boundaries: Rethinking Difference in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). I shall consider Kinoshita's claims in more detail in Chapter 4 (below). It is also important to note that another phrase used frequently in this essay, "Where the garment gapes," is reminiscent of a similar phrase, used in a different context and with rather different connotations, by Roland Barthes in his *The Pleasure of the Text* (1973). This poetic similarity is not meant to be referential; I am not making specifically Barthesian claims about Wavrin's narrative. The metaphor does strike me as useful, however, in pointing to the contrary motions of Wavrin's rhetoric which, in upsetting narrative uniformity or closure, reveal the desires and imperatives that underwrite them.

For the moment, it is sufficient to note that these redactive “moves” produce a number of tensions in the text – including, among other things, significant differences in style, diction and tone; chronological ambiguities and distortions; and clear errors in fact, such as the claim that Dracul suffers in captivity for “four years,” when Wavrin’s own organization of events suggests that it could only have been one or two.<sup>272</sup> These various problems, which I describe and analyze in detail in the appendix, suggest several hypotheses concerning the kinds of sources Wavrin consulted and the ways they might have reached his possession. As my discussion reveals, the answers can be maddeningly elusive.<sup>273</sup>

The situation is made even more complex by the fact that we are not sure *who* redacted the final version of the expedition narrative. It may have been Jean de Wavrin; or, as Visser-Fuchs suggests, Waleran himself may have provided his uncle with the text in its current incarnation, in the form of “newsletter.”<sup>274</sup> Ultimately, as Georges Le Brusque points out, it is impossible to know with any certainty.<sup>275</sup> But a close analysis of the narrative and a collection of related documents *has* led me to propose a two-part hypothesis: first, that the text contains a good deal of first-hand testimony from the captain-general himself, which may be derived from a document of his own authorship; and second, that Jean de Wavrin was probably responsible for redacting the expedition into its present form. The first proposition is supported by the clearly introspective, even autobiographical, tenor of some parts of the narrative;

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<sup>272</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 24. Wavrin’s arithmetic is seemingly irreconcilable with the series of events that have occurred since Dracul’s imprisonment, which is presented in Chapter II.

<sup>273</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>274</sup> See above and Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 264-86.

<sup>275</sup> See Le Brusque, “From Agincourt to Fornovo,” 187.

the second is supported by a number of textual features, including the use of certain conventional transitions, the appearance of a number of factual errors, and the emphasis on certain stylistic elements – all of them seemingly characteristic of Jean de Wavrin’s “pen.” I have presented my detailed argument for the possibility of Jean’s editorship in Appendix A (below).

If my suspicions are correct, then the “shared” and open authorship of the text is a second important source for its different (and often contending) narrative layers. When the text foregrounds an embassy by upsetting the chronology of courtly events, we may well see the influence of a second, less-informed textual redactor. Likewise, when the narrative seems to balance apologetics and strategic honesty – the depiction of Waleran as a *preux* warrior contending with candid revelations of his manipulation of chivalric symbology – two different soldierly voices may be speaking. I shall discuss this latter case in more detail in Chapter 3; for now it is important to dispel the sense that all of these differences result merely from redactive weakness or carelessness. For what they encode is not just the traces of different “hands” and “voices,” but also of different and multiple objectives – objectives a later redactor (Jean de Wavrin, in my formulation) may have knowingly admitted into his confection. This brings us to the most important part of our discussion.

### **‘Where the garment gapes’: Rhetoric and ambiguity**

Of all the sources of narrative tension and ambiguity in Wavrin’s narrative, the most critically significant, for our purposes, is often the most *subtle*. Not all of the incidents of textual difference stem strictly from divergent viewpoints or discrete conventions; some also seem to occur in passing, spoken at times in the voice of a single *raconteur* or within the framework of one or a few narrative episodes. Their primary source, as I suggested above, is the contrary motion of different, often contending, rhetorical objectives; and as such they are highly revealing – of political and reputational imperatives, of accepted modes of writing and thinking, and of courtiers’ skills at negotiating and even critiquing those modes. I shall devote the remainder of this study to examining such sites and their political and cultural implications. For the moment, it is useful to introduce the subjects of rhetorical embellishment and ambiguity by looking at two episodes in which both are manifestly at work: Wavrin’s depictions of the Burgundians’ greatest victory in the East, from which his protagonist was absent, and of their greatest defeat, for which he was partly responsible. Not surprisingly, these two episodes reflect an acute, indeed an almost visible, concern over defending and rehabilitating the reputation of the *seigneur de Wavrin*. Yet this very imperative brings the narrator into contact with inconvenient “others” – other facts, other texts, other rhetorical objectives – which render his prose unstable.

The success of four Burgundian galleys in helping the Knights Hospitallers to repel the naval forces of the Egyptian sultan from the island of Rhodes in the summer of 1444 proved to be a mixed blessing for the duke's "capitaine-général es metes de Levant."<sup>276</sup> On one hand, the skirmish brought glory to an expedition that was nominally under his command; as we shall see, crusade advocates such as Jean Germain celebrated the defence as a major crusading victory.<sup>277</sup> But one inconvenient fact could not be denied: Waleran himself had contributed nothing to a triumph that brought such glory to his lieutenant – and, some have suggested, his courtly rival<sup>278</sup> – Geoffroy de Thoisy. Thoisy was knighted at Rhodes; Waleran, unlike many of his fellow chamberlains, did not receive the coveted title. And whereas Thoisy spent the years after the expedition as a major figure in the duke's naval projects<sup>279</sup>, Waleran's subsequent role in Philip's *Kreuzzugspolitik* was more ambiguous, and seemingly more peripheral.<sup>280</sup>

Our narrator thus faced a two-pronged rhetorical challenge: even as he

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<sup>276</sup> "Captain-general on the confines of...the Levant": Wavrin-Hardy, 23. Here as elsewhere I have made use of the excellent English translation of the expedition narrative provided by Colin Imber in *The Crusade of Varna, 1443-45* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), a volume in Ashgate's Crusade Texts in Translation series. For this citation, see Imber, 117.

<sup>277</sup> See my discussion of other Burgundian accounts of the Rhodes episode in Chapter 3 (below).

<sup>278</sup> Discussing the advisory tracts that both Geoffroy and Waleran wrote in advance of Duke Philip's last crusading project in 1464, Monica Barsi notes that the "hypothèses de Thoisy...précèdent sans doute celles de Wavrin qui contest ponctuellement *son rival auprès du duc*" (emph. mine). See Barsi, "Constantinople à la cour de Bourgogne," 162.

<sup>279</sup> Thoisy became a ducal chamberlain in 1446; in 1448, Philip sent him to Anvers to supervise the construction of four new galleys meant to be deployed in the Mediterranean. See Henri Taparel, "Geoffroy de Thoisy: Une figure de la croisade bourguignonne au XVe siècle," *Le Moyen Age* 94, no. 3-4 (1988): 390.

<sup>280</sup> This is not to say that Waleran fell out of favour with Philip or that he was excluded from subsequent crusade planning and advocacy. For useful discussions, see M. Yans, "Waleran de Wavrin," 132-6, and Jacques Paviot, *Les ducs*, 147 and 169.

sought to celebrate and laud the Burgundians' triumph at Rhodes, he seems to have felt an urge to temper and mitigate Thoisy's achievements there. The result, as we shall see, is a two-part strategy: first, the narrator heightens the prominence of Waleran's own leadership by positioning the Rhodes episode *between* sections that focus on his own captainship and his prominence at court; and second, he frames the Rhodes passage in such a way as to efface Thoisy's leadership role there (but not, interestingly, to deny or downplay his personal valour). Each of these efforts results in certain, often very telling, forms of textual ambiguity and difference.

*Framing the episode: Waleran in Dijon and Tenedos.* If Geoffroy de Thoisy was indeed the *de facto* leader of the Rhodes expedition – and a *de jure* confidant of the duke's soon after his return to Valois lands – these special roles are nowhere visible in Wavrin's narrative. Instead, the two chapters of the *Anciennes Chroniques* dedicated to events in Dijon, Venice, Rhodes and Tenedos in 1443 and 1444 work concertedly to emphasize *Waleran's* prominence in court and his personal leadership of the entire Eastern campaign – an effort supported by the citation of insider details and the manipulation of chronology, among other things. In order to analyze this rhetorical "framing," and to consider its costs and benefits, it will be necessary to look more closely at these chapters (VI and IX), which are woven into passages depicting King Wladyslaw's deeds in the Long Campaign of 1443.

The sixth chapter is set in the afterglow of these crusading victories: a jubilant Pope Eugenius IV informs Philip the Good, whom he knows to be a "tres

christien et aimable prince,” of the Hungarian triumphs and of the urgent need for ships to guard the Straits of Constantinople. Seized by the “desir et voullente de faire armee quy feust a la loenge de Nostre Seigneur,” the duke sends an embassy to the pope to ask how he can be of service.<sup>281</sup> In the meantime he receives a Greek ambassador, Theodore Karystinos,<sup>282</sup> who makes a passionate plea on behalf of the Emperor for “men, artillery and money” to equip warships. Waleran de Wavrin, who is charged with protecting the ambassador, worries that sending people and goods so far would be “chose a laventure”; he advises Philip instead to contract with the Venetians to arm the galleys.<sup>283</sup> Philip concurs, and makes his offer – of seven galleys in all, including four armed in Venice – in a magnanimous speech to the ambassador, who hurries home delighted with what he has achieved.

The narrative then turns back to the action in the Balkans, recounting Wladyslaw’s 1443 expedition for a second time (Ch VII and VIII; see above). Returning to Dijon, Wavrin unveils a lengthy and detailed chapter (IX) which includes three discrete subsections. The first picks up where Chapter VI left off: Philip receives word from Pope Eugenius who begs – rather redundantly, as it turns out – that he send “la plus grant armee que il porroit, adfin de...garder la destroit de

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<sup>281</sup> “A very Christian and worthy prince”; “the desire to equip an expedition that would be in praise of our Lord Jesus Christ” (transl. Imber 115); Wavrin-Hardy 19-20.

<sup>282</sup> This is a rearrangement of events which serves to enhance Wavrin’s stature and reputation. As Jacques Paviot explains in his *Ducs de Bourgogne*, the news of the Ialomita victory (not the Long Campaign) was received at the court in the autumn of 1442, and the Conté embassy was away between December 1442 and March 1443. The Karystinos embassy did not arrive until June or July of 1443. See below for a detailed discussion.

<sup>283</sup> “Hazardous” (transl. Imber, 115); Wavrin-Hardy, 21. This is an example of the “amplification” of Waleran’s experience and wisdom in this passage; see my discussion below.



Constantinoble.”<sup>284</sup> Philip acknowledges the pope’s plea but cannot give it much consideration; he must devote his energies to defending his aunt, the duchess of Bavaria, whose territory of Luxembourg has been invaded by William, duke of Saxony. It is only at Christmas, after the “conquete de la ville et chastel de Luxembourg,” that Philip gives more thought to the naval expedition. He makes “son ordonnances”: Waleran, the captain-general of his fleet, will go to Venice to oversee the arming of his leased galleys there, while others – including Geoffroy de Thoisy and Regnauld de Confide, a knight of Rhodes – will arm and sail Philip’s own ships, which are being prepared in Provence.

Soon after the “gens d’armes” are dispersed, the pope asks for Waleran’s help in dealing with a new threat: the Mamluk sultan of Egypt is preparing a fleet to attack the isle of Rhodes by sea.<sup>285</sup> The Venetians refuse to let Waleran participate despite his “grant desir et voullente”; he therefore sends Thoisy and Confide, with their galleys, to aid the Hospitallers. The narrative that follows – largely borrowed, as Jacques Paviot has noted, from a report of Thoisy’s provenance – offers a rare account of a Christian victory in the East. The Burgundians shame their vacillating Castilian allies, also in Rhodes, into fighting with them; they surprise the Egyptian fleet, docked several miles away to prepare its artillery, with a round of cannon-fire; and then, when the fleet arrives and launches its siege, they defend the city artfully and boldly. They win special distinction in a sally to the St. Nicholas breakwater,

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<sup>284</sup> “As large a fleet as he could, in order to...guard the Straits of Constantinople” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 30-31.

<sup>285</sup> During the fifteenth century, Rhodes was one of only a few Christian outposts remaining in the Levant; it was home to, and defended by, the Knights Hospitallers.

where the Saracens have placed “gros engiens et bombardes”<sup>286</sup>; following the engagement, Thoisy is knighted for his heroism. Soon afterward, the Egyptian commander dies and the fleet withdraws.<sup>287</sup>

The chapter’s third sub-section is equally colourful, if rather less momentous: Waleran leaves Venice for the Levant in the company of his galleys, and, “[h]oping to re-enact the Greek landing in the Trojan war,”<sup>288</sup> he stops at the port of Dardanelle. Once on shore, Waleran and his men hold aloft Philip’s banner and give battle to a squadron of Turks. A few overzealous archers put the group – including Waleran – at risk, drawing them into an ambush; but thanks to the “archers and companions from the galleys,” the banner and the war-leaders are saved, and the Turks are compelled to flee.<sup>289</sup>

Thus the chapter ends, with a second successful skirmish – Waleran’s – standing as a kind of counterpoint and dramatic “dampener” to Thoisy’s. The effect is not accidental: by “insulating” the account of Geoffroy’s triumph on both sides by descriptions of Waleran’s crusading leadership, the narrative effectively frames the events at Rhodes as one *amongst several* victories, and as a key achievement within a campaign that is indebted as much to Waleran’s captaincy as to Duke Philip’s patronage. And by employing redactive and narrative strategies to foreground and promote the *seigneur de Wavrin*’s status in Philip’s court, it tends to mitigate the fact

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<sup>286</sup> “Great war-engines and bombards” (i.e. artillery; my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 36.

<sup>287</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 33-38.

<sup>288</sup> This is Colin Imber’s astute observation; he also remarks that there was “a widespread belief in the fifteenth century that the Turks were descendants of the Trojans” (Imber, 122, f.n. 35). I shall consider the broader issue of classical crusade precedents in Chapter 4 (below).

<sup>289</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 38-41.

that Waleran, though a chamberlain, appears not to have been in the inner circle of the duke's courtiers.<sup>290</sup>

The first of these tactics involves the distortion of chronology to foreground Waleran's role in the genesis of the Burgundian naval expedition. There is only one such intervention in this section, but it appears rather less naïve than the redactive inaccuracies that occur in the Long Campaign chapters: Wavrin "moves ahead" by several months the date of the Karystinos embassy at which the future *capitaine-général* plays an outspoken part.<sup>291</sup> This creates the impression that the Greek embassy was a kind of originary moment for the expedition, that Waleran was the duke's "right hand man" *ab initio*, and that an important part of the naval plan – the choice to lease ships from the Venetians – stemmed from his counsel. In fact, as Jacques Paviot notes in his study of these events, the Karystinos embassy occurred in late June or early July of 1443, several months after the pope had proposed the naval plan and Philip had begun to make rental inquiries of the Venetians.<sup>292</sup> Other allies and envoys, including the famed Juan de Capistrano and the "seigneur de Conté" – Guillaume le Jeune, Philip's messenger to the pope, who in Wavrin's version hadn't

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<sup>290</sup> On Waleran's status as a "less elevated" noble in the court, see Antoinette Naber, "Jean de Wavrin: Un bibliophile," 284.

<sup>291</sup> To be more precise, Wavrin inverts the order of events, claiming that Karystinos after Philip's own embassy to the pope had left (in December 1442), but before it had returned (in March 1442). He does not offer specific dates for these events; all we can say, to borrow from Jacques Paviot, is that Wavrin "a un peu embrouillé la chronologie" (*Les ducs*, 97).

<sup>292</sup> Paviot, *Les ducs*, 97.

yet brought papal instructions when the Greek embassy arrived – actually reached Philip’s court long before Karystinos did.<sup>293</sup>

If the intended benefit of this chronological inversion is to enhance Waleran’s diplomatic and military stature, it also results in unintended side-effects – that is, in tensions and ambiguities in the depiction of related “facts.” Given that Karystinos arrived in Burgundy relatively late, for example, we can suppose that it was not his intention to announce the details of the allied crusade plan to Philip,<sup>294</sup> but rather to sound a “supplementary” plea for assistance – spurred, perhaps, by Greek alarm at Turkish military might.<sup>295</sup> By suggesting otherwise, Wavrin makes his account of Conté’s message from the pope seem rather redundant: the Holy Father admonishes Philip (yet again) to send a fleet to defend the straits and advises him (yet again) of Hunyadi’s great victories.<sup>296</sup> These and other tensions<sup>297</sup> stem from Wavrin’s “bonne connaissance de la conjoncture,”<sup>298</sup> and they are more than a little ironic: neither the

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<sup>293</sup> See Paviot, *Les ducs*, 95-6. The extensive archival evidence presented by Paviot seems to belie Richard Vaughan’s claim that the Karystinos embassy occurred in March 1442; see Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 271 (and f.n. 1).

<sup>294</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 20-1. In fact, that the plan for a combined terrestrial assault/naval blockade did not originate with the King of Hungary and the Legate, as Wavrin suggests, but with Pope Eugenius IV himself, who subscribed to a strategic plan developed in 1439 by Jean Torzello. See Paviot, *Les ducs*, 92.

<sup>295</sup> As Paviot notes, both Olivier de la Marche and Jean Germain suggested that Karystinos was requesting aid out of fear of a planned Turkish siege of Constantinople; see *Les ducs*, 97. On Karystinos’ itinerary from May 1443 onward, see *Les ducs*, 96-7.

<sup>296</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 30-1.

<sup>297</sup> Wavrin also confuses the location of his events in a manner that betrays his chronological inversion. He states that Karystinos addressed Philip while his court was in Chalon-sur-Saône (in Chapter VI), and Conté “later” returned the papal message to the duke in Dijon (Chapter IX). In fact, Philip only went to Chalon in mid-summer 1443 – several months after he had heard from Conté in Dijon. See Wavrin-Hardy, 30; Paviot, *Les ducs*, 96; and Herman Vander Linden, *Itinéraires de Philippe le Bon*, 219.

<sup>298</sup> “Great familiarity with the circumstances”; the phrase is Paviot’s (*Les ducs*, 97). If the narrator was Jean and not Waleran, his “bonne connaissance” may have been based on detailed testimony

Burgundian memorialist Olivier de la Marche nor the author of the biography of Jacques de Lalaing, both of whom present the Karystinos embassy as the originary event for the crusade, seem to be aware of the Conté embassy. Hence the apologetic value of the Karystinos embassy in Wavrin's account is tempered by a detail that only Waleran – the beneficiary of the apologetics – seems to have known.<sup>299</sup>

A comparison with contemporary sources also reveals other, properly *narrative* strategies at work in Wavrin's text. In the first place, as I noted, our account of the Karystinos embassy promotes its noble "client" by selecting and emphasizing key details. Only Wavrin notes that the "seigneur de Wavrin" was present at the embassy; only he notes that Waleran was entrusted with the ambassador's protection, and only he makes the apocryphal claim that it was Waleran's idea to lease galleys from the Venetians.<sup>300</sup> More strikingly, Wavrin, unlike either la Marche or the *Lalaing* author, depicts the embassy scene in vivid discursive terms, using state-of-mind descriptors and direct quotations to foreground the character of his protagonists. "Car il a autresfois este a Venisse," Waleran advises the duke from a well-informed (and pragmatic) perspective: "[I]l ne le vous refuseront pas car larmee est autant

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or reports provided by the Burgundian captain, rather than on first-hand knowledge. See my discussion of authorship issues in Appendix A (below).

<sup>299</sup> The question of what Waleran "knew" and reported speaks, of course, to the issue of authorship – an issue which is no less vexed in this vivid passage than in previous chapters. Elsewhere I have suggested that the "naïve" chronological errors underpinning the misplacement and repetition of the Long Campaign episodes might betray Jean de Warin's less informed editorial stewardship. Using similar logic, we might speculate that the "misplaced" Karystinos embassy here shows traces of Jean's redactive hand – his effort, perhaps, to sort through the complex and seemingly contradictory facts of Waleran's testimony, and to assemble them in ways that made sense to him *and* enhanced his nephew's profile. This seems to me the most likely scenario, though it is not impossible that Waleran himself (who must have known the chronology well) was the source of the error. In either case, though we need not ascribe purely cynical or manipulative intentions to our narrator or his source(s), the inversion seems to reflect clear rhetorical priorities.

<sup>300</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 20-1.

pour leur bien comme pour lempereur de Constantinoble.”<sup>301</sup> This is the voice, unpretentious and balanced, of a soldier and diplomat who *understands* the East – and who has little to learn from, and little to concede to, an adventurer like Thoisy.<sup>302</sup>

*A geste without a captain: Thoisy at Rhodes.* Wavrin *does* have to account for Thoisy’s courage, however. So it is not surprising that he expends much rhetorical effort in finessing his account of the Burgundians’ participation in the defence of Rhodes – a passage which must report on Thoisy’s marital valour *and* must base its claims on the *seigneur de Mimeure*’s own version of events. In the previous section, I noted that the two Long Campaign episodes offer some of the most compelling *internal* evidence supporting my “composite authorship” hypothesis; this text, however, is the only one for which a reliable external exemplar is available.<sup>303</sup> As Jacques Paviot has noted, Wavrin’s narrative appears closely related to a report that

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<sup>301</sup> “Because he had been to Venice before”; “They will not refuse your request, for the fleet is as much for their good as for that of the emperor of Constantinople” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 116.

<sup>302</sup> It is worth noting that the reputation of Philip the Good also benefits from Wavrin’s thematic *amplificatio* and his use of direct discourse. As much in the passionate supplications of Karystinos (“nostre empereur et tout son peuple christien...cryent aprez toy comme prince puissant et de pitie renomme”) as in his own words (“le plus grand desir quil eust en ce monde estoit de donner secours selon sa puissance a la christiennete”), Philip emerges as a gentle crusading prince guided by the principles of *loyauté* and magnanimity. Here, as I suggested above, there is more than a casual concordance between Philip’s portrait and that of the young Wladyslaw – the crusading king who received Hungarian supplicants “luy priant humblement que ad ce se vouldist liberalement consentir et hastivement...les conduire et secourir contre les Turcqz.” Both men are moved by the plight of their fellow-Christians; both act out of devotion rather than self-interest. Just as the chivalric values of the Long Campaign episodes serve to add *gravitas* to Waleran’s journey, then, the depictions of both Wladyslaw and Philip call upon a network of ideas that tend to glorify his patron; and however much Waleran’s ambivalent experiences might tend to problematize the crusade effort itself, Philip’s profile in the narrative is always typologically perfect.

<sup>303</sup> This is not to suggest, as I note in Appendix B (and as Nicolae Iorga has suggested), that there might not be a close relationship between Wavrin’s version of Dracul’s imprisonment and that related in the letter of Bartholomew of Genoa. See my discussion below.

we can attribute to Geoffroy de Thoisy; the latter text is compiled in a manuscript *recueil* first owned by the de Lannoys, a family of prominent courtiers.<sup>304</sup> Paviot's claim concerning Thoisy's authorship of the report seems unassailable<sup>305</sup>; very few interested Burgundians were witness to the Rhodes campaign, and the report is clearly written so as to aggrandize Thoisy's status and enhance his reputation.<sup>306</sup> It seems even more certain, as Paviot suggests, that Wavrin's account is based either on this report or (more improbably) on a shared source that also emanated from Thoisy; the similarities in detail, especially as concerns the more technical elements of the battle scenes, are too precise to be coincidental.<sup>307</sup>

But striking "similarity in detail" does *not* entail naïve or passive transcription. Even at its most derivative points, Wavrin's version testifies to an independent editorial spirit; sentences are recrafted, diction is altered, as our narrator "reclaims" the text as his own. I shall examine this redactive method in detail below<sup>308</sup>; for the moment, it is useful to consider the ways in which Wavrin intervenes in the text to promote and defend Waleran's reputation. Considering the

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<sup>304</sup> The narrative "s'est servie [d'un] rapport" "que l'on peut attribuer à Geoffroy de Thoisy": *Les ducs*, 101. The Lannoy family included Gillebert de Lannoy, a famed Levantine traveller and writer; the reasons for his interest in a crusading report are perhaps self-evident. For more on this collection of documents now housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (BN fr. 1278), see Charles Potvin's edition of Lannoy's *Oeuvres*. The report was edited in 1927 by Nicholas Iorga; see "Les aventures 'Sarrazines,'" 30-5.

<sup>305</sup> A possible alternative hypothesis is that Thoisy merely supervised the composition of the report, which bears clear evidence of a partisan "hand."

<sup>306</sup> See Paviot, *Les ducs*, 101 and my discussion in Chapter 4 below.

<sup>307</sup> See, for example, the striking similarities between Wavrin's and Thoisy's descriptions of the naval attack on the Saracen fleet docked at Chateau-Rouge: Wavrin-Hardy, 35-6; Thoisy in Iorga, "Les aventures 'Sarrazines,'" 31.

<sup>308</sup> In Appendix A, I shall undertake a detailed comparison between Jean de Wavrin's redaction of an episode elsewhere in the *Anciennes Chroniques* and the editorial techniques at work in the transformation of Thoisy's report into Wavrin's episode. I shall try to determine whether similarities between the two redactions support the hypothesis that Jean was the primary editor of our version of the expedition narrative.

stakes – and the failures – of his larger expedition, it is hardly surprising, as I have suggested, that Wavrin would want to treat Thoisy’s successful solo expedition *very* carefully. He would want to explain clearly, for example, why Waleran was unable to participate in this particular foray. He would want to frame the defense of Rhodes as a glorious *segment* of the larger crusading project commanded by the Lord of Wavrin. And he would *certainly* want to dispel the notion that Thoisy’s leadership abilities might have surpassed those of his more cautious captain.<sup>309</sup>

As it turns out, Wavrin’s redaction achieves all of these things, deftly but effectively. “Icelluy cappitaine de Bourgoigne parla...au duc de Venise pour ce quil avoit grant desir et voullenter daller secourir Rodes,” he notes in a lengthy prequel to the episode; but the *doge*, having “jure bonne paix” with the sultan of Egypt, will not allow him to go.<sup>310</sup> Faced with this dilemma, Waleran writes to Thoisy and orders him into battle. Such details, which exculpate Waleran for his non-participation and elevate his status as a crusading “principal,”<sup>311</sup> are entirely absent

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<sup>309</sup> This points to the interesting question of whether Waleran and Geoffroy ever felt a sense of animosity or jealousy toward one another based on rank and/or martial achievements. Though I am not aware of any explicit textual evidence supporting this claim, it has been suggested that a sort of “rivalry” existed between them (the term is Monica Barsi’s; see above, [f.n. 278](#)). Several writers, including Visser-Fuchs and Paviot, have commented on their strikingly different personalities and attitudes toward warfare – differences which are revealed both in our texts and in the two men’s crusading advisory letters to Philip the Good, written in the mid-1460s: “Waleran...apparaît...comme un homme indécis, hésitant...au contraire d’un Geoffroy de Thoisy, peut-être trop aventureux et hardi,” writes Paviot (*Les ducs*, 104). Paviot also notes that Thoisy seldom mentions Waleran in his reports, “ayant sans doute quelque jalousie vis-à-vis du chef de l’expédition” (*Les ducs*, 101). Wavrin’s narrative interventions might likewise suggest that this “jalousie” was mutually felt.

<sup>310</sup> “The captain of Burgundy spoke...with the duke of Venice because he had a great desire and wish to go to defend Rhodes”; “sworn peace” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 33.

<sup>311</sup> Other such details include a reference to the personal correspondence between the Pope, the Cardinal of Thérouanne, and Waleran – a detail which underscores the prominence of the *cappitaine-generale* in the diplomatic network surrounding the crusading project. See Wavrin-Hardy, 33.



from Thoisy's account; the latter tends to frame Rhodes as *his own* victory, initiated and won largely through his valour. But Wavrin's most notable rhetorical moves involve suppression, not amplification: sprinkling crusading references and chivalric commonplaces throughout the text, he implies that the Rhodes expedition is merely an extension of Waleran's project, a naval crusade in which "nos Cristiens" bring the judgment of God upon "les ennemis de la foy." Thoisy, for his part, is just one of several sailors referred to collectively as "les Bourguignons"; in the few instances that his name is mentioned, it is never to imply that Geoffroy is *primus inter pares*.

Indeed, a close comparison between the two texts reveals how effectively, even ruthlessly, Wavrin pursues this project of effacement. Thoisy reports that he sailed with "his" galleys to the aid of Rhodes<sup>312</sup>; Wavrin credits both Regnault de Confide *and* Thoisy with the expedition, adding (perhaps mischievously) that the Hospitaller was "especiallement" joyful at the prospect of the journey.<sup>313</sup> In Thoisy's account, Geoffroy communicates with the grand master of Rhodes and personally delivers the heroic speech "comforting" the Hospitallers and "shaming" the vacillating Catalans<sup>314</sup>; Wavrin reports only that "les Bourguignons" offer up these stirring words.<sup>315</sup> Thoisy's "Joffroy," who sails out to encounter the sultan's fleet, is

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<sup>312</sup> "Les gualères dudit Joffroy": Iorga, "Sarrazines," 31.

<sup>313</sup> "[P]ar especial le chevalier de lordre": Wavrin-Hardy, 34.

<sup>314</sup> "Ledit Joffroy, arrivés en ladite ville, fust prestement informés des choses dessusdites, pour quoy *anvoia* devers mondit seigneur le Maistre luy dire que l'y *vouloit* aler faire la reverence et luy dire aucunes choses.... Et, se fait, present tous, luy *presentera* de part monseigneur le duc mille combatans...et que, supposé que tous eulx abandonasse ladite ville, à l'aide de Dieu *il la garderoit* et en rendroit bon compte" (emph. mine): Iorga, "Sarrazines," 31.

<sup>315</sup> "[L]es Bourguignons *furent venus* devant le grant maistre...et *dirent* illec en audience que...*estoient* ilz assez puissance pour...la tenir contre tous les malvoeillans" (emph. mine): Wavrin-Hardy, 35.

also absent from Wavrin's description of the sea battle.<sup>316</sup> And most significantly, Wavrin elides a dramatic and glowing reference to Thoisy's command during the Mamluk siege of the city. Geoffroy's text claims that he places his men directly across from the besieging Saracens and positions himself in line with their captain, tacitly suggesting their equivalence in rank<sup>317</sup>; when the invaders destroy a portion of the wall, he repairs it by ordering his men to carry in cotton sacks. For its part, the expedition narrative merely notes that each of the captains who were in Rhodes defended a quarter of the city; neither the Burgundian defenders nor their sacks are mentioned.<sup>318</sup>

The combined effect of this redactive movement, as I suggested earlier, is *not* to deny Thoisy's valour; indeed, Wavrin twice mentions the *seigneur de Mimeure's* dubbing after his courageous efforts at guarding the Christian sally to St. Nicholas. Instead, our narrator suppresses and marginalizes all evidence of Thoisy's *leadership* in the affair – vacating, as it were, the *rôle* of valiant chivalric captain, which is here reserved for the duke's (absent) *capitaine-général*. This creates a fascinating sort of narrative difference – not only between Wavrin's and Thoisy's texts (and, not incidentally, between the *Anciennes* account and Jean Germain's tribute to Thoisy's prowess<sup>319</sup>), but also between this and other chapters of the expedition narrative.

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<sup>316</sup> Iorga, "Sarrazines," 31; Wavrin-Hardy, 35-6.

<sup>317</sup> "[T]out ainsi que ilz se logient, ledit Joffroy logoit ces gens devant eulx entre la fausse et la vraye muraille et ly se loga devant leur capitaine": Iorga, "Sarrazines," 31.

<sup>318</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 36. Wavrin does acknowledge that the various "captains" reach decisions in concert with the grand master of Rhodes; but even in this context, Thoisy's name is never specifically mentioned.

<sup>319</sup> Germain's text appears in the *Liber de Virtutibus Philippi Burgundiae Ducis*; an edition of this manuscript has been published in the *Chroniques relatives à l'histoire de la Belgique sous la domination*

Where normally Waleran's voice gives and rationalizes orders, there is here only a curious silence – a rhetorical wrinkle which, read in the context of the Burgundian glory economy and the politics of Philip's court, tends to reveal as much as it conceals.

*'Comme se ce feust chose dyabolique': Framing the disaster at the Straits*

If Wavrin's task of reframing the events at Rhodes was significant, it surely paled in comparison to the apologetic challenge of depicting (and justifying) the naval disaster which took place in the straits near Constantinople. There, a Christian fleet, including four galleys under Waleran's command, failed to prevent between 30,000 and 40,000 of sultan Murad's soldiers from crossing the Bosphorus – a strategic disaster that probably contributed more to the Turks' subsequent victory at Varna than any other factor.<sup>320</sup> The fiasco seems to have prompted much hand-wringing in western courts; as Oscar Halecki has pointed out, the Italian humanist Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (the future pope Pius II), attributing the fiasco to military

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*des ducs de Bourgogne*, t. 3, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Brussels: Hayez, 1870): 67-75. Though I shall discuss this work briefly in Chapter 3 (below), I have not yet had an opportunity to undertake a detailed comparison between Germain's text – which, as Jacques Paviot has noted, was doubtless informed by Thoisy's – and the expedition narrative. I hope to do so in conjunction with future research. It is worth noting, moreover, that another unique account of the siege of Rhodes, penned by the Catalan poet Francesc Ferrer, offers its own various, often partisan, rhetorical emphases. For more on Ferrer, see Nicolau d'Olwer, "Un témoignage Catalan du siège de Rhodes en 1444," *Estudis Universitaris Catalans* 12 (1927): 376-87.

<sup>320</sup> On the events in the Bosphorus, see Kenneth Setton, "The Crusade of Varna," in *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571): Vol. II, The Fifteenth Century* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1978), 88-90; Martin Chasin, "The Crusade of Varna," in *A History of the Crusades*, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 306-8; and Colin Imber, "Introduction," *The Crusade of Varna*, 30.

negligence, “made the Christian fleet responsible for the failure of the whole crusade.”<sup>321</sup> Observers in allied countries were likewise angered and perturbed.

The Burgundians, as it happens, were not the main target of this ire. A rumour circulated that Genoese merchants operating in the region had accepted bribes to help transport the Turks to strategic positions; they were singled out by many, including Pope Eugenius himself, for special blame.<sup>322</sup> Yet this eased Wavrin’s rhetorical burden only slightly. The very purpose of Waleran’s expedition had been to protect Wladyslaw’s crusaders from the influx of “infidels”; his failure to do so, as we shall see, seems to have prompted a stony silence – and at least some dismay – in the Burgundian court.<sup>323</sup> Wavrin thus embarked on a weighty rhetorical project, crafting an episode that balances epic and supernatural language with dextrous deferrals of blame. These features, which tend to distance Waleran and his

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<sup>321</sup> See Halecki, *The Crusade of Varna: A Discussion of Controversial Problems* (New York: Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, 1943), 63. On Piccolomini’s anger, see Setton, “Varna,” 89 (and f.n. 28).

<sup>322</sup> The pope, Piccolomini, and (as we shall see) Wavrin himself charged the Genoese with treachery; see Setton, “Varna,” 89 (f.n. 29) and Chasin, “Varna,” 307 (f.n. 92). Chasin accepts the veracity of these claims, as does Imber, who, working from Muslim sources, reports that the Genoese from the colony of Pera (just opposite Constantinople) provided Halil Pasha, the sultan’s Grand Vizier, with transport vessels and canon, enabling him to land on the European side of the straits the morning before Murad and his forces arrived on the Asian side (Imber, “Introduction,” 30). It is also interesting to note that Christians across Europe were divided on the question of blame. As the Polish chronicler Dlugosz later reported, “some think [the fleet and its guards] may have been bribed, though the pious cannot accept that Venetians and Genoese would go so far as to sell the blood of Christians to the Muslims” (see *The Annals of Jan Dlugosz*, transl. and ed. by Maurice Michael (Chichester, UK: IM Publications, 1997), 492). Piccolomini himself seems to have vacillated on this point; in an early (1445) letter, he noted that “I do not admit the likelihood of this, nor am I convinced that anyone would act with such greed that he would sell Christian blood for money, unless it was someone whom the devil had subjected to himself in the manner of Judas” (*Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*, ed. Rudolf Wolkan, in *Fontes Rerum Austraricarum*, Bd. LXI (Holder: Vienna, 1909), 566). I am grateful to Patrick Conway for the latter translation.

<sup>323</sup> See below, Chapter 3.

“interior life” from the narrative, mark out this portion of the text as strikingly different from other depictions of the *seigneur de Wavrin* and his adventures.<sup>324</sup>

To understand this difference, we must first take a closer look at the text. At the beginning of the two chapters (XI and XII) detailing the momentous events of October 1444, Waleran and his fleet, anxious for their sea battles against the infidel, are stationed between Constantinople and the Black Sea, one of two primary crossing points on the Bosphorus. A Turkish embassy comes to show the *capitaine-général* proof that King Wladyslaw and the sultan had recently signed a peace treaty<sup>325</sup>; Waleran’s Ragusan ally, the captain of the Hungarian galleys, says that the treaty looks valid. Neither captain, however, acknowledges this to the Turkish envoys.<sup>326</sup> Waleran returns to Constantinople, where he finds the commander of the fleet, Cardinal Condulmer, also perplexed by news of a truce. But before long, a messenger from the papal legate arrives to announce that they “should not believe a word” of it<sup>327</sup> – a message, Wavrin says, that delights the bellicose Burgundians.<sup>328</sup> Word also comes that the Genoese are delivering boats and other aid to Murad and his Grand Vizier, but Waleran at first refuses to believe these reports, “car lesdis Geneuois faignoient estre leurs amis.”<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> This is astutely noted by Georges Le Brusque; see “Des chevaliers,” 164-5.

<sup>325</sup> This is the Treaty of Szeged, which has been the subject of a great deal of historical debate in the past century. I shall discuss the treaty and its implications in more detail in Chapter 3 (below).

<sup>326</sup> “[N]en donna rien a cognoistre auz Turcqz, ne ne fist on quelque samblant de vouloir pour tant cesser la guerre”: Wavrin-Hardy, 45. I shall consider the implications of this strategic dissembling in my study of Waleran’s discursive manoeuvres in Chapter 3 (below).

<sup>327</sup> “[Q]uilz nen vouldissent riens croire” (Wavrin-Hardy, 46): transl. Imber, 126.

<sup>328</sup> “[T]ous furent rejois”: Wavrin-Hardy, 46.

<sup>329</sup> “Since the Genoese pretended to be their friends” (transl. Imber, 126): Wavrin-Hardy, 47.

The *capitaine-général* does, however, act on the information that the Turks plan to seize both sides of the Bosphorus and fire on the fleet. He and the Ragusan captain tour the coasts of the Bosphorus, and they agree that it will be impossible to prevent the Turkish passage without holding at least one of the coasts. They beg the Greek emperor, John VIII Paleologus, to take arms against the Muslim forces coming to the European shore; Waleran himself offers to “widier avec tout ce quil avoit de gens hors des gallees et estre des premiers a la bataille.”<sup>330</sup> But their pleas fall on deaf ears. “Je ne voeil pas mettre moy et ma cite en adventure de perdition totale,” the emperor protests<sup>331</sup>; and so the Burgundians, showing grim chivalric stoicism, agree to do their best and to “atendre tele adventure quil plairoit a Nostre Seigneur Jhesu Crist eulz envoyer.”<sup>332</sup> Waleran then disappears briefly from the narrative, leaving an account of a crusading loss that focuses only on other causes and other forces.

With the help of the Genoese, Halil Pasha does indeed occupy the Greek shore of the Bosphorus on the day before Murad’s arrival. His forces exchange fire with the Christian fleet, which suffers more damage because of its vulnerable position. When Murad’s forces arrive on the Asian shore, they bring plenty of canon

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<sup>330</sup> “To come ashore from the galleys with all his men and be the first into battle” (transl. Imber, 127): Wavrin-Hardy, 48.

<sup>331</sup> “I do not wish to put myself and my city in danger of total ruin” (transl. Imber, 127): Wavrin-Hardy, 49. While it is true, as we shall see, that Wavrin uses this passage in part to shift blame for the disaster onto the shoulders of the Greeks, the narrator’s perspective here is not entirely unsympathetic to the emperor. He is allowed several lines of direct discourse to make his case – and that case tends, as we shall see, to foreshadow the critique of temerity which Hunyadi and (I shall argue) Wavrin himself present later in the narrative. The tensions between the two movements create another example of the rhetorical ambiguity which is my particular interest in this section. For my arguments on the critique of temerity, see Chapter 4 (below).

<sup>332</sup> “To await whatever adventure our Lord Jesus Christ decided to send them” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 49.

and continue the assault on the fleet; but the Christian ships are still mobile enough to prevent the Turks from crossing in their Genoese boats. Then at dusk, a storm moves in from the Black Sea – a tempest so fierce it seems “comme ce feust chose dyabolique,” and which the Turks take as a “fast de leurs dieux.”<sup>333</sup> The Christians can no longer row upstream, indeed they can barely stay at anchor; Murad’s forces cross safely, and his canons severely damage the fleet. But if this is a Manichean struggle, as George Le Brusque suggests, God does not treat all of his forces equally: “comme ce feust miracle,” most of the cannon-fire sails over the Burgundian vessels and pummels the Greek galleys.<sup>334</sup> It seems “par layde de Dieu,” moreover, that a massive Turkish bombard bursts before it can strike the Christian ships. If it had, Wavrin avers, it would have sent them to the bottom of the sea “par la fortune du tempz...et layde du deable.”<sup>335</sup>

And so the Turks cross the Bosphorus in only two days and two nights – something they never could have done, Wavrin says, if the galleys had been mobile. Nor do his apologetics end there. Waleran reappears at the end of the passage to parley with a Turkish sailor, who cries out: “The King of Hungary and the Hungarians have perjured and violated their oath. Moratbay is going to do battle against them.” Then, striking his hand on the hilt of his sword, he adds: “But by this

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<sup>333</sup> “[L]ike something diabolical,” “a favour of their Gods” (transl. Imber, 128): Wavrin-Hardy, 50. It is worth noting that this ascription of pagan pantheism to the Muslims – which is repeated on p. 51, where the Turks are referred to as “payens” – is an example of the so-called Tervagant convention, which was common to epic poetry throughout the French middle ages. For a detailed discussion of the implications of this convention, see below, Chapter 4.

<sup>334</sup> “As if by some miracle” (transl. Imber, 128): Wavrin-Hardy, 50.

<sup>335</sup> “[W]ith the stormy weather...and the aid of the devil” (transl. Imber, 129): Wavrin-Hardy, 51.

sword, we shall be victorious.”<sup>336</sup> Wavrin offers no objection, and indeed no response, to this oblique condemnation of Waleran’s allies. He merely reiterates his most important defence against Waleran’s own accusers: “Au vray dire il nest point possible que gallees gardent le destroit se elles nont lun des deux rivages de leur partye.”<sup>337</sup> Our captain has not failed at chivalry: he has done his best with an impossible task.

It is no coincidence that this carefully-crafted episode ends on not one but *two* apologetic high notes, one pragmatic and one supernatural. Far more than any other section of the narrative – including, interestingly, Wavrin’s account of Waleran’s later withdrawal from the field at Nicopolis – this one is concerned with exculpating its protagonist. To do so, Wavrin makes a sustained effort to deflect blame onto various scapegoats, including the treacherous Genoese and the vacillating Greeks.<sup>338</sup> We learn from the beginning not just that the Genoese merchants are supplying the Turks with tactical assistance and materiel, but that they are *lying* about it: “par nuyt faisans samblant daller peschier,” they deliver boats to the Turks; meanwhile, proclaiming their friendship to the Burgundians, they

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<sup>336</sup> “[L]uy dist en ceste maniere: ‘Le roy de Hongrye et les Hongres ont parjure et faulse leur loy. Moratbay va a bataille contra eulz,’ et en frapant de sa droite main sur la manche de son espee dist: ‘mais par ceste espee nous vainquiron la bataille’ et atant se party” (Wavrin-Hardy, 51): transl. Imber, 129.

<sup>337</sup> “In truth, it is impossible for galleys to guard the straits unless they control one of the two shores” (transl. Imber, 129): Wavrin-Hardy, 51.

<sup>338</sup> The theme of Greek cowardice, which Wavrin’s account seems only vaguely to recall, was a staple of many western European crusading tracts and recovery treatises in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This is true of Guillaume Adam’s *Advis directif pour faire le passage d’Outre-mer*, a copy of which was contained in a crusading compilation owned by Jean de Wavrin (now housed in Paris Arsenal, ms. 4798); see Antoinette Naber, “Les manuscrits d’un bibliophile,” 38. As I have argued above, however, Wavrin’s own interest in the limits of chivalric temerity tends here to mitigate his critique of the Greeks.



deceive them with “*lourdes et menchongnes*.”<sup>339</sup> One can hardly blame the westerners for trusting such people; who, as Piccolomini wonders mournfully, could believe that Christians would sell the blood of their coreligionists?<sup>340</sup> Yet Wavrin’s Genoese clearly *are* capable of such evil; by the end of the episode he has referred to their misdeeds no fewer than four times.<sup>341</sup>

As for the Greeks, it is not their treachery but their cowardice which fatally afflicts Waleran’s mission. Lest anyone think the *capitaine-général* went into the battle unprepared, Wavrin four times stresses Waleran’s assessment that “il leur serroit impossible tenir audit destroit ne tenir le passage” with the Turks stationed on both shores.<sup>342</sup> It is the emperor’s unwillingness to exert any effort in defending one of them – however eloquently he argues his case<sup>343</sup> – that dooms the fleet to failure. Standing in sharp contrast to Waleran’s valiant offer to lead the Greek forces into battle, John’s utterance betrays a faintness of heart that seems to irritate God himself: at the height of the storm, when the galleys are immobilized and under fire from the Turks, it is John’s ships who “miraculously” take the brunt of the Turkish

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<sup>339</sup> “Making a pretence of going fishing [at night]”; “lies and falsehoods” (transl. Imber, 126): Wavrin-Hardy, 47.

<sup>340</sup> See [f.n. 322](#) above.

<sup>341</sup> Though contemporary evidence suggests he is right to accuse the Genoese of complicity with the Turks, Wavrin’s vitriol here is perhaps not surprising given Waleran’s troubled relations with the Genoese in the period after this event. The piracy subsequently undertaken by his ships in the Black Sea had a negative effect on Genoese commerce; as a result, Burgundian ships and goods were confiscated, and a long-standing diplomatic dispute was created. For more on this, see my discussion in Chapter 4 (below).

<sup>342</sup> “It would be impossible to stand firm in the strait or block [their] passage” (transl. Imber, 127): Wavrin-Hardy, 48.

<sup>343</sup> On the narrative and thematic ambiguity implicit in the emperor’s speech, see above, [f.n. 331](#).

onslaught.<sup>344</sup> Here is a *iudicium Dei* that folds the climax of the episode neatly back upon its key complication: whereas the Turks believe that their “gods” are responsible for the victory, Wavrin, in the tradition of scores of crusade apologists, depicts an angry God punishing those of his *own* people who are cowardly and incompetent.

He also seems to be angry at the Hungarians’ perjury. The fascinating final scene of the episode suggests this more oblique and subterranean explanation for God’s rage: the diabolical storm, the fearful Turkish bombardment, and the maddening helplessness of the situation are punishments for the unavoidable fact that, as the Turkish sailor blurts out in a moment of “favoured” direct discourse, the Hungarians “ont parjure et faulse leur loy.”<sup>345</sup> Like the *iudicium* against the Greeks, this one is depicted with a certain pleasing symmetry: Wavrin begins the episode with a Turkish envoy who reveals the truce, and ends it with a Turkish envoy who condemns the Christians who betray it. It also produces a curious tension within the larger narrative, between Wavrin’s apparent efforts in Chapter X to justify (or at least rationalize) the faithless actions of men with whom Waleran associates, and his move here to exculpate the *capitaine-général* by condemning those same associates. Georges Le Brusque has argued that Wavrin seems largely unconcerned by Wladyslaw’s violation of the Treaty of Szeged<sup>346</sup>; I respectfully disagree. The unevenness and inconsistency of these passages seems to point precisely to the dangerous and

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<sup>344</sup> “[C]omme ce feust miracle les pierre dengiens par deseure celles de Bourgoigne, si battoient celles de lempereur et dommagoient plus que nulles des autres”: Wavrin-Hardy, 50.

<sup>345</sup> “Have perjured and violated their oath” (transl. Imber, 129): Wavrin-Hardy, 51.

<sup>346</sup> Le Brusque, “Des chevaliers,” 263.

“radioactive” characteristics of the Szeged story, and to Wavrin’s skill in marshalling it for various and contending rhetorical purposes.

His broader rhetorical strategy, moreover, contributes to another form of textual difference which marks the “Straits” passage off from other parts of the narrative – including his other accounts of Waleran de Wavrin’s adventures. By employing these epic *topoi* to shift blame to the Genoese, the Greeks and the Hungarians, Wavrin indulges in a very different sort of reportage than he presents elsewhere. Nowhere else in Waleran’s tale, as Le Brusque points out, is this “Manichean spirit” quite as evident<sup>347</sup>; none of the captain’s other adventures are framed in such vividly “epic” terms. By contrast, the stories of Waleran’s travels on the Black Sea and Danube contain many more references to his “interior life”: his thoughts and meditations, even his feelings, are reported with a kind of biographical transparency that seems strikingly direct for the genre. This is a “voice,” as we shall see, that offers invaluable insights into the thought-world of the Burgundian nobility – but one that cannot appear in the Straits passage, lest it render the captain vulnerable to criticism. And so a rhetorical imperative once again prompts a narrative effacement – one that speaks volumes about the concerns and anxieties underpinning the composition of our text.

Like storm-winds on the Bosphorus, then, Wavrin’s contrary rhetorical motions leave their traces on the surface of an otherwise closed and unified text.

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<sup>347</sup> See Le Brusque, “Des chevaliers,” 274.

Following the patterns of this third, and analytically most important, source of textual difference thus offers us key insights into the most important priorities of our chronicler. As it happens, these insights extend beyond simple issues of reputation and courtly rivalry: they also illuminate the ways in which Burgundian knights sometimes cynically and deliberately manipulated their chivalric *personae*, and in which they articulated their concerns over *and criticisms of* the wars they were expected to fight. Wavrin's chronicle is therefore not merely a personal but also a *cultural* document – one that helps us to understand the thought-world and the symbology of the Valois court. The next two chapters are dedicated to a close study of these phenomena and their implications for the lives of the warriors who served its chivalrous prince.

**'Adfin quon ne murmurast contre luy':**

The glory economy and chivalric identity in the expedition narrative

The previous chapter and its supplementary appendices (A and B) are dedicated in large measure to philology, to *explication*, to source criticism – subjects I have addressed with care, conscious of my status as a reader approaching his sources from a vast cultural distance.<sup>348</sup> My conclusions, carefully worded and often painstakingly qualified, reflect these concerns. But there is another, properly *scholarly* reason to be careful in making sweeping claims about Wavrin's expedition narrative: it is a remarkably complex historical and literary document, both polysemic and confined, both didactic and unstable. Nested in a variety of discursive and literary networks, inflected with a variety of rhetorical interests and social preoccupations, the narrative tends on many levels to elude empirical analysis.

The primary purpose of my earlier studies, which attempted just such an analysis, was to confront the rhetorical and discursive density of the narrative at the level of textual fundamentals. And despite my inability to give categorical answers to such traditional source-critical questions as "Who redacted the expedition narrative?", the exercise *did* bring into relief some of the operative differences<sup>349</sup> that unsettle the text and produce its ambiguous, dialogic texture. We saw, for example,

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<sup>348</sup> By "explication" I refer to a pedagogical exercise, the *explication de texte*, which is common in French academic culture. The *explication* offers, among other things, a means of establishing basic textual parameters in order to set the stage for a more penetrating critical analysis.

<sup>349</sup> The term "difference" in this context, and in subsequent references in this chapter, is meant to denote the variety of discursive and rhetorical codes which tend to create incongruity and/or tension in the text.

that negotiations between an autobiographical “voice” and an ostensibly separate redactive “pen” produce revealing tensions in the text; the same is true of the redactor’s use of independent sources, which he reframes in various ways (and with varying degrees of editorial intervention) to provide geopolitical context for the main narrative. Together, these forms of difference testify not only to the timeless problems of historiographical pastiche, but to the various, sometimes disparate discourses that were available to Burgundian authors who sought to imagine and represent crusading warfare in the East.<sup>350</sup>

Elsewhere the narrative tension results from factors quite separate from the conflation of independent sources. As I noted in the last part of the chapter, the redactor’s own rhetorical achievements, his efforts to unify and calibrate the narrative, are far from insubstantial; his apologetic strategies<sup>351</sup> do impose certain kinds of uniformity and *conformity* upon the text. Yet despite these politic suppressions and emphases, a number of ambiguities emerge – even, indeed especially, in the passages conveying Waleran’s own testimony. This is only surprising at first glance: for while the account of the Burgundian captain’s adventures on the Black Sea and Danube reflects more consistent apologetic interests on the part of both source and redactor, it does not articulate only a single, reductive (and narrowly “political”) rhetorical plan. Rather, as I argued above, it encodes a

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<sup>350</sup> For the broad contours of this argument I am indebted to David Wrisley’s penetrating study of the rhetorical and discursive complexity of a contemporary text, Jean Germain’s *Mappemonde Spirituelle*. See Wrisley, “Situating Islamdom” (cited above).

<sup>351</sup> I use the term “apologetic” in this context to refer to rhetorical strategies which seek to rehabilitate Waleran’s reputation and promote his cause, particularly in light of the possibility that his expedition was perceived as a “failure” (see below).

number of different concerns within a variety of rhetorical and discursive modes. These disparate threads – various anxieties and preoccupations, various ways of seeing and speaking – together constitute the variegated and locally-inflected “social logic” of the text.<sup>352</sup> They speak, obliquely and uniquely, to the complicated thought-world of the Burgundian warrior class.<sup>353</sup>

The analysis that follows seeks to identify and unravel these narrative threads, considering the particular social and cultural concerns – the “unstated desires, beliefs, misunderstandings, and interests,” in Gabrielle Spiegel’s words<sup>354</sup> – which they articulate. As I pursue these questions, I shall continue to foreground the functions of rhetorical difference in the text; for it is precisely in the collisions between discursive layers – the points of tension, the unwitting subversions – that the problems and contradictions of “local” ideologies are brought into relief. This is a particularly useful hermeneutic to apply to our narrative, a text that is after all *founded* in tension and dissonance: even as it recounts a series of military failures, it trades in the language of the crusade, the loftiest of Burgundian chivalric codes.

Contrary to the assumptions of the Huizinga-Dufournet thesis, our narrator does not

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<sup>352</sup> The phrase, as noted earlier, is Gabrielle Spiegel’s; for her elegant explication of the concept, see “History, Historicism and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages,” in *The Past as Text* (cited above).

<sup>353</sup> Here we should acknowledge Constance B. Bouchard’s suggestion that many chivalric texts of the high Middle Ages were likewise riddled with ambiguities and contradictions, often for similar reasons (though she ascribes the differences to deliberate critical impulses on the part of individual *romanciers*). See her *Strong of Body, Brave and Noble: Chivalry and Society in Medieval France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1998), 112-16. Norman Housley’s fascinating study of the *Livre des faits* of Marshall Boucicaut is particularly relevant to our discussion; not unlike like Wavrin’s peers, “Boucicaut and those in his circle liked to hear and read that they lived in a ‘Boys’ Own’ world of unrestrained holy war against wicked unbelievers,” he writes, “even though documents embedded in the same text reminded them of the more complex realities often involved.” See Housley, “One man and his wars,” 5.

<sup>354</sup> Spiegel, *The Past as Text*, 26.

handle this task merely by suppressing ambiguity through the clumsy articulation of chivalric “myths” and literary conventions. He retains certain differences, cultivates certain tensions, and confects a narrative that is, in remarkable and revealing ways, at odds with itself.<sup>355</sup>

I am not the first person to notice, or to study, the rhetorical and discursive complexity of the expedition narrative. The two previous articles dedicated exclusively to the text frame their analyses around a study of textual difference. Vladimir Agriogoroaei, in his aptly-named “Literary Leakings into Wavrin’s Danube,” parses the narrative in an effort to distinguish between those contents which are reliably objective and historical, and those which are coloured or tainted by “literary” convention.<sup>356</sup> For his part, Georges Le Brusque considers whether the narrative can be read as a representative example of Burgundian “chivalric” historiography.<sup>357</sup> His conclusion is ambivalent: while elements of the text – especially the early contextual episodes – are written in an epic register suitable for the celebration of a princely *guerre de magnificence*, the first-hand accounts of Waleran’s own adventures slip into a “realist” mode, betraying the pretensions of

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<sup>355</sup> For a brilliant (and related) treatment of narrative tension and “hesitation” in the works of Jean Froissart, see Peter Ainsworth, “The Art of Hesitation: Chrétien, Froissart and the Inheritance of Chivalry,” in *The Legacy of Chrétien de Troyes*, Vol. II, ed. N.J. Lacy et al. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988), 187-206.

<sup>356</sup> Agriogoroaei, “Literary Leakings,” *passim*. Agriogoroaei also sets himself a number of other tasks in this rather wide-ranging study, which focuses on four military episodes contained in the expedition narrative. Though the article was presented at a major conference in 2006, it has not yet been published.

<sup>357</sup> Le Brusque articulates this definition of “chivalric” history-writing in the first chapter of his thesis (“From Agincourt to Fornovo,” 23-59). Echoing a number of literary historians, he writes that Jean Froissart gave the chivalrous chronicle its “fully developed character” (29), and that the genre “flourished and matured” under the pens of Burgundian chroniclers, notably Monstrelet, Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, Wavrin and Chastellain (32).



Burgundian knighthood. In candid moments, Le Brusque notes, the narrator reports the crusader's personal misgivings about the venture; he also "faithfully transcribe[s] the opinions of men of cultures different than [his] own."<sup>358</sup> Such collisions between the ideal and the real, between the literary and the factual, produce fascinating forms of textual ambiguity.<sup>359</sup>

Here as elsewhere, Le Brusque's observations are instructive; and both scholars deserve praise for noticing and highlighting tensions and differences within the text. I differ from them, however, in rejecting the essentialist dichotomy distinguishing "literary" or "ideal" or "chivalric" discourse from reportage of the "real." This distinction tends to reinscribe upon the narrative the status of the medieval "other," the unsophisticated, derivative and naïve tract, which our very acknowledgement of its complexity should serve to unsettle; for it implies that, inasmuch as the narrator may be striving toward transparency and depth of character, the hallmarks of "modern" style, he remains tethered to hoary conventions. The error here lies not in the acknowledgement of the literary character of traditional chivalric ideology, but in the privileging of something called "realist" prose – as if any such transparent, disinterested, "non-literary" and non-discursive form could exist, whether under the pen of Jean de Wavrin or Philippe de Commines or, for that matter, Mark Twain. It cannot, of course; all prose is conditioned by the ambient

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<sup>358</sup> Le Brusque, "From Agincourt to Fornovo," 185-207.

<sup>359</sup> Le Brusque's entire statement deserves to be cited here: "Wavrin's account is rather ambiguous, because it is the story of the confrontation of chivalrous ideals with other mentalities. There is a plurality of voices and senses in the account that...simply results from the fact that Walleran and Jean faithfully transcribed the opinions of men of cultures different than their own.... Wavrin's account is also the story of the confrontation of a Westerner's expectations vis-à-vis the crusade with reality" ("From Agincourt to Fornovo," 188).

discourses, the political and cultural currents, which surround and inflect it.

Defining “realist” prose as Le Brusque does imposes arbitrary limits on it – limits that only hurt the analyst by foreclosing on the study of rhetorically and discursively framed differences *within* that prose.

For the purposes of my study, therefore, I shall eschew this dichotomy in favour of a study of the narrative’s *multiple* rhetorical and discursive modes, and of the tensions that result from their interaction. Replacing such essentialist distinctions as the “ideal” and “real” with functional markers of textual difference – “apologetic” and “strategic” writing modes, for example – I shall devote each of the following chapters to studying the ways in which specific “Burgundian” concerns, anxieties and desires are simultaneously articulated *and* subverted in the text. The present essay examines the role of chivalric symbology in the negotiation of knightly reputation; in the following chapter (4), I shall consider the complex relationship between crusading ethics and martial pragmatics – a tense struggle that is deeply coloured by elaborate crusading dreams and by the memories of recent losses.

Together, these studies, with their Janus-faced focus on both narrative process and social logic, seek not only to probe the rhetorical and discursive density of this remarkable text, but also to profit from it, mining it for historically significant insights into the troubled ideology of Burgundian crusading. This involves, to be sure, a hermeneutic leap from the particular to the general – and I am conscious of the dangers of such inductive steps. In order to justify my claims about the presence of ambient discourses in the narrative, it will be necessary to read Wavrin’s work in

the context of some (roughly) contemporary texts – particularly the histories and romances that appear to have been most accessible and important to the Wavrins.<sup>360</sup>

In this regard, however, my gaze will be limited; for in the time-sensitive context of a

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<sup>360</sup>It is important to stress, as I do below, that neither of the comparator texts which I shall study demonstrably *predates* the expedition narrative. In fact, if we make the most conservative estimate as to its date of composition (ca. 1446), it is even true that only a few “indigent” Burgundian romances or chivalric biographies had yet been composed; this activity began in earnest only around that time. This by no means reduces the value of such a comparison; for my study considers how these categories of approbation, inherited from the epic and romance tradition which had long been popular in Valois Burgundy, endured within and informed the “thought-world” of the Wavrin family during a broadly contiguous period. These observations relate to a key working hypothesis which I shall employ in the next two chapters: that Wavrin (indeed both Wavrins, Jean and Waleran) had access to and were familiar with the romance, epic and historiographic literary traditions of the Burgundian court prior to the composition and redaction of various “phases” of the expedition narrative. This seems highly probable, particularly given Jean’s status as one of the first noble bibliophiles of the Burgundian territories; as Antoinette Naber has demonstrated, his collection reveals a special interest in chivalric romance, which we may reasonably suppose predated the creation of his library (see “Les manuscrits,” 26-35). It is also important to bear in mind the Wavrins’ repeated contacts with and involvement in the court from the late 1430s (see Naber, “Un bibliophile,” 283-5, 288-92), which would have exposed them to a number of romantic/epic/chivalric motifs, themes and ideas – including such events as the *pas d’armes* of the *Arbre de Charlemagne* in 1443. The Wavrins were also connected with the Lalaing family, which produced the most self-consciously “romantic” and “chivalrous” knight of the Burgundian era, Jacques de Lalaing (see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 166 and 310). As I noted above, Jacques undertook his highly romantic quest at the very time that Waleran himself was away – suggesting a broad understanding of the literary underpinnings of such activities amongst peers and fellow noblemen. Likewise, the family was connected with Jean de Créquy, who like Jean would go on to create a library with romantic components (see f.n. 385 below and *Warwick and Wavrin*, 166-7). Notwithstanding all of this circumstantial evidence, however, my hypothesis is unprovable in an absolute sense, given the paucity of details surrounding the Wavrins’ lives and recreations (see “Un bibliophile,” 292). I hope that future research will help to elucidate these issues. In the meantime, I should note that none of my key assertions in the following chapters absolutely rise and fall on the hypothesis (though were it shown to be false, I might need to reframe my discussion in some ways). In the **present chapter**, I reflect on Wavrin’s use of four key chivalric virtues – prowess, prudence, loyalty/fidelity, and renown – which, though they were *derived* from the epic/romance literary tradition, were also disseminated in the “public” chivalric discourse of the court in which the Wavrins played a part (and reflected in various indigenous texts written in the period shortly after the earliest possible composition date of the expedition narrative); on this, see also f.n. 362. The **first part of Chapter 4** (below) supposes that both Wavrin and some of his readers were familiar with the *chansons de geste* and possessed “epic literacy.” If this was not the case, then Wavrin’s *sources* for the Long Campaign accounts certainly did possess this literacy; and my observations on the contrary rhetorical motions of those passages, and the anxieties and concerns they reflect, still apply to those sources (see f.n. 545). The **second part** of that chapter includes the suggestion that the Wavrins were familiar with Froissart’s account of Nicopolis; this is a compelling, though not a rhetorically necessary, hypothesis (see f.n. 696). The **third part** of the chapter evaluates Wavrin’s use of chivalric mythology; the narrator’s knowledge of this material is clearly attested by the text itself.

thesis project, one can only manage to balance great depth of field with a certain breadth. Hence I shall often qualify my claims and conclusions, acknowledging that future research in the field may infuse them with added nuance, and may even cast them in an entirely new light.

**‘Ce que jay fait...est plus a vostre loenge’: Chivalric identity and the glory economy**

The two earlier analysts of the expedition narrative each focused their attention on prominent features of the text – the collision of *mentalités* in Le Brusque’s case, the interpenetration of facts and literary devices in Agrigoroaei’s – that lent themselves to useful and penetrating analyses. Yet it seems to me that no comprehensive study of the narrative can avoid dealing with its most vivid and recurrent element: the depiction and negotiation of personal glory and renown, the most precious commodities in the chivalric economy of late medieval Burgundy. This is a hermeneutic path that we overlook at the risk of bland reductionism; for at its core, the expedition narrative is an intriguing and colourful document about chivalry – about *being* chivalric, about knightly identity as a set of lived behaviors and symbolic negotiations.

This chapter will attempt to answer a number of questions about “Burgundian” chivalric ideology – to the extent that one can characterize such a varied, unstable and chimerical code – as it is imagined and negotiated in the narrative. It will consider, in the first place, how the text functions within a cultural

ethos concerned with the ascription of honour and renown, and how particular categories of approbation, uttered in the third-person omniscient voice, are used to rehabilitate Waleran's reputation. It will also examine what the text *betrays*: a self-conscious, perhaps at times cynical, attempt by the nobleman to manipulate these same codes in his own interest. This double logic hinges on a peculiar sort of discursive tension: a collision between motifs of chivalry common in the "thought-world" of the Wavrins – motifs which represent knightly virtues as timeless and indwelling – and a self-consciously *strategic* discourse concerned with negotiating purely contingent and symbolic reputational claims in the context of ambivalent, often even unflattering, circumstances.<sup>361</sup> The tension between these "apologetic" and "strategic" modes of writing shines a light on noble anxieties and desires; it also speaks to a form of courtly "self-fashioning" that, *pace* Burckhardt, emerged independent of the Renaissance model. In the pages that follow, I shall consider each of these modes in turn.

## **Part 1. Romance, apologetics and chivalric rehabilitation**

There is no doubt that the Burgundian crusader – that rare, indeed almost legendary figure – shouldered a heavy burden of expectations. We have seen that crusading ideology was paramount in the the ducal court of the mid-fifteenth

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<sup>361</sup> My approach here is indebted to the work of Richard Kaeuper, whose studies of the various, sometimes ambiguous and contending, "codes" of chivalry in medieval romances, biographies and instructional texts remain among the most sophisticated and enduring. Indeed, my own necessarily broad, but nonetheless sweeping, reference to the "traditional literary" themes of chivalry tends to occlude variations within these texts to which Kaeuper offers salutary attention. See Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: OUP, 1999).

century, and that the *saint voyage* was regarded as a supreme chivalric feat; men who performed it well could expect to be immortalized by poets and *indiciaires*.<sup>362</sup> Even those who, like Duke John the Fearless, were thought to have failed nobly in the task were celebrated as heroes.<sup>363</sup> But these high stakes played both ways; truncated or ineffectual crusading efforts could provoke embarrassment and contempt, and there is evidence that many of Waleran's contemporaries reacted coolly to his expedition. Duke Philip, to be sure, "ne semble guère s'être soucié de ce qu'ont accompli ses

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<sup>362</sup> See discussion in Chapter 1 (above). For the purposes of my argument, it is important to bear in mind Jacques Paviot's suggestion that Duke Philip's interest in the crusade project – and with it, his emphasis on public celebrations of chivalric and crusading ideology – changed after 1451, when, for largely political reasons, "le duc de Bourgogne a voulu affirmer publiquement son désir de croisade." This new interest, he writes, coincided with his promotion of many more chivalric cultural productions, both literary and ceremonial, in the court (see *Les ducs*, 11 and 118). The expedition narrative in a sense straddles this important landmark; it is very possible that it was redacted into its present form well into the 1450s or 1460s, and that it contains texts and editorial interventions crafted after that time. It is also possible that parts, if not all, of our text – including, very probably, the sources on Waleran's adventures which especially concern us in this chapter – date from as early as 1446. None of this, in any case, problematizes the claims I make in the next two chapters. In the first place, the Valois court from its inception was keenly interested in the epic/romantic symbology of chivalry; such events as the founding of the order of the Toison d'Or (1430) and the Pas de l'Arbre de Charlemagne (1443), and such "chivalric" literary productions as *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople* (1448), all testify to this enduring interest. Given that crusading was very commonly framed as a prestigious chivalric enterprise, both in the French tradition and elsewhere; given the imaginative resonances of a return to Nicopolis, the site of Duke John's previous "descomfiture"; and given the disappointing results of the 1444-46 expedition, it seems reasonable to assume that the Wavrins were keenly interested in depicting Wavrin as a *bon chevalier* (see below) and in framing the larger expedition in light of previous struggles against "infidel" foes (see Chapter 4), using themes and motifs inherited from the epic and romance traditions.

<sup>363</sup> Both Richard Vaughan and Elizabeth Moodey have commented at length about the "baffling glory that bathed [John's] whole mismanaged enterprise," both immediately after the duke's delayed return from Nicopolis and in subsequent years. "The fame and prestige of the house of Burgundy had been successfully promoted," writes Vaughan, "and it was now linked forever to the proud and almost magic tradition of the crusades" (Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 76; also cited in Moodey, "Illustrated Crusader Histories for Philip the Good of Burgundy" (PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2002), 143). For a detailed discussion, see Moodey, 143-8; see also Jean Devaux, "Le culte du héros chevaleresque dans les *Mémoires d'Olivier de la Marche*," *Publication du Centre européen d'études bourguignonnes (XIVe – XVe s.)* 41 (2001): 53-66 (esp. 64-5). For a salutary critique of Vaughan's assessment, however, see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 56-7.

sujets en Orient”<sup>364</sup>; but there is little evidence that he celebrated their accomplishments, and this ambivalence is reflected in the judicious silence of contemporary and later chroniclers.<sup>365</sup> Neither Olivier de la Marche nor the Monstrelet-continuator spills any ink on Waleran<sup>366</sup>; among those few who do, the anonymous author of the *Livre des faits de Jacques de Lalaing* – a text which appears, ironically, to be closely related to the Wavrin *atelier*<sup>367</sup> – is distinctly curt. “De leur armée,” the author writes,

et de ce qu’ils firent, ne veux faire, ne tenir long conte, mais comme

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<sup>364</sup> The duke “seems not to have been troubled by what his subjects accomplished in the East: no honourable or brilliant deed” (my transl.): Paviot, *Les ducs*, 109. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that the duke was disappointed by the outcome of the expedition; as Charles Schefer points out, the “insuccès du siège de Nicopoli dut être d’autant plus sensible à Philippe le Bon qu’il était le second échec essuyé, depuis cinquante ans, devant cette ville, par les armées de Bourgogne.” See Schefer, “Le discours du voyage d’Oultremer au tres victorieux roi Charles VII, prononcé en 1452 par Jean Germain, évêque de Chalon,” *Revue de l’Orient Latin* 3 (1895): 310. Though it seems very possible, moreover, that an early version of the expedition narrative circulated within the ducal court (see Appendix A), we lack any information on its dissemination or reception. Were such information available, we might be able to confirm Schefer’s conclusions in more vivid terms.

<sup>365</sup> For useful discussions see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 108-9; Paviot, *La Politique Navale*, 123; Taparel, “Un épisode,” 28-9; Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 265; and Georges Le Brusque, “Une campagne qui fit long feu: Le saint voyage de Philippe le Bon sous la plume des chroniqueurs Bourguignons,” *Le Moyen Age* 112, no. 3-4 (2006): 535-7. Perhaps the first scholar to acknowledge this silence was René de Belleval, who wrote: “À l’exception de Wavrin, qui s’en était constitué l’historiographe, car c’était pour lui comme une affaire de famille, la publicité de l’histoire lui a fait presque complètement défaut. En récompense d’un stérile dévouement le sire de Wavrin n’obtient que l’oubli de la postérité” (Belleval, *Gauvain Quiéret, seigneur de Dreuil et sa famille* (Paris: 1866), 28; cited in Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 265).

<sup>366</sup> La Marche was a prominent ducal counsellor and a leading “memorialist” of Burgundian chivalric culture; the anonymous Monstrelet-continuator shared a number of sources with Jean de Wavrin. As I note in Appendix A, La Marche does provide an account of the Karystinos embassy which is said to precipitate Waleran’s mission (see *Mémoires d’Olivier de la Marche*, t. 1 (Paris: Renouard, 1883-88), 287-8, and *Mémoires*, t. 2, 1-5). Of the outcome of the embassy he says only that “le duc faisoit sçavoir à l’Empereur qu’il se tiroit en ses pays marin, et que, luy arrivé par delà, il mettroit sus gens et navires, pour l’aide et confort de la chrestienté et de l’estat de l’Empereur, et de ce feroit telle diligence, que l’Empereur auroit cause de soy contenter” (t. 2, 4-5). I have found no other reference to the expedition in La Marche, nor in the *Chronique* of the Monstrelet-continuator, nor in the contemporary French chronicle of Mathieu d’Escouchy. It is possible that Georges Chastellain, the first *indiciaire*, wrote about the expedition, but the appropriate portions of his *Chroniques* have been lost.

<sup>367</sup> On the Wavrin *atelier*, see Appendix A (below).

j'entendis pour lors, ils ne profitèrent guère à la chrestienté; ne aussi ne fut faite chose qui fust à leur profit, dont à present je veux cesser d'en plus parler.<sup>368</sup>

This brusque coda, which appears after the *Lalaing* author's description of the Karystinos embassy, brings into relief both the criteria for success – chivalric deeds that benefit both the church and the knight himself – and the penalty for failure: a missed opportunity at posterity.<sup>369</sup> The fact that this passage appears in a biography paying homage to a paragon of Burgundian chivalry could only have embittered the pill.<sup>370</sup>

Not every contemporary writer, to be sure, was as critical of the expedition. Both the prolific crusade advocate Jean Germain and the anonymous author of a partisan chronicle, the *Livre de trahisons de France envers la maison de Bourgogne*<sup>371</sup>, offer substantial – and, at points, glowing – reports of the voyage. Germain devotes six chapters of his *Liber de virtutibus Philippi Burgundiae ducis*, a didactic work prepared

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<sup>368</sup> “As concerns their fleet and what they accomplished, I do not wish to give a long account; for as I understood at the time, they did not benefit Christianity, nor indeed did they do anything to their own profit; now, therefore, I shall stop speaking about it” (my transl.): Lettenhove, *Livre des faits*, 34. Some scholars have proposed a redaction date of ca. 1470 for the *Lalaing* – in which case the text probably would not have preceded the composition of the expedition narrative (see Doutrepont, *La littérature*, 48). Nonetheless, it very probably *would* have reflected longstanding internal criticisms of which the author and/or the redactor of the expedition narrative were mindful.

<sup>369</sup> The *Lalaing* author is nonetheless far more diplomatic than the later chronicler Adrien de But, who in his brief reference to the failure of the expedition refers to its piratical elements. For a brief but useful discussion, see Paviot, *La Politique*, 123.

<sup>370</sup> It is worth noting, however, that the *Lalaing* author does pay tribute to Waleran's chivalrous qualities in the following chapter (VIII), where he acknowledges Wavrin's victory at a joust held in “Dijon” (actually Besançon) in November 1442. “[P]our le temps de lors,” he writes, “on tenoit [le seigneur de Wavrin] pour un moult vaillant jousteur” (“At that time, the lord of Wavrin was recognized as a very valiant jousting,” my transl.): Lettenhove, *Livre des faits*, 35.

<sup>371</sup> “An account of French treachery against the house of Burgundy” (my transl.). The *Livre de trahisons* is published in *Chroniques relatives à l'histoire de la Belgique sous la domination des ducs de Bourgogne*, t. 2, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Bruxelles: Hayez, 1873), 1-258. For evidence of the text's especially partisan treatment of its Burgundian subjects, see Bernard Schnerb, “Jean de Villiers, Seigneur de l'Isle-Adam, vu par les chroniqueurs bourguignons,” *Publication du Centre Européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* (XIVe-XVIe siècles) 41 (2001): 105-22.



for Philip's son Charles, to the expedition; this includes an extensive description of the Burgundian defence of Rhodes.<sup>372</sup> For its part, the *Livre de trahisons* reports that "plusieurs gentils cappitaines," including "le seigneur de Wavrin et messire Joffroy de Thoisy," were defending the holy Church in the East when Rhodes was attacked by the "Turcs"; thanks to their intervention with Duke Philip's great ship, "la ville de Rodes fut délivrée du dit siège."<sup>373</sup> A marginal notation in the *Livre* links this episode temporally, and apparently thematically, with the solemn crusading vows which Duke Philip took at the Banquet of the Pheasant in 1454.<sup>374</sup>

Together these texts may signal the dissemination of a more favourable narrative of the expedition; whether this was a genuinely "public" discourse or the grist for a few apologetic tracts is difficult to know.<sup>375</sup> Regardless, it did little to solve

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<sup>372</sup> The *Liber* is published in *Chroniques relatives à l'histoire de la Belgique sous la domination des ducs de Bourgogne*, t. 3, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Bruxelles: Hayez, 1873); Chs. 41-6, p. 67-75, cover the expedition.

<sup>373</sup> "Several noble captains"; "the lord of Wavrin and Sir Joffroy de Thoisy"; "the city of Rhodes was delivered from the said siege" (my transl.): Lettenhove, *Livre de trahisons*, 227.

<sup>374</sup> Here the *Livre*, which places the siege in 1453, errs in its chronology. See Lettenhove, *Livre des trahisons* 227, f.n.2.

<sup>375</sup> It is important to note that a few other tracts penned by chancellors of the Toison d'Or contain positive references to Waleran's adventures. The first of these, Germain's *Desbat du Chrestien et du Sarrazin* (1450), notes that "le seigneur de Wavrin et messire Joffroy de Thoisy" "tindrent longtemps le passage de Gallipoly contre le Turcq," and that Waleran's company sailed up the Danube "et dommaigez fort les ennemis de la foy crestienne." A special emphasis, however, is again placed on Thoisy's defence of Rhodes: "Par leur bon ayde, fut puissamment levé le siege que avoit fait mettre, l'an M.CCCCXLV, le soudan de Babyloine devant la cité de Rhodes; et fut toute l'isle saulvée, et rompue l'armée dudit sudan, et son admiral rebouté honteusement" (Schefer, 303-4; and see Wavrin-Dupont 28, f.n. 1). For its part, Guillaume Fillastre's *Histoire de la Toison d'Or* (1468-72) pays tribute to Philip the Good's magnanimity and his devotion to the "vraye foy" in a reference to the expedition. Thoisy's achievements are again given pride of place: "[Le duc] a delivré l'isle de Rodes de la main des Sarrazins"; this is followed by a lengthy note on the expedition which makes no reference to Waleran's military successes but marvels at the distances travelled by the fleet – evidence, Fillastre writes, of Duke Philip's devotional "ardeur." "Par armée qu'il envoya de Flandres jusques en Orient," he notes, "il a conforté les Hongres contre les Thurcz par ses gallées qui partirent de l'Escluse en Flandres en armes et nevigerent jusques en la Mer Majour, la traverserent toute et entrerent en la Dunauwe en la terre de Valasquie que les Thurcz invahissoient, ouquel lieu oncque plus n'avoit esté veue armée des chrestiens; laquelle chose on

Waleran's reputational problem. Both of these texts concentrate – Germain's heavily, the *Livre's* almost exclusively<sup>376</sup> – on the heroic defence of Rhodes, a mini-expedition commanded by Geoffroy de Thoisy.<sup>377</sup> The *Livre's* ambiguous reference to Waleran does little to mitigate the fact that he had no real claim on this adventure; his subordinate (and, if we are to believe Monica Barsi, his courtly “rival”) earned most of the reputational capital accruing from its success.<sup>378</sup> We have seen in Chapter 2 how Wavrin's narrative sought to temper the boasts that emerged from the house of

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pourroit dire incredible...” (Brussels BR ms. 9087; transcribed by Andrew Heron in *Il fault faire guerre pour paix avoir: Crusading propaganda at the court of Duke Philippe le Bon of Burgundy (1419-1467)* (PhD Dissertation, Cambridge University, 1992), 203. Yet one can discern traces of ambivalence even within some of these apologetic texts. Germain's *Discours du voyage d'Oultremer* (1452), for example, contains some peripheral references to Waleran's expedition which do little to rehabilitate his chivalric reputation. It briefly mentions the Christians' recent victory at Rhodes (Schefer, 329), and it refers to facts contained in Waleran's report, including the Karaman prince's contacts with the Burgundian captains (329-30) and János Hunyadi's promise to Pierre Wast “et autres cappitaines des galées de mondit s<sup>r</sup> de Bourgogne” to launch a new crusade after the disaster of Varna (337). Nowhere, however, are Waleran or Thoisy mentioned by name, nor are their exploits celebrated as Franco-Burgundian attainments. In a curious contrast with the *Desbat*, the *Discours* refers rather brusquely to the disaster at the Bosphorus (which Germain once again restricts to Gallipoli): “Si le passage eust esté bien gardé à Galipoli et le roy de Polene ne fust mort, la Grece estoit recouvrée par les chrestiens” (330); and even as Germain lionizes the Hungarian voevode János Hunyadi as a hero who has “gagné sur la Dyone [the Danube] places et forteresses,” he does not mention Waleran's exploits on the Danube in association with any of Hunyadi's victories there (337).

<sup>376</sup> Both Waleran and Geoffroy, it is true, are said by the narrator to have “mervilleusement couru et pillié les terres du soldan et les terres du Turc” (227); it is conceivable that this may refer in part to Waleran's conquests on the Danube, but as George LeBrusque notes, it seems to focus more particularly on the acts of piracy which both men, but most notably Thoisy and his cousin Jacot, conducted in the East. See Le Brusque, “Une campagne,” 536.

<sup>377</sup> Germain's text devotes four of its six chapters (6½ of 8½ printed pages in the Lettenhove edition) exclusively to Rhodes; see *Liber de virtutibus*, 68-74. The text treats the Burgundians' travels on the Danube, and their meeting with Hunyadi, in a very brief five-sentence chapter which mentions none of Waleran's conquests. It does note that the Burgundian sailors returned home “victorious, with glory” (*Liber de virtutibus*, 75); but one is left with the sense that the glory accrued mainly from the defence of Rhodes. Interestingly, this text, like the *Desbat*, omits any reference to the Burgundians' failure to defend the Straits, noting only that they positioned themselves there “with great spirit”: *Liber de virtutibus*, 67. I am grateful to Patrick Conway for these translations.

<sup>378</sup> On Barsi's phrase, see Chapter 2 (above).

Thoisy in the wake of this victory.<sup>379</sup> But such gestures alone were not sufficient to win Waleran the respect he deserved; more colourful, more specific, and more *positive* claims had to be made.

*Crusading apologetics: Ideas, and ideals, of chivalry*

It is in this context, and with these pressures in mind, that we may approach the expedition narrative with an eye to its chivalric apologetics. Two broad areas of investigation suggest themselves here; the first of these, the narrator's techniques of justifying and reframing loss and disaster, informed our study of Wavrin's rhetorical techniques in the previous chapter. For the moment, I am concerned with the depiction of Waleran as a *bon chevalier*: the narrator's strategies of glorifying his protagonist by using chivalric motifs and descriptors that were especially evocative for his readers. Contextualizing these efforts within the realm of Burgundian literature and culture is a complex business, for there was a lively conversation – and no simple or precise agreement – between contemporary ethicists, historians and *romanciers* concerning chivalric and martial ideals.<sup>380</sup> Yet it is clear that Wavrin deployed a number of especially popular terms of chivalric approbation in his text – terms which were derived from the epic/romance tradition, which were particularly

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<sup>379</sup> Jacques Paviot suggests convincingly that Germain's text in the *Liber de virtutibus* was in fact based on Thoisy's direct testimony; see *Les ducs*, 101.

<sup>380</sup> There are numerous studies of the varying forms and complexions of chivalric ethics in the culture of Valois Burgundy; scholars from Lucien Febvre and Johan Huizinga to Arjo Vangerjagt, Charity Cannon Willard and Maurice Keen have offered lucid insights into this complex field. For the purposes of our analysis, Malcolm Vale's classic study of "The Literature of Honour and Virtue" provides an especially valuable overview of contemporary texts; see Vale, *War and Chivalry: Warfare and aristocratic culture in England, France and Burgundy at the end of the Middle Ages* (Athens: Univ. Georgia, 1981), 14-32.

meaningful to Burgundian courtiers, and which served in his own day to ennoble such “courtly” genres as martial history, prosified epic/romance, and chivalric biography.<sup>381</sup>

This was a natural rhetorical choice – particularly if, as we suspect, Jean de Wavrin was involved in making it. From around 1450 (and possibly earlier), the *seigneur de Forestel* was involved in these genres as an editor, writer and bibliophile,<sup>382</sup> and many of his peers were familiar with the narratives of Froissart and *Girart de Rousillon*, of *Gillion de Trazegnies* and the *Seigneurs de Gavre*.<sup>383</sup> Indeed, the genres seem to have flourished in Burgundy precisely at this time; local *écrivains* began crafting romance *remaniements* and knightly biographies in the mid-1440s, while writers such as Froissart, whose work had been contained in the Burgundian ducal library for decades, seem to have enjoyed a special prominence beginning in

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<sup>381</sup> For two key studies of this phenomenon, see Michelle-Noelle Magallanez, “Knights in Chronicle: Exchange of Character Traits Between Romance and Historiography (Ch. 5),” in “Mirrors of Glory: Spectacles of Chivalry and Aristocratic Identity in Fifteenth-Century Burgundian Romance, Chronicle and Chivalric Biography” (PhD diss., NYU, 2001), 129-50 (esp. 143), and Ruth Morse, “Historical Fiction in Fifteenth-Century Burgundy,” *Modern Language Review* 75 (1980): 48-64, esp. 53-5. As Morse remarks, the three genres are both stylistically and conceptually similar. Bearing these similarities in mind, I have framed my comparative analysis (below) around representative samples of two of these genres, which articulate themes inherited from the epic/romance tradition.

<sup>382</sup> Livia Visser-Fuchs has speculated that Jean de Wavrin may have commenced work on the *Anciennes Chroniques* as early as 1446, despite a textual attestation that he began writing in 1455. See Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 204. The atelier of the Master of Wavrin is said to have begun producing texts around 1448; see René Stuij, “Entre mise en prose et texte original: Le cas de l’*Histoire des Seigneurs de Gavre*,” in *Rhétorique et mise en prose au XVe siècle*, ed. S. Cigada and A. Slerca (Milan: UCSC, 1991), 211-28 (esp. 216).

<sup>383</sup> Some Burgundians even imagined their own family histories through the filter of such texts; see e.g. Charity Cannon Willard, “Gilles de Chin in History, Literature and Folklore,” in *The Medieval Opus: Imitation, Rewriting and Transmission in the French Tradition* (Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 1996), 357-66 (esp. 364). This was by no means an exclusively Burgundian phenomenon; chivalric biographies in particular were similarly framed, and similarly received, in Britain. See e.g. Sumner Ferris, “Chronicle, chivalric biography, & family tradition in fourteenth century England,” in *Chivalric Literature: Essays on relations between literature and life in the later middle ages*, edited by Larry D. Benson and John Leyrerle (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, 1980), esp. 36-7.

the early 1450s.<sup>384</sup> The expedition narrative, as we have seen, was redacted in its present form at some point between 1446 and 1470 (though it is quite possible that much of the material on Waleran, which is of special interest here, was crafted soon after he returned from his expedition). While it would be perilous, therefore, to frame the concordances between our narrative and these ambient genres in terms of simple derivation or direct textual “influence,” they are very revealing – for they testify to the kinds of “epic” ideas, values and formulations that were particularly evocative in the broad temporal and cultural milieu in which the Danube account was written and redacted.<sup>385</sup> As privileged and privileging genres, the histories,

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<sup>384</sup> Several of the earliest Burgundian prose *remaniements* of epics, romances and knightly biographies were crafted by Jean Wauquelin; he produced a translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1444-45) and a prose *Manekine* (1446) for the Croÿ family, and prose versions of *Girard de Rousillon* (1447) and *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople* (1448) for Duke Philip. Other early *remaniements* include *Charles Martel* (1448), and *Gillion de Trazegnies* (1450); see Doutrepoint, *La littérature*, 22-69 (esp. 49), and Pierre Cockshaw, “A propos des ‘éditeurs’ à la cour de Bourgogne,” in *Le statut du scripteur au Moyen Age: Actes du XII colloque scientifique du Comité de paléographie latine*, ed. M.C. Hubert et al. (Paris, 2000): 283-9 (esp 284-5). On Froissart’s popularity in the Burgundian ethos, especially in the years 1460-80, see Laetitia Le Guay, *Les princes de Bourgogne lecteurs de Froissart* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998).

<sup>385</sup> It is important to note that, beginning in the mid-1440s, historical, epic and romance texts were added not only to the library of Philip the Good, but also to those of several of his noble courtiers. Significantly for our purposes, the two eldest (and “earliest”) courtly bibliophiles, Jean V de Créquy and Jean de Wavrin, who were most active in building their collections between 1447 and 1460, were also the two collectors who focused most intently on romance texts and *remaniements* – speaking, perhaps, to a heightened interest in these forms in precisely the regions and periods in question here. On this, see Hanno Wijsman, “La librairie des ducs de Bourgogne et les bibliothèques de la noblesse dans les Pays-Bas (1400-1550),” in *La Librairie des ducs de Bourgogne: Manuscrits conservés à la Bibliothèque royale de Belgique*, Vol. II, ed. B. Bousmanne et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 19-37 (esp. 26-32); Naber, “Jean de Wavrin, un bibliophile du XVe siècle”; Marc Gil, “Le mécénat littéraire de Jean V de Créquy, conseiller et chambellan de Philippe le Bon,” *Eulalie* 1 (1998): 69-95. It is also important to acknowledge that the collections of some later Burgundian bibliophiles (like that of the duke himself) did tend to privilege didactic and historical texts over purely “literary” romances. Though these generic boundaries are porous, this may suggest changes in intellectual and cultural fashions, especially in the later years of Philip’s reign and that of his son Charles. Indeed, it is even possible that some younger courtiers showed a particular interest in more humanistic, and less strictly “chivalric,” ideals and values; but this by no means unsettles my general point about the prominence of such themes in the Wavrins’ world, or in Philip’s court. For a related discussion, see Chrystelee Blondeau, “Arthur et Alexandre le Grand

romances and biographies were concerned primarily with chivalric virtue and the gaze of posterity; they therefore traded in a specific, contemporary tropology that was also well-suited to Wavrin's apologetic purposes.

Their insistently social orientation, moreover, produced certain *literary* effects which are of interest to our study. A number of scholars have observed, first, that the authors of chivalric histories written in the broad stylistic and ethical tradition of Froissart typically described their rhetorical objectives as both panegyric and educational. Securing for the great men of history the literary immortality merited by their *gestes*<sup>386</sup>, they also sought to inspire contemporary warriors to emulate those feats.<sup>387</sup> Both tasks call for forms of characterization that tend to be highly formalistic; chivalric virtues are portrayed as stable and indwelling traits, reflected in both the *preux* martial actions and the well-considered decisions of heroic knights.<sup>388</sup> This

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sous le principat de Philippe le Bon: les témoins d'un imaginaire en mutation," *Publication du Centre européen d'études bourguignonnes* (XIVe – XVIe s.) 41 (2001): 223-46 (esp. 233). For other useful discussions, see Celine Van Hoorebeeck, "Item, un petit livre en franchois... La littérature française dans les librairies des fonctionnaires des ducs de Bourgogne," *Moyen Français* 57-58 (2005): 381-413 (esp. 405-6); Paviot, "Les circonstances historiques du Banquet du Faisan," in Caron and Clauzel, *Le Banquet du Faisan*, 68-9; and Magallanez, "Mirrors of Glory," 129-50.

<sup>386</sup> This was certainly Monstrelet's intention, writes Denis Boucquey: "Tous les événements retenus par Monstrelet ont pour seul but d'entretenir la mémoire, le souvenir de ceux qui se sont battus, qui ont fait preuve de leur courage. L'histoire est leur rémunération. Il veut, par l'intermédiaire de sa *Chronique*, leur rendre un hommage éternel." See Boucquey, "Enguerrand de Monstrelet, historien trop longtemps oublié," *Publication du Centre Européen d'Études Bourguignonnes* (XIVe – XVIe s.) 31 (1991): 119-20.

<sup>387</sup> As Hélène Wolff explains, "La tradition...de la chronique chevaleresque exploite les potentialités éducatives de la prouesse guerrière; 'le récit des choses dignes de mémoire,' en illustrant les valeurs du moment, veut en prolonger l'existence effective. La valeur exemplaire des faits historiques est ressentie par chaque chroniqueur, et leurs vertus éducatives annoncées dans les prologues comme au fil du récit.... L'oeuvre historique, dans cette perspective, s'adresse exclusivement aux chevaliers dont elle flatte les goûts et perpétue l'idéal." Wolff, "Histoire et pédagogie princière au XVe siècle: Georges Chastelain," in *Culture et pouvoir au temps de l'Humanisme et de la Renaissance*, ed. L. Terreaux (Paris: Champion, 1978), 39.

<sup>388</sup> For useful discussions of this chivalric formalism, see e.g. Jean Devaux, "Le culte du héros," 53-66; Hélène Wolff, "La caractérisation des personnages dans les *Mémoires* d'Olivier de la Marche:

essentialization of character is even more pronounced in the epics, romances and biographies; “[l]e chevalier,” Elisabeth Gaucher writes in her definitive study of the latter genre, “casqué de vertus, offre à la postérité un model de conduites actives et publiques, et non l’image d’une intimité.”<sup>389</sup> Ruth Morse concurs: “The ‘truth’ to be grasped from romance and chronicle,” she writes,

was the picture of what a knight should be. Biographers...idealized those feats which had come to be accepted as *de rigueur* for a hero. We ought not to expect to learn much about the inner life of a hero or heroine from what he or she says.<sup>390</sup>

Whether one could *ever* “learn much” about an “inner life” through the medium of narrative is of course an open critical question; but both scholars are right to suggest that the chivalric text often posits martial words and actions as windows on a virtuous, and ostensibly unmediated, knightly soul. It interiorizes, and essentializes, the social – a strategy, as we shall see, that is both deployed and subverted in the expedition narrative.<sup>391</sup>

I shall return to this issue in my study of the tensions between Wavrin’s discursive modes. For the moment, it is important to note that the heroic deeds and

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Identification ou description?” *Revue des Langues Romanes* 97 (1993): 43-56; Godfried Croenen, “Heroes and Anti-Heroes in Book II of Jean Froissart’s *Chroniques*,” *Publication du Centre Européen d’Etudes Bourguignonnes (XIVe-XVle s.)* 41 (2001): 7-14; and Magallanez, “Mirrors of Glory,” *passim*.

<sup>389</sup> “The knight, armed in virtues, offers to posterity a model of active, public conduct, and not the image of a private life” (my transl.): Gaucher, *La Biographie Chevaleresque*, 520.

<sup>390</sup> Morse, “Historical Fiction,” 57. Compare the essays by Larry Benson (on the biography of Guillaume le Maréchal) and Sumner Ferris (on English chivalric biography) in Benson & Leyerle, *Chivalric Literature*, 1-38. “The *Life* [of the Black Prince],” Ferris notes, “treats the prince as he might have been treated in romance. Like a romance figure, the prince is already a hero from his birth.” Episodes “serve mainly to display the heroic qualities that [have] been with him since birth” (30-2).

<sup>391</sup> I do *not* wish to suggest, in making these claims, that the kinds of textual ambivalence and narrative complexity I have identified in Wavrin’s text are absent from the works of other Burgundian historiographers and writers; on the contrary, as the work of various scholars suggests, they tend to characterize a great many contemporary texts. For a related discussion, see Chapter 5 (below).

dispositions (and, in cautionary cases, *misdeeds* and malevolence) recounted in these texts, refracting as they do a finite set of *moeurs*, are limited in form and number. As a collection of *topoi*, they offer writers a kind of panegyric toolkit that enforces certain kinds of consistency across texts and even, at times, across genres.<sup>392</sup> It far exceeds the remit of this project to study all of their permutations in contemporary literature and discourse; but in order to read the expedition narrative in its ideological context, it will be useful to consider the chivalric language it shares with a few comparable texts. By doing so, I hope to illuminate both Wavrin's use of contemporary evaluative terms for the benefit of his protagonist and his efforts to compensate for the absence of key chivalric virtues – notably through the use of such rhetorical techniques as amplification and suppression.

For the sake of this comparison, I have chosen two texts – neither of which was among the most popular Burgundian works of its day, and neither of which demonstrably preceded or “influenced” the expedition narrative.<sup>393</sup> Both, however, are striking for their acute concern with issues of chivalric posterity, and for their

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<sup>392</sup> For an elegant (if theoretically dated) discussion of this phenomenon, see Rychner, *Littérature et moeurs*. On the same subject, see John Leyerle, “Conclusion; the major themes of *Chivalric Literature*,” in Benson and Leyerle, 131-46.

<sup>393</sup> As I noted above, it is impossible to know precisely when the portions of the expedition narrative which especially interest us were composed and/or redacted, though it is quite possible that the material on Waleran's adventures may have been crafted, at least in a seminal form, in the late 1440s. Hence it would be perilous to suppose that certain texts predated or directly “influenced” Wavrin's narrative. Such claims are not in any case essential to my thesis; I am only concerned with identifying chivalric themes that were especially meaningful in the Wavrins' circle during a period *broadly* coterminous with that in which the expedition narrative was crafted and redacted. Of the texts I have selected, one (*Gavre*) was composed in 1456, and the other (Verneuil) – one of the few extant texts containing substantial passages which were verifiably authored by Jean de Wavrin – presents a complex pedigree. Though Jean used a base source which features relevant chivalric themes and which probably predated our narrative, his own additions may date from as late as the mid-1460s (see [f.n. 394](#) below).



proximity to the thought-world of the Wavrin family during the broad period in which our narrative was crafted and redacted. The first is Jean de Wavrin's historical account of the battle of Verneuil, a tract which, as I note in Appendix A, the *seigneur de Forestel* himself redacted and extensively rewrote for inclusion in the *Anciennes Chroniques*.<sup>394</sup> The second, the *Histoire des Seigneurs de Gavre* (1456), is a colourful chivalric biography contained in Jean's library and closely affiliated with his *atelier*;<sup>395</sup> it tells of a Wavrin ancestor's glorious (and fictional) adventures in Greece and the Balkans. There is a nice symmetry between these two works; for while the Verneuil tract describes group combat at its bloodiest and most splendid – of all contemporary battles, says Jean, Verneuil “fut du tout plus a redoubter et la mieulz combatue”<sup>396</sup> – the *Seigneurs de Gavre* is particularly concerned with individual prowess and the shining attributes of the perfect knight.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>394</sup> See also Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 261-2. Wavrin's original source on the Battle of Verneuil (1424) almost certainly dates from the first half of the fifteenth century, and possibly quite early in that period, given that Monstrelet, who either used or authored the same source, ended his chronicles in the year 1444 and was dead by 1453. Jean, who was present at Verneuil, may have added his own revisions and insertions to the text as late as the mid-1460s, when, according to Visser-Fuchs, he was probably compiling the fifth book of the *Anciennes Chroniques*; or he may have done so earlier. On the timing of Wavrin's fifth volume, see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 214.

<sup>395</sup> Indeed, as I noted in Appendix A (below), Jacques Paviot has argued persuasively that Jean may have been the author of the *Seigneurs de Gavre*. On the possible circumstances concerning the composition of and audience for the text, see René Stuip, “Le public de l'*Histoire des Seigneurs de Gavre*,” in *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context*, ed. K. Busby and E. Cooper (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1990), 531-7.

<sup>396</sup> The battle at Verneuil “was of all the most formidable and the best fought” (transl. Hardy in Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 72): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 109.

<sup>397</sup> For the purposes of this study, I shall consider in detail only a few excerpted chapters from the *Seigneurs* which offer ample evidence of the themes and motifs under discussion (Chapters 30-33 and 38; see *Histoire des Seigneurs de Gavre*, ed. René Stuip (Paris: Champion, 1993), 83-93, 102-4). A more extensive study of the work, which I hope to undertake in the future, will no doubt offer additional insights into these subjects – and may also prompt me to revise and/or qualify some of the claims made here.

Together, therefore, the two texts cover a range of themes which underscore the apologetic challenges facing Wavrin, just as they testify to the kinds of rhetorical tools that might be used to address them. In the pages that follow, I shall consider each of these themes in turn; reading the expedition narrative against our comparator texts, I shall search for evidence of strategic agreement and consider the causes and consequences of key differences.

(a) *Prowess, courage and warlike zeal*. There is no doubt that, of all of the chivalric virtues that were preached and praised, lauded and coveted in Valois Burgundy, personal prowess was the most important. Even as warriors struggled with the demands of strategy, even as humanists and ducal administrators sought to direct noble energies toward *le bien publique*,<sup>398</sup> the desire and ability to fight a good fight remained the *sine qua non* of chivalric worth. The point was emphasized in nearly all courtly literature; *romanciers* and chroniclers alike aligned themselves with Jean Froissart, for whom *proesce* figured as “*mère materielle et lumière des gentilz hommes*.”<sup>399</sup> Our texts are no different.<sup>400</sup> The Verneuil account and *Gavre* both pay

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<sup>398</sup> Arjo Vanderjagt has produced the definitive work on the evolving ideology of “*le bien publique*” in Valois Burgundy. See for example his important essay, “The Princely Culture of the Valois Dukes of Burgundy,” 51-79.

<sup>399</sup> See Wolff, “Chastelain,” 39. Georges Le Brusque concurs: “Froissart had inflamed the imaginations of his aristocratic readers,” he writes, “by presenting *proesce* as the martial virtue par excellence, and the stuff of which history was made” (“Chronicling the Hundred Years War in Burgundy and France in the Fifteenth Century,” in *Writing War: Medieval Literary Responses to Warfare*, ed. C.J. Saunders et al. (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2004), 78). It is important to acknowledge, however, that Froissart’s approach to the virtue of prowess is at times qualified, and even marked by ethical ambivalence. For a useful discussion, see George Diller, *Attitudes chevaleresques*, esp. 159-63.

sustained attention to warlike dispositions and martial deeds; as concerns the former, they offer vivid portraits of fighting men's bloodlust and courage under fire. "Moy acteur de ceste euvre," Jean de Wavrin writes in the Verneuil text, "navoie jamais veu plus belle compaignie...ne mieulz ordonnee ou moustrant greigneur samblant ou voullente de soy combattre."<sup>401</sup> The pitched battle that follows between English and French knights is marked by remarkable hatred and bloodlust; no man, says Wavrin, is "so brave and confident" that he is "not in fear of death." Yet the warriors fight on "vaillamment," and thanks to the exemplary courage of princes such as Bedford<sup>402</sup> and the "preu" Salisbury, it is the French who finally lose their nerve and retreat.<sup>403</sup> For his part, Louis de Gavre, the young hero of the *Seigneurs*, is so keen to win glory, and so fearless in his combats, that he seldom hesitates before rushing headlong into battle. "Erupting like lightning" into one melee between knights of Athens and Adrianople, he inspires the Athenians, filling them with "vigour and the courage to take vengeance."<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> Nor indeed is the biography of Marshall Boucicaut which, as Norman Housley writes, reveals the importance of demonstrating the virtue of prowess in the context of chivalric apologetics which are very similar to those undertaken by Wavrin. See Housley, "One man and his wars," 8-9.

<sup>401</sup> "I the author of this work had never seen a fairer company nor one...set in better order, nor showing greater appearance of a desire to fight" (transl. in Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 73); Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 109. This formulation is not unique in the passage; earlier, we are told, the French knights have "hope and desire to fight the regent" (transl. in Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, 69-70).

<sup>402</sup> The Duke of Bedford's courage is further exemplified by his stoic preparedness for the outcome of battle. Note that Bedford's and Salisbury's chivalric virtues are depicted as indwelling; see Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 100.

<sup>403</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 110-115; translations in Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 73-78.

<sup>404</sup> "Loÿs de Gavres, embrasé comme fourdres a lencontre de ses anemys"; "[C]eulx d'Attaines...prindrent vigeur et corrages d'eulx revengier": Stuipe, *Seigneurs*, 86.

Waleran de Wavrin, to be sure, is no Louis de Gavre; he often appears more hesitant, or at least more thoughtful and measured in his choices.<sup>405</sup> Yet the narrator of our text makes clear that he is as eager for chivalric combat as any good knight should be. As soon as his recently launched fleet approaches Dardanelle, “exactly the place where the Greeks had landed” in the Trojan War, “le seigneur de Wavrin avoit tres grant desir que se a celluy port on trouvoit les Turcqz de descendre a terre et davoit a faire a eulz.”<sup>406</sup> His keenness to fight is subsequently dampened neither by bad odds nor by the cowardice of allies: seeing that the Turks will mount a devastating resistance from both shores of the Straits of Constantinople, he begs the Greek emperor to attack the enemy on land, offering “de widier avec tout ce quil avoit de gens hors des gallees et estre des premiers a la bataille.”<sup>407</sup> The offer is refused, and the fleet imperilled; yet the Burgundians resolve, with the same stoic courage as Bedford displayed outside Verneuil, to “atendre tele adventure quil plairoit a Nostre Seigneur Jhesu Crist eulz envoyer.”<sup>408</sup> That *adventure*, of course, turns into a disaster; but Waleran’s crusading zeal remains intact, and he soon concocts a plan to sail up the Danube, under threat of attack, to join with a new band of Hungarian crusaders.<sup>409</sup> Before entering the Black Sea, he divides and separates

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<sup>405</sup> See Paviot, *Les ducs*, 104.

<sup>406</sup> “[I]f there were Turks at this port, the Lord of Wavrin was eager to go ashore and have done with them” (transl. Imber, 121-2): Wavrin-Hardy, 38-9. Waleran is here interested in a literal re-enactment of a classical battle; for a full discussion, see Chapter 4 (below).

<sup>407</sup> Waleran offers “to come ashore from the galleys with all his men and be the first into battle” (transl. Imber, 127): Wavrin-Hardy, 48.

<sup>408</sup> “To await whatever adventure it pleased our Lord Jesus Christ to send them” (my transl.; Imber has “to do the best that it pleased our Lord Jesus Christ to grant,” 127): Wavrin-Hardy, 49.

<sup>409</sup> More specifically, Waleran sets out on a tour of the Black Sea to discover if there is any truth to the rumour that King Wladyslaw survived the battle of Varna. While there, he plans to send his

his fleet specifically to provoke a Turkish attack: “[il] luy sambloit que quant les Turcqz scauroient quil ny avoit que deux gallees costoiant la Grece ilz les venroient plus legierement combatre que a plus grant nombre.”<sup>410</sup> The ruse, alas, attracts no foes.

Waleran strikes virile postures throughout the remainder of his travels, offering clear testimony to his chivalrous intentions.<sup>411</sup> Warlike zeal, however, is one thing, and actual *deeds* of prowess are another. For both of our comparator texts, the latter are clearly the chivalric gold standard; authors devote lengthy passages to the “moult cruelle” clashes of swordsmen and horses on the battlefield, treating them with an almost reverent fascination.<sup>412</sup> “Many new knights were made,” Wavrin writes of Verneuil, “who valiantly approved themselves that day. Many a capture and many a rescue was made there...; the blood of the slain...and of the wounded ran in great streams about the field.”<sup>413</sup> War-leaders, in particular, proved their prowess: Salisbury demonstrated remarkably “grant...conduite” and Bedford “fist tant darmes que merveilles, et occist maint homme,” in gestures that almost single-

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subordinate, Sir Pietre Vast, to urge the Hungarian lords to begin a new assault on Ottoman territories on the Danube, and to offer his naval support to the project. See Wavrin-Hardy, 61-2.

<sup>410</sup> “It seemed to him that if the Turks knew that there were only two galleys sailing round the Greek coast, they would be more likely to come to attack them than if there were more” (transl. Imber, 135); Wavrin-Hardy, 62-3.

<sup>411</sup> The captain-general, for example, is “moult joyeux” at opportunity to crusade with the Hungarians (Wavrin-Hardy 70); he “avoit grant voullente” to take the journey to besiege Giurgiu (Wavrin-Hardy, 91), and he strongly advises an assault on Ruse (Wavrin-Hardy, 103). At the end of the narrative, facing the arrival of winter, he strives to find some way to fight the retreating Ottomans in the spring – then is deeply frustrated and disappointed by his inability to achieve this (Wavrin-Hardy, 116).

<sup>412</sup> On the importance of martial heroism as an element of “epic toning” in an historiographical text, see Chapter 4 (below).

<sup>413</sup> “Avant labordement furent fais maintz chevalliers nouveaulz...lesquelz vaillament sesprouverent ce jour. Mainte prinse et mainte rescousse y furent faites...; le sang des mors estendus sur terre et des navrez couroit par grans ruisseulz parmy le champ” (Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 112); transl. Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 75.

handedly won the day for the English.<sup>414</sup> So it goes for the chivalrous Louis de Gavre, whose monomaniacal and grotesque actions – “[il] se fery entre ses anemys: a l’un coppoit ung bras, a l’autre l’espaule, l’autre pourfendoit jusques au menton: horrible chose estoit a voir”<sup>415</sup> – win him the admiration of an army of soldiers; the men imagine that he must be “a spirit or a phantom” to perform with such superhuman skill. His chivalric merit rests primarily on such assessment of his fighting skill; there could be no higher praise, and no more valuable semantic currency, in the glory economy of Valois Burgundy.

And yet it is precisely in the realm of martial deeds, where the reputational stakes are highest, that Wavrin’s narrative betrays a certain ambivalence. To be sure, the text recounts Waleran’s participation in a few terrestrial combats in the East: he and his men fulfill his wishes near Dardanelle by landing and skirmishing with the Turks, and later, while cruising up the Danube, he commands a vigorous assault on the castle of Tutrakan. There his attack drives the Turkish defenders “tant raddement dedans leur basse court quilz le prindrent dassault”<sup>416</sup>; after the Christians seize most of the castle and burn the main tower, Waleran and his men march boldly up to the door to await the onslaught of the fleeing Turks.<sup>417</sup> This is all well and good in chivalric terms; but it is striking that neither of these passages,

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<sup>414</sup> “Great conduct”; “did wonderful feats of arms, and killed many a man” (transl Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, 76): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 113-14.

<sup>415</sup> Louis “rode against his enemies: he slashed the arm of one, the shoulder of another, and cut open another all the way to his chin: it was a horrible thing to see” (my transl.): Stuipe, *Seigneurs*, 86.

<sup>416</sup> They “pushed the Turks into their service courtyard with such vigour that they took it by assault” (transl. Imber 146): Wavrin-Hardy, 81.

<sup>417</sup> The captain-general, indeed, very nearly loses his head in this incident; the Turkish “subashi” lunges at Waleran, who is saved by his “moult vaillant” paymaster, who strikes the Ottoman commander on the back of a head with his halberd. The rather ambivalent outcome of this event offers further support to my comments below; see Wavrin-Hardy, 84.

which pay close attention to the strategic contours of the battle, contains a detailed depiction of the captain-general's *own* martial exertions.<sup>418</sup> Any hint of personal prowess is diluted by a tendency toward brevity and impersonal description. Hence we never witness Waleran inspiring his men's respect through some *beau geste* comparable to Geoffroy de Thoisy's defence of the Christian sally near Rhodes, or to János Hunyadi's dramatic personal encounter with the Turkish commander at Varna ("dune grosse lance quil portoit [il] rua jus Caraibay avec tous les premiers venans"<sup>419</sup>). In this key reputational arena, Wavrin's chivalric apologetics are curiously restrained – and as such, they are partially subverted.<sup>420</sup>

The reasons for this rhetorical ambivalence – it might be a modernist conceit to call it "honesty" – are necessarily opaque, but we can make some informed guesses. The simplest explanation is that Wavrin had no other *gestes* to recount; given that his readers probably included veterans of the expedition, he could not invent adventures for the captain-general, and could only embellish Waleran's actions to a certain extent. This does not, of course, explain his seeming reluctance to engage in more embellishment than he actually *did* – an impulse that, given the apologetic stakes of the text, would seem to be rather natural. To address this objection, we might propose a second hypothesis: that chivalric apologetics are not

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<sup>418</sup> It is worth observing that this is not in keeping with the expectations of many contemporary historians and *romanciers*, who emphasized the necessity of the captain to lead by example, and to inspire his men, through his own his martial exertions on the field. See Jean Devaux's excellent study of the subject, "L'image du chef de guerre dans les sources littéraires," *Publication du Centre Européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes (XIVe – XVe s.)* 37 (1997): 115-29, esp. 127-8.

<sup>419</sup> "[W]ith a great lance that he was carrying, [he] hurled Caraibay to the ground together with all the men who came up first" (transl. Imber 131): Wavrin-Hardy, 54. On Thoisy at Rhodes, see Wavrin-Hardy, 36-7.

<sup>420</sup> Small wonder that scholars such as Paviot and Visser-Fuchs read in Waleran's narrative persona something other than the standard-issue chivalric hero. See Appendix A (below).

the only business of this narrative. Another rhetorical project – a desire, specifically, to argue against imprudent forms of chivalric combat in the face of a new kind of Turkish military menace – tends to rub up against it, tempering elements of the text which might otherwise trade in more exuberant and bellicose themes.<sup>421</sup> I shall examine Wavrin's fascinating, and destabilizing, critique of chivalric temerity in Chapter 4 below; for now it is sufficient to observe that, whatever the reasons for the rather restrained and problematic depiction of Waleran's prowess, it seems to have contributed to an apologetic imperative to prove his chivalric merit according to *other* sets of evaluative terms. Two of the most important are wisdom and tactical acuity; I turn to them next.

(b) *Wisdom, prudence and tactical acuity.* The tension between *proesce* and prudence to which I have alluded is by no means unique to Wavrin's work; it reflects a longstanding dichotomy within the epic tradition, played out in romances and didactic works for centuries after Roland *le Preux* and Olivier *le Sage* staked their complementary – but intrinsically antagonistic – positions in the twelfth-century *Chanson de Roland*.<sup>422</sup> As Elisabeth Gaucher has remarked, the impulse to impose moderating standards of *prudence et sens* upon the bellicose impulses of the *preux*

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<sup>421</sup> Note that this hypothesis is not threatened by the fact that Wavrin does recount some aspects of bellicose gamesmanship, such as Waleran's division of the fleet upon entering the Black Sea, and some aspects of *preux* leadership, such as Hunyadi's advance against Caraiabay. In the first place, neither of these is a foolhardy, self-indulgent or uncalculated gambit; and second, even if they were, such ambiguities and inconsistencies might well occur in a text such as this one, which encodes different, and sometimes contending, rhetorical objectives.

<sup>422</sup> "Preux" is the adjectival form of "prouesse"; given the complexity of the term, it is difficult to identify a single English word which captures its significance. I might suggest the phrase "courageous and skilled."



*chevalier* waxed and waned over the years, reflecting the varying concerns of kings, clerks and *romanciers* writing and fighting in different political contexts. The sober reign of Charles V “le Sage” in the fourteenth century spurred writers such as Cuvelier toward a new appreciation of the strategic imperatives faced by knightly captains – and to an especially pragmatic vision of chivalric merit: “Il s’agit de concilier la sagesse avec le courage, tous deux opposés à la folie héroïque.”<sup>423</sup> Johan Huizinga famously claimed that fifteenth-century Burgundy eschewed this enlightened approach, embracing an ideal of knightly heroism that was hobbled by an irrational contempt for battlefield pragmatics.<sup>424</sup> Gaucher does not disagree with this, though she makes a subtler political argument: it was the defensive aristocratic ideology of the Burgundian court, she writes, which promoted a “cult of prowess” that tended to resist the discourse of military reform.<sup>425</sup> Still, as she and others have noted, the corpus of Burgundian chivalric literature testifies to a complex and ambiguous situation. Though the heavy emphasis on prowess tended at times to problematize discussions of pragmatics – sometimes rendering them uncomfortably transgressive, as we shall see below – a number of writers *did* reveal an ethical investment in inherited notions of *sagesse* and prudence. Historians such as Jean

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<sup>423</sup> “It involves reconciling wisdom and courage, both of them in opposition to heroic folly” (my transl.): Gaucher, *La biographie chevaleresque*, 588. For a useful discussion of Cuvelier’s worldly *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin* – which Gaucher reads in direct contrast with the floridly chivalric biography of Jacques de Lalaing – see 593-5.

<sup>424</sup> Huizinga writes, for example, that “[t]he conflict between the chivalric spirit and reality is most clearly revealed when the knightly ideal attempts to establish its validity in the midst of real war. No matter how much the knightly ideal may have infused fighting courage with form and vigor, as a rule it had a more retarding than promoting effect on the conduct of war because it sacrificed the demands of strategy for those of the beautiful life” (*Autumn*, 111).

<sup>425</sup> See Gaucher, “La confrontation de l’idéal chevaleresque et de l’idéologie politique en Bourgogne au XVe siècle: L’exemple de Jacques de Lalaing,” *Rencontres médiévales en Bourgogne* (XIVe-XVe siècles) 2 (1992): 3-25; and see my discussion of this phenomenon in Chapter 5, below.

Froissart and Jean Molinet, memorialists such as Olivier de la Marche, and didactic writers such as Christine de Pisan and Hugues de Lannoy all tempered their descriptions of (and *prescriptions* for) chivalric virtue with markers of thoughtfulness and wisdom.<sup>426</sup>

This list, as it happens, includes both the Verneuil chronicler Jean de Wavrin and the author of the rancorously virile *Seigneurs de Gavre*. Once again there is a nice complementarity between the two works, the first offering examples of the pragmatism and judiciousness expected of a war captain – an important debate, as Jean Devaux and Gaucher have noted, in the wake of the fourteenth-century

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<sup>426</sup> The ways in which they do so, of course, vary widely. On Froissart, whom I include in this group because of his singular influence on Burgundian historiography, see e.g. Godfried Croenen, “Heroes and Anti-heroes,” esp. 13; on Froissart’s admiration of princes who follow good counsel, see Peter F. Dembowski, “Chivalry, Ideal and Real, in the Narrative Poetry of Jean Froissart,” *Medievalia et Humanistica* 14, ed. P.M. Clogan (Totowa, NJ: Roman & Littlefield, 1986), 1-15 (esp. 7). On Molinet and others, see Jean Devaux, “L’image du chef de guerre” (esp. 123-5, 129). On La Marche, see Devaux, “Le culte du héros chevaleresque” (esp. 58-9), and Hélène Wolff, “La caractérisation des personnages” (esp. 51-2). On Pisan, see Charity Cannon Willard, “Christine de Pisan on Chivalry,” in *The Study of Chivalry: Resources and Approaches*, ed. H. Chickering and T.H. Seiler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, 1988), 511-28 (esp. 516), and Gabriella Parussa, “Instruire les chevaliers et conseiller les princes: L’*Epistre Othea* de Christine de Pisan,” in *Studi di Storia della Civiltà Letteraria Francese: Mélanges offerts à Lionello Sozzi* (Paris: Champion, 1996): 128-55 (esp. 139). Lannoy, to be sure, strongly urges the virtues of courage and prowess upon the knight; but elements of asceticism, restraint and thoughtfulness also find their way into his formulations. In “L’instruction d’une jeune prince,” the knight is enjoined avoid personal excess and sins of the flesh; see Potvin, *Oeuvres de Lannoy*, 416-17. Prudence, moreover, is depicted as the first virtue of the prince: “Elle aime science et diligence, et jamais ne dist ne entreprennent chose que par avant n’ait empensé et étudié quelle fin il en poeut venir” (*Oeuvres*, 355). On *prudentia* as one of four classical virtues on which the Toison d’Or was founded, see Arjo Vanderjagt, “Learning and Power at the Fifteenth-Century Burgundian Court,” in *Centres of Learning: Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 272-3. On the virtue of prudence in the writings of Jean Germain and Guillaume Fillastre, see Vangerjagt, “Learning,” 273 and Heron, *Il faut faire*, 169-77. It is also worth noting that, in his version of the history of Alexander the Great, Jean Wauquelin promises to recount “actes de bravoure et de sagesse destinés à inspirer l’imaginaire de la chevalerie et à influencer sa conduite” (emph. mine); on this see Jean Devaux, “L’art de mise en prose à la cour de Bourgogne: Jean Molinet, derimeur du Roman de la Rose,” *Le Moyen Français* 57-58 (2005): 87-104 (esp. 89-90). See also Vale, *War and Chivalry*, 25 and 27.

reforms<sup>427</sup> – and the second reflecting on the kinds of wisdom which a knight must share with his prince. Such references are, to be sure, less common and more subdued than those celebrating *preux* deeds; they nonetheless contribute to the image of the good knight. The Duke of Bedford has a good watch kept on his army near Verneuil, sending out scouts “pour doubte des surprises, comme il apartenoit et quil est coustume de faire en pareil cas par tous bons chiefs de guerre.”<sup>428</sup> He crafts a careful and strategic ordinance for the battle, including the deployment of sharpened stakes to intercept cavalry strikes “selon la mode Angloise.”<sup>429</sup> And despite his great valour and experience, he prudently seeks the advice of his men before undertaking any of it. Louis de Gavre, in the *atelier* romance, is a source for such counsel – and for all the young knight’s gung-ho bellicosity, his advice to the Athenian duke is both measured and strategic. He argues for a pre-emptive assault on the duke of Adrianople partly on the grounds of available manpower: “[S]e la venoit...que sans resistance il entrast en voz pays...quant ce venroit a la bataille la pluspart de voz hommes seroyent in leurs hostelz, pour garder leurs chasteaux et

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<sup>427</sup> On the military reforms of the fourteenth century, see Gaucher, *La biographie chevaleresque*, 593; Christopher T. Allmand, “Changing Views of the Soldier in Late Medieval France,” in *Guerre et Société en France, en Angleterre et en Bourgogne, XIVe-XVe Siècle*, ed. P. Contamine et al. (Lille: Université Charles de Gaulle), 171-88; and N.A.R. Wright, “The Tree of Battles of Honoré Bouvet and the Laws of War,” in *War, Literature and Politics in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. C.T. Allmand (Liverpool: LUP, 1976), 12-31. Concerning the debate over the proper conduct of the war leader, Jean Devaux notes in his recent study that the captain’s ability “to moderate his ardour for battle and to weigh carefully each of his decisions” is one of the qualities prescribed by commentators, including some Burgundian chroniclers. See Devaux, “L’image du chef de guerre,” 129.

<sup>428</sup> “For fear of surprises, as was fit and is accustomed to be done in such a case by all good chiefs of war” (transl. in Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 68): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 101.

<sup>429</sup> “In the English manner” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 110.

villes.”<sup>430</sup> Taken aback, the duke and his barons marvel at Louis’ wisdom: “[M]oult s’ebahirent tous du grant sens et prudence quy en luy veoyent estre, veu la grant jonesse en coy il estoit.”<sup>431</sup>

There is much in the expedition narrative to recall the strategic emphases of these texts – and much to recommend Waleran de Wavrin as a judicious soldier and wise captain. Being a middle commander, of course, he plays *both* roles in the text. As a subordinate to Duke Philip in Burgundy and to the Cardinal of Venice in the East, he counsels princes who, like Duke Athenor, lack his strategic acuity.

“Monseigneur...se vous vouldrez envoyer devers le duc et seignourie de Venise requerir quon vous preste pour vostre armee quatre gallees,” he tells Philip the Good, warning against a proposal from ambassador Karystinos to obtain ships from the Greeks, “ilz ne le vous refuseront pas car larmee est autant pour leur bien comme pour lempereur de Constantinoble.”<sup>432</sup> Unlike Louis, however, Waleran has forged this *sens* through experience: the narrator informs us that “il avoit autresfois este a Venisse et veu le grant nombre des gallees auz Venitiens.”<sup>433</sup> He likewise offers Cardinal Condulmer seasoned advice on the high seas – and the legate, an inexperienced commander, clearly depends on it. “Now, noble lord, if you, like me, were the Legate of our Holy Father,” Condulmer says at one point, “and I, like you,

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<sup>430</sup> “If it happened...that he invaded your country without resistance...when he came to battle, most of your men would be in their hostels, in order to guard their castles and cities[; hence they would be unable to join your army]” (my transl.): Stuipe, *Seigneurs*, 103.

<sup>431</sup> “They were all dumbfounded by the great wisdom and prudence that they saw in him, given that he was so young” (my transl.): Stuipe, *Seigneurs*, 104.

<sup>432</sup> “My lord..., [i]f you were to send to the Doge and Signoria with the request that they lend you four galleys, they would not refuse. After all, the fleet would be as much for their good as for the Emperor’s” (transl. Imber, 116): Wavrin-Hardy, 21-2.

<sup>433</sup> “He had been to Venice and seen what a large number of galleys the Venetians possessed” (transl. Imber, 116): Wavrin-Hardy, 21.

were the Captain of Burgundy, what would you decide to do?" The captain-general gives a detailed answer – though not without a hint of contempt, as we shall see.<sup>434</sup>

The most vivid testimony to Waleran's wisdom and tactical acumen comes, however, in portraits of his own efforts as a war leader and planner. The narrative places a heavy emphasis on strategy, offering battle descriptions that are as procedurally complex as they are epically subdued. And there is no doubt that Waleran is the chief strategist: attacks on such sites as Tutrakan and Giurgiu succeed thanks to his prudence and resourcefulness. At Tutrakan, the captain prepares his men "en grant point,"<sup>435</sup> defending the fleeing Vlachs with a mighty assault; he orders a powerful artillery attack against Turks defending the castle, driving them into the main tower; and then, in concert with the Wallachian leaders, he conceives a successful plan to burn the Turks out of the tower.<sup>436</sup> When things *don't* go well, moreover, it is because of the incompetence or rashness of others. As soon as they have inspected the straits of Constantinople, Waleran and his Hungarian counterpart recognize that it will be impossible to thwart the Turkish crossing unless the Christians hold one of the shores; it is the Greek emperor who, failing to heed their pleas, dooms the project to failure.<sup>437</sup> Likewise, the slightly ignominious results of the first phase of Waleran's carefully-orchestrated siege of the Danube castle of

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<sup>434</sup> Transl. Imber, 151. "Je yroie," Wavrin replies, "visiter ledit chastel et y faire tout le mielz que je porroie, veu que ces seigneurs Vallaques dient que cest une place quy moult griefve les Christiens; tantost nous aurons fait ou failly, atendu la puissance des Vallaques quy son six mille hommes et deux grosses bombardes, et jen ay aussi une moult bonne, qui est grant chose; si dient quilz ne sont que environ trois cens Turcqz layans dedens la place, je la desire bien a veoir" (Wavrin-Hardy, 91-2). For more on this exchange, see Part 2, below. For another example of Waleran's advice to Condulmer, see Wavrin-Hardy, 103.

<sup>435</sup> "With the utmost care" (transl. Imber, 145): Wavrin-Hardy, 81.

<sup>436</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 81-4.

<sup>437</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 48-9.

Giurgiu – a fruitless bombardment and a broken bombard – stem from the foolish actions of the trigger-happy Vlachs. It is up to Waleran to save the operation by crafting another incendiary plan: “[M]e samble pour ma part expedient,” he tells Vlad Dracul, “que chascun...porte autant de bois quil polra...puis bouter le feu dedens pour faire la flamme saillir dedens la place.”<sup>438</sup> The tactic works admirably well.

It is worth noting, finally, that Waleran’s strategic acumen blends wisdom and *mesure* with moments of quick-wittedness. Like Bedford, he takes counsel with his allies before taking major steps; in difficult cases, such as his decision to attack Tutrakan in the absence of the cardinal, he seems almost to agonize over his choices.<sup>439</sup> But like Louis, he is also capable of rescuing an ally through decisive action. Learning with dismay that Geoffroi de Thoisy has been captured at Batumi, Waleran immediately sends letters to the emperor of nearby Trebizond asking him to intervene on the Burgundians’ behalf. “Lequel empereur,” the narrative concludes brusquely, “fist incontinent grant dilligence denvoier au pays de Georgie par tel facion que ledit messire Geoffroy luy fut rendu et il le remist saulvement en sa

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<sup>438</sup> “It seems advisable to me that everyone...should gather as much wood as they can...then set it alight so that the flames will rise up inside [the castle]” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 96.

<sup>439</sup> As Jean Devaux notes, the duty of the war leader to take counsel with his leading men was treated very seriously by contemporary chivalric writers; see “L’image du chef de guerre,” 123-4. For his part, Waleran takes counsel with commanders, peers *and* subordinates. He confers with the Hungarian captain at the straits (Wavrin-Hardy, 47-8); he discusses the emperor’s request for aid with “nos gens” (presumably including his subordinates Thoisy and Confide) (59); he deliberates with his “gens de bien” before the assault on Tutrakan (80) and with the men of the galleys before the assault on Giurgiu (92-3); he decides “tous ensemble” with the Christian lords to abandon the siege of Nicopolis (111); and he consults with Regnault on his plan to trick the Turks (112-13).

galley."<sup>440</sup> We saw in Chapter 2 that the subtle differences between Wavrin's and Thoisy's chronicles may underscore a competition between the two houses for crusading glory; this seems particularly evident here. Wavrin emphasizes Waleran's role in freeing his impetuous lieutenant and treats Geoffroi's own actions in a decidedly ambiguous manner;<sup>441</sup> these revisions to Thoisy's bellicose text suggest not only the chivalric *legitimacy* of Waleran's deliberate and strategic style, but also its *superiority* to Geoffroi's headstrong heroics. The passage thus presents a point of convergence between Wavrin's chivalric apologetics and his pointed critique of temerity in wars against Eastern foes – a subject to which I shall return in Chapter 4.

(c) *Loyalty, deference and fidelity.* In considering the cultural and discursive context of Wavrin's apologetic themes, it is important to remember that Burgundian chivalric virtues were enacted not only on the battlefield but also in the elaborate chivalric ceremonies of the Valois dukes. Scholars have spilled a great deal of ink on these events; several recent studies, following in the broad tradition of Clifford Geertz, argue that the dukes and their leading courtiers exploited the symbology of

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<sup>440</sup> "The emperor was quick to send to Georgia and, by these means, Sir Geoffroy was returned to him, and put safely on board the galley" (transl. Imber, 138): Wavrin-Hardy, 67.

<sup>441</sup> "Although the Emperor of Trebizond had told [Thoisy] that [the locals] were Christians," Wavrin writes, "he nevertheless did not wish to abandon his plans, claiming that his orders were to fight all schismatics who did not obey our Holy Father.... They allowed Sir Jeffroy to land at the port of Vaty, all eager to plunder the village, but as he approached the ambush, they jumped on him, killing many of his men and taking him prisoner" (transl. Imber, 138): see Wavrin-Hardy, 66. This is a far cry from Thoisy's own account, which offers a more vividly chivalric version of the adventure (and makes no mention of Waleran's intervention); see Chapter 2 (above) and Iorga, "Les aventures 'Sarrazines,'" 33-4.

chivalry to further their political and dynastic ambitions.<sup>442</sup> Rather less attention has been paid, however, to the multivalent nature of this symbolic exchange – to the ways in which participants as well as organizers relied on chivalric themes as markers of personal status. In many cases, Duke Philip’s grand tourneys, feasts and *pas d’armes* offered lesser noblemen an important opportunity to demonstrate the knightly virtues of *loyalty and fidelity*; by deferring ceremonially to the duke, by undertaking selfless oaths and challenging physical *emprises*, they “revealed” these traditional, and ostensibly indwelling, virtues to the world.<sup>443</sup> So it was at the famous *Banquet du Faisan* (1454), probably the most elaborate feast of the late medieval period, where some 100 noblemen from across Philip’s territories swore ruggedly ascetic vows to join him on crusade against the “infidel.” No other event better illustrates the ways in which themes of chivalric selflessness were inherited and refracted in Burgundian martial discourse (and, owing to the apparent discrepancies between the *Banquet*’s ostentatious display and its ascetic intentions, none has earned so much contempt from modern scholars).<sup>444</sup>

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<sup>442</sup> This extensive literature includes works by Peter Arnade, Jeffrey Chipps-Smith, Marie-Thérèse Caron, Jesse Hurlbut and others (see Introduction and Chapter 5).

<sup>443</sup> On loyalty as one of the traditional “knightly” virtues celebrated in chivalric historiography, see Maurice Keen, *Nobles, Knights, and Men-at-Arms in the Middle Ages* (London: Hambledon, 1996), 69; Le Brusque, “From Agincourt to Fornovo,” 41-3.

<sup>444</sup> Raymond Lincoln Kilgour, for example, offers a hostile assessment of the *Banquet* that is reminiscent of Huizinga’s hermeneutics. “There was...not great need for sincerity in these vows, since they were part of an elaborate theatrical representation,” he writes. “[W]hen one remembers that the Duke went through his part in the ceremony with the gravity of a mighty prince engaging in amateur theatricals..., one cannot help but realize the pompous futility of the whole affair. Chivalry, for want of any true inspiration, had become a semi-literary diversion.” See Kilgour, *The Decline of Chivalry*, 257. On this point, see also Vanderjagt, “Ritualizing Heritage,” 8.



A detailed study of the symbology and ritual of the *Banquet* is beyond the scope of this project (happily, a number of previous studies treat the subject well).<sup>445</sup> For our purposes it is sufficient to note that the themes of loyalty, deference and promise-keeping articulated by Philip's knights in Lille were by no means anomalous; they inhabited the thought-world of the Burgundian nobility, penetrating its literature as extensively as did depictions of prowess and *sens*.<sup>446</sup> Our comparator texts offer vivid examples. Even after his superhuman feats against the

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<sup>445</sup> See e.g. Agathe Lafortune-Martel, *Fête noble en Bourgogne au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle: Le Banquet du Faisan (1454): Aspects politiques, sociaux et culturels* (Montréal: Bellarmin, 1984); Otto Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy*, 135-53. Marie-Thérèse Caron's superb critical edition and study of a crusading miscellany preserved in the *fonds* of the Bibliothèque Nationale (ms. fr. 11594) – a text containing an anonymous account of the *Banquet du Faisan* and a record of the crusading vows pronounced there – constitutes one of the most important recent contributions to Burgundian crusading scholarship. Her discussion of the function of chivalric ceremonies is particularly relevant here. "[C]es réunions avec joute, banquet, spectacle," she writes, "constituaient un moment privilégié pour exalter les valeurs de courage, d'habileté aux armes, de dépassement de soi, de fidélité au prince, sans contradiction avec des vertus chrétiennes; elles valorisaient cependant l'individu, en lui donnant des occasions de se faire apprécier...." See Caron, *Les vœux du faisan, noblesse en fête, esprit de croisade: Le manuscrit français 11594 de la Bibliothèque nationale de France* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 55. For a related discussion, see Michel Stanesco, "Le banquet du faisan: De la fête courtoise au scénario rituel," in Quérue, *Rencontres médiévales en Bourgogne II*, 47-67 (esp. 56-63), and Caron, "Vœu du Faisan," 285.

<sup>446</sup> For more on the theme of loyalty in Burgundian literature, see Vale, *War and Chivalry*, 26-7, and Jean Devaux, *Jean Molinet, Indiciaire Bourguignon* (Paris: Champion, 1996), 360. Bernard Schnerb's recent study of the heroic depiction of Jean de Villiers in Burgundian historiography likewise reveals the strong emphasis placed by these sources on the knight's loyalty and devotion to the duke and his house. See Schnerb, "Jean de Villiers," esp. 117-21. Significantly for our purposes, Arjo Vanderjagt has demonstrated the extent to which the theme of loyalty to the prince had penetrated Burgundian chivalric discourse by the mid-1440s; see his fascinating discussion of the evolution of the concept of *le bien publique* in "The Princely Culture of the Valois Dukes of Burgundy," 70-9. On loyalty and mutual service as a prerequisite for membership in the Toison d'Or, see Griffin Gerard Jones, *The Order of the Golden Fleece: Form, Function, and Evolution, 1430-1555* (PhD dissertation, Texas Christian University, 1988), 32-4, Jacques Paviot, "Du nouveau sur la création de l'ordre de la toison d'or," *Journal des Savants* 2 (2002): 279-98 (esp. 287), and Françoise de Gruben, *Les chapitres de la Toison d'Or à l'époque Bourguignonne (1430-1477)* (Leuven: LUP, 1997), 40-1. On the fidelity of vassals as "une donnée première de la vie nobiliaire" in the Burgundian ethos, see Marie-Thérèse Caron, "La fidélité dans la noblesse Bourguignonne à la fin du Moyen Age," in *L'Etat et les aristocraties (France, Angleterre, Ecosse), 12<sup>e</sup> – 17<sup>e</sup> siècles: Table ronde*, ed. P. Contamine (Paris: 1989): 103-27. On the *emprise* as a physical mark of fidelity and promise-keeping, see Jean-Pierre Jourdan, "Le thème du Pas et de l'Emprise," *Ethnologie française* 22, no. 2 (1992): 172-84 (esp. 176-8).

army of Adrianople, first, young Louis de Gavre does not forget his humble place in the retinue of Duke Athenor. Asked by the duke and his barons for advice on how to handle their enemies, he proves as demure a vassal as he is a fierce warrior: “Ha a sire, pour Dieu,” he protests, “ja ne m’adveingne que devant tant de nobles barons et consiliers je doye dire mon advis de ceste chose: trop suis jones et ay peu veu.”<sup>447</sup> It is only after he has made every effort to defer pride of place to others that he dares speak his mind – and then, only in the humblest terms.<sup>448</sup>

The Verneuil tract, for its part, foregrounds the importance of demonstrating loyalty and fidelity through the fulfillment of promises. The Duke of Bedford severely punishes a number of “base knights and esquires of Normandy” who had “formerly made oath of loyalty and fidelity” but defected to the French because of their superior numbers.<sup>449</sup> Bedford himself models proper chivalric fidelity; he makes and fulfills an oath by St. George “non jamais sejourner ou arrester jusques a ce quil auroit combatu ses annemis silz ne le fuyoient villainement.”<sup>450</sup> In this respect, he is clearly superior to his French foes. As he and an enemy captain keep

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<sup>447</sup> “Ha – oh, sire,” said Louis, “it has never happened before that I was asked to give my advice on such a thing in front of so many noble barons and counsellors: I am too young and I have seen too little” (my transl.): Stuipe, *Seigneurs*, 102.

<sup>448</sup> “Se...chose y a qui ne soit de faire, benignement soit corrigiet,” he says, “et ma simplesse veuillies tenir pour excusee” (“If [I say] something that is not right, let it be gently corrected, and please take my simplicity as my excuse,” my transl.): see Stuipe, *Seigneurs*, 102. It is worth noting that Louis’ diction is somewhat reminiscent of the submissive rhetoric employed by the duke’s many “tres humble et obeissant serviteurs” in their 1454 crusading vows. The latter phrase is taken from the vow of Bon de Donquerre; for the full text of the vows pronounced at Lille, see Caron, *Les voeux du faisan*, 112-66.

<sup>449</sup> “Aulculns lasces chevaliers et escuyers de Northmandie”; “avoient fait serment de loyaulte et fidelite audit duc de Bethfort regent” (Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 120). Transl. in Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 81.

<sup>450</sup> “Never to rest or halt until he should have fought his enemies, unless they fled shamefully” (transl. in Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 72): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 107.

their promises to exchange hostages for the castle of Ivry, the latter bemoans the fact that he never received the help he was promised by his king: “Or voy je bien que aujourd’huy me ont failly de convenant dixhuit grans seigneurs du party au roy Charles de France, quy mavoient promis donner secours,” he declares, holding aloft a letter to which eighteen noble seals are attached.<sup>451</sup>

Clearly the stakes of fidelity and loyalty, of keeping promises and maintaining allegiances, are high in these Burgundian texts. And in both respects, Waleran proves to be a model warrior. He is, in the first place, consistently deferential to Cardinal Condulmer, his mercurial naval commander. Even as he voices frustration with the prelate’s leadership – “Quant on fait ung prestre chief de guerre il nen pourroit pas bien venir,” he blurts out at one point, “par grant couroux”<sup>452</sup> – he takes pains to secure his approval of major ventures, refers other war-leaders to him as a first contact, and agonizes over the decision to invade Tutrakan in his absence.<sup>453</sup> And when the angry cardinal accuses him of treachery for the latter indiscretion, he responds with a humble bow and a submissive reply. His reaction to the cardinal’s charge, to be sure, is no less vitriolic for its *pro forma* humility – it is, in fact, a masterful and passive-aggressive manipulation of the codes

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<sup>451</sup> “Now I see clearly that today eighteen great lords of the party of king Charles of France, who had promised to give me succour, have failed to keep covenant with me” (transl. Hardy in Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 69): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 102.

<sup>452</sup> “He said to them sorrowfully: ‘When you appoint a priest leader in war, no good can come of it’” (transl. Imber, 142): Wavrin-Hardy, 73.

<sup>453</sup> Waleran ensures, for instance, that the cardinal is pleased with his plans for a Danube expedition (see Wavrin-Hardy, 60-2); he also defers to Condulmer in deciding whether to allow the Turkish lord, Saoussy, to try to influence the Turks on the Danube (75-6). And when Pietre Vast returns from his mission to Hungary, Waleran tells him: “Messire, allez deverz monseigneur le cardinal faire vostre dilligence, je me doubte quil ne sera mal content de ce que nestest alles premierement devers luy” (“Sir, go to Monsignor the Cardinal to deliver your message. I do not think that he will be unhappy that you went to him first,” transl. Imber, 159): Wavrin-Hardy, 106.

of chivalric loyalty that ultimately proves the superiority of his own military skills.<sup>454</sup> But the narrator's depiction of Waleran's words and actions, here and throughout the text, protects him against accusations of insubordination.

A far more important claim, however, concerns Waleran's status as a promise-keeper. The expedition narrative is cluttered with references to vows given and observed by the captain-general: his promise to his Hungarian emissary, Pietre Vast,<sup>455</sup> to return "without fail" to the mouth of the Danube after adventuring on the Black Sea, and his timely departure from Caffa to keep that covenant<sup>456</sup>; his offer to make any "reasonable and legal" crusading alliance that János Hunyadi deems suitable, and his efforts to ensure that the cardinal supports that agreement through the timely provision of galleys<sup>457</sup>; his tortured decisions to march on Tutrakan, bound by his word to the Vlachs, and to withdraw from Nicopolis, quit of his covenant by Hunyadi<sup>458</sup>. These and other instances constitute the most prominent chivalric theme

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<sup>454</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 87-92; and see Part 2, below.

<sup>455</sup> "Pietre Vast" is Pedro Vasquez de Saavedra; see Chapter 1, above.

<sup>456</sup> "Dedens ung mois il retourneroit illec en une ville appele Brelago pour atendre la revenue de messire Pietre Vast sans nulle faulte" (Wavrin-Hardy, 65); "Le seigneur de Wavrin quy vouloit tenir la promesse par luy faite a messire Pietre Vast et aus seigneurs de Hongrye se party de Caffa" (Wavrin-Hardy, 67).

<sup>457</sup> The Hungarian lords ask Pietre Vast "quele sceurte ilz auroient dudit capittaine...ausquelz messire Pietre respondy, 'Jay ycy son secretaire avec moy quy a des blans seellez sur luy, ou nous metteres les promesses teles que vous voulez quil face, moyennant quelles soient licites et raisonnables" (Wavrin-Hardy, 68). In order to fulfill "toutes les promesses et traities dessusdis," Waleran writes to the cardinal asking "quil luy vouldist entretenir la promesse que faite lui avoit au parti, et venir en la Dunoue atout autant de gallees quil pourroit finer" (Wavrin-Hardy, 70). Later, as the time to meet the Hungarians draws near, Waleran urges the cardinal "que la journee quil avoit donnee auz Hongres destre devant Nycopoly, cest a scavoir a Nostre Dame de Septembre, ne feust pas oubliee, ne ny eust faulte nullement en leur promesse laquele luy mesmes avoit jure et afferme do son seel" (Wavrin-Hardy, 103).

<sup>458</sup> The Vlachs "envoierent devers le seigneur de Wavrin dire quil leur tenist sa promesse" (Wavrin-Hardy, 81); Hunyadi, acknowledging that it is fruitless to pursue the Turks beyond the Danube, declares: "Je...quitte le capittaine-general du duc de Bourgogne bien quitte de son convenant" (Wavrin-Hardy, 115).

of the narrative – one that is, moreover, amplified by descriptions of Waleran’s keenness to fulfill his vows and of his consistent success in doing so. Soon after the Varna disaster, the captain-general is “overjoyed” to learn of the Hungarians’ agreement to join him in a new crusading adventure; he declares immediately that “tout ce que promis avoit en son nom il l’aveuoit et l’accompliroit au Dieu plaisir sans faulte.”<sup>459</sup> And so he does, finding and deploying all the galleys he has offered, and even arriving at the appointed meeting place before his allies. “Le seigneur de Wavrin se trouva moult joyeulz,” the narrator reports, “voiant quil estoit illec venus devant les Hongres.”<sup>460</sup> No one, and certainly not the crusading hero Hunyadi, could accuse him of failing in his duty.

Such details, and the claims they underwrite, play a crucial apologetic role in the expedition narrative. Facing the devastating accusations of the *Lalaing*-author that the Burgundians achieved little to their profit in the East, readers of Wavrin’s text could point to Waleran’s stolid fidelity – a kind of litmus-test of his indwelling chivalric virtue, and a gain in the profit-columns of the glory economy. It is an important gain, too, given both the mediocre military results of the expedition and the paucity of individual deeds of prowess attributable to Waleran; more than any reference to his prudence or courage, it serves as a surrogate virtue, designed to counteract these shortcomings. Yet even here, the apologetic objective is tempered

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<sup>459</sup> “He acknowledged everything that had been promised in his name and..., God willing, he would accomplish it without fail” (transl. Imber 140): Wavrin-Hardy 70.

<sup>460</sup> Waleran arrives, in fact, four days after the agreed-upon date. His relief at the fact that the Hungarians have not yet arrived, and so he has been true to his word, is thus palpable here: “The Lord of Wavrin was extremely pleased to have arrived before the Hungarians, considering that it was already four days after Our Lady of September” (transl. Imber, 159): see Wavrin-Hardy, 106.

by other rhetorical currents in the text – in this case, by another discursive thread betraying Waleran's efforts to negotiate his reputational standing against purely legalistic standards of martial fidelity. We shall consider these politics of promise-keeping in Section 2 below; for the moment it is important to consider a final key element of Wavrin's apologetic program.

(d) *Renown and recognition*. Thus far we have considered the traditional chivalric virtues which Burgundian authors in general, and Wavrin in particular, ascribed to their protagonists. Many authors used a complementary rhetorical technique to reinforce these claims: heroes' abilities, their chivalric status and reputation, are confirmed by the actions and responses of *other* characters in the narrative. The strategy is common to numerous contemporary romances, as Alphonse Bayot's work suggests; it certainly plays a role in our comparator texts.<sup>461</sup> Returning to his capital of Rouen after the victory at Verneuil, Bedford is received as a hero by the city's burghers, commonality and garrisons; "ceulz du clergie luy allerent reveramment alencontre, tous revestus, chantans a maniere de procession," and children flock to him "moustrant grant exaltation de joye pour sa glorieuse et belle victoire."<sup>462</sup> Louis de Gavre is likewise received honourably in Athens, where

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<sup>461</sup> According to Bayot, the Wavrin *atelier* romances contain a number of commonplaces which enable secondary characters to express their admiration for the chivalric hero. These include "Amour des grands et des petits pour le héros"; "Efforts pour lui 'complaire'"; and honourable "Réception," among many others (see e.g. Bayot, *Gillion de Trazegnies* (Louvain: Peeters, 1903), 155-62).

<sup>462</sup> Members of "the clergy went reverently to meet him, all robed, singing in the manner of a procession"; "showing a high degree of joy for his glorious and fair victory" (transl. Hardy in Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 81): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 121.

the duke's seneschal insists he ride in advance in the ceremonial procession.<sup>463</sup> Nor is it merely in formal receptions that the hero's skills and status are publicly celebrated; both texts do so using a variety of other, sometimes more subtle, references and descriptors. Duke Athenor, for instance, highlights Louis' martial acuity in the *Seigneurs* by approaching him first for advice,<sup>464</sup> while the Verneuil narrator foregrounds the status and reputation of various knights through the use of well-placed epithets.<sup>465</sup>

Waleran de Wavrin, to be sure, leads no victory procession into Constantinople or Lille. Yet echoes of all of these laudatory themes – muted, as is appropriate to the circumstances – can be heard in the expedition narrative. Doubts as to the merits of his achievements, first, are assuaged by the “honourable receptions” extended to him by potentates in the East. Returning to Constantinople after their Danube adventures, Waleran and the cardinal “furent honnourablement receus par lempereur...quy leur fist grant chiere et reverence.”<sup>466</sup> The emperor offers him “moult beaux et riches dons” for his exemplary efforts, but Waleran refuses; like any good crusader, he seeks only holy relics to bring back to his homeland “en commemoration de son dit voyage” – and the emperor gladly

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<sup>463</sup> “Le seneschal Eminidus tenoit Loÿs de Gavre par la main et le mist au dessus de luy”; Louis' local host, among others, was “moult joieux quant sy grant honneur luy veoit faire par le seneschal Eminidus.” See Stuijp, *Seigneurs*, 88.

<sup>464</sup> See Stuijp, *Seigneurs*, 102.

<sup>465</sup> At the beginning of the chapter detailing the surrender of the castle of Ivry, for instance, he notes that Bedford had taken four hostages, “les plus renommez de la garrison,” to secure its surrender. Amongst Bedford's captains, he writes, the Earl of Salisbury came first and “nestoit mie a oublier.” The lord of L'Isle-Adam arrives at Evreux with a company of Burgundian noblemen; Bedford is delighted because “tous estoient chevalliers de grant recommandation” (see Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 99-100).

<sup>466</sup> They “were honourably received by the Emperor of Constantinople, who welcomed them with the greatest respect” (transl. Imber, 165): Wavrin-Hardy, 117.

agrees.<sup>467</sup> Later, Waleran is honourably feted not only by the Doge and Signoria of Venice<sup>468</sup>, but also by his own Duke Philip<sup>469</sup> – and even by the Holy Father in Rome. Arriving at the papal court, Waleran “prays and begs” Eugenius “que le service que fait lui...lui pleust prendre en gre.” The pontiff, we learn, *is* delighted (“de laquele chose nostre saint pere le pape et les cardinaulz, tres contentz, le remercyerent”<sup>470</sup>), and he generously acknowledges Waleran’s status as a crusader: “En remuneration dudit service fait a leglise par le seigneur de Wavrin nostre saint pere lui donna certains indulgences quil raporta avec luy, desqueles sont participans tous ceulz qui visitent leglise de Lillers....”<sup>471</sup> One suspects that the literary parallels with the return of the victorious warriors of the First Crusade to their Flemish homeland are not accidental.

The narrator is also at pains to establish Waleran’s status, and to enhance his profile, through the use of key descriptors earlier in the text. At his first appearance in the narrative, Duke Philip entrusts the lord of Wavrin with the prestigious tasks of protecting and communicating with the Greek ambassador, and of commanding the Burgundian fleet in the East.<sup>472</sup> Soon after his arrival in Venice, Waleran has direct

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<sup>467</sup> “Fine and sumptuous gifts”; “to commemorate his journey” (transl. Imber, 165): Wavrin-Hardy, 117.

<sup>468</sup> “[I]lz furent moult haultement conjois et honnourablement recheus, tant par le duc de Venise comme par la seignourie et peuple Venitiens” (Wavrin-Hardy, 118).

<sup>469</sup> Il “sen retourna...devers son prince le tres noble duc Phelippe de Bourguoinge quil trouva en sa bonne ville de Lille, duquel...il fut honnourablement recheu et festoie de bon vouloir, aussit fut il des nobles princes et barons de sa court generalmente” (Wavrin-Hardy, 119).

<sup>470</sup> “To accept the service which he had performed”; “Our Holy Father the Pope and the Cardinals very happily thanked him for this” (transl. Imber, 165): Wavrin-Hardy, 118.

<sup>471</sup> “[I]n consideration of the service that the Lord of Wavrin had rendered to the Church, our Holy Father gave him certain indulgences, which he carried back with him, and which benefit all who visit the church of Lille” (transl. Imber, 166): Wavrin-Hardy, 118-19.

<sup>472</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 21-3.



communications with the pope and the doge concerning the Mamluk threat to Rhodes<sup>473</sup>; later it is he, “a la pryere et requeste” of Cardinal Condulmer, who “porteroit le baniere de leglise, et luy bailla ledit cardinal tous ses gens.”<sup>474</sup> These and other references to the captain-general’s diplomatic and military privileges reinforce our sense of his central role in the crusade planning, and of his status as a peer amongst the great and powerful.

But perhaps the most eloquent testimony to his chivalric reputation comes in the responses of other fighting men. Hearing that Pietre Vast bears letters from the captain-general of Burgundy, Hunyadi and the Hungarian lords – still smarting from the disaster of Varna – receive him with utmost respect; later, as they prepare to meet Waleran for their adventures on the Danube, they “avoient en voullente de le recepvoir et festoier moult honnourablement.”<sup>475</sup> Likewise, both the renegade Turkish lord Saoussy and the crusading hero Hunyadi approach Waleran *before* they consult with the cardinal; as in the advice scene in the *Seigneurs de Gavre*, his military competence seems to render his lesser rank a moot point.<sup>476</sup> Hunyadi, for his part, only leaves to visit the cardinal when he discovers that his broad armour will prevent him from entering the injured captain’s quarters; he soon returns, kindly offering Waleran a strange set of medicines for his malady. The gesture, curious and exotic as it appears to the Burgundian (“lequel non obstant quil se doubtaست assez

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<sup>473</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 33-4.

<sup>474</sup> It was the “earnest request of the Cardinal” that Waleran “should carry the banner of the Church”; “the Cardinal also assigned him all his men” (transl. Imber, 141): Wavrin-Hardy, 73.

<sup>475</sup> The Hungarian lords “had intended to welcome him and to feast him with great honour” (transl. Imber, 159): Wavrin-Hardy, 106.

<sup>476</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 76; 109.

que ce luy deust plus faire de mal que de bien, toutes fois ne luy endure il a refuser"<sup>477</sup>), seems to signal Hunyadi's sincere concern for his ally; it thus reinforces a sense of fellowship, and of chivalric equality, between our protagonist and the most celebrated crusading hero of the fifteenth century. Certainly no member of the Thoisy clan could boast of such a relationship.

Together, these responses do much to mitigate Waleran's reputational problem. But the most vocal admirer of his chivalric attainments turns out to be Vlad Dracul, his rather unreliable Wallachian ally. After the capture of Ruse, a number of Christian Bulgarians free themselves from Turkish domination. As they cross the Danube with Christian help, Vlad thanks Waleran and the Cardinal for their efforts; "le seigneur de la Vallaquie se moustra moult joyeux," the narrator informs us,

...disant que quant ores la present armee de nostre saint pere et du duc de Bourgoigne nauroient fait en ce voyage autre bien que de saulver onze ou douze mille ames des Christiens, et les corpz mis hors de chetivoisin et des mains des Sarrazins, celuy sambloit bien estre une grant operation.<sup>478</sup>

Here, in a single, emphatic line of dialogue, is an airtight rebuttal to those who, like the *Lalaing*-author, would write off the expedition as an embarrassing and fruitless effort. Wavrin makes no mention of the fact, noted by some scholars, that the same Bulgarians soon found themselves under Turkish domination once again; this may

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<sup>477</sup> "The captain suspected that this would do him more harm than good, but the Voevode did not allow him to refuse" (transl. Imber, 161); Wavrin-Hardy, 110.

<sup>478</sup> "The Lord of Wallachia seemed delighted," saying that "even if the fleet of the Holy Father and the Duke of Burgundy had achieved nothing by the expedition, apart from saving eleven- or twelve thousand Christian souls and releasing their bodies from captivity at the hands of the saracens, it would still seem to him to be a great achievement" (transl. Imber, 158); Wavrin-Hardy, 105.

be a strategic omission, though there is every possibility that Waleran was unaware of that outcome.<sup>479</sup> The point is moot: for on a purely rhetorical level, Dracul's monologue *works*. It works to mitigate the truncated and rather disappointing ending to the Nicopolis expedition,<sup>480</sup> and it works to underwrite Waleran's status as a crusader – the very embodiment of the highest ethical aspirations of the Burgundian court.

Together, then, these four strategies serve to rehabilitate the chivalric reputation of a man who might otherwise have been lost to posterity. They are not the only such techniques at work in the narrative, but they are certainly the most effective; it is easy to imagine a contemporary reader moderating, if not abandoning, his contempt toward the captain-general after reading about the fall of Tutrakan or the exodus of the Bulgarian Christians. Yet even as this apologetic project succeeds on one rhetorical level, it is unsettled and subverted on another. Moments of petulance, of coyness, of self-serving pragmatism emerge here and there in the text, wrinkling the façade of Waleran's purportedly "indwelling" chivalric virtue. These features belie critics' claims concerning the monochromatic and derivative character

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<sup>479</sup> See Le Brusque, "From Agincourt to Fornovo," 204.

<sup>480</sup> It is interesting to juxtapose the triumphalism of Dracul's words against the narrator's acknowledgment near the end of Chapter XVIII that Waleran and the Cardinal, advised by Hunyadi that they could not proceed any further against the Turks, were "angry and said that it had not been possible for them to do better" (my transl.: "courrouchies et doullentz de ce quilz navoient peu mieulz faire," Wavrin-Hardy, 116-17). Le Brusque has argued that such passages, reflecting the work's "realism," betray Wavrin's disappointment with the entire expedition (see "From Agincourt to Fornovo," 206). I would suggest, in light of the evidence I have presented, that this phrase does *not* run so squarely against his apologetic project. Rather, it serves an exculpatory function, demonstrating that the Burgundians were keen to pursue the Turks by any means they could, and that they were frustrated – as any keen chivalric warriors would be – to learn that their combats had come to a necessary conclusion. There is nothing in the phrase to suggest a condemnation of the entire project, nor of Waleran's conduct in the East. For more on this passage, see my discussion in Chapter 5.

of Burgundian culture; for though they tend to distinguish Wavrin's narrative from our comparator texts (and other filiated examples), they speak in clear ways to concerns and anxieties that exercised the Valois nobility, and that can be identified in other Burgundian cultural artifacts. I turn now to a study of this revealing "second mode" of chivalric discourse.

## Part 2. 'Strategic' discourse and the glory economy

As my discussion of the courtly symbology of fidelity and deference suggested, there was more to the acquisition of chivalric renown in fifteenth-century Burgundy than just *being* courageous and wise. Knightly reputation, in that richly symbolic milieu, was built not just on men's indwelling merits, but also on the codes and rituals employed in representing those virtues to others.<sup>481</sup> This was equally true of posthumous renown, which was mediated by the *récit*, the telling of the tale; often, a man was remembered as a *preudhomme* when he was so constructed in a

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<sup>481</sup>Warriors themselves engaged in this reputational *ludos* through a variety of means, including participation in chivalric tournaments and ceremonies, rhetorical self-fashioning in the court, and public apologetics at the chapters of the *Toison d'Or*. For a relevant discussion, see Bernhard Sterchi, "The Importance of Reputation in the Theory and Practice of Burgundian Chivalry: Jean de Lannoy, the Croÿs, and the Order of the Golden Fleece," in *The Ideology of Burgundy: The Promotion of National Consciousness*, ed. D.J.D. Boulton and J.R. Veenstra (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 99-115. Sterchi's study examines, among other things, courtiers' perceptions of the importance of correct speech for the maintenance of renown (100-5), and the ways in which *Toison* knights explicitly contested and negotiated the terms of their reputation at chapter meetings (108-15). It is worth adding, as Maurice Keen and others have argued, that Burgundian chivalric ritual also offered the noble class collectively an opportunity to fashion itself imaginatively. For a useful, and nuanced, discussion of the function of chivalric ritual in Valois Burgundy, see Alice Planche, "Du tournoi au théâtre en Bourgogne: Le Pas de la Fontaine des Pleurs à Chalon-sur-Saône," *Le Moyen Age* ser. 4, t. 30 (1975): 97-128.

courtly text.<sup>482</sup> As Élisabeth Gaucher and others have suggested, the chivalric symbols and themes employed for the latter purpose were limited and highly stereotypical in nature; they were concerned mainly with a knight's (purported) martial deeds and pronouncements, which were cast as windows into his warrior's soul. Sometimes the historical "facts" of those deeds – a great victory on the battlefield, a grand *geste* in a tourney – lent themselves well to such representation; at other times they were ambiguous and needed to be rehabilitated through significant rhetorical embroidery.<sup>483</sup> Either way, the portraits of great fighting men that resulted were thoroughly constructed, thoroughly *literary* products. By framing character and individual virtue in terms of these standard chivalric models, contemporary historians and biographers occulted their own rhetorical activities, indulging in forms of amplification and suppression that were invisible to (but perhaps also understood and expected by) their readers.<sup>484</sup>

None of this, of course, is particularly surprising. Scholars of Burgundian literature, working in a Huizinga-esque register, have long criticized historians and biographers for their formalist blindness to the intricacies of human character; some continue to do so, even though such arguments, by privileging modern interpretive

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<sup>482</sup> Bernhard Sterchi offers a case study illustrating the stakes, and the often contested nature, of warriors' depictions in official and semi-official historiography. Josse de Lalaing's son Charles, he notes, "demanded an inquiry into the *Mémoires* of Olivier de La Marche, since they contained an unfavorable passage about Josse's service during the Ghent revolt of 1483. A committee...was invested with the research, as a result of which Olivier de La Marche's widow and any other owner of a manuscript of the *Mémoires* were asked to erase the passage. Indeed, it does not survive in any of the ten existing manuscripts" (Sterchi, 113).

<sup>483</sup> This is not to suggest that chroniclers always served as apologists for individual knights (though they certainly did at times; see e.g. Schnerb, "Jean de Villiers," cited above), nor that they limited themselves to lauding the figures depicted in their texts.

<sup>484</sup> For a useful study of the implications and effects of such rhetorical activity in historical literature, see Schnerb, "Jean de Villiers" (cited above).

categories, fail to account for the Derridean objection that *any* act of writing is necessarily derivative, and is one of stealth and manipulation.<sup>485</sup> Perhaps the most unfortunate result of such modernist hermenetics is the tendency to overlook forms of textual complexity, of tension and instability, that reveal the act of medieval writing in its own terms. Our study of the expedition narrative, by contrast, will profit by considering a revealing paradox which emerges just at the point we have left off. Even as the narrator, writing in an apologetic mode, deploys both amplification and suppression to depict his protagonist as a “model” chivalric hero, his text on another level betrays this manipulation. It reveals the efforts of the protagonist himself, conscious of the legal and formalistic aspects of the codes of chivalry, to undertake symbolic gestures – some of them purely cynical – to secure reputational capital. Like the narrator working silently above him, Waleran manipulates his symbolic environment, not only (indeed not primarily) in response to his chivalric conscience, but in order to survive and thrive within the system.

In the pages that follow, I shall consider three instances of this unsettling discursive layer: Waleran’s struggles to avoid technical culpability for perjury, his subterranean efforts to humiliate his commander for a perceived slight, and his work to ensure the respect of his subordinates through symbolic self-abnegation. In each case, as we shall see, the captain-general negotiates, and manipulates, using litigious and self-conscious language that lacks the virile transparency supposed to be

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<sup>485</sup> Hélène Wolff’s brilliant study of the “caractérisation des personnages dans les *Mémoires* d’Olivier de la Marche,” for instance, might merit scrutiny and criticism on these grounds; note Wolff’s observation that La Marche was “prisonnier...de ses rêveries nostalgiques, de son attachement à un univers chevaleresque et courtois plus mythique que réel” (“La caractérisation,” 43).

characteristic of a *preudhomme*. As such, it reflects and articulates not just a set of themes, but also a kind of instrumental symbolic exchange or “economy,” of chivalric glory. Hence the phrase “glory economy,” which I use to refer to the competitive and dynamic environment in which the Burgundians lived, rose and fell; and hence my use of “strategic discourse,” for lack of a better descriptor, to refer to the peculiar rhetorical and discursive mode which emerges occasionally in the text, disclosing Waleran’s apparently political interests and intentions.

*‘Voulez-vous que je faulse maintenant mon serment?’: The politics of promise-keeping*

The keeping of vows, as we have seen, is one of the most important apologetic themes in the expedition narrative. Time and again, Waleran proves his trustworthiness through promises freely offered and faithfully kept; this underwrites the claim that, whatever the practical outcomes of his expedition may have been, he was an honourable warrior who behaved admirably in the East. But as the example of the *Banquet du Faisan* suggests, the taking of oaths in late medieval Burgundy involved more than just the naïve performance of “honour” – more, that is, than spontaneous and virtuous responses to the exigencies of warfare. Making promises also involved knights in a complex set of rules, traditions and codes – codes that they could, and did, manipulate in order to burnish their reputations. The stakes of framing those promises well, and of observing their terms with legal (if not ethical) precision, were extremely high. This becomes evident in our text, which includes, amongst its many depictions of virtuous promise-keeping, a few scenes betraying

Waleran's intense – and rather amoral and unchivalric – concern with oaths as legalistic means (or obstacles) to mainly political and self-serving ends.

In one curious case, the normally pragmatic and flexible captain-general insists vigorously that he must not “violate” a vow that, while technically binding, has become not only superfluous but meaningless under the circumstances. The renegade Turkish lord Saoussy, a nephew to the sultan and pretender to his throne, has joined the Christian fleet; the Burgundians allocate him a separate galley and promise that they will deliver him into the hands of the Hungarian lords. But after Saoussy fails to convert some local Turkish lords to his cause, he decides to leave the fleet and join some Wallachian allies on shore. Waleran is incensed: “Et comment,” he retorts, “vous mavez fait promettre que je ne vous levreray a nul autre que auz seigneurs de Hongrye. Voulez vous que je faulse maintenant mon serment?” Saoussy, understandably perplexed and annoyed, replies: “Ne suis-jou pas en ma franchise pour aller ou il me plect? Me tenez vous pour vostre esclave?”<sup>486</sup> But Waleran only allows the Turk his freedom after he formally absolves the captain of his oath in the presence of Cardinal Condulmer. Waleran's curious obstinacy here might seem to confirm Huizinga's arguments concerning the “bizarrerie” underwriting late medieval chivalric ideology; but such readings cannot account for the otherwise measured and pragmatic, and still thoroughly chivalric, depictions of the captain elsewhere in the text. I would prefer to read this as the reflection of a

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<sup>486</sup> “What! And you made me promise that I would not deliver you to anyone except the lords of Hungary! Do you want me to break my oath?” The Lord Saoussy replied treacherously [‘felouneusement’]: ‘Am I not at liberty to go where I please? Do you take me for your slave?’” (transl. Imber, 144); Wavrin-Hardy, 78.



different, but equally important, discursive mode: one that candidly acknowledges the political value of adhering strictly to the terms of one's oaths, even in absurd circumstances – such gestures being a purely formal, but entirely effective, means of preserving one's reputation as a faithful knight.

In addition to insisting upon the *pro forma* fulfillment of meaningless oaths, Waleran carefully guards his reputation through a more cynical tactic: by studiously avoiding participation in oaths that might technically involve him in perjury.<sup>487</sup> I call the tactic “cynical” because these gestures do not preclude Waleran's complicity in the perjurious actions that ensue. But by deftly evading a formal role either in taking or in violating the oaths, he shifts the responsibility – legally, if perhaps not ethically – to others. This first becomes evident in the gaps and fissures of a carefully-worded chapter (XI) which reports on the consequences of the Peace of Szeged, a treaty signed between King Wladyslaw and the sultan which should have precluded the entire Christian campaign. Anchored near Constantinople, Waleran and his colleague, the captain of the Hungarian galleys, receive a delegation of Turks who inform them of the peace. The Ragusan captain advises Waleran to let the Turks fetch copies of the treaty, saying he will look at them willingly; and when he realizes that they are legitimate, he responds with consummate tact:

[L]e traitie...fut bien veu au long et sambloit audit capittaine des gallees que la paix estoit bien fait et que on navoit cause de guerroyer, mais nen donna

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<sup>487</sup> It is worth noting, *à propos* of the argument that follows, that Wavrin is not alone amongst late medieval chroniclers in depicting French knights engaging in this sort of deliberate (and perhaps cynical) casuistry. As David Whetham suggests, Froissart paints a portrait of Marshal Boucicaut and other warriors behaving in similar ways. For a pertinent discussion, see Whetham, *Just Wars and Moral Victories: Surprise, Deception and the Normative Framework of European War in the Later Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 224-7 and 233.

rien a congnoistre auz Turcqz, ne ne fist on quelque samblant de voulloir  
pour tant cesser la guerre.<sup>488</sup>

The Ragusan's refusal to acknowledge the peace to his Turkish interlocutors enables him *technically* to avoid the charge of perjury. Waleran, by virtue of his silence, might seem at first glance to be somewhat removed from these machinations. Yet given the narrator's use of the collective pronoun "on" in the final clause – and given that the captain-general goes immediately to give the Greek emperor this news – we may presume that both men believed that a legitimate treaty had been signed, and that neither imperilled his honour by acknowledging it in such a way that he might be forced to defend it. Soon after Waleran's arrival in Constantinople, Cardinal Caesarini, the Hungarian legate, sends word that the crusaders are "not to believe a word" of the treaty<sup>489</sup> – a message that delights Waleran and his allies, who make no objection to (and seek no clarification of) his claims. "Doyr lesqueles nouvelles chascun fut moult joyeux combien que paravant ilz ne scavoient que conseil prendre entreulz, cest a scavoir la demourer ou sen retourner," Wavrin writes, "mais ilz furent par la teneur des ces lettres confermez...."<sup>490</sup> One can almost hear the narrator's sigh of relief as he shifts the legal responsibility for the Christians' perjury squarely onto the legate's shoulders. The question of *ethical* responsibility, of course,

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<sup>488</sup> "After scrutinising it at length, the captain of the galleys concluded that peace had indeed been made, and that there was no reason to go to war. However, he did not let the Turks know this, and [the men, or the leaders] gave no indication of wishing to put an end to hostilities" (transl. Imber, 125; my insertion attempts to account for the collective pronoun "on"); Wavrin-Hardy, 45.

<sup>489</sup> The Cardinal warns that "se ilz ouient aulcunes nouvelles que paix fust entre le roy de Hongrye et le Grant Turcq quilz nen vouldissent riens croire"; earlier, at the end of Chapter X, we learn that the cardinal also informs the crusaders that "ce ne seroit que toute abusio" (translated by Imber as "nothing but a trick"); Wavrin-Hardy, 46, 44.

<sup>490</sup> "Everyone was delighted to hear this news, because previously they had not known what to do – whether to stay or whether to leave – but now the content of the letters gave them assurance" (transl. Imber 126); Wavrin-Hardy, 46.

is rather more thorny<sup>491</sup>; and while this account seems to have satisfied Wavrin's sense of propriety, I think it is unlikely that he borrowed this model of dissembling diplomacy from the pages of chivalric romance.

The various evasions, rhetorical and discursive, that occur in the Szeged scene are even more pronounced in a fascinating episode which occurs late in the narrative. During the Christian assault of the castle of Giurgiu, the Turks surrender on the condition that they be led safely into Ottoman Bulgaria; soon afterward, the ailing Waleran receives Vlad Dracul's son Mircea into his chamber. The Wallachian prince says mysteriously that he has planned an "enterprise against the Turks," and swears the captain to secrecy.<sup>492</sup> Then he reveals his plan: to avenge the subashi's past treachery against his father, he will cross the Danube and ambush the departing prisoners "*sicque quant ilz cuideront aller a Nycopoly, je seray audevant deulz; si les*

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<sup>491</sup> From the start, Wavrin's narrative treats the Szeged treaty in ambivalent ways, never quite succeeding in exculpating the crusaders from the ethical elements of their perjury. It is true that in Chapter X, the narrator insists that the Grand Turk secures the peace through deception – by spreading false tales that the fleet has been destroyed, he frightens Wladyslaw into negotiations. And the narrator clearly shifts much responsibility away from the warrior nobility and onto to the cardinal-legate, first blaming him for delaying his instructions to the king (and thus exacerbating Wladyslaw's sense of urgency to sign), and then depicting him goading and pushing the king into renouncing the truce. Yet in their own disputations with Caesarini, the Hungarians reveal that they undertook the treaty in part with pragmatic, self-interested reasons in mind; these include the prospect of gaining new castles along the Danube (see Wavrin-Hardy, 41-4). Much as it seeks to mitigate the Hungarians' actions, therefore, the narrative is not entirely or unproblematically reconciled with them. This is particularly evident in the words of a Turkish sailor, triumphant after the Ottoman passage across the Straits, who cries: "*Le roy de Hongrye et les Hongres on parjure et faulse leur loy*" ("The King of Hungary and the Hungarians have perjured and violated their oath," transl. Imber, 129): Wavrin-Hardy, 51.

<sup>492</sup> Specifically, Mircea says: "*Sil luy vouloit prometre de le non accuser, il luy declarroit son secre, laquele chose le seigneur de Wavrin luy jura liberalement*" (Wavrin-Hardy, 100). By adhering strictly to this "promise" of secrecy – which Waleran seems to offer before he clearly understands the perjurious nature of the Vlach's plans – and by refusing to do anything to dissuade him once he *does* understand, the Burgundian captain manages to preserve his *legal* integrity while being fully complicit in the ambush. As I argue here, the fact that such a questionable promise is used to justify complicity in the violation of a treaty suggests that the narrator writes in a particularly litigious discursive milieu – one in which knights were concerned above all with fulfilling the "letter" of their promises, and had less concern for their ethical implications.

metteray tous a mort.”<sup>493</sup> This is clearly a tactic of dubious legality; it violates the spirit, and probably also the letter, of the surrender agreement.<sup>494</sup> The captain’s reaction, however, is remarkably politic: maintaining his “promise,” he withdraws into silence (“le seigneur de Wavrin ne respondy mot, ne mal ne bien”), not prohibiting the treacherous venture, but also not participating in any legal sense. A few hours later, the cardinal, unaware of these machinations, sends Waleran his safeconduct so the captain can append his seal. The Burgundian’s response deserves to be quoted in full:

[I]l respondy quil ne lui appartenoit pas seeler avec le cardinal, pourveu quil estoit chief de toute larmee, mais tel saulfconduit que fait avoit promettoit que lui et ses gens le entretenroient. De laquelle response le cardinal fut bien content; si fut ledit saulfconduit delivre aux Turcqs....<sup>495</sup>

The expedition narrative contains no better example of strategic dissembling than this remarkable confession. By offering the cardinal a chivalric justification for his deferral, Waleran preserves his own honour – and renders the prelate an unwitting participant in perjury. At the same time, his carefully-worded promise that his men

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<sup>493</sup> “So that when they imagine they are going to Nicopolis, I shall be in their way and put them all to death” (transl. Imber, 156): Wavrin-Hardy, 101.

<sup>494</sup> As concerns the letter of the agreement, there is a trace of ambiguity in the text. Wavrin first notes first that the subsahi negotiates his surrender with Vlad Dracul on the condition that “leurs vyves [soient] saulves” (Wavrin-Hardy, 99). Later, he quotes Mircea saying the “Sarrazins se sont maintenant rendus a mon pere leurs vyves biens saulfz et les doit on mettre ou pays de Vugarye sceurement” (emph. mine; Wavrin-Hardy, 101). Mircea appears to propose an ambush further into Ottoman territory (“je menvois atout deux mille Vallaques a deux lyeues dicy passer la riviere,”); so it might be argued that his attack *technically* does not violate the letter of the truce. But as Waleran’s reaction reveals, such dubious casuistry does nothing to obscure the *de facto* perjury involved here.

<sup>495</sup> “He replied that it was not for him to add his seal to the Cardinal’s, given that he was the commander of the whole army. He promised, however, that since such a safe-conduct had been issued, he and his men would respect it. The Cardinal was happy with this reply, and the safe-conduct was delivered to the Turks...” (transl. Imber, 156): Wavrin-Hardy, 101.

will uphold the treaty, while legally sound, almost certainly misleads his commander into thinking that his own safeconduct will be respected. The legalistic lengths to which the captain-general goes in order to preserve an artificial and formal blamelessness are almost as shocking as his silences; the narrator likewise suppresses a great deal, omitting such potentially damning details as the cardinal's reaction to the slaughter – a spectacle which is fully visible to the men of the galleys, who see the nude corpses of slaughtered Turks arranged “sur la rivage de leau, quy estoit cruele chose a voir a eulz des gallees quant ilz passerent devant.”<sup>496</sup>

*‘Sans luy je nen voeil riens conclurre’: Deference and hostility*

It is perhaps no coincidence that Wavrin spills as much ink in reporting Waleran's reaction to a single accusation of treachery, blurted in anger by his commanding officer, as he does in painstakingly justifying the fleet's failure to guard the straits of Constantinople from the Turks.<sup>497</sup> Seen through the filter of the Burgundian glory economy, the reputational stakes of the former are as weighty as the latter, defeat being perhaps an easier thing to rationalize honourably than the unfairness of such a dangerous accusation. Wavrin's detailed, five-page<sup>498</sup> account of the charge and its dramatic consequences thus offers a valuable perspective on

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<sup>496</sup> “Along the riverbank, making a forbidding sight for the men of the galleys as they passed by” (transl. Imber, 157); Wavrin-Hardy, 102.

<sup>497</sup> The straits episode occupies approximately four printed pages in Wavrin-Hardy (47-52) and four pages in the Paris manuscript (fol. 21r-23r); Wavrin's treatment of Condulmer's accusation and its outcome stretch over roughly five pages in Wavrin Hardy (87-92) and in the Paris manuscript (fol. 39v-42r).

<sup>498</sup> This applies, as noted above, to both Wavrin-Hardy's edited version and the Paris manuscript. The episode occupies six pages in Wavrin-Dupont (see 122-8).

Waleran's well-developed techniques of manipulating chivalric codes in order to protect his reputation. And by focusing so closely on a particular instance of *competition* for glory, it provides a vivid glance at the hunger for renown shared by French knights – and even Italian priests – in an era of when the prospects of crusading victories were consistently bleak. For both of these reasons, the episode merits our close attention.

It will be necessary, first, to elaborate on our earlier synopsis.<sup>499</sup> Waleran's crisis, like others in the narrative, is provoked by the demands of his sometimes troublesome allies. Sailing his galleys up the Danube ahead of the cardinal's, the captain lands on the riverbank to bake bread; he is approached by the Wallachians, who announce their intention to attack a nearby castle (Tutrakan) and ask for his help. Waleran is reluctant to answer without the cardinal present – "le capitaine...voiant... nulle aparence du cardinal ne de ses gallees, avoit le ceur mal a son aise" – and though his "gens de bien" advise him that refusing would be a great dishonour, he agonizes over the decision.<sup>500</sup> His final response is ambiguously qualified: "jay esperance que monseigneur le cardinal venra ancores annuit et aussi mes autres gallees, et demain au matin je seray prest," he says; "envoiez devers moy quant vous volrez passer, si men yrai assaillir ledit chastel avec vous."<sup>501</sup> But when the morning comes, the cardinal *still* has not arrived; the Vlachs send to Waleran,

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<sup>499</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>500</sup> "When the captain saw...that there was no sign of either the Cardinal or his galleys, he became distinctly alarmed" (transl. Imber, 145): Wavrin-Hardy, 79.

<sup>501</sup> "I am hoping that Monsignor the Cardinal will still be coming tonight and, with him, my other galleys. I shall then be ready in the morning. Send to me when you want to set out, and I shall go to attack the castle with you" (transl. Imber, 145): Wavrin-Hardy, 80.

reminding him of his “promise,” and they rush headlong into an attack which he moves quickly to support.

The battle at Tutrakan, as we have seen, ends in a qualified victory; but when the cardinal finally arrives, he is furious that neither he nor the other crusaders were present to share in the glory.<sup>502</sup> He then makes an accusation which seems to strike Waleran with an almost physical force: “[L]e cardinal luy dist que fait lui avoit une grande trahison, laquele il nuncherait a nostre saint pere le pape et a tous les princes christiens.”<sup>503</sup> There could be no worse threat to a crusading knight’s reputation, and Waleran protests his innocence – already established by the narrator in the previous passage – with an elegant and lengthy rebuttal. The statement comprises three parts: first, he claims (rather disingenuously) that the Vlachs had already been driven back and were in need of his help when he arrived<sup>504</sup>; second, he offers to fight the cardinal or a substitute in judicial combat in order to preserve his honour; and finally, he reminds the prelate that his actions at Tutrakan will redound “plus a vostre loenge, que estes mon chief, que a la mienne.”<sup>505</sup>

It is a virtuoso chivalric performance, reminiscent of the language contained in a series of angry missives exchanged between Philip the Good and the Duke of

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<sup>502</sup> This motivation is only hinted at in the cardinal’s words, but it is later conceded by the Hospitaller Regnault de Confide: “The Cardinal and all of us,” he tells Waleran, “are annoyed that we were not there at the capture of the castle” (transl. Imber, 150): Wavrin-Hardy, 89.

<sup>503</sup> “The Cardinal told him that he had committed a great act of treachery, which he would announce to our Holy Father the Pope and all the Christian princes” (transl. Imber 149): Wavrin-Hardy 87.

<sup>504</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 88. This is disingenuous because the captain had promised aid to the Vlachs the night before; his actions were therefore not impelled purely by the necessity of the moment. On his promise, see Wavrin-Hardy, 80.

<sup>505</sup> “More to your glory than mine, since you are my commander” (transl. Imber, 149): Wavrin-Hardy, 88.

Gloucester in the 1420s.<sup>506</sup> Like Waleran's speech, the letters focus on the chivalric justice of disputed actions, the implications of the dispute on the honour of both parties, and the value of judicial combat as a remedy for chivalric affronts. But they differ in presenting a *two-way* exchange; accusations are responded to in kind, and the two authors move rapidly toward a desired outcome – a duel – which promises to satisfy their prickly sense of honour and privilege.<sup>507</sup> Waleran's eloquent defence, by contrast, goes virtually unanswered; Condulmer merely modulates his tone, though as the narrator tells us, he continues to speak "rather insultingly."<sup>508</sup> Some time later, after being urged by Bartholomew of Genoa, a respected churchman and *de facto* mediator, to make amends for his "cruel" language, the cardinal sends Waleran a gift of malmsey, bread and biscuit. But this is no formal retraction – no balm for Waleran's reputation – and the captain's anger continues to simmer.

In short order, he is handed an opportunity to avenge the slight by more subterranean means. Vlad Dracul implores the crusaders to support yet another assault on a Turkish castle (Giurgiu) which they are fast approaching. Waleran refers the Wallachian messenger to the cardinal, who admits that he cannot make a

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<sup>506</sup> These fascinating letters, occasioned by a dispute over Gloucester's incursion into Hainault, were compiled by Jean de Wavrin and other contemporary chroniclers (including Monstrelet and Lefèvre). They appear in Volume 5, Book 3 of the *Anciennes Chroniques*; see Wavrin-Hardy 39, 3, p. 92-129. The letters merit a close textual study of their own; though this falls outside the parameters of my present project, I hope to undertake it at a future date.

<sup>507</sup> The much-anticipated duel is ultimately cancelled by order of the French parlement – but not before the two antagonists engage in a great many rhetorical postures ("By the help of God, Our Lady, and Saint George," Philip writes at one point, "with my body against yours, I will make you acknowledge and confess that the contents of my letter are true," Wavrin-Hardy 40, 3, p. 102) and extensive planning (see "Of the preparations and habiliments which the duke of Burgundy caused to be made for fighting the duke of Gloucester," 125-6) which portray their keen interest in a genuinely chivalric outcome.

<sup>508</sup> "[P]arlant toutestfois tousjours un peu sur gorge" (Wavrin-Hardy, 88): transl. Imber, 149.



decision without consulting the captain: "Avoir nous fault le seigneur de Wavrin pour conclurre de ceste besogne," he says; "sans lui je nen voeil riens conclurre."<sup>509</sup>

Bartholomew is sent back to Waleran to request his assistance, whereupon the Burgundian, having been accused of insubordination by a man who clearly lacks his own leadership abilities, adopts a posture of exaggerated – but thoroughly hostile – chivalric deference.<sup>510</sup> He declines the invitation, telling the Franciscan there is no need for him to come:

[L]e cardinal conclue ce que bon luy samble, et voist mettre le siege ou assaillir je yrai tousjours avec luy, car je donne bien ladvantage dores en avant a lui, et a ses gens, quilz voissent a lassault ou a la bataille des premiers adfin quil en ait tousjours lhonneur et moy nulle tele ramprosne que je nay eu ceste fois.<sup>511</sup>

Ceding the right to fight in the vanguard, saying that he will simply follow the cardinal's orders – and claiming, disingenuously, that his own input is not necessary – Waleran foregrounds the irony of his situation, commenting tacitly on Condulmer's incompetence and misplaced pride even as he gives vent to his own rage. His passive-aggressive vitriol is not lost on Bartholomew, who upbraids him for using such language and urges him to visit the cardinal. When he finally does so, Waleran continues his stoic performance, deferring to the Wallachian lords and then giving the cardinal a noncommittal suggestion – "we can only go or not go...just say

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<sup>509</sup> "We need the Lord of Wavrin before we can decide on this matter"; "I do not want to decide anything without him" (transl. Imber, 150): Wavrin-Hardy, 90.

<sup>510</sup> The captain-general had, in fact, announced his intention to stay away from Condulmer even before Bartholomew's arrival; see Wavrin-Hardy, 90.

<sup>511</sup> "The cardinal can decide whatever seems best to him, whether to lay siege or to storm. I shall follow him anyway because, from now on, I am giving him and his men the privilege of entering the assault or the battle first. Then he will always enjoy the honour and I shall not have to suffer the insults I had to put up with on this occasion" (transl. Imber, 151): Wavrin-Hardy, 90-1.

what it is you want doing" – that belies his own eagerness to proceed.<sup>512</sup> In desperate need of Waleran's guidance, Condulmer finally blinks. "Or beau sire," he replies, "se vous esties legat de nostre saint pere comme je suy et je feusse capitaine de Bourgoigne comme vous estes, quel chose en conclurries vous de faire?"<sup>513</sup> By thus inverting their roles, he tacitly acknowledges Waleran's martial and strategic superiority – his standing, in a sense, as the *de facto* leader of the expedition; for as the metaphor implies, the captain's decisions both underwrite and determine his own.

The concession seems to satisfy Waleran, who immediately offers his commander detailed and eloquent advice. There is no further mention of hostilities between the two men, though Waleran does seem to make ironic reference to the cardinal's concern for pride of place in a later comment to Sir Pietre Vast: "I do not think that he will be unhappy that you went to him first," he says, with news of the Hungarians' approach.<sup>514</sup> It appears that the narrator, like the captain, considers the matter resolved and the slight avenged – not by physical chastisement, but by a kind of public humiliation achieved through manipulation and chivalric gamesmanship. This is not the sort of vengeance, to be sure, that one commonly finds in chivalric romance; but it does offer a fascinating perspective on the ways in which power and prestige could be, and presumably often were, contested in the Burgundian milieu.

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<sup>512</sup> In fact, says the narrator, Waleran "avoit grant voullente de faire le voyage" (Wavrin-Hardy, 91).

<sup>513</sup> "Now, noble lord, if you, like me, were the Legate of the Holy Father and I, like you, were the Captain of Burgundy, what would you decide to do?" (transl. Imber, 151): Wavrin-Hardy, 91.

<sup>514</sup> "Je me doute quil ne sera mal content de ce que nestes alles premierement devers luy" (Wavrin-Hardy, 106): transl. Imber, 159.

Scathing as Wavrin's critique of Condulmer's leadership appears, there is some evidence that Waleran may also have struggled to command the respect – and to control the impulses – of his subordinates. Much of this evidence is external to the narrative; Henri Taparel's research, for example, suggests that on his return voyage to Rome, Waleran "had the greatest of difficulties in preventing his men from looting and pillaging the island" of Modona.<sup>515</sup> Yet the text itself contains a few faint and truncated, but nonetheless telling, hints of these struggles. One of the most disquieting episodes of Waleran's adventures is a fierce internecine fight over prisoners that breaks out after the fall of Tutrakan. Though the narrator is somewhat coy as to its causes – "or advint une grande malheurete entre les Chrestiens," he writes – he candidly describes Waleran's anger and frustration at being unable to control the ensuing fracas. "Le seigneur estoit moult trouble et courouchie de veoir tele noise entre les Christians," he writes, "a quoy il ne povoit remedier ainsi quil eust voullu."<sup>516</sup> Waleran swings his sword from side to side, trying to separate the men; he even orders the Turkish prisoners killed in an effort to quell the fighting. That only prompts a new battle over booty, which rages until every last scrap of armour and clothing has been seized.<sup>517</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> Paraphrased by Heron in *Il fault faire guerre*, 19. For Taparel's observations on this event, which are based on evidence gleaned from Waleran's own report (ADN B1989/59542), see Taparel, *Le Duché valois de Bourgogne*, 131-2.

<sup>516</sup> "At this point a great misfortune befell the Christians"; "The Lord of Wavrin was extremely distressed and very angry to see a quarrel like this breaking out among the Christians, which he could not settle as he would have wished" (transl. Imber, 147-8): Wavrin-Hardy, 84-5.

<sup>517</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 84-5.

Given the strong emphasis placed by contemporary writers on a captain's duty to maintain order and discipline in his troops, we may reasonably speculate that this brief episode offers a friendly gloss on a much larger, and more troubling, problem with Waleran's leadership. A second hint of this precarious situation appears in the account of the Christian siege of Giurgiu. The captain, we are told, has lost the use of his arm after being hit by a stone at Tutrakan; nonetheless, he joins his men in fetching firewood without allowing the surgeons to dress it, "*combien quil se sentist mallade; anchois, pour aller venir et faire paine, le cuidoit tousjours desrompre.*"<sup>518</sup> He tells his comrades, moreover, that his pain stems mainly from the effects of a chill he suffered while debating with Vlad Dracul in the cold night air after the last battle.<sup>519</sup> The results of these combined injuries are nearly disastrous: Waleran is stricken with paralyzing gout and confined to his cabin for days. His surgeons, not surprisingly, lecture him on the consequences of such rash behavior: "[L]e dis que quant ung capitaine ou chief de guerre se sent aulcunement blechie ou

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<sup>518</sup> "No matter how ill he felt"; "Rather, he came and went and made such an effort that he was always [concerned about] breaking his arm" (transl. Imber, 154): Wavrin-Hardy, 96.

<sup>519</sup> "*Mais toutesfois disoit bien que la froidure de la bruyne quil avoit eu en se desarmant devant le Chastel Turquant estoit la cause principal de sa douleur*" (Wavrin-Hardy, 96-7). There is some ambiguity as to whether, by referring to the chill, Waleran is attempting to hide the seriousness of his battle-wound from his comrades. (The ambiguity is reflected in Imber's translation: "He claimed, however, that the main cause of the pain was the chill from the drizzle that was falling..." 154.) A close reading of the narrative, however, tends to suggest that he is not. His undressed wound, which renders his arm useless, presumably offers *visual* testimony to his heroic efforts; hence his claim that this second affliction is the "cause principal[e]" of his sufferings tends only to amplify the sense of their seriousness. Elsewhere, the narrator seems to suggest that both of the injuries are indeed responsible for Waleran's night of agony; in recounting the fateful debate with Dracul, he writes: "*il scenty grant froit quant son harnas fut oste; si se doubta bien de ce quy depuis luy en advint*" ("He felt very cold [when his armour had been removed], and began to suspect what in fact was to happen to him later," transl. Imber, 148): Wavrin-Hardy, 85. In any case, even if we accept the claim that Waleran is trying to hide the extent of his injuries here, it does not unsettle my argument; for whether his wood-gathering entails a show of heroic self-abnegation or merely a deceptive effort to show strength, he engages in symbolic behaviour for purely political reasons – as the narrator openly avers. See below.

traveillie quil ne le doit pas mettre en nonchalloyr, ainsy prendre garde assez tempre que plus grant inconvenient ne sen cause quy puist grever a tout ung peuple, armee, ou pays.”<sup>520</sup>

This is a complex and important passage, and there is much in it that merits our close attention. In subsequent chapters, I shall consider the possibility that it serves an exculpatory function, authorizing Waleran’s absence from the subsequent combat, and that it simultaneously (and obliquely) articulates a critique of chivalric temerity which the Wavrins *themselves* wished to convey to the Burgundian court. For now, however, I shall focus on a single phrase – one that brings into relief not only Waleran’s particular challenges as a commander, but also the reputational stakes of his actions and decisions. Near the beginning of the passage, the narrator informs us that the captain undertakes his headstrong gesture “adfin quon ne murmurast contre luy quil se feist plus mallade quil nestoit” – in order that people not “mutter against him” that he is pretending to be more ill than he really is.<sup>521</sup> His selfless deed is therefore not selfless at all; it is motivated exclusively by concerns over his chivalric reputation. Far from articulating the sort of unmediated martial courage one encounters in the romances (or the sort of measured pragmatism Waleran himself models elsewhere in the narrative), it is a political *geste*, undertaken

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<sup>520</sup> “They told him...that, when a captain or war-leader feels himself to be in any way wounded or exhausted, he should not put himself in any danger, but rather be careful that it is not the cause of some greater misfortune which could harm a whole people, army or country” (transl. Imber, 154): Wavrin-Hardy, 97.

<sup>521</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 96. Imber’s English translation is even more suggestive for our purposes: “To stop people muttering against him that he was pretending to be more ill than he really was” (Imber, 154, emphasis mine). Though I have provided a more literal translation above, I agree with Imber that the phrase leads one by implication to suspect that such “mutterings” had already occurred. See my discussion below.

for its emblematic value in demonstrating the captain's fortitude and shielding him from criticism.

With this in mind, we can observe that the brevity of Wavrin's phrase – evading as much as it claims, hinting at a discursive context we encounter nowhere else in the narrative – suggests that he is choosing his words carefully and trading, perhaps, in reputationally hazardous goods. It points to an intriguing hypothesis: we may suppose that Waleran's men, the judgmental collective comprising the vague third-person "on," were not averse to "muttering against" the captain for his reticence in other situations, and that such mutterings were damaging both to his reputation and to the power of his command. Small wonder, in this sort of environment, that Waleran might be moved to undertake such a drastic effort at chivalric damage control. The extent of his sufferings – "tous ses doitz de la main dextre lui cheyrent en sa palme, les jambes et les bracz lui racrucifierent...et ne faisoit tousjours que cryer de la grant doulleur quil sentoit"<sup>522</sup> – seem to mirror his desperation to rehabilitate his status through acts of symbolic self-abnegation.<sup>523</sup> They underscore the stakes of keeping up chivalric appearances, in word *and* in deed.

If the Giurgiu passage reveals the captain's concern over symbolic acts meant to protect his reputation, a curious episode near the end of the narrative speaks to his interest in purely artificial gestures that *enhance* it. As the Christian galleys sail past Nicopolis to the site where they hope to give battle, writes the narrator, the Turks

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<sup>522</sup> "All the fingers of his right hand bent in towards his palm; his legs and arms crucified [i.e. tormented] him.... All he did was to cry out from the great pain that he was suffering" (transl. Imber, 154); Wavrin-Hardy, 97.

<sup>523</sup> Or, at least, by avoiding the appearance of weakness; see above, [f.n. 519](#).

light massive bonfires along the shores, creating the impression that their forces are more numerous than they actually are. Regnault de Confide, Waleran's Hospitaller lieutenant, proposes a counter-ruse: in the dead of night, their ships will spread out and fire a series of volleys to convince the Ottomans that the Christians are landing for an assault. "Se ainsi le faisons que oncques ribaux Turcqz neurent plus belle paour quilz auront a ceste fois," Confide promises<sup>524</sup>; and indeed, the trick – to which Waleran contributes his share of strategic insights – works marvellously. The Turks flee from the shores; several Hungarian prisoners rejoin the Christian forces, and when the Ottomans finally return to their positions, Waleran's men let loose a barrage of insults: "[T]ous les Chrestiens, par terre et par eue, huioent et escharinsoient merueilleusement aprez eulz par maniere de ramprose pour leur villaine fuite nocturne."<sup>525</sup>

Wavrin devotes a full two pages<sup>526</sup> to this colourful episode, which offers an important rhetorical opportunity: by dwelling in loving detail on the Turks' humiliation, he depicts a "victory" that overshadows (and to some extent compensates for) the Christians' subsequent failure to pursue or even engage their enemies on the banks of the Danube. But here, too, the text betrays as much as it reveals. With the exception of the prisoners' escape, the ruse offers no strategic gains; Wavrin even notes that, had they landed, two or three hundred men could have

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<sup>524</sup> "If we do this, it seems to me that no Turkish louts will ever have such as fright as these ones will now" (transl. Imber, 163): Wavrin-Hardy, 113.

<sup>525</sup> "All Christians on land and water hurled insults at them, mocking them for their cowardly nocturnal flight" (transl. Imber, 163): Wavrin-Hardy, 114.

<sup>526</sup> In the Wavrin-Hardy edition (112-14); the episode occupies nearly three pages in Wavrin-Dupont (153-6), and two pages in the original manuscript. (fol 51v-52v).

seized a great deal of booty.<sup>527</sup> This seems not to matter to the Burgundians, who are concerned primarily with discursive advantages of a *symbolic* victory – a ludic enactment of the chivalric *geste*. “Nous ne sommes pas gens de bien,” Confide tells Waleran, “se nous ne resveillons ces Turcqz une nuitie.”<sup>528</sup> For this trickster-knight – unlike most epic heroes that I am aware of, but perhaps *not* unlike many of the noble denizens of Duke Philip’s court – a purely symbolic performance of chivalry is an acceptable, even desirable, surrogate for authentic combat. The Christians’ taunts seem likewise to point to the ludic underpinnings of the episode: one can exult in the results of a phoney sally as much as those of a genuine victory. Unconquered lands, unbloodied swords, are of little concern in the face of an enemy’s delightfully “villaine fuite” – however strategically meaningless it might be.

In both episodes, then – Waleran’s desperate bid for credibility amongst his men and his efforts to deceive the Turks into a temporary retreat – the captain-general betrays his consciousness of, and his willingness of manipulate, the symbology of chivalry to preserve his reputation.<sup>529</sup> The ludic and symbolic *geste*

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<sup>527</sup> “Avoient laissie comme toutes leurs bagues derriere, et...se deux ou trois cens hommes feussent descendus en terre ilz eussent merueilleusement gaignie” (Wavrin-Hardy, 114).

<sup>528</sup> “We cannot call ourselves men of honour if one of these nights we do not wake the Turks up” (transl. Imber, 162): Wavrin-Hardy, 112.

<sup>529</sup> Elisabeth Gaucher, as we have seen, discusses the political causes behind the tendency of some Burgundian courtiers to regard and “enact” warfare as a “jeu chevaleresque”; see “La confrontation,” 3-24 (esp. 7). On the tendency of knights at Nicopolis to regard crusading as a “fête chevaleresque,” see Gaucher, “Deux regards sur une défaite: Nicopolis (d’après la *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis* et le *Livre des faits de Boucicaut*),” *Cahiers de recherches médiévales* (XIIIe-XVe s.), 1 (1996): 93-104, esp. 96. It is also important to note that Waleran and his comrades inhabited a *courtly* environment where elaborate chivalric games were staged to emulate authentic combat and to reveal warriors’ (ostensibly) indwelling prowess; one suspects that such spectacles also reminded warriors about the potential for manipulating the symbology of chivalry. For a discussion of the relationship between jousts, tourneys and *pas d’armes* in Burgundian life and literature, see Maria Colombo-Timelli, “Entre littérature et vie: Le jeu chevaleresque dans la



therefore stands as a vivid final example of the “strategic” discursive mode which collides with, and indeed often subverts, the narrator’s terms of chivalric approbation. The result, as I suggested above, is a text at odds with itself; uneven, full of gaps, elisions and tacit contradictions, it calls to mind the imperfect contours of lived experience. It may be tempting to refer to this portion of the expedition narrative, as Le Brusque does, as “realist”<sup>530</sup>; ultimately, however, we must not succumb to the temptation to equate narrative complexity with historical facticity. We cannot take for granted the transparency and accuracy of claims made in the text; at best, we can suggest that modes of discourse employed therein were both common and meaningful to the courtiers by and for whom they were produced. Such is the case, I propose, with both the epic and strategic modes of negotiating chivalric reputation – these mutually destabilizing narrative threads, which interacted in a similar sort of dynamic tension elsewhere in the thought-world and story-world of the Valois nobility.

It will be useful to conclude this chapter by asking one final (and deceptively complicated) question: why? Why should a writer of Jean de Wavrin’s calibre have admitted such problematic contents into a panegyric devoted to his nephew? The answer, of course, lies in a critical reappraisal of the question, which presupposes a kind of authorial unity and single-mindedness which may not be operative here. As

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Bourgogne de Philippe le Bon,” in *Rencontres médiévales en Bourgogne (XIVe-XVe siècles)* 2, ed. D. Quérueu (Reims: Presses Universitaires de Reims, 1992), 27-45.

<sup>530</sup> “[Wavrin’s] account of Walleran’s actions in Romania,” he writes, “has a very different flavour from that of his narratives of Varna and the Long Campaign: here there is no epic inspiration, but a very down-to-earth realism instead.” See “From Agincourt to Fornovo,” 201.

noted in Chapter 2, we cannot confidently ascribe any part of the text to a single author; it is almost certainly a pastiche of literary voices and concerns. More importantly, we must not think of the text's function as exclusively, or even primarily, apologetic; it appears to encode a number of different interests and concerns, only some of which are related to personal posterity. This is, in sum, a *redacted* text – like most, perhaps all, medieval texts; like most, perhaps all, literary creations. It cannot be understood as the unified utterance of a single-minded rhetor, but rather as a patchwork of varying rhetorical objectives, authorial interests, source texts, and ambient discourses. It incorporates dynamic tension between form and difference; and it struggles with itself.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the acute tension between depictions of indwelling and performed chivalry – the most common and insistent problematic in the narrative – is not the only form of ambiguity to be found in Wavrin's confection. As promised above, I shall devote the remaining chapters of this thesis to a study of other forms of textual difference which, if they appear more sporadically, speak no less clearly to the concerns and interests, and the ways of writing and imagining, common to the court of Burgundy. I turn now to a discussion of the ways in which cultural "memories" – of crusading heroism, of shameful loss – are marshalled in the service of contending objectives: one which lauds the chivalric success of the Burgundian expedition, and several others which reveal a political, strategic and military critique of the very chivalric temerity which threatens to unsettle future crusading ventures.

**Antioch, Nicopolis, Troy:** Epic precedents, battlefield pragmatics and the depiction of warfare in the expedition narrative

*Events, victors and heroes of “high” contemporary reality are...appropriated by the past as they enter into...high genres...; they are woven by various intermediate links and connective tissue into the unified fabric of the heroic past and tradition. These events and heroes receive their value and grandeur precisely through this association with the past, the source of all authentic reality and value. They withdraw themselves, so to speak, from the present day with all its inconclusiveness, its indecision, its openness, its potential for re-thinking and re-evaluating.*

- Mikhail Bakhtin, “Epic and Novel”<sup>531</sup>

“Brave New Worlds,” Sharon Kinoshita’s provocative 2003 study of Robert de Clari’s *La Conquête de Constantinople*, offers vivid testimony to the scholarly benefits of reading medieval crusading chronicles *closely*. Her analysis of the *Conquête*, a lengthy account of the calamitous Fourth Crusade, suggests that the most uneven and digressive parts of the text – passages long derided by historians as “literary” embellishments unworthy of serious study – are in fact the sites of its most “intense historical work.”<sup>532</sup> The Picard knight’s bewildered reports of Seljuk princes who talk like *chevaliers* and French-born empresses who eschew the *langue* and manners of their compatriots; his long, contradictory digressions on the legitimacy of pretenders in Constantinople and Jerusalem, and his confused mathematical

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<sup>531</sup> “Epic and Novel” is one of four essays anthologized in Bakhtin’s immensely influential collection, *The Dialogic Imagination (Voproy literatury i estetiki)*, originally published in 1975. This excerpt is from the English edition, transl. C. Emerson and M. Holmquist (Austin: University of Texas, 1981), 18.

<sup>532</sup> “Brave New Worlds: Robert de Clari’s *La Conquête de Constantinople* (Ch 5),” in Kinoshita, *Medieval Boundaries: Rethinking Difference in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 139. Before being anthologized in this superb volume, the essay appeared in Khalil I. Semaan (ed.), *The Crusades: Other Experiences, Alternate Perspectives* (Binghamton, NY: Global Academic Publishing, 2003), 161-77.

calculations all encode the collision between “received cultural models” and the lived experiences that challenged and unsettled them.<sup>533</sup> These first impressions of the exotic East, writes Kinoshita, may not have been “literally unthinkable” in Stuart Clark’s terms – but they certainly beggared Robert’s capacity for description. His account is thus riddled with tensions and hesitations, reflecting “not an uncertain command of events, but the failure of available mental structures adequately to account for the unprecedented turns the Fourth Crusade had taken.”<sup>534</sup>

I think of Kinoshita’s essay on the *Conquête* as something of a scholarly beacon: an unusually insightful and, in many respects, admirable treatment of a deceptively complex crusading chronicle. Her focus on the anomalies which render the text unstable and its rhetoric ambivalent – and her claim that such constructions offer a point of entry into Robert’s ideological negotiations – are salutary developments in the study of a genre that has too often been mined only for historical “facts” and pruned of its (presumed) literary superstructure.<sup>535</sup> It is a beacon that I intend to follow; for Wavrin, as we have seen, does precisely this sort of “historical work” in his expedition narrative. His prose is just as uneven, his rhetoric as multivalent; and in those spots where discursive layers collide and buckle we likewise find the best evidence of the contending interests and concerns which simmered in the Burgundian milieu. This heuristic informed my investigation of Wavrin’s ambiguous depictions of chivalry in the previous chapter; and, mindful of

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<sup>533</sup> Kinoshita, 139.

<sup>534</sup> Kinoshita, 139.

<sup>535</sup> For all its virtues, and despite its philological sophistication, Vladimir Agrigoroaei’s “Literary Leakings into Wavrin’s Danube” may perhaps be cited as a study which succumbs to the temptation of subordinating the “literary” to the “historical.” See Agrigoroaei, *passim*.

its efficacy in the Clari essay, I shall continue to deploy it with confidence through the remainder of this study.

But even as I acknowledge my indebtedness to Kinoshita – who, like Gabrielle Spiegel, provides valuable thinking tools – I must also insist on some points of difference which are particularly relevant to my objectives in this chapter. In the following pages I shall argue a thesis which both affirms the value of Kinoshita's methodology and problematizes her *historical* claims. These latter include forms of psychological and teleological reductionism: the suggestion, first, that chivalric discourse encodes essentially static, naïve and parochial "mental structures" which are bound to be upset by encounters with radical alterity; and the claim that the thirteenth century, having witnessed a proliferation of these encounters, emerged as "an important turning point in world history and the history of European mentalities."<sup>536</sup> The trope of the "turning point," to be sure, tends not to provoke the same allergic reaction in the literary scholar, for whom it may function merely as subsidiary speculation, as in the cultural historian, whose chaotic experiences in the archives have heightened her sensitivities to world-historical claims. Falling in the latter category, I cannot help but wonder how Kinoshita would deal with Wavrin's chronicle – a text which betrays many of the same negotiations, tensions and inversions as Clari's, but which was written some two and a half centuries later. What happened to the "turning point" in the history of *mentalités*? Were the Burgundians *that far* behind the curve?

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<sup>536</sup> Kinoshita, 175.

A different set of assumptions seems to be in order here. To be sure, we can admit the value and validity of reading our text, like Clari's, as encoding a dialectic between old and new – or more precisely, between articulations of traditional narrativity and the contingency of lived experience. But we should not conclude that in doing so, it betrays the psychological infantilism of the Western nobility – the vestiges of a “clash of civilizations” between naively credulous knights and sophisticated Easterners which causes the narrator to suffer a “software failure” and lose control over his text. I propose instead that these narrative tensions result from the fact that the writing culture of medieval Burgundy was elastic and multifaceted, and that medieval authors had recourse to a number of *topoi* and ambient discourses to depict various forms of cultural and ideological difference, including the sometimes surprising contingencies of travel and warfare. They did so deliberately, not naïvely, for their own reasons, not others' – reasons which at times included an interest in more naturalistic, even “anthropological,” descriptions of the larger world.

This is the complex *arrière-plan* against which the dialectic between old and new plays out in Wavrin's chronicle. For the purposes of our study, the most important manifestation of this dialectic, and the one to which I shall devote this chapter, is the question of how warfare is depicted, valorized, rationalized – and then, at times, critiqued – in his text. Here again, as in Chapter 3, it is important to consider these questions in light of contemporary politics, acknowledging that the narrative functions in the first instance as a project of justification and ennoblement: an effort to record the deeds of the *seigneur de Wavrin* in the most favourable light.

And in addition to arguing for the kind of man Waleran was – a *bon chevalier* constructed, as we have seen, from stock themes and literary motifs – the text also makes claims concerning the kinds of wars he and his allies fought. His expedition is carefully framed as a *crusading* voyage, that loftiest of chivalric enterprises, through tacit comparisons with and references to “remembered” precedents – that is to say, stories about the crusading past – which circulated, sometimes widely and sometimes amongst the most literate or privileged readers, in the literary and discursive climate of Duke Philip’s court.<sup>537</sup>

These stories came to the Burgundian ethos in a variety of forms, some of them inherited, some purchased, and some rewritten by contemporary *écrivains*.<sup>538</sup> They included, among other things, historians’ and *romanciers*’ accounts of past crusading warfare; *chansons de geste* depicting Carolingian struggles against the “infidel”; myths of Greek and Trojan conquest, which frequently served as vivid, if not logically consistent, analogies for the crusading project; and oral and written accounts of the disastrous crusade of Nicopolis (1396), which served as a wellspring of heroic recollection even as it hinted at the dangers of chivalric *outrecuidance*.<sup>539</sup>

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<sup>537</sup> It is of course difficult to know how many Burgundian noblemen were familiar with the various crusading genres represented in the ducal library, and with the motifs and conventions contained within them. We can, however, make some qualified assumptions. See below, [f.n. 545](#), for a discussion of this problem.

<sup>538</sup> For useful discussions of this literature, see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 201-38; Elizabeth Johnson Moodey, “Illustrated Crusader Histories for Philip the Good of Burgundy” (PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2002), 30-234; Doutrepoint, *La littérature*, 236-66, 403-65, 8-69, 147-76. It is important to note that the *remaniement* of epics, romances and chivalric biographies in the Burgundian milieu occurred in a period roughly coterminous with the possible redaction dates of the expedition narrative, and of the creation and redaction of its contextual/political episodes, which may have been crafted in their present form in the 1450s or 1460s.

<sup>539</sup> David Wrisley has produced a number of outstanding studies detailing the influence – and the politically and ideologically motivated reworking – of key literary themes of crusading and the

Each of these forms of remembering animates and ennobles parts of the expedition narrative. But just as strikingly, each is unsettled, its full rhetorical effect tempered and truncated, by contending concerns and preoccupations. The most pressing of these, and the one that produces the most insistent dialectic between old crusading narratives and new martial pragmatics, is the question of how to deal with the Turkish foe—with his daunting power, his tactical acuity, and his relatively unfamiliar and unchivalric methods of combat. This is no casual concern, but an important rhetorical countercurrent that reflects the interests not only of the redactor but also, as we have seen, of the seasoned and judicious Waleran himself.<sup>540</sup>

In the pages that follow, I shall consider the narrative tensions resulting from this collision of rhetorical concerns, speculating on the modest historical claims that they allow us to make. I shall avoid the temptation to characterize the text as representative of any sort of epistemic shift in Latin Christianity – the burden of proof being far too heavy for the narrow shoulders of this study. Instead, I shall

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East in the Burgundian literary ethos of the mid-fifteenth century. For his valuable observations, see Wrisley, “L’Orient de Jean Wauquelin,” in *Jean Wauquelin* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006): 171-84; “Translating Power and Knowledge at the Fifteenth-Century Court of Burgundy,” in *Medieval Translator X*, ed. J.Jankins and O. Bertrand (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 349-63; “Burgundian ideologies and Jehan Wauquelin’s prose translations,” in *The Ideology of Burgundy*, ed. D.J.D. Boulton and J.R. Veenstra (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 131-50; and “Prosifying Lyric Insertions in the Fifteenth-Century Violette (Gérard de Nevers),” in *Poetry, Knowledge and Community in Late Medieval France*, ed. R. Dixon and F.E. Sinclair (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2008), 125-35. For other useful discussions of the Burgundian court’s “memory of ancient and medieval stories, often collected in the manuscripts of the ducal library,” see Arjo Vanderjagt, “Ritualizing Heritage,” 12, and Wim Blockmans, “Manuscript Acquisition by the Burgundian Court and the Market for Books in the Fifteenth-Century Netherlands,” in *Art Markets in Europe, 1400-1800*, ed. M. North and D. Ormrod (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 7-18. On the *chansons de geste* in particular, see Nadine Henrard, “Le roman en prose de Guillaume d’Orange et le monde bourguignon,” and Alexandre Winkler, “Le Cycle de la Croisade à la cour de Bourgogne,” in *L’Épopée médiévale et la Bourgogne*, ed. M. Ott (Dijon: EUD, 2006), 195-207 and 229-41 (esp. 196-7 and 229-35).

<sup>540</sup> See Chapter 3 (above) and Appendix A (below) for notes on Waleran’s apparent interest in the problems of chivalric temerity in combat against the Turks – a subject to which I shall return in Part 2 (below).



limit my claims to various inductive suggestions concerning the local, “Burgundian” concerns which seem to have inflected Wavrin’s narrative. My chapter, accordingly, takes a tripartite structure. Each of its sections analyzes one of the “memorial frameworks” – epic invocations of struggles against “infidels,” memories of the “Burgundian” crusade of Nicopolis, and references to the exploits of Greek heroes – which are deployed by the narrator and his sources in an effort to elevate and ennoble the crusading efforts of the mid-1440s. Each section also considers one or more of the *political* concerns – anxieties over the growth of Ottoman power, concerns over the strategic dangers of chivalric temerity, and an appreciation of the need for new methods and models of warfare – which tend to subvert the grandeur of these formulations. This is a complex project demanding detailed arguments; I therefore beg the reader’s indulgence with respect to its length. I begin with a study of language that is gilded, grand – and reminiscent of the Old French *chansons de geste*.

### **Part 1. Remembering crusades past: Epic toning, narrative tension and the limits of Christian power**

Georges Le Brusque has observed that Wavrin’s expedition narrative is nothing if not a stylistic mélange. “What is most striking about this text,” he writes, “is its blend of an epic and Manichean spirit, especially present in the first part of the

account, with a very down-to-earth realism, which is dominant in the second.”<sup>541</sup>

This unevenness, as I argued above, is hardly surprising, given the evidence that Wavrin redacted a variety of contemporary sources on the events of 1442-44 together with Waleran’s own, seemingly rather “naturalistic” testimony.<sup>542</sup> Yet even inasmuch as such redaction produces stylistic differences, we need not ascribe to Wavrin a passive role in either retaining or amplifying them. The “esprit épique” of some of his contextual episodes – which is actually a more complex blend of literary referents than Le Brusque’s formulation suggests – serves a very particular function here, ennobling the events of the Varna campaign by relating them in literary and theological terms to imagined triumphs of the past. This process serves in turn to ennoble Waleran’s *own* expedition, which is framed as an extension of – and even, in some respects, a structural analogy to<sup>543</sup> – King Wladyslaw’s and Cardinal Caesarini’s heroic but tragic journey to Varna.

This strategic literary “remembering” is a complex process. Wavrin’s depictions of the Long Campaign, the battle of Varna, and other recent events replicate key motifs of earlier crusading victories as they appeared in historiographical texts available to the Burgundians.<sup>544</sup> They also employ

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<sup>541</sup> “Ce qui frappe sans doute le plus dans cette narration, c’est le mélange d’esprit épique et de manichéisme, surtout présents dans la première partie du récit, et d’un réalisme très terre-à-terre, qui domine dans la seconde partie”: Le Brusque, “Des chevaliers,” 274.

<sup>542</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>543</sup> We shall see, for example, that the Hungarians’ submissive appeal to King Wladyslaw for crusading help, depicted in Chapter V, is analogous to the Greek ambassador’s appeal to Duke Philip in Chapter VI.

<sup>544</sup> Geoffroy de Villehardouin and William of Tyre, among other crusade chroniclers, were represented in the Burgundian ducal library from an early date. It is important to acknowledge, however, that such texts may have been familiar to a limited number of readers; [see f.n.s 537 above and 545 below](#).

conventions of heroic warfare – and, in particular, heroic *anti-Islamic* warfare – common to the *chansons de geste* and retained (at least partially) in some of the chivalric biographies and other “romances” penned and redacted in the Burgundian milieu.<sup>545</sup> Most of this epic infrastructure, of course, probably predates Wavrin’s redaction of his sources; it reflects other authors’ projects of ennoblement, undertaken in similar literary-discursive milieux. But as I shall argue below, the currency of these themes in Wavrin’s world rendered them equally suitable to his rhetorical purposes. Likewise, the historians to whom these accounts seem thematically indebted – writers such as William of Tyre and Geoffroy de Villehardouin – themselves employed epic themes and theological frameworks

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<sup>545</sup> The analysis that follows assumes that Wavrin and at least some of his intended readers were familiar with conventions of epic warfare contained in the *chansons* tradition, and in some cases in the historiography of the earlier crusades. This seems likely for a few reasons: first, by the middle of the century, the ducal library contained numerous histories and *chansons de geste*, some of them inherited and some obtained by Philip the Good (see [f.n. 567](#) below); second, the practice of rewriting medieval epics, chivalric biographies and romances, which emerged in Burgundy in the mid-1440s and flourished in later decades, produced several “indigenous” texts which replicated some of these epic conventions. As we saw in Chapter 3 (above), the libraries of Jean V de Créquy and Jean de Wavrin, as well as Philip’s own library, contained such texts. If, as I suspect, the Long Campaign and other contextual episodes were inserted into the narrative at a date substantially later than that of Waleran’s return, they would have been especially likely to speak to readers who possessed “epic literacy.” For related discussions, see Keen, *Chivalry*, 103-6; Wrisley, “Lyric Insertions,” 133-4; François Suard, “La tradition épique aux XIVe et XVe siècles,” *Revue des Sciences Humaines* 55, no. 183 (1981): 96-107 (esp. 98); and various essays in Ott, *L’Épopée médiévale et la Bourgogne*. My claims in this section, however, do not rise or fall on issues of audience reception; for as I note below, elements of the “epic infrastructure” of these episodes may have been crafted by someone other than Wavrin. Hence, wherever, whenever and by *whomever* these accounts were produced, the *chanson* and historiographical traditions were clearly alive to the author and embedded in his or her text. The subversion of these themes, probably by the same author, speaks to the ways in which contemporary concerns and preoccupations inflected perceptions – and unsettled epic narrative modalities. Finally, my suggestion that epic themes were “retained” in fifteenth-century romances is not meant to imply that the Burgundians passively received cultural forms, nor that perceptions of and priorities for crusading combat did not evolve in complex ways in the fifteenth century. For useful discussions of these changes, see Jacques Paviot, “Noblesse et croisade à la fin du moyen âge,” 69-84 (esp. 70), and Danielle Regnier-Bohler, “La vie de l’écrit, de la cour de Bourgogne aux presses des imprimeurs,” *Atalaya* 2 (1991): 43-57 (esp. 51).

which referred to earlier precedents.<sup>546</sup> The redactor's efforts to ennoble Waleran's journey therefore involve a sort of multiple regression – a network of backward references – that invests the events of 1443-44 with world-historical value.

This all prompts an important question: why should this be? Why does the past serve as such a powerful ideological magnet, such an important source of authority and *gravitas*, in this retroactive movement of signifiers? The common-sense answer is that golden legends infuse the rough-edged present with allegorical dignity. But there is more to be said about the subject; and as Gabrielle Spiegel has suggested, no one speaks to it more elegantly or forcefully than Mikhail Bakhtin.<sup>547</sup> In his 1975 essay "Epic and Novel," Bakhtin traces the contours of the epic genre – a closed, authoritative form which refuses the indeterminacy and the moral relativism of the multi-voiced, dialogic novel. He notes that the patriarchal *gravitas*, the transcendent national "voice," which emerges in epic poetry is dependent upon its utter separation from the vagaries of the present – and its framing in a distant and mythologized past. This always-anterior time, a font of pure, immutable forms and of "firsts" and "bests," derives its ideological authority from its ahistoricity.<sup>548</sup> This is not to say that epic toning cannot be applied to historical subjects; indeed, as Bakhtin notes in the passage cited above, contemporary figures are lionized precisely by

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<sup>546</sup> Villehardouin in particular wrote his account of the Fourth Crusade in an epic mode; see Jeanette Beer, *Villehardouin: Epic Historian* (Geneva: Droz, 1968). On his similarities to (and differences from) William of Tyre, see below.

<sup>547</sup> I am grateful to Prof. Spiegel for noting the potential value of Bakhtin's formulations in the context of this study, and for her insights into epic toning and its ideological ramifications. For her own use of Bakhtin, see *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 93-4 and 105-6.

<sup>548</sup> See Bakhtin, 13-20 and *passim*.

draping them in “the unified fabric of the heroic past and tradition.”<sup>549</sup> But to the extent that this happens, such figures are rendered monochromatic and allegorical; they are sundered “from the present day with all its inconclusiveness, its indecision, its openness, its potential for re-thinking and re-evaluating.”<sup>550</sup>

The great value of Bakhtin’s formulations to our study of Wavrin’s ideological project, and of his invocations of the heroic past, is clear. Yet the most important qualifier here – “to the extent that this happens” – is my own gloss on, and a necessary caveat to, the Russian critic’s rather expansive claims. His essay, which is concerned with the distinctions between epic and novel literary forms, does not directly address the limitations of epic toning in such hybrid genres as medieval historiography – genres in which the invocation of timeless virtues and heroic precedents is always liable to collide with inconvenient traces of historicity. Authors may choose to suppress these traces entirely; but as the celebrated example of Jean Froissart demonstrates, many of them do not.<sup>551</sup> And this is certainly true of Wavrin. Every time that it appears in his confection, epic toning – invocations, in his case, of the timeless virtues of anti-Islamic warfare from Roland to Godfrey of Bouillon and Baldwin of Flanders – is truncated, qualified and unsettled by strategic reflections upon the very “inconclusiveness and indecision” which are normally absent from the

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<sup>549</sup> Here I use “epic toning” – a phrase suggested by Prof. Spiegel – to refer to literary figures and *topoi* which are borrowed from *chansons de geste* and other epic works, and which serve to colour historiographical texts in particularly evocative ways.

<sup>550</sup> Bakhtin, 18.

<sup>551</sup> On narrative complexity in Froissart, see for example Peter Ainsworth, *Jean Froissart and the Fabric of History*, esp. 48-50; George Diller, *Attitudes chevaleresques et réalités politiques chez Froissart*, esp. 157-63; Kenneth Fowler, “A World of Visual Images: Froissart’s Legacy to Burgundy,” *Publication du Centre européen d’études bourguignonnes (XIVe-XVe siècle)* 41 (2001): 15-25 (esp. 20).

“pure” epic poem. These are the moments to which I shall pay close critical attention – beginning with Wavrin’s accounts of the triumphs of King Wladyslaw’s Long Campaign.

*The ‘esprit épique’ of the Long Campaign (1443)*

Whatever one thinks of Wavrin’s habits as an historian and redactor, one cannot accuse him of having crafted a facile account of the remarkable events of 1442-45. The first two chapters of the narrative,<sup>552</sup> which recount the alleged capture of Vlad Dracul by the treacherous Grand Turk and János Hunyadi’s use of guerilla tactics to repulse Ottoman raids in 1442, begin a complex process of framing and contextualization by introducing some of the text’s most ideologically resonant motifs. These include the condemnation of Turkish perfidy, which is used, as we have seen, to mitigate instances of Christian perjury elsewhere in the text; and the valorization of Hunyadi’s prudence and guile, which serve to authorize a tacit critique of chivalric temerity in later episodes. When it comes to *ennobling* Waleran’s expedition, and to elevating the stakes of his journey, however, none of the “contextual” chapters is as important as those recounting the Polish-Hungarian King Wladyslaw’s “Long Campaign” of 1443. This expedition, the first sanctioned crusading journey in decades and one which seemed briefly to suggest an opportunity to avenge the disaster of Nicopolis, appears twice in Wavrin’s narrative: once in Chapter V, which precedes an account of Duke Philip’s resolution to join the crusading effort, and once

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<sup>552</sup> These are identified as Chapters II and III of Part 6, Book 1 of the *Anciennes Chroniques d’Angleterre*. Chapter I, as we have seen, deals with contemporary events in England which are unrelated to the expedition narrative.

in Chapter VIII, which follows it.<sup>553</sup> The effects of this narrative sequencing are significant; for by blending Burgundian courtly scenes with portraits of contemporary crusading heroism, Wavrin colours the former with all of the dignity and momentousness of the latter. He also suggests a fascinating (and significant) structural parallel between Philip and Wladyslaw, both of whom are revealed to be ideal crusading princes who respond magnanimously to the urgent pleas of their coreligionists.

It is much easier, of course, to account for Wavrin's sequencing of these events than for their *repetition*. I have argued that that the best explanation for his decision to recount the events of 1443 twice, depicting them as if they occurred sequentially (and so creating a "phantom year" of crusading which unsettles his chronology), is that he sought to redact two separate and independent accounts of the Long Campaign within his narrative. I have already considered the evidence for and consequences of this decision<sup>554</sup>; at the moment, it is important to consider its *stylistic* aspects. The two chapters stand out from much of Wavrin's account by virtue of an especially high-toned and formulaic style – an epic "voice" produced by the invocation of motifs that were common to previous crusade historiography (in both its lay-vernacular and ecclesiastical-Latin forms) and to the earlier *chanson de geste* tradition. These features bathe the Long Campaign episodes in the glow of

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<sup>553</sup> The scene in Philip's court occurs in Chapter VI. Chapters IV and VII, as I note in Appendix B, are short, transitional chapters. These latter serve the purpose of creating editorial continuity between the two major accounts of the Long Campaign (Ch. V and VIII) – accounts which appear to have been based on separate sources, and which otherwise would not be completely compatible with the portions of the Wavrin's narrative which precede them.

<sup>554</sup> See Appendix B.

world-historical heroism, endowing kings and cardinals with the mantle of “vrais champions victorieux.”<sup>555</sup> My first task in this section will be to describe these motifs and identify their precedents – revealing, in the process, that Le Brusque’s “esprit épique” is no casual or impressionistic effect, but rather the consequence of specific literary strategies of remembering.

In doing so, I must tread carefully. As some scholars have pointed out, the business of building inventories of generic conventions is a perilous and inexact science.<sup>556</sup> Indeed, my own studies, which are concerned in the first instance with the tensions and ambiguities encoded in medieval narratives, should remind us that sweeping pronouncements about the ubiquitous features of the great crusade narratives and *chansons de geste* tend to reduce and schematize bodies of works which are variegated and thematically ambiguous.<sup>557</sup> Yet these are only reasons to qualify my conclusions – not to abandon the goals of this chapter. For as other writers have demonstrated, it is possible to identify features within a medieval text which are *broadly* characteristic of “epic” and crusading traditions, and which would have been deployed as such by its author (and recognized by at least some of its readers). And such precedents are clearly evident in both Long Campaign chapters –

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<sup>555</sup> “True victorious champions” (transl. Imber, 114): from Chapter V (Wavrin-Hardy, 18).

<sup>556</sup> For a useful discussion, see Richard McDonald, “The Epic Genre and Medieval Epics,” in *A Companion to Old and Middle English Literature*, ed. L.C. and R.T. Lambdin (London: Greenwood, 2002), esp. 230-1.

<sup>557</sup> I am, moreover, no expert on either the particular *chansons de geste* or the body of crusading historiography to which the Burgundians had access. Inasmuch as I have attempted to identify motifs common to these genres, therefore, I have relied on (a) readings of portions of a number of ambient texts, and (b) the summaries and inventories provided by scholars who are experts in these fields. It is certain that a closer, detailed and more wide-ranging reading of primary texts would add nuance and complexity to the analysis which follows. I hope to undertake such a study in the near future.



though, as we shall see, they come in more than one variety. Whereas Chapter V tends to encode themes that are traditionally “epic,” in the sense of according with the *chansons de geste* and the crusading histories written by and for knights such as Villehardouin, Chapter VIII *also* includes certain religious *topoi* which recall traditional “monastic” histories of the early crusades. These features contribute no less to the timeless grandeur of the tale; hence they are equally important constituents of its “epic” toning, understood in Bakhtin’s terms. But their subtle ideological differences raise important questions about the range of crusading discourses admitted into the Burgundian milieu.

We shall consider these in detail below. First, however, a brief review and summary of the two episodes, together with their historical referents, is in order.<sup>558</sup>

*The Long Campaign: history and representation.* The historical Long Campaign, launched at the behest of pope Eugenius IV and his legate Julian Cesarini, left Buda in July 1443. It was commanded by the young Polish king Wladyslaw, who had been crowned by Hungarian magnates three years earlier; his army met the soldiers of János Hunyadi at Belgrade, and their combined forces won a series of strategic victories in and around the Ottoman strongholds of Kraguyevats, Nish, and Sofia. The crusaders, intending to proceed all the way to the sultan’s seat of Adrianople, finally reached the Zlatitsa Pass in December. Oppressed by brutal winter weather and meeting fierce Turkish resistance, they were forced to withdraw. But even in

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<sup>558</sup> For a longer summary and discussion of these texts and events, see Appendix B.

their retreat, the crusaders managed to fight one more successful battle against the Turkish forces, on January 5; and when they reached Buda, as Martin Chasin writes, they “were greeted as conquering heroes. A service of thanksgiving was held in the cathedral, where a ‘Te Deum’ was sung and the captured Turkish weapons were displayed.”<sup>559</sup> As Colin Imber has argued, however, the image of victory was largely illusory; the campaign had been “a disaster” in its final stages.<sup>560</sup> The Hungarian army was so badly afflicted at Zlatitsa that the survivors – fewer than half of the original retinue – returned home looking like “ghosts devoid of flesh rather than men.”<sup>561</sup>

Chapters V and VIII of the expedition narrative both present highly abbreviated and condensed versions of these events – each depicting the key players in grandly heroic terms, and each condensing the campaign’s various combats into a single and glorious (but barely recognizable) battle scene. Chapter V, as we have seen, contains a long narrative preface describing Wladyslaw’s coronation by grateful Hungarian subjects seeking his protection against the Turk; he is next depicted planning and organizing the event in conjunction with the curia.<sup>562</sup> The cardinal legate preaches the crusade far and wide; the king ensures his army is well-supplied; and then the crusaders march southward, meeting the Turkish force in a

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<sup>559</sup> Chasin, “The Crusade of Varna,” 293. My summary is based mainly upon this article.

<sup>560</sup> Imber, “Introduction” to *The Crusade of Varna*, 17. Chasin does not share this view; he refers to the campaign as “victorious” and focuses on its political benefits. See “Crusade of Varna,” 293.

<sup>561</sup> These are the words of the Polish chronicler Jan Dlugosz in his *Annals*; cited in Imber, 17.

<sup>562</sup> As I note in Chapter 2 and Appendix B, this scene collapses the events of 1440-43 into a single, continuous episode, omitting a number of important (and rhetorically-destabilizing) political events. It is useful to compare Wavrin’s “expurgated” chapter with the more accurate and comprehensive account of Jan Dlugosz; see *The Annals of Jan Dlugosz*, transl. Michael, 477-90.

narrow field that favours their smaller numbers. A brutal battle ensues, resulting in the sultan's ignominious flight and the capture of a miraculous amount of booty, with which the crusaders return to Buda.<sup>563</sup> The narrator disapproves of their withdrawal, charging that they could have conquered all of Greece had they but pressed onward. He reports, however, that the crusaders decide to resume their invasion in the following year.<sup>564</sup>

Chapter VIII depicts Caesarini and Wladyslaw, ostensibly a year later, responding to reports that the sultan is planning an attack against Hungarian territories. They dispatch envoys around Christendom, gather their troops, and wait for the Turkish advance through the mountains – which occurs at the end of October. Wladyslaw and Murad then march directly toward each other; and when the sultan's army is about a league away, the king sends a terrified herald-at-arms to the Grand Turk's<sup>565</sup> camp to demand battle the following day. The next morning, after taking confessions and hearing mass, the Christians win a glorious victory against the Ottomans. This time, however, they press forward into the mountains, where they encounter such brutal cold that they are forced to turn back, losing half of their men – who, the narrator avers, will join the Lord as his newest martyrs. The leaders

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<sup>563</sup> Colin Imber suggests that Wavrin's account here conflates the details of two battles: the occupation of Kasim Pasha's camp near Nish (in early November 1443) and the battle of the Zlatitsa Pass (on December 24): Imber, 114.

<sup>564</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 13-19.

<sup>565</sup> Sultan Murad was not actually present at any of the battles of the Long Campaign; see Chasin, 291-3.

resolve to tell Christian princes only the good news about the expedition, and to deny any reports concerning losses at the Pass.<sup>566</sup>

*Textual precedents: Epic topoi, historiographical referents.* The action recounted in these chapters, as I suggested earlier, is cast in glowing and resonant – and often vague and unspecific – language that recalls the glories of past struggles against the “infidel.”<sup>567</sup> This language takes a number of forms. In the first place, both chapters make use of a number of “epic” themes and *topoi*, such as may be found in traditional *chansons de geste*<sup>568</sup> and the romantic confections of Burgundian authors.<sup>569</sup>

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<sup>566</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 25-30.

<sup>567</sup> For a useful introductory discussion to the “Long Campaign” episodes which touches in broad terms on some of these issues, see Le Brusque, “Des chevaliers,” 261. Le Brusque seems only to refer to the account contained in Chapter VIII, and does not remark (as does Imber) on the apparent repetition of Long Campaign episodes in Wavrin’s text.

<sup>568</sup> Inasmuch as the inventories of the Burgundian ducal library offer an impression of the kinds of interests shared by Philip’s most literate courtiers (see f.n. 545 above), the *chansons de geste* do appear to have exerted an enduring influence. Though the library did not contain a copy of the *Roland*, Duke Philip did inherit or obtain copies of such *chansons* as *Aymeri de Narbonne*, the *Guillaume d’Orange* cycle, the Crusade cycle, *Girart de Roussillon*, the *Enfances Ogier*, *Auberi le Bourguignon*, and *Berte aus grans piés*. He also obtained fifteenth-century prose *remaniements* of such epics as the *Ogier*, *Girart*, *Huon de Bordeaux*, and *Le Chevalier au Cygne*. I am not a specialist in these texts, and it is true, as we shall see, that fifteenth-century *remanieurs* sometimes gave their new compositions a rather different complexion (see f.n. 579 below). Still, it seems reasonable to suggest, further to Norman Daniel’s arguments in *Heroes and Saracens* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1984, esp. 121-78), that they presented some of the epic motifs of anti-Islamic warfare which we see reflected in Wavrin’s text. It is also probable that, despite the thematic revisions made by the *remanieurs*, the contents of the original *chansons* retained their interest for Burgundian readers; as Keith Busby writes: “[A]t the same time that they were commissioning and acquiring contemporary manuscripts..., the Burgundians were still collecting, preserving, and otherwise showing interest in books already endowed with an air of venerable antiquity” (*Codex and Context: Reading Old French Verse Narrative in Manuscript*, Vol. 1 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), 662). See also Doutrepoint, *La littérature*, 8-22, and Yvon Lacaze, “Le rôle des traditions dans la genèse d’un sentiment national au XVe siècle: La Bourgogne de Philippe le Bon,” *BEC* 129 (1971): 303-85.

<sup>569</sup> As noted above, several of the romances and biographies composed and redacted in the Burgundian court retain certain “epic” elements and conventions, especially of anti-Islamic warfare, which we shall examine here. These include such texts as Jean Wauquelin’s translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1444-5) and his *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople* (1448); the anonymous *Gillion de Trazegnies* (1450), which depicts the Muslims in relatively sympathetic (but

Like the anti-Islamic expeditions of Charlemagne and Jean d'Avesnes, the Long Campaign is imbued with national and world-historical significance – and it is painted on a large canvas. The desperate Hungarian magnates offer Wladyslaw the crown as a means of saving their country from “le felon Turcq appelle Moradbay,” who even now “assambloit grant puissance en pays de Turquie, Natoille et Grece et...en sa personne il vouloit venir mesmes enhavir les pays de la Vallaquie et de Hongrye, adfin diceulz mettre en son obeissance et totale subjection” (Ch. V).<sup>570</sup> The young king, just 20 years old “mais la renommee couroit que son sens estoit bien de quarante,”<sup>571</sup> responds as any epic hero should: he resolves not only to defend his Hungarian subjects on their own land, but to shift the balance of power by invading Ottoman territories south of the Danube “et luy aller au devant en bataille, adfin de plus prouffitablement ses terres garder doppressions” (Ch. V).<sup>572</sup>

Like Charlemagne in the *chansons*, moreover, the Polish king – who informs the pope of “la bonne, grande et digne voullente qu[']il avoit de resister auz

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thoroughly chivalric) terms and was penned in the near precincts of Jean de Wavrin; the anonymous *Jehan d'Avesnes* (ca. 1460), also a product of the Wavrin atelier; a remaniement of *Florent et Octavien* for the courtier Jean de Créquy (1454); David Aubert's *Croniques et Conquestes de Charlemagne* (1458) and *Charles Martel* (1464-5); and numerous others. This is not to suggest, of course, that the prose *remanieurs* did not alter elements of the *chanson* tradition; on this see [f.n. 579](#) below.

<sup>570</sup> “The evil Turk, called Moradbay”; “was amassing a great force in the lands of Turkey, Anatolia and Greece, and that he was intending to invade Wallachia and Hungary in person and to reduce them to total subjection and obedience” (transl. Imber 112); Wavrin-Hardy, 15. The extent of the sultan's operations further signals the world-historical significance of the event; on this epic attribute see McDonald, “Epic Genre,” 236.

<sup>571</sup> “Although he was reputed to have the wisdom of a man of forty” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 14. As I noted in the previous chapter, wisdom was an important virtues in Burgundian chivalric literature; compare this phrase to the *Gavre*-author's tribute to Louis de Gavre: “[M]oult s'ebahirent tous du grant sens et prudence quy en luy veoyent estre, veu la grant jonesse en coy il estoit” (*Seigneurs de Gavre*, ed. Stuij, 104; see my discussion in Chapter 3).

<sup>572</sup> “[T]he better to protect his lands from oppression, he was determined to cross the River Danube and bring him to battle” (transl. Imber, 113); Wavrin-Hardy, 15.

entreprinses dudit Grant Turcq annemy de la foy crestienne, pour laquele deffendre et exaulchier il vouloit devenir champion" (Ch. V)<sup>573</sup> – has God as an ally. Both chapters attribute the Hungarians' major victory against a dramatically larger Turkish force<sup>574</sup> to divine favour. "[L]es crestiens si portèrent tant vaillamment par layde de Nostre Seigneur Jhesu Christ," the narrator writes in Chapter VIII, "que ja feussent ilz petit nombre au regard des [Turcqz], toutesfois les tournerent ilz a desconfiture."<sup>575</sup> And while this blood-soaked *iudicium Dei* testifies to Christ's ire against the Turks, the "pagans'" own "gods" fail them in their hour of need: "[A] pou de perte et petite resistance furent Sarrazins descomfis, et le Grant Turcq sen fuy

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<sup>573</sup> His "excellent, great and honour able desire" to "resist the ventures of the Grand Turk, the enemy of the Christian faith, in whose defence and exultation he wished to become the champion" (transl. Imber, 113); Wavrin-Hardy, 15.

<sup>574</sup> The theme of Christian valour in the face of numerical inferiority is also common to the *chanson de geste* tradition and to "epic" crusade historiography. As Jeanette Beer writes in her study of Villehardouin, "There is constant emphasis upon the overwhelming odds against which the Crusading army is pitted. In general, such inequality enhances the achievement of the Crusaders or more properly, of the Crusaders' God." See Beer, *Villehardouin*, 52.

<sup>575</sup> "The Christians made such a valiant showing that, although they were few in number by comparison with the Turks, with the aid of our Lord Jesus Christ, they put them to rout" (transl. Imber, 120); Wavrin-Hardy, 28. Later in the chapter, the narrator writes: "[L]es chrestiens eurent grant joye de la belle victore que Dieu leur avoit donnee.... [F]ut commande que chascun regraciast Nostre Seigneur de la bonne fortune" (Wavrin-Hardy, 28). Chapter V likewise depicts the Hungarians twice praising God for granting them victory: "Auquel lieu se logerent le roy Lancelot et toute son armee loant et glorifiant Nostre Seigneur Jhesu Christ de leur belle victore"; "[L]e roy, princes, barons, et menu peuple regracierent Dieu Nostre Seigneur de la belle victore quil leur avoit donnee" (Wavrin-Hardy, 18). The *topos* of thanking God for victory is common to many "epic" depictions of knightly battles in the late medieval period (see Jean de Wavrin's account of Verneuil, described in Appendix A (below); and see Bayot, *Gillion*, 150). It appears to have an analogue, and probably a remembered precedent, in the specifically anti-Islamic contents of the early *chansons de geste*. Consider, for instance, the scenes of God's intervention in stanzas CCLXI-CCLXVI of the *Chanson de Roland*, or Guillaume's spirited cry in the *Prise d'Orange*: "Deus confonde la sarrazine geste!" (see *La Prise d'Orenge according to MS. A1*, ed. Blanche Katz (New York: King's Crown, 1947), 33). For a related discussion of the role of gods and the supernatural in medieval epics, see McDonald, "Epic Genre," 236-7.

villainement foursenant et maugrent ses dieux de ceste mesadventure" (Ch. V).<sup>576</sup>

The narrator here employs a time-honoured epic tradition – the so-called "Tervagant convention" – to mock the impotence of the Muslims' (presumed) faith system.<sup>577</sup>

The motif is as ubiquitous in Burgundian crusading romances as in their epic precursors: time and again, infidels make oaths to their deities, then disparage and defile them when things go wrong.<sup>578</sup>

This Manichean framework is also reflected in a variety of human differences on the ground, where the Christians are revealed to be pious and valiant, the Saracens bestial and cowardly.<sup>579</sup> On the morning of the battle, the cardinal legate

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<sup>576</sup> "The Saracens were defeated at the cost of very little loss and hardly any resistance. The Grand Turk fled ignominiously, cursing his gods for this misadventure" (transl. Imber, 114): Wavrin-Hardy, 17.

<sup>577</sup> The phrase "Tervagant convention" was coined by Norman Daniel, whose *Heroes and Saracens* remains a definitive study of the depictions of Islam in medieval epic poetry. On the Tervagant convention in epic poetry of the Crusade cycle (which was contained in Philip's library), see D.A. Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades* (Geneva: Droz, 1987), 113-14. For examples of the convention and its application in the early *chansons*, see *Prise d'Orenge*, ed. Katz, stanzas XXXV to XXXVIII, p. 30-2.

<sup>578</sup> To cite one example, the *Roman de Jehan d'Avesnes*, which seems to have been commissioned by Jean de Wavrin, reports that the infidel king of Grenada, hearing his compatriots crying for help, "fait mettre a voie sez hommes et malgre sez dieux Mahon et Tervagant." See *L'histoire de tres vaillans princez monseigneur Jehan d'Avennes*, ed. Danielle Quérueu (Paris: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 1997), 177; for a useful discussion, see Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, *La Tentation de l'Orient dans le roman médiéval. Sur l'imaginaire de l'Autre* (Paris: Champion, 2003), 366-7. It is also worth noting that the *topos* of the Muslim "pagan" found its way into other courtly literature, including crusade propaganda; the apocryphal letter from Mehmet II to Pope Nicholas V contained in Wavrin's *Anciennes Chroniques*, for example, makes reference to "nostre grant dieu Jupiter" and "Neptunus, dieu de la mer" (Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 361).

<sup>579</sup> It is important to acknowledge, as David Wrisley does, that the epic binaries of the *chanson* tradition were not always embraced wholeheartedly by Burgundian writers and translators. For a variety of political and ideological reasons, authors were at times prompted to "soften," mitigate and problematize their depictions of Turks – just as, in other cases, they tended to supplement and refine notions of "epic" Christian prowess with appeals to other virtues. In some cases, the process of "romancizing" also led to the foregrounding of the personal chivalric quest, to which crusading combat was supplementary. For related discussions of the ideological and political effects of *remaniement*, see Wrisley, "L'Orient de Jean Wauquelin," 180, 179; William Kibler, "From Epic to Romance: The Case of the *Lion de Bourges*," in *The Medieval Opus. Imitation, Rewriting and Translation in the French Tradition*, ed. D. Kelly (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996), 327-55 (esp. 329-33); E.J. Moodey,

offers his soldiers “benediction et absolution” (Ch. V); as a result, the narrator avers in Chapter VIII, “force et hardement leur creurent a moitie, si estoient plus joyeulz que paravant et tres desirans deulz trouver en besogne a lencontre de leurs adversaires.”<sup>580</sup> This is pure epic toning; Caesarini – who by all accounts was a zealous and bellicose character – is assigned the classical *rôle* of the crusading bishop, epitomized by the warlike Archbishop Turpin of the *Roland* tradition.<sup>581</sup> Like Turpin, the Italian legate is depicted as a close advisor to the commander and a key player in the expedition. And like Turpin’s orations, Caesarini’s blessings inspire his troops to the loftiest chivalric deeds, to “porter...vaillamment par layde de Nostre Seigneur” (Ch. VIII).<sup>582</sup> Thanks to their active piety, moreover, those good Christian men who die on the field, at Zlatitsa as at Roncesvalles, can look forward to endless joys in heaven: “[Dieu] avoit esprove leurs bonnes affections et vollentez, pour

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“Historical Identity in the Burgundian Netherlands: The Role of Manuscripts,” in *Tributes in Honor of James H. Marrow*, ed. J.F. Hamburger and A.S. Korteweg (London: Harvey Miller, 2006), 343-51 (esp. 345-6); Danielle Quérue, “Des mises en prose aux romans de chevalerie dans les collections bourguignonnes,” in *Rhétorique et mise en prose au XVe siècle*, Vol. II, ed. S. Cigada and A. Slerca (Milan: Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 1991), 173-93; and Valérie Naudet, “Une compilation de David Aubert: *Les Histoires de Charles Martel*,” in *Les Manuscrits de David Aubert*, ed. D. Quérue (Paris: CNRS-Paris IV, 1999), 69-79 (esp. 76-9).

<sup>580</sup> “[T]heir strength and morale increased by half. They were happier than before and eager to discharge their duties in the encounter with their enemies” (transl. Imber, 120): Wavrin-Hardy, 28. This is highly reminiscent of scenes of absolution and encouragement by Archbishop Turpin in the *Roland*: see for example lines 1124-44 and 1470-81. On “Turpin-like clerics” and their exhortations in the epic crusade cycle, see Trotter, *Medieval French Literature*, 113-14.

<sup>581</sup> It is worth noting that at least one Burgundian *remaniement*, *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople*, retains the *topos* of a fighting prelate – in this case the Pope, who not only blesses the departing troops but rides out on horseback, sword in hand, to the aid of the English King Henry, who is defending Rome from a Saracen attack. See *La Belle Hélène* in Régnier-Bohler, *Splendeurs*, 165-7.

<sup>582</sup> “Made...a valiant showing...with the aid of our Lord Jesus Christ” (transl. Imber, 120): Wavrin-Hardy, 28.



remuneration desqueles choses il les vouloit herbregier en son paradis par tel martire" (Ch. VIII).<sup>583</sup>

Just as the narrator works to ennoble and elevate the crusaders' achievements, moreover, he seeks to abase the "infidel" foe – a task to which a number of epic conventions conveniently apply.<sup>584</sup> While the expedition narrative lacks the nauseating anatomical depictions of Saracen slaughter – heads and bodies split open, eyes rolling out, brains dashed to the ground – that punctuate the many individual combats portrayed in the *chansons de geste*, it does work subtly, especially in Chapter V, to portray the Turks as both coarse and cowardly. The sultan and his men, said to be "maulvais," "faux" and "felon" – all descriptors which invert key virtues in the chivalric tradition – are rendered overconfident by their superior numbers. "[S]oy confiant en sa multitude," Murad launches a strategically inadvisable attack;<sup>585</sup> and when his forces are penned into a narrow field, the panicked vanguard tries to retreat, running into the soldiers advancing from behind. As a result, the Christians slaughter them "comme bestes mues" – like dumb beasts – and the sultan embarks on his base and ignominious ("villaine") flight. At least three anti-Islamic features common to French epics – depictions of the infidels' superior

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<sup>583</sup> "Our Lord...had tested their devotion and will, and who, as a reward for their sufferings, would, through martyrdom, give them a place in His paradise" (transl. Imber, 120-1): Wavrin-Hardy, 29-30. For a comparable passage in the *Roland*, see again lines 1470-82. It is worth noting that most suggestions of crusader piety occur in Chapter VIII, whereas other epic *topoi* are more common to Chapter V. This supports my suspicion, noted below and in Appendix B, that the two passages may have been derived from separate sources.

<sup>584</sup> See f.n. 579 above.

<sup>585</sup> This tactical ineptitude stands in curious contrast to Wavrin's observations later in the text concerning the Turks' crafty and pragmatic fighting style. It may thus offer further support to my contention that the Long Campaign episodes were derived from separate and independent sources. See Appendix B.

numbers, of their cowardly retreat, and of their crude and bestial deaths<sup>586</sup> – contribute to the black comedy of this scene. There is probably also some element of epic exaggeration in the narrator’s claim that “plus de quarante mille Turcqz” (Ch. V) or “plus de trente mille Sarrazins” (Ch. VIII) died in the battle – notwithstanding his later assertion that the number was confirmed by “chevalliers notables” (Ch. VIII).<sup>587</sup>

All of this, the formulaic use of light and shadow, contributes to the epic grandeur of the Long Campaign narrative – and, by extension, to the world-historical importance of the Varna project.<sup>588</sup> It also helps to position the Long Campaign chapters within a tradition of crusade historiography that often employed such *chanson* motifs, and which, in its turn, furnished fifteenth-century chroniclers with more particular ways of recalling the glories of past crusades. The historian and crusading marshal Geoffroy de Villehardouin certainly served in this combined

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<sup>586</sup> For a useful discussion of how all three of these epic themes, derived from the *chansons*, help to animate one early crusade chronicle, see Carol Sweetenham, *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 61-2.

<sup>587</sup> “More than forty thousand Turks”; “more than thirty thousand Saracens”; “notable knights” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 17, 28.

<sup>588</sup> We could, moreover, point to other, more incidental motifs which are either typical of or common to the epic tradition, and which add weight to our thesis. Like several of the traditional *chansons de geste* surveyed by Jean Rychner (in *La Chanson de Geste: Essai sur l'art epique des jongleurs* [Geneva: Droz, 1955]), Chapter VIII features a dramatic embassy across enemy lines – in this case, to convey the king’s challenge directly to the Grand Turk. (The herald-at-arms who is charged with the mission trembles with fear, even after Wladyslaw, showing the magnanimity of a true crusading prince, assures him that he has “esperance en Dieu quil te conduira.”) A typically “epic” emotion – vivid and demonstrative sorrow – occurs at the end of the Zlatitsa passage, when the crusaders mourn their fallen comrades, “en pleurs de leurs amis qui estoient ainsi finez par martyre des nesges et froidures” (Ch. VIII). Finally, as in so many of the *chansons*, the Christian victory at Nish results in the seizure of miraculous amounts of booty – including the Grand Turk’s massive tent, “une tente merueilleusement grande et la plus riche que jamais on avoit veue car elle estoit par dedens toute doublee de veloux cramoisy” (Ch V). The capture of the sultan’s tent is a common *topos* in the chivalric literary tradition; one finds it for instance in the romance of *El Cid* and the Antioch scene in William of Tyre’s *Historia* (discussed below). For more on plunder as a “set theme” in epic texts (though not necessarily an exclusively epic motif), see Beer, *Villehardouin*, 54.

role of heir and benefactor. As Jeanette Beer argued in an elegant 1968 monograph, Villehardouin's history of the Fourth Crusade (*De la Conquête de Constantinople*) appears more stylistically indebted to the *chansons de geste* and the epic crusade cycles than to the Latin historiographical tradition which preceded it.<sup>589</sup> His work was known to the Burgundian court for at least a generation before Varna<sup>590</sup>; and certain of our narrator's formulations, particularly in Chapter V, seem to recall his efforts to celebrate the glories of an ideologically resonant enterprise.

We have seen, for instance, that Wavrin's text focuses upon the Hungarian knights' appeal to King Wladyslaw, "luy priant humblement que ad ce se vouldist liberalement consentir et hastivement venir en Hongrie pour les conduire et secourir contre les Turcqz felons quy desja par leurs courses avoient fait a eulz de grans dommages."<sup>591</sup> This appeal is echoed in the subsequent account of the Greek ambassador's sorrowful supplications before Philip the Good (Ch. VI), which prompted the duke's own crusading efforts.<sup>592</sup> It seems reasonable to speculate that some Burgundians, reading or hearing these passages, were reminded of Villehardouin's account of a stirring address to the Venetian council in 1200:

"Lords, the barons of France, most high and puissant, have sent us to you; and they cry to you for mercy, that you take pity on Jerusalem, which is in bondage to the Turks, and that, for God's sake, you help to avenge the shame of Christ Jesus. And for this end they have elected to come to you, because

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<sup>589</sup> See e.g. Beer, *Villehardouin*, 31-3.

<sup>590</sup> As Jacques Paviot notes, Villehardouin's account appeared in the Burgundian ducal library during the reigns of Philippe le Hardi (Philip the Bold) and Jean sans Peur (John the Fearless), Philip's grandfather and father. See *Les ducs*, 202, and Doutrepont, *La littérature*, 242, 263.

<sup>591</sup> "Humbly begg[ing] him graciously to consent to come quickly to Hungary to lead them and save them from the wicked and villainous Turks, who had already caused such enormous damage with their raids" (transl. Imber, 112): Wavrin-Hardy, 14.

<sup>592</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 20-1.

they know full well that there is none other people having so great power on the seas, as you and your people. And they commanded us to fall at your feet, and not to rise till you consent to take pity on the Holy Land which is beyond the seas.”<sup>593</sup>

Like the appeals to Wladyslaw and Philip in the fifteenth century, this address marks the beginning of a momentous crusading enterprise – one, it should be remembered, that placed a comital ancestor of duke Philip’s on the imperial throne of Constantinople.<sup>594</sup> The network of literary and ideological concordances between the three texts is therefore both expansive and complex. Other details in our narrative seem likewise to recall Villehardouin’s glorious vision of the Fourth Crusade: the response of stout knights to the entreaties of crusade preachers, who “esmeurent telement les coers du peuple a devotion que plusieurs prendrent les armes pour aller personnellement...combatre les Turcqz infidels” (Ch. V)<sup>595</sup>; the crusaders’ strategic use of topography to defeat a more numerous enemy (Ch. V)<sup>596</sup>; and God’s personal interventions in the struggle, which come in the form of sporadic, life-giving “miracles” (Ch. VIII).<sup>597</sup>

Not all of the crusade historians who were read in the fifteenth century were as singularly indebted to the “epic” form – in the sense of echoing and distilling the techniques of the *jongleurs* – as was Villehardouin. The influential William of Tyre,

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<sup>593</sup> Translated by Sir Frank T. Marzials in *Memoirs of the Crusades by Villehardouin and De Joinville* (New York: Dutton, 1958), 7.

<sup>594</sup> Baldwin I of Constantinople (1172-1205), the first Latin emperor installed after the crusaders’ capture of the city in 1204, was both count of Flanders and count of Hainault. Both titles, in addition to other ducal and comital honours, were held by Philip the Good in the fifteenth century.

<sup>595</sup> “They moved the hearts of the people to such devotion that a number of them personally...took up arms to fight the infidel Turks” (transl. Imber 112); Wavrin-Hardy, 16-17. This is highly reminiscent of Villehardouin’s scene depicting crusade preaching: see *Memoirs*, transl. Marzials, 1-2.

<sup>596</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 17; compare with *Memoirs*, transl. Marzials, 44.

<sup>597</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 29; compare with *Memoirs*, transl. Marzials, 45.

for one, wrote in the more contemplative and self-conscious tradition of the monastic historiographers of the First Crusade.<sup>598</sup> This involved very different narrative and historiographical techniques, and it produced distinct stylistic effects. But even as we acknowledge these differences, we must be careful not to exaggerate or essentialize them; for as scholars have noted, certain of the Latin histories were redolent with heroic and quasi-epic features, all of them contributing to a pronounced epic toning.<sup>599</sup> This was certainly true of William's work: "The larger-than-life traits of the leaders, the constant interplay of divine power and human confidence, the commonplace occurrence of Christian heroism, and the whole expedition portrayed as a divine drama," as Peter Edbury and John Gordon Rowe have noted, were important (and substantively "Rolandesque") elements of the Archbishop of Tyre's writing.<sup>600</sup>

Not surprisingly, William and his colleagues did some unique things with these heroic motifs of crusading – including, among other things, embroidering them with a heightened sense of theological and moral purpose. Reading Villehardouin's writing beside William's thus produces a puzzling sense of both familiarity and distance. The same is true of Wavrin's Chapters V and VIII, which tend to strike the reader, respectively, as more "knightly" and more "monkish" texts. Like Villehardouin, the narrator of the first Long Campaign episode describes the knights'

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<sup>598</sup> On William's sources and narrative techniques, see Peter Edbury and John G. Rowe, *William of Tyre: Historian of the Latin East* (Cambridge, UK: CUP, 1988), 23-58. On the place of William's work in the ducal library, see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 202.

<sup>599</sup> See for example Carol Sweetenham's discussion of Robert the Monk's use of epic topoi in his *Historia Iherosolimitana* (*Robert the Monk*, 61-2).

<sup>600</sup> Edbury and Rowe, 153.

blessing and absolution by the cardinal, but he does not dwell in detail on its significance.<sup>601</sup> Chapter VIII, as we have seen, devotes more far more attention to this episode – announcing in advance that the legate is to sing a mass, describing it, and then reporting that the absolved warriors are blessed with “force et hardement...a moitie, si estoient plus joyeulz que paravant et tres desirans deulz trouver...a lencontre de leurs adversaires.”<sup>602</sup> The episode thus recalls not only the general contours of many *chanson* combats, but the specific treatment of the world-historical battle of Antioch in William’s *Historia*. There, the archbishop writes,

[a]fter the celebration of divine service, when all the legions had been filled with the divine gift, grace in wonderful fullness was showered upon them from on high. Those who, but yesterday and the day before, were listless and abject, emaciated and lifeless, so weak that they could scarcely lift their eyes...now voluntarily came forth in public. Casting aside cowardice, they bore their arms manfully, as if with strength renewed....<sup>603</sup>

The thematic concordances between the two passages are unmistakable. Likewise, in a manner common to the authors of William’s tradition, the narrator frames “Rolandesque” notions of martyrdom and paradise – invoked in the account of the disaster at Zlatitsa – in the context of more subtle meditations on theodicy. “[F]ut ainsi comme ung miracle de Dieu de ceulz quy se sauverent, si fut grant pitie, douller et dommage des cristiens qui la perirent en si grant destresse,” he writes. “[M]ais il en fault laisser le secre en Nostre Seigneur....”<sup>604</sup> Such sufferings,

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<sup>601</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 17.

<sup>602</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 28 (translated in [f.n. 580](#) above).

<sup>603</sup> Transl. E.A. Babcock and A.C. Krey in their edition of William’s *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea* (New York: Columbia UP, 1943), 285-6.

<sup>604</sup> “It seemed like a miracle of God that some had survived”; “but the mystery must reside with our Lord” (transl Imber, 120): Wavrin-Hardy, 29.

sustained in the hope of a heavenly reward, are a thematic staple of the Latin histories.<sup>605</sup>

In admirably economical and abbreviated forms, then, Wavrin's two short chapters on the Long Campaign invoke a series of associations – with Antioch, with Constantinople, with Roncesvalles, with *crusading* writ large – that leave no doubt as to the heroic and world-historical character of the expedition. Yet remarkably, both texts manage to subvert and temper this epic grandeur in their closing lines. The problematic ingredient, in both cases, is the troubling Christian withdrawal from Zlatitsa: a retreat that throws into question not only the extent of the Christian military resurgence on the Ottoman frontier, but also the viability of any major expedition against the forces of Sultan Murad. I turn now to the political logic – and the ideological effects – of this fascinating rhetorical wrinkle.

*Subverting rhetoric, tempering grandeur: Wavrin's treatments of Zlatitsa.* In their various silences, ambiguities and contradictions, Wavrin's two accounts of the Christian withdrawal from the hellish conditions of the Pass reveal a great deal about the ideological stakes of depicting Christian "victory" at a time when perceptions of Turkish military superiority produced acute anxieties and concerns

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<sup>605</sup> See Beer, *Villehardouin*, 66. It is also useful to compare these meditations on theodicy with those contained in another newsletter included in Wavrin's *Anciennes Chroniques* (Vol. 6, Bk. 5, Ch. VII). The text, which may be derived from an ecclesiastical source, describes the exploits of Juan de Capistrano and János Hunyadi, and the losses of Christian life, in broadly similar terms: "A ceste journee furent occis environ chincq mille Christiens, desquelz Nostre Seigneur voeille par sa clemence avoir colloque leurs ames en son paradis" (Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 366); "Fut grant dommage pour la Christiennete de perdre ung tel champion (Hunyadi); mais de chose que nostre Dieu face ne doit homme mortel murmurer" (367).

across the Latin West.<sup>606</sup> A brief synopsis of the two passages will help us to deal with these important fissures. Chapter V, as we have seen, suppresses all evidence of the crusaders' agonies at Zlatitsa; it merely reports that in the wake of their great battle against Murad – the depiction of which, as Colin Imber suggests, may contain sublimated details of events at the Pass – the “vrais champions victorieux” decided to withdraw from the field and return to Hungary “atout leur victore et leur guaing.”<sup>607</sup> This decision, the narrator remarks sternly, “a depuis porte moult grant prejudice et dommage a la crestiennete”; for had they pressed forward, they would have conquered Greece “sans faulte,” seeing that all of Turkey “trambloit de paour” in the wake of their recent victories.<sup>608</sup> Chapter VIII, for its part, describes the disaster at Zlatitsa and its consequences with much greater historical accuracy.

Suppressing only the Turks' *military* role in repulsing the Christians from the Pass,

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<sup>606</sup> These concerns are reflected in contemporary chronicles of the Long Campaign. The belief that reports of victory will inspire new efforts against the Turk, for example, is expressed in a letter from Cardinal Julian Caesarini to Emperor Frederick III containing an account of the battle of Nish. “The hope is that this victory, in these areas,” he writes, “will prepare great new endeavours against the Turks, and will snatch many out of their authority.” He then lists a number of “lords of Albania and Greece” who have taken up arms in the wake of Wladyslaw's victory. See *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum*, Bd. LXI, ed. R. Wolkan (Vienna, 1909), 281-3. (The date attributed to this letter, 4 October 1443, seems erroneous, given that the battle in question was actually fought on 3 November.) Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the future pope Pius II, echoes these sentiments in a letter of January 1444; see *Fontes*, ed. Wolkan, 281-3. It is also worth noting that some authors, writing long after these events, felt a need to emphasize the Christian victories while downplaying or eliding the events at Zlatitsa. The source for Wavrin's Chapter V appears to be one of them. Another, the Hunyadi apologist János Thuróczy, makes no mention at all of the disaster; he writes only that the voivode “always emerged the victor” in his “five battles” *en route* to Bulgaria and in his final conflict on the way home. No indication of his reasons for withdrawing from the south is given; Thuróczy merely describes the “return home” as “supremely glorious and triumphant.” See Frank Mantello's translation of Thuróczy's *Chronicle of the Hungarians* (Bloomington: Indiana U, 1991), 136.

<sup>607</sup> “True victorious champions”; “together with the victory and the spoils” (transl. Imber, 114): Wavrin-Hardy, 18.

<sup>608</sup> “Has since done great damage to Christianity”; “without fail”; “was trembling in fear” (transl. Imber, 114): Wavrin-Hardy, 18. It is interesting to note that, despite its effect in tempering the epic grandeur of the chapter, this interjection is itself reflective of the authorial mode of the *chansons de geste*. See Beer, *Villehardouin*, 34-5.



the narrator vividly describes the formidable obstacles facing the crusaders: the “arbes, pierres et empeschemens” which the Turks laid across their path; the “grande froidure de vent et de gelle,” combined with a heavy snowfall, which killed all of the “gens et chevaulz...quy nestoient a couvert”; the uncertainty and worry faced by the crusade leaders; and the “pitie, doulleur et dommages” suffered by those who died.<sup>609</sup> In the end, he writes, the crusade leaders acted wisely in retreating. It seemed “comme ung miracle de Dieu” that any of their men survived; and as for the fallen crusaders, God, who had tested their devotion and will, would reward their sufferings with a place in paradise.<sup>610</sup> In a remarkable and revealing coda, the narrator notes that the Cardinal legate omitted all references to the events of the Pass in his subsequent preaching: “[I]l se tairoit des pertes que les christians avoient recheu es montaignes, adnullant les parlers de ceulz qui en diroient aulcune chose.”<sup>611</sup>

One is tempted to suspect that this very strategy, revealed in the second Long Campaign account, helped to shape the contours of the first. In any case, the factual suppressions of Chapter V – which are uncommon amongst contemporary accounts of the Long Campaign<sup>612</sup> – tend to underscore the political stakes of the text.

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<sup>609</sup> “Trees, rocks, and other obstacles”; “men and horses without shelter”; “misery, pain and loss” (transl. Imber 120): Wavrin-Hardy, 29.

<sup>610</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 29-30.

<sup>611</sup> “[H]e was to keep quiet about the losses that the Christians had suffered in the mountains, contradicting anyone who said anything about them” (transl. Imber, 121): Wavrin-Hardy, 30.

<sup>612</sup> It is uncommon, that is, that contemporary sources omit *entirely* references to the Zlatitsa disaster, though several authors do treat the subject gingerly and with circumspection. As we saw above (f.n. 606), János Thuróczy does not mention the events at the Pass. For his part, the Greek chronicler Doukas merely reports that “when both sides realized that they were making no headway whatsoever because of the ruggedness of the terrain, each returned whence it had come” (see Doukas, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, transl. H.J. Magoulias [Detroit:

By erasing any mention of the fiasco at the Pass, and by portraying a massive and unambiguous Christian victory at the climax of the campaign, the narrator assures his readers of the power of the Christian armies and the viability of the Ottoman crusading project. His lamentation over the inadvisability of the Christian withdrawal – “car se ilz eussent passe la montaigne de Philipoly et poursievy leur victore aigrement ilz eussent sans faulte reconqueste a peu de faite toute la Grece” – reinforces his tacit claim that Christians had nothing to fear from the Muslim menace.<sup>613</sup> Yet this rhetorical solution to the Zlatitsa problem tends at the same time to undermine the epic grandeur of the chapter; for in the absence of a tragedy at the Pass, Wladyslaw’s decision to retreat from the field becomes puzzling, even unaccountable, in terms of chivalric heroism. It seems tainted by opportunism; returning home “atout leur victore et leur guaing,” the crusaders were presumably motivated by a desire simply to enjoy their winnings. Nor does the narrator’s decision to interject a single, seemingly cryptic, reference to Zlatitsa near the end of the chapter offer balm for this chivalric offense. “[L]endist que pour le...tampz quil

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Wayne State U, 1975], 182-3). Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini simply concedes that the army was dismissed because it was “struggling with hunger and could not get through the narratow passes of Romania” (transl. from the Latin by P. Conway; see *Fontes*, ed. Wolkan, 565-6). Michael Beheim is more forthcoming, admitting in his heroic song for “King Pladislavo” that the Turks’ position in the mountain was so well-defended that the Hungarians soon “let them be. The army massed together, the trumpets were blown, and they hurried back across the river. [...] Horses and men died of hunger. They suffered great hardship because of the cold. They had nothing to eat” (transl. Imber, 171). The Polish chronicler Jan Dlugosz, as I note below, offers the most poignant portrait of the crusaders’ suffering at Zlatitsa and in its aftermath: “[M]any of the king’s men die of starvation on the march. They can be seen staggering from side to side as though about to fall; with their pallid faces and sunken eyes, they are more like ghosts than humans.” See *The Annals of Jan Dlugosz*, transl. Michael, 489-90.

<sup>613</sup> “If they had crossed the mountains to Philipoly [Plovdiv] and vigorously followed up their victory, they would, without fail, have reconquered all of Greece with very little effort” (transl. Imber, 114); Wavrin-Hardy, 18.

faisoit ilz avoient cremu a passer les montaignes,” he notes.<sup>614</sup> If the king and his men were not merely complacent, then they were also, perhaps, afraid of the weather.

This subtle but potent ambiguity tends to unsettle the interwoven epic and historiographical themes which endow the chapter with such grandeur. It is true, of course, that critiques of knightly failings, and of inadvisable retreats, are not unknown in the tradition of epic poetry. Nonetheless, I think it is fair to say that chivalric heroes are seldom accused, even by implication, of complacency or untimely hesitation. These are the unsettling dividends of a politically motivated redaction – effects, incidentally, which Chapter VIII skillfully avoids. Indeed, far from suppressing the troubling details of Zlatitsa, Wavrin’s second narrative *emphasizes* them, reporting in riveting detail on the crusaders’ acute sufferings and their leaders’ agonizing decisions. Only one inconvenient fact – the Turks’ military resistance against the crusaders, which might tend to problematize the “heroic” Wladyslaw’s decision to withdraw – is elided. Otherwise, the chapter is more forthcoming than many contemporary accounts; and it resembles most of all Jan Dlugosz’s gritty description of a disaster which prompted warriors to retreat with “pallid faces and sunken eyes.”<sup>615</sup>

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<sup>614</sup> Colin Imber translates this passage as: “It was said that the cold weather had made them afraid to cross the mountains” (114): Wavrin-Hardy, 18. There is a problem, however, in that the original text reads “pour le chault tanz,” which I take to mean “because of the hot weather.” It is hard to imagine warm temperatures hindering any sort of mountain passage; hence I presume that Imber regarded this simply as a scribal error. It is not impossible, of course, that the narrator intended to suggest a return to Buda that took place earlier in the year. In any case, “fearing” (“avoient cremu”) *any* sort of weather is not traditionally a desirable attribute for an epic hero or a crusader-king.

<sup>615</sup> See [f.n. 612](#) above.

The narrator of Chapter VIII proceeds this far without undermining the epic toning of his text. He does so, as we have seen, by making use of a particular tropological (and mechanistic theological) toolkit – framing the crusaders’ sufferings, and God’s willingness to reward their martyrdom, as unavoidable, inscrutable, and divinely-sanctioned events.<sup>616</sup> This is the only time that such language appears in the expedition narrative, and it solves several problems for him. His insistence that the Christians’ previous victory at Nish was mandated by God (“la belle victoire que Dieu leur avoit donnee”) need not be challenged by their seemingly counterproductive retreat from the Pass; for this too was part of God’s inscrutable plan, “le secre [de] Nostre Seigneur,” which resulted in the ascent of many thousands of Christian souls to paradise. Nor should the king and the legate be blamed for the decision to turn back; they acted “sagement,” “tout considere,” in light of circumstances beyond their control. As crusade apologetics go, this is a masterful production.<sup>617</sup>

Yet in the end, the narrator manages again to subvert the epic integrity of his composition – not through awkward silences, in this case, but with a candid confession. In the last lines of the chapter, as we have seen, Cardinal Caesarini is told to go out and spread the word of the Christians’ “grans victoires” in the Balkans. At the same time, he is instructed to suppress – indeed, to *contradict* (“adnullant les

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<sup>616</sup> I am tempted, at the risk of reductionism, to note that the devotional aspects of crusading are emphasized here in a manner that recalls, among other ecclesiastical texts, Bernard of Clairvaux’s *De laude novae militiae*.

<sup>617</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy 28, 29.

parlers”) – all claims of Christian losses at the Pass.<sup>618</sup> However soothing the narrator’s theodicy might be, then, and however passionately he might depict the crusaders’ martyrdom at Zlatitsa, these justifications are evidently not sufficient to calm the nerves of a European community that is deeply fearful of the surging Ottoman threat, and needs desperately to hear news of unqualified victories. A fascinating contradiction thus appears: the leading representative of Christ’s vicar on earth is told to deny what the narrator has *just presented* as evidence of God’s magnanimous intervention in the lives of his knights. Immutable (and past-centred, and “epic”) truth is dismissed as a discursive liability; and the crusade leaders, who set out to suppress it for political reasons, suddenly look more like propagandists than epic heroes.

These are the unmistakable signs of the pressure exerted by “the present day, with all its inconclusiveness, its indecision, its openness, its potential for re-thinking and re-evaluating” upon epic and heroic formulations. For all their grandeur, and despite their careful use of themes and conventions that call to mind a pure and heroic crusading past, neither of these texts can ultimately sustain the pressures of historicity and the imperfect present. The inconvenient truths of fifteenth-century crusading and the political imperatives of crusade historiography engage in an epic struggle of their own, unsettling the placid calm (and dampening the heroic spirit) of Wavrin’s panegyric. In the process, they offer invaluable glimpses into the concerns and fears that most troubled his contemporaries. These negotiations, as Kinoshita

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<sup>618</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 30. I have found no mention of this instruction in any of the contemporary sources I have yet surveyed; future research, however, may reveal concordances with other texts.

reminds us, represent the most intense and revealing “historical work” that is undertaken in the redaction of a crusading chronicle.<sup>619</sup>

*‘Epic toning’ elsewhere in the narrative*

The Long Campaign episodes are certainly not the only passages that use (and subvert) epic themes; other examples abound, particularly in the early, “contextual” chapters of Wavrin’s narrative. His animated description of the Burgundians’ successful defense of Rhodes (Chapter IX), for example, includes a number of such features, including heroic speech, honourable receptions, and dubbings on the field.<sup>620</sup> Likewise, his fascinating account of Waleran’s failure to hold the Straits against the Ottomans (Chapter XII) – a passage, as I argued above, which offers a carefully-crafted *apologia* for the disaster – rests on a sort of truncated and modified epic infrastructure. Occasional but pointed references to the captain’s submission to God’s will, to the “diabolical” tempest which afflicts the galleys, and to God’s apparent protection of the Burgundian ships serve not to glorify the protagonists, but rather, as Le Brusque argues, to exculpate them by shifting responsibility for their failures into divine hands.<sup>621</sup> Here again, epic themes are

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<sup>619</sup> See above and Kinoshita, 139.

<sup>620</sup> For the Burgundians’ heroic speech, which “encoraga grandement” the Catalan mercenaries who were threatening to leave the island in the face of a Mamluk invasion, see Wavrin-Hardy, 35. For other features noted here, including honorable receptions, dubbings and praise to God for martial victories, see Wavrin-Hardy, 34-8.

<sup>621</sup> Wavrin’s “narration du passage des détroits par les Turcs était agité d’un souffle véritablement épique,” writes Le Brusque. “C’est sans doute que Wavrin voulait employer tout son art pour excuser l’échec de Walleran, le mettant aux prises avec des forces surhumaines” (“Des chevaliers,” 270). See Wavrin-Hardy, 48-51.

used to support rhetorical objectives; here again, they create revealing silences and gaps.<sup>622</sup>

Nor indeed does Wavrin's epic toning end there (*pace* Dr. Le Brusque). Even the more "naturalistic" contours of Waleran's testimony concerning his travels on the Danube after the disaster of Varna (Chapters XV to XIX) contain heroic elements, though to be sure these are more muted and uneven than the gilded terms appearing in the contextual chapters. I argued in Chapter 3, for example, that Waleran is here constructed as a *bon chevalier* according to evaluative categories inherited from epic and romance literature; his testimony likewise offers up occasional references which call to mind other glories of crusading warfare.<sup>623</sup> I shall have occasion to return to these features in subsequent discussions of the text.

For the moment, however, it is important to turn our attention to one last "contextual" episode, Wavrin's nuanced account of the Battle of Varna (Chapters XIII-XIV), which features especially vivid forms of epic toning.<sup>624</sup> Like the Long Campaign episodes, the Varna scene also contains a good deal of narrative tension – though here a different set of anxieties unsettles the panegyric project. Even as he seeks to mitigate the Christian loss by praising the crusaders' heroic conduct, the narrator seems deeply concerned about their failure to take more calculated and pragmatic action against the Turks. This critique of chivalric temerity in the face of

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<sup>622</sup> See my discussion in Chapter 2 (above).

<sup>623</sup> An especially vivid example, described in detail in Chapter XIX, is Waleran's return from the East with relics and papal indulgences for "leglise de Lillers" – a scene that recalls the triumphant return of French warriors from the First Crusade. See Wavrin-Hardy, 117-19.

<sup>624</sup> Though I shall differ from Georges Le Brusque on some fundamental points in the section that follows, I am grateful for his (characteristically) elegant and thoughtful analysis of the Varna chapter, which has helped to inform my study. See "Des chevaliers," 265-6.

Ottoman tactical acuity is vital to my study: as we shall see, it informs several episodes in the expedition narrative, testifying to a concern that Wavrin seems intent on communicating to his readers *alongside* his chivalric apologetics. His interest in prudence is underwritten, moreover, not only by Waleran's own experiences with the Turks, but also by ambivalent memories of a decades-old crusading disaster – the Battle of Nicopolis (1396) – which was fought in these very precincts. I turn now to a study of Wavrin's portrait of Varna, and of his urgent reminder of the perils of old kinds of *démesure* in new theatres of battle.

## **Part 2. 'Il me souvient...l'année passée': Varna, Nicopolis and the critique of chivalric temerity**

The most significant Christian crusading loss of the fifteenth century occurred on the tenth of November, 1444, less than a year after the tactical victories and sudden setbacks that had marked the Long Campaign. A great deal had happened in the interim: the Hungarians had returned to Buda and negotiated a peace with the sultan; the Muslim prince of neighbouring Karaman had launched his own unsuccessful venture against Murad; and the Burgundians and Venetians had assembled a fleet to prevent the Ottomans' main force from crossing the Bosophorus.<sup>625</sup> King Wladyslaw – who, Martin Chasin suspects, had been intent on

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<sup>625</sup> The events of 1444 are exceedingly complex and, thanks to significant differences amongst the various sources, have engaged a great many scholars in various debates in recent decades. I offer this brief summary as a contextual framework for my analysis of Wavrin's text; for more detailed discussions of these events, informed by careful study of various sources, see Chasin, "The Crusade of Varna," 276-310; Held, *Hunyadi*, 91-112; Imber, *The Crusade of Varna*, 18-36; Kenneth M. Setton, "The Crusade of Varna and its Aftermath," in *The Papacy and the Levant*, 82-107.



fighting a crusade all along<sup>626</sup> – violated the Treaty of Szeged almost immediately after it was ratified, launching a major expedition in September. In the weeks that followed, the Hungarians and their allies ransacked cities and castles across a wide swath of Ottoman territory south of the Danube.<sup>627</sup> They finally met the sultan's army, massively reinforced by the Anatolian troops who had crossed the Straits, at the Black Sea port of Varna. There they were decisively routed, though not before achieving some promising successes: the Anatolian commander Karaca Bey was killed by Hunyadi's forces, and another Ottoman contingent, under the Rumelian commander Davud Pasha, was repulsed.<sup>628</sup> It was in the wake of these heady victories, according to several sources, that King Wladyslaw made the fateful decision to charge into the retinue of janissaries protecting the sultan. He was quickly unhorsed and beheaded; and when word of his death circulated, the crusader army retreated. Murad's victory, which set the stage for future assaults on Belgrade, Constantinople and Vienna, effectively hobbled the crusading movement for decades.<sup>629</sup>

It is not clear precisely how Wavrin's nuanced portrait of this loss was crafted. Judging by its "literary" contours and its uneven concordances with other

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<sup>626</sup> See "Crusade," 301. The question of culpability in the violation of the peace negotiated has been hotly debated, particularly by central European scholars writing in the twentieth century. For two especially important and influential discussions, see O. Halecki, *The Crusade of Varna*, and Francisc Pall, "Autour de la Croisade de Varna: La question de la Paix de Szeged et de sa rupture," in *Bulletin de la Section Historique de l'Académie Roumaine* 22 (1941): 144-58.

<sup>627</sup> These sites included Vidin, Orjahovo, Nicopolis, Tarnovo, Shumen, Novi Pazar and others; see Imber, 29.

<sup>628</sup> Held, 109.

<sup>629</sup> "The failure of the crusade," as Chasin writes (310), "sealed the fate of Byzantium nine years later. Varna brought the Turks to the walls of Belgrade in 1448 and to the walls of Vienna in a generation."

sources, the narrator may well have derived it from an independent textual source in order to fill a gap in Waleran's first-hand testimony.<sup>630</sup> In any case, as Le Brusque remarks, the scene is a special one: colourful and tense, it offers an example *par excellence* of the effects of epic toning in Wavrin's historiography.<sup>631</sup> The evening after their arrival at Varna, the crusaders see fires on the mountainside; the sage "Johannes Hoignacq," "qui depuis eut a nom le Blancq Chevallier,"<sup>632</sup> informs the king that they mark the Ottomans' arrival. Masses are sung and councils held the next day; and though the king hopes to press into the mountains, he is advised to await the Turks in a strategic position. The battle finally begins when "Caraiabay" (Karaca Bey) looks down from the mountain and, seeing "larmee du roy de Hongrye si petite[,] il le prisa moult peu."<sup>633</sup> Spurring his horse and giving a great shout, the Turkish commander comes face to face with Hunyadi, whose heroic reflexes are perfect: "dune grosse lance quil portoit rua jus Caraiabay avec tous les premiers venans."<sup>634</sup> The vanguard struggles to flee, creating chaos in the Turkish ranks; Hunyadi takes advantage by slaughtering them from all sides. The resulting victory,

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<sup>630</sup> This may have occurred, moreover, some time after Waleran first provided his testimony. For more on the problems of sources, redaction and authorship, see Appendices A and B (below).

<sup>631</sup> "Le récit que nous fait Wavrin de la fameuse bataille de Varna est tout aussi épique..." writes Le Brusque. "Wavrin jette sur cet événement une lumière particulière, qui le différencie totalement des autres batailles 'profanes' qui rythment sa chronique..." "Des chevaliers," 265.

<sup>632</sup> "János Hunyadi," "who has since been called the White Knight" (transl. Imber, 130): Wavrin-Hardy, 52, 53. The epithet "White Knight," with its romantic resonances, marks out Hunyadi as an especially heroic figure in the crusading movement. The origins of the phrase, however, may be more prosaic: scholars have suggested that "Blancq Chevallier" may have evolved linguistically and semantically from the phrase "Chevallier Vlacq," the "Wallachian knight." For a useful discussion, see Marinesco, "Du nouveau sur *Tirant lo Blanc*," 174-7.

<sup>633</sup> Seeing that "the King of Hungary's army was so small, he rated it for very little" (transl. Imber, 131): Wavrin-Hardy, 54.

<sup>634</sup> "With a great lance that he was carrying, [he] hurled Caraiabay to the ground together with all the men who came up first" (transl. Imber, 131): Wavrin-Hardy, 54.

Wavrin avers, is “ung beau benefice de Dieu,” who has deigned to give “tele victore a si petit nombre de Christiens comme tel multitude de Turcqz.”<sup>635</sup>

This dramatic reversal panics some of the Ottoman leaders, but not the pragmatic sultan: “avec sa maignie se tint toujours tout coy sur une montaigne.”<sup>636</sup> The Hungarian and Polish lords, for their part, are jealous of Hunyadi’s success; they urge the king to launch a new attack on the mountain so they can win honour for themselves. This seems foolhardy to the White Knight, who objects in a long and thoughtful speech: “Pour lhonneur de Dieu ne vous mettez pas en necessite de perdre ce quy est guaignie,” he exclaims, listing all of the strategic advantages the king risks surrendering.<sup>637</sup> But his words go unheeded; Wladyslaw orders an attack, the Cardinal threatens any reticent fighters with excommunication, and the Christians swarm up the hill to engage Murad’s janissaries. They fight with great valour, “comme tygres, et malmenerent grandment ceulz quy estoient au front de la...karolle.”<sup>638</sup> The king presses so far ahead, however, that he is soon unhorsed and decapitated by the sultan’s guard. His foolhardy death does not cause immediate defeat; the battle continues to rage for some time, but in the end the Hungarians and

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<sup>635</sup> “A great favour from God,” “such a victory to a small band of Christians against such a multitude of Turks” (transl. Imber 131): Wavrin-Hardy, 55.

<sup>636</sup> The Grand Turk “still stood calmly on a mountain with his retinue” (transl. Imber, 131): Wavrin-Hardy, 55.

<sup>637</sup> “For the sake of God, do not put yourself in a position to lose everything that has been gained” (transl. Imber, 132): Wavrin-Hardy, 56. The length and detail of Hunyadi’s speech helps to frame it as the climax of the episode, and points to the importance of his critique of temerity from the perspective of the author and/or the redactor. I have found no other source which provides this speech in such careful detail, though as we shall see, some contemporary chroniclers, including Chalcocondylas, Dlugosz and Beheim, do mention Hunyadi’s opposition to the king’s assault. See [f.n. 656](#) below.

<sup>638</sup> “Like tigers, [severely] mauling the ones at the front of the circle” (transl. Imber, 132): Wavrin-Hardy, 56.

Poles retreat. The cardinal-legate is said to have been drowned in the Danube, and only Hunyadi brings his troops home safely and in good order.<sup>639</sup>

This taut narrative, as I suggested, is marked by a particularly dense sort of epic toning. Hunyadi's personal heroics with the lance are more reminiscent of the deeds of a Roland (or indeed, of a Burgundian *preux chevalier* such as Louis de Gavre) than any other combat in the expedition narrative.<sup>640</sup> Other features likewise call to mind the *chansons* and the old crusading narratives: the singing of masses, the taking of absolutions, the Turks' arrogance in the face of inferior Christian numbers, God's intervention in the battle, and the depiction of valorous fighters as raging "tygres."<sup>641</sup> Yet this heroic grandeur is once again tempered – not just by the grim necessity to report the Christian loss, but also by the terms in which failure is rationalized. This involves the curious *inversion* of epic themes: the imprudence of the Hungarian knights, who clamour jealously for the chance to win renown ("Sire, le vaivode a fait sa bataille dont il a honneur; ceste bataille seconde doit estre a nous"<sup>642</sup>); the craven acts of the Cardinal, a kind of anti-Turpin who, instead of inspiring his troops to battle, threatens excommunication out of fear; and the prelate's ignoble end, which sees him "desrobe et noye par les Vallacques" as he tries to flee across the Danube.<sup>643</sup> This intermingling of positive and negative tropes produces fascinating narrative

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<sup>639</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 56-7.

<sup>640</sup> On the theme of prowess in the chivalric biography *Histoire des Seigneurs de Gavre* (1456), which was closely related to Jean de Wavrin's *atelier*, see Chapter 3 above.

<sup>641</sup> See above. On the epic tradition of depicting *preux* knights as wild and formidable predators, see Gaucher, *La Biographie*, 113-14.

<sup>642</sup> "Sire, the Voivode has fought his battle and has the honour of it. This second battle should be ours" (transl. Imber 131): Wavrin-Hardy 55.

<sup>643</sup> "Robbed and drowned by the Vlachs" (transl. Imber 132): Wavrin-Hardy 57.

tension – a sense of irresolution and incompatibility, and a “mélange,” as Le Brusque puts it, “de louanges et de reproches.”<sup>644</sup>

In his study of the episode, Le Brusque suggests that this ambiguity is the literary watermark of a medieval “mentality” – a puerile ability to countenance contradictions that differs, for example, from the “classical” pragmatism evident in the work of the Greek chronicler Chalcocondylas.<sup>645</sup> Though I readily concede that such ambiguity may be characteristic of much chivalric literature, I would prefer to credit our narrator (and other “medieval” narrators) with more competence and sophistication than these remarks imply. The Varna passage, in my view, encodes a number of different, at times contending, rhetorical objectives; and it is this plurality of interests, rather than a specifically medieval “mindset,” which produces the acute tensions we have observed.<sup>646</sup> Teasing these objectives out of the text, to be sure, is an easier job than deciding to whom we should ascribe them; it is immensely difficult to know which formulations Wavrin may have inherited directly from other textual or oral sources, and which ones he may have enhanced, emphasized or

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<sup>644</sup> “A mixture of praise and blame” (my transl.): “Des chevaliers,” 266.

<sup>645</sup> “Ce mélange de louanges et de reproches n’apparaît pas dans la narration de Chalcocondylas,” he writes. “En effet, Chalcocondylas voit tout cela d’un oeil beaucoup plus critique.... Au risque de caricaturer, on pourrait dire que le jugement de Chalcocondylas est représentatif de la mentalité classique, alors que celui de Wavrin est plutôt typiquement médiéval” (“Des chevaliers,” 266).

<sup>646</sup> I would argue that the same is true of a few other ambiguous treatments of crusading battles that I have found in my (admittedly preliminary) readings of Burgundian historiography. An account of the capture of the king of Cyprus by the sultan of Egypt in 1426 contained in both Monstrelet’s and Le Févre’s chronicles, for instance, reports on the king’s refusal to save himself in the face of terrible odds. The author of this report reflects on the danger this presents to the kingdom, even as he depicts the king in decidedly heroic terms. A critique of temerity – though a far more gentle and circumspect one than that contained in Wavrin’s narrative – thus seems to be operating in this text as well. See *La Chronique d’Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, t. IV, ed. L. Douet-D’Arcq (Paris: Renouard, 1860), 259-69; and *Chronique de Jean Le Févre*, t. 2, ed. F. Morand (Paris: Renouard, 1881), 121-9).

reframed according to his particular interests and concerns. Ultimately, though, this does not pose a problem for our analysis of Wavrin's rhetoric; for whether he retained or substantially altered the details, they appear in each case to be calibrated with particularly "Burgundian" concerns and preoccupations.

What, then, are these contending objectives? The first task of the narrative is clearly to mitigate the scope of the Christian loss at Varna and to laud the achievements of the knights there; this is especially important to Wavrin, given Waleran's close association with the project and its key protagonists. Many of the epic features we have seen serve this purpose, as do the narrator's efforts to depict the outcome of the battle as a kind of tactical draw.<sup>647</sup> Second, the author seems particularly intent on depicting Hunyadi as both the primary hero and *éminence grise* of the conflict (a view, as Joseph Held suggests, that is not supported by all accounts – certainly not that of Dlugosz).<sup>648</sup> This also suits Wavrin's apologetic needs; for elsewhere in the text, as we have seen, the Transylvanian hero bolsters Waleran's status through his association and friendship; he also authorizes the sad necessity of a final, ostensibly "unchivalric" withdrawal from the Danube.<sup>649</sup> The *preudhomme* depicted in the Varna passage is well-suited to these sorts of endorsements:

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<sup>647</sup> As Le Brusque observes, Wavrin is careful to point out that neither of the parties remains on the battlefield for three days after the conflict – a gesture, according to "old medieval customs of warfare," which is required in order to declare victory. See "From Agincourt to Fornovo," 198; and see Wavrin-Hardy, 18.

<sup>648</sup> See Held, esp. 108-10; see also Dlugosz, transl. Mantello, 493-6.

<sup>649</sup> On the depiction of Hunyadi's respect for Waleran (and its rhetorical benefits), see Chapter 3 (above).

experienced and intuitive, brave and measured, he is equally adept at unhorsing a Turkish lord and parsing Turkish military strategy.<sup>650</sup>

Finally, and rather disruptively, the narrator seems intent on articulating a critique of chivalric temerity by establishing a contrast between the imprudent (but otherwise heroic) Hungarians and the *sage* voivode. The dichotomy is founded on a series of inversions: from the beginning, King Władysław is inclined to give up his tactical advantage in the valley, whereas the crafty sultan sits “tout coy” on the mountain<sup>651</sup>; the jealous Hungarians urge the king to “forg[er] le fer entandis quil est chault,” while Hunyadi urges sensible caution and restraint<sup>652</sup>; and the Hungarians and Poles fight heroically but disperse chaotically, whereas Hunyadi brings his men home “ordoneement et en bon arroy.”<sup>653</sup> All of this tends to exculpate Waleran for *his* role in the disaster; for by focusing on the knights’ *démésure* and the king’s strategic error, the text conceals the effects of the Turks’ Anatolian reinforcements on the outcome of the battle. More importantly, it encodes a tactical concern that seems to be shared by Waleran himself: the need to adapt military strategy to the tactical

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<sup>650</sup> Hunyadi’s heroic profile in the Burgundian ethos was substantial, particularly in the years after Waleran’s expedition. Other texts contained in Wavrin’s *Anciennes Chroniques* testify to this prominence; see, for example, the account of the Siege of Belgrade (1456) and its aftermath in Vol. 6, Bk. 5, Ch VII (Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 365-8); and the tale of Hunyadi’s capture of Misivri and subsequent injury in Vol. 6, Bk. 5, Ch. V (361-2). For useful discussions of Hunyadi’s status in the West, see Marinesco, “Du nouveau sur *Tirant lo Blanc*,” 164-74, and Dominique de Courcelles, “Le roman de *Tirant lo Blanc* et le Voeu du Faisan: Le pouvoir de la parole entre politique et littérature,” in Caron and Clauzel, *Le Banquet du Faisan*, 177-80.

<sup>651</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 55.

<sup>652</sup> “Strike while the iron is hot” (transl. Imber, 132): Wavrin-Hardy, 56. It is worth noting that Wavrin gives the Hungarian lords an opportunity to rebut Hunyadi’s argument, and their justification for proceeding – that the sultan might otherwise escape and trouble them at a later time – is by no means irrational. Still, their protestations here seem overshadowed by Hunyadi’s logic, and their position is shown very quickly to be wrongheaded. See Wavrin-Hardy, 56.

<sup>653</sup> “Safely and in good order” (transl. Imber, 132): Wavrin-Hardy, 57.

strengths of the Turkish foe. We hear echoes of this concern elsewhere in the expedition narrative – and even, as we shall see, in Waleran’s own writings.

*‘Vous auries tres grant desavantage’: The critique of temerity*

I shall consider these parallel references in a moment. First, however, it is worth noting that few instances of direct discourse in the expedition narrative are as prominent (or as pointed) as Hunyadi’s lengthy call for restraint at Varna, which forms the climax of the episode and extends for nearly half a page in the printed edition.<sup>654</sup> The narrator has thought carefully about his arguments, and he lays them out like munitions: the Turkish archers on the mountain, the voivode contends, “vos gens metteroient a perdition”; the Hungarians are in a superior strategic position in the valley, but will surrender that advantage by fighting uphill after dark; they are tired and have lost weapons, whereas the janissaries are both well-rested and courageous.<sup>655</sup> It all seems eminently sensible, and ominously prescient, against the hot-headedness and jealousy of his interlocutors – and it is hard to imagine that Wavrin did not sympathize with these words. Indeed, whether he crafted, adapted or merely borrowed them from an earlier source, the emphases of his text are not accidental.<sup>656</sup> The lessons of Varna recur throughout the narrative, forming an

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<sup>654</sup> This is true of both Hardy’s and Dupont’s printed editions (cf. Wavrin-Hardy, 55 and Wavrin-Dupont, 82). The passage occupies nearly a full column of text in manuscript form; see Fol. 25r of the Gruuthuyse manuscript (BnF ms. fr. 84).

<sup>655</sup> “Will...send your men to perdition” (transl. Imber, 131). The full exchange is reported on Wavrin-Hardy 55-6.

<sup>656</sup> It is important to note that the theme of Hunyadi’s prudence in the face of Wladyslaw’s temerity is probably *not* Wavrin’s own invention; depictions of the Varna battle in other sources make reference to it as well. Chalcocondylas, Doukas and Dlugosz all acknowledge it, and Michael



uneven and sporadic, but still coherent, argument against the worst instincts of Waleran's contemporaries.

These themes first appear in the depiction of the Burgundian landing at Dardanelle, near the purported site of ancient Troy (Chapter IX). Military *démésure* jeopardizes this early battle against the Turks; for though the galley troops are ordered to stay in good order, “ung archier Anglois, gentilhomme...se vouloit moustrer devant tous les autres sans tenir son ordonnance” – prompting his comrades, “soy voullant moustrer vaillans comme lui,” to follow suit. The results are nearly disastrous: the crafty Turks pretend to flee, then cut off the archers from the rest of the Burgundian corps. Though Waleran and his men rescue their comrades, two sailors are killed and twenty archers wounded in the fracas.<sup>657</sup> This sets a tone for the rest of the narrative: it is an equally crafty Turk, as we have seen, who lures the headstrong King of Hungary into a deadly trap in the Varna scene (Chapter XIV). Somewhat later, during Waleran's adventures on the Danube in 1445,

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Beheim quotes Hunyadi in a roughly equivalent statement: “My lord, you know nothing of the Emperor's and the Turks' customs, and how they seek out opportunities. Let us stay here together and fight only with the people we have here in front of us” (transl. Imber, 178). None of the primary sources I have examined, however, gives nearly as much prominence to Hunyadi's speech as does Wavrin, and only Chalcocondylas, who describes the Hungarian knights' vainglorious speech in some detail, pays as much attention to the theme of temerity. See Chalcocondylas, *Historiarum Libri Decem*, Book VII, S. 177, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, t. CLIX, ed. J.P. Migne (Turnhout: Brepols, 1978), 331. (I am grateful to Patrick Conway for his translation of and insights into this text, which deserves a great deal more scholarly study than it has received.)

<sup>657</sup> “An English bowman...tried to show off in front of the others, by abandoning his position (and going on ahead of the other archers); “want(ing) to prove that they were as brave as he was” (transl. Imber, 122); Wavrin-Hardy, 40. It is worth noting, of course, that the *démésure* of archers does not amount precisely to “chivalric” temerity, given that the offending parties in this case were not knights on horseback. The thematic and ethical parallels between this kind of *outrecuidance* and other manifestations of knightly vainglory are nonetheless clear. The archer in question was one Hugh Jones; on him, see Jacques Paviot, “Angleterre et Bourgogne: Deux voies pour la Croisade aux XIVe et XVe siècles?” *Publication du Centre européen d'études Bourguignonnes (XIVe-Xve s.)* 35 (1995): 27-35 (esp. 33-4).

the captain *himself* comes in for criticism. Having suffered an injury at the battle of Tutrakan, Waleran exerts himself at work in order to impress his comrades (Chapter XVII).<sup>658</sup> He gets violently ill, and his physicians upbraid him for his proud and careless actions: “[Q]uant ung capittaine ou chief de guerre se sent aulcunement blechie ou traveillie,” they lecture, “quil ne le doit pas mettre en nonchalloir, ainsy prendre garde assez tempre que plus grant inconvenient ne sen cause quy puist grever a tout ung peuple, armee, ou pays.”<sup>659</sup> A different kind of *dém mesure* – overexertion in the face of illness – provokes a similar critique of self-indulgent pride. And as in the Varna scene, the narrator reflects on the stakes of such temerity: not only the endangerment of an army, but potentially that of a whole nation, a whole “people.”<sup>660</sup>

These episodes together underscore three of Wavrin’s most pressing concerns: the strategic dangers of chivalric *orgueil* and *outrecuidance*; the potentially baleful consequences of such attitudes on the part of war leaders and princes; and the Turks’ special skill in turning the Christians’ temerity against them. The same themes animate the most remarkable speech of the narrative, Hunyadi’s call for withdrawal from the Danube, which occurs suddenly at the climax of Chapter XVIII. The Burgundians have been sailing all summer in hopes of avenging Varna; now, at

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<sup>658</sup> For a discussion of the implications of this scene with respect to the Burgundian “glory economy,” see Chapter 3 (above).

<sup>659</sup> “When a captain or war-leader feels himself to be in any way wounded or exhausted, he should not put himself in any danger, but rather be careful that it is not the cause of some greater misfortune which could harm a whole people, army or country” (transl. Imber, 154); Wavrin-Hardy, 97.

<sup>660</sup> It is interesting that, in this case, Waleran is the object rather than the author of this critique; but we should not take this to mean that the Wavrins were not entirely supportive of its contents. By having the physicians voice the criticism, the narrator tacitly exculpates Waleran for his absence from subsequent combats. See my discussion in Chapter 5 (below).

the very moment that a pitched battle seems imminent, the Ottomans retreat from the south shore of the Danube, burning everything in their path. Hunyadi releases Waleran from his covenant and declares the expedition over; he has insufficient provisions to pursue the Turks, he says, “et je les cognoy bien telz que se je les poursievoie tousjours fueroient devant moy, adfin de...moy enclorre a leur advantage.”<sup>661</sup> His next comments deserve to be quoted in full:

“Il me souvient comment lannee passee a la bataille de Varne nous perdismes nostre roy avec grant plente de seignourie et de peuple de Hongrye, duquel royaume, noblesse et peuple jay maintenant la charge, si ne les voeil pas mettre en hazart car se jestoye rus jus le royaume seroit perdu: et est necessite de combattre les Turcqz soubtillement et malicieusement quy les voelt vaincre, car ilz sont gens cautelaux.”<sup>662</sup>

These words – virtually unassailable in light of the chivalric *bonae fides* of the speaker – are unlike most soldierly statements one finds in Burgundian chivalric texts. What sets them apart is not just Hunyadi’s message of restraint and *measure*, but his call for a different approach to warfare on the frontier: one that is frankly “soubtille” and “malicieuse,” never jeopardized by pride or restrained by anachronistic notions of valour.<sup>663</sup> This stands in a certain tension with the crusading ideal as it was often

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<sup>661</sup> “I know them well, and I know that, if I pursue them, they will continue to flee ahead of me, in order to...exploit this advantage to surround me” (transl. Imber, 164): Wavrin-Hardy, 116.

<sup>662</sup> “I am mindful of last year, and of how we lost our King at the Battle of Varna, along with a whole host of lords and men of Hungary. The kingdom, nobility and people are now in my charge, and I do not wish to put them at risk because if I were struck down the kingdom would be lost. Anyone who wishes to conquer the Turks must fight them cunningly in an underhanded way, because they are a crafty people” (transl. Imber, 164): Wavrin-Hardy, 116.

<sup>663</sup> It is worth noting that the term “soubtil” could be applied to knights without pejorative overtones; see Taylor, “La fonction de la croisade,” 201. However, in combination with “malicieux” – a term commonly applied to Saracens in the *chansons* tradition (see Gaucher, “Deux regards,” 102) – it appears normally to denote a crafty, underhanded and even treacherous approach to one’s affairs. This is borne out by a few other searchable instances of the phrase in middle French texts. In his *Advis pour faire conqueste sur le Turcq*, Geoffroy de Thoisy describes the

represented in the mainstream of the Burgundian “cult of prowess”; but it is justified, in Hunyadi’s eyes, by the Turks’ perfidious nature. “Ils sont gens cautelaux,” he declares: not only ethically “lesser-than,” but also tactically “better-than.” In such circumstances, self-indulgent approaches – and vainglorious attitudes – neither can nor *should* be adopted.<sup>664</sup>

Georges Le Brusque has noticed the radical nature of these comments, reading in this scene a clash between Waleran’s fundamentally naïve, “Burgundian” ideology and the real-world pragmatism of a frontier warrior.<sup>665</sup> It is certainly

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Turkish warrior as “subtil et malicieux”; he suggests that the Ottomans may not therefore engage the powerful French in pitched battle, opting instead for “la guerre guerriable” – which in this context probably does not mean a chivalric campaign of capture and ransom, but rather a guerrilla war of attrition (see Jules Finot, *Projet d’expédition contre les Turcs* (Lille: Quarré, 1890), 28). Other references make clear how *unchivalric* and unfaithful “soubtil et malicieux” people and actions were often thought to be. A legal text from the time of Charles VI notes that old laws have to be revised and replaced because “le monde est plus soubtil et malicieux, et procede cautelement et couvertelement pour lesdictes constitutions et ordonnances transgresser et enfreindre” (see *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, Vol. 7, ed. F.A. Isambert *et al.* (Paris: Belin-Leprieur, 1825), 270). A medieval French translation of Ovid’s *Ars amatoria* uses the phrase to refer to married women who are deceptive and unfaithful; see Bruno Roy, *L’Art d’amours: Traduction et commentaire de l’Ars amatoria d’Ovide* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 270. Jean de Wavrin employs the phrase at least twice in his *Anciennes Chroniques*; in both cases he uses it to describe loathsome and perfidious figures. One of these is Karras, who craftily plays off the avariciousness of the ancient Romans, persuading them to name him their captain-general in order to protect the merchants of Britain from pirates. He uses the commission to do the exact opposite, attempting to seize the island for himself, and acting with such treachery that “oncques nulz navoit fait tant de mauz au pays comme faisoit ce Karras” (Wavrin-Hardy 39, 1, p. 161; see also 39, 1, p. 258). One possible exception to this general rule, however, may be found in Chapter 93 of Jean Wauquelin’s *Les faits et conquestes d’Alexandre le Grant*, in which an Indian knight uses the phrase (“subtilz et malicieux”) to describe Alexander and his army. Here the phrase is blended with markers of chivalric approbation, though – given that it is uttered by Alexander’s enemies – it may also encode elements of contempt. See *Les faits*, ed. S. Hériché (Geneva: Droz, 2000), 172.

<sup>664</sup> The phrase “cult of prowess” was coined by Élisabeth Gaucher; in making these claims, I am indebted to her analysis of the Burgundian court as a site where the “traditional” chivalric values of courage and martial zeal carried a special ideological weight. In such a context, statements such as Hunyadi’s must have appeared at least faintly transgressive. For a detailed discussion of these points, see Chapter 5 (below).

<sup>665</sup> “Hunyadi had offended Walleran and Condulmer by telling them that they might as well return home...,” he writes in the English version of his essay. “At the end of the day, it seems that Walleran did not get on very well with men of different cultures and mentalities. In particular, his heroic, self-assured, chivalrous stance clashed with...Hunyadi’s prudence and experience. Still,

possible, and indeed probable, that the voivode was inclined to give pragmatic advice of this sort, and that the *capitaine-général*, marching with his penants and standards in tow, received it in the first instance with some degree of bewilderment or hesitation. The problem with Le Brusque's claim, however, is its presumption that our narrator "faithfully transcribed" these ideas at a later date in a purely disinterested fashion, never reflecting upon, distilling, or endorsing them. My argument is markedly different: I propose that Wavrin's recurrent critique of chivalric temerity appears in this form precisely because it serves his rhetorical interests and political objectives. If, as I suspect, Jean de Wavrin prepared the final redaction of this text, the emphasis on chivalric *mesure* was a key concern which he shared with his nephew, and which sprang from the *capitaine-général's* extensive naval and diplomatic experience.<sup>666</sup>

Several facts support this hypothesis, including, as I have suggested, the narrator's apparent emphasis upon and repetition of the critique in the narrative; to argue that such features appear by accident puts one at risk either of analytical naivety or of condescension toward the redactor. There is also fascinating external evidence suggesting that Waleran himself was inclined, at least later in his career, to urge caution and prudence upon his liege lord. As I note in Appendix A, Waleran authored a report in 1464 concerning a planned crusade (the *Avis touchant la voiage de*

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because Wavrin's narrative faithfully reports the opinions and statements of all protagonists, the reader may choose a different conclusion...." See "From Agincourt to Fornovo," 206.

<sup>666</sup> This is not to suggest that Jean de Wavrin was not also interested in literary representations of more traditional forms of prowess; on this, see below, [f.n. 753](#).

*Turquie*) which calls for restraint and careful planning.<sup>667</sup> It urges Duke Philip to delay his excursion for a year, noting that Waleran feels “grand douleur et desplaisir en mon coeur” when he thinks of the dangers that otherwise will face Valois lands and territories. The geopolitical stakes, he adds, are just as high: “Se l’armée se rompt, sans conquerer Constantinople, ce sera ung grant orgueil aux Turcs, et fort en seront encouragez les ennemys de la foy....”<sup>668</sup> There are interesting resonances between the two texts: both Waleran and Hunyadi emphasize the dolorous consequences of knightly *outrecuidance*, and both frame their recommendations pragmatically in terms of the character of their opponents. In light of these similarities, it is hard to imagine that the *capitaine-général* was not at least somewhat sympathetic to the reasoning of the man who called a halt to their doomed chivalric enterprise.<sup>669</sup>

There is also significant evidence embedded *within* the expedition narrative which suggests that Waleran’s own experiences with the Turks and their martial strategies may have informed his own insights into their “cauteleux” nature and penchant for strategy. This is evident from the start: prior to their success at the Straits (Ch. XI), the Turks conspire with the treacherous Genoese to secure ships and

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<sup>667</sup> See Appendix A. For one of the best analyses of this document to date, see Monica Barsi, “Constantinople à la cour de Philippe le Bon,” 160-69.

<sup>668</sup> “I feel a great grief and sadness in my heart”; “If our forces are defeated without conquering Constantinople, it will be a source of great pride to the Turks, and it will greatly encourage the enemies of the faith” (my transl.): Waleran de Wavrin, “L’avis...touchant le voyage de Turquie,” in *Monuments pour servir à l’histoire des provinces de Namur, de Hainaut et de Luxembourg*, t. V, ed. F. de Reiffenberg (Brussels: CRHB, 1848), 553.

<sup>669</sup> As Barsi notes, Waleran’s *Avis* also tends to reveal a fundamental problem in the crusading effort: the fact that European political, military and economic circumstances strongly favour Turkish success. “C’est peut-être cette prise de conscience,” she writes, “qui suggère a Walleran une prudence plus grande que celle de Thoisy,” to whose own, less cautious advice the *seigneur de Wavrin* was here responding. See Barsi, 168.

communicate with Rumelian forces.<sup>670</sup> At the Danube port of Triest (Silistra), a vast Ottoman army, “bien trente mille chevaulz de Turcqz,” hides in the town, waiting to ambush Waleran’s fleet. When their ruse is discovered, they try to provoke a Christian attack by setting fire to part of the city “et faisoient courir a grans cris les femmes et enfans hors de la ville”; the seasoned Wallachians warn off the assault, reporting that this is typical Turkish strategy.<sup>671</sup> In the brutal *melée* at Tutrakan, the Turks try to buy time by offering to surrender – “car ce nestoit que pour faire cesser lassault,” remarks Wavrin, “car ilz ne tenoient chose quilz promeissent.”<sup>672</sup> And as their forces track the fleet up the banks of the Danube past Nicopolis, the Ottomans try to intimidate the Christians through deception: “[Les] Turcqz faisoient toutes les nuitz tant de si grans feux que merveilles..., si estoit advis par nuit quilz feussent plus de gens que ilz nestoient.”<sup>673</sup>

All of this suggests that Waleran learned a number of strategic lessons on his voyage – and that he had good reason to warn his countrymen about the tactical acuity, and the gritty cynicism, of armies based on both sides of the Ottoman frontier.<sup>674</sup> His criticism of Christian temerity in the face of these obstacles is

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<sup>670</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 46-7.

<sup>671</sup> “At least thirty thousand Turkish horse”; “forcing the women and children to run out of the town, screamingly loudly” (transl. Imber, 142): Wavrin-Hardy, 74-5.

<sup>672</sup> “However, they did this only to stop the attack, because they never held to anything they promised” (transl. Imber 146): Wavrin-Hardy, 83. The Turks, Wavrin notes, were expecting reinforcements to arrive “at any moment”; hence their peace overture was a mere ploy. It is worth noting that this pronouncement exculpates Waleran and his allies from the charge of refusing a good-faith offer of surrender – an important gesture given the reputational stakes of promise-making, and promise-keeping, in Wavrin’s text (see Chapter 3, above).

<sup>673</sup> “Every night the Turks lit amazingly large fires.... At night this gave the impression that there were more of them than there really were” (transl. Imber, 162): Wavrin-Hardy, 112.

<sup>674</sup> It is worth noting that other experienced advisors to Duke Philip, including the authors of a text contemporary to Waleran’s *Avis*, the *Avis pour faire conquête sur le Turcq*, were both aware of and

tempered, to be sure, by the need to maintain the posture of bravura expected of a *bon chevalier*; this may explain the narrator's decision to allow other figures, in particular the redoubtable crusading hero Hunyadi, to voice these concerns.<sup>675</sup> Nor do his words amount to a condemnation of the "saint voyage" in itself – indeed the Wavrins, as Jacques Paviot has noted, were crusade partisans during much of their careers, participating in planning and diplomacy even when some noble and bourgeois factions opposed the duke's plans.<sup>676</sup> Yet a forceful critique of temerity is unmistakably present in the expedition narrative; and in its tripartite form, focussing not only on the strategic dangers of chivalric pride but also on the political consequences of hasty action, it strikes at the heart of both a warrior's and a prince's concerns. Knowing Duke Philip's crusading zeal as they did, either or both the *seigneur de Wavrin* and his uncle were no doubt poignantly aware of the strategic implications of his bellicose dreams.

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concerned about the Turks' tactical acuity and their "subtle and malicious" means of waging war. The fact that Geoffroy de Thoisy was probably involved in redacting the latter text suggests that even the seemingly vainglorious *seigneur de Mimeure* had learned a great deal during his earlier adventures about the gritty realities of warfare in the East. For the full text of the *Avis pour faire conquête*, see Jules Finot, *Projet d'expédition contre les Turcs préparé par les conseillers du duc de Bourgogne, Philippe le Bon* (Lille, 1890); and for a useful discussion, see Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon," Pt. II, 18-19, and Paviot, *Les ducs*, 169.

<sup>675</sup> See my discussion in Chapter 5, below.

<sup>676</sup> From as early as 1457, Paviot writes, Waleran de Wavrin was a member of the "parti de la croisade" at the ducal court; his *Avis* was one of a few texts provided to the duke by counsellors and naval veterans (including Geoffroy de Thoisy) in the early 1460s (see *Les ducs*, 147, 169; Marinesco, "Philippe le Bon," pt. II, 17-21; and [f.n. 674](#) above). For his part, Jean de Wavrin was one of four courtiers to take part in an embassy to Pope Pius II in June 1463 communicating Philip's ardent desire to proceed with a crusade in the following year (see *Les ducs*, 164; for a comprehensive overview of the Burgundian crusading project during this later period, see 117-76). Thoisy also participated in this embassy – a fact which supports the possibility, as I suggested above, that Jean de Wavrin may have revised and redacted parts of the expedition narrative (such as the defense of Rhodes passage) at a later date, based on new information gleaned from Thoisy himself.



One last point remains to be made about the cultural and imaginative resonances of the critique. A few scholars, including Charles Schefer, have commented on a remarkable coincidence that was occasioned by Waleran's journey.<sup>677</sup> Almost exactly a half-century after the disastrous crusade of Nicopolis – a crusade, as Jacques Paviot reminds us, which should not be described as exclusively “Burgundian,” but which *was* led by Philip's father John and contained a significant Burgundian contingent<sup>678</sup> – Waleran's expedition, seemingly by accident and happenstance, came very close to re-enacting that battle in the very precincts where John was captured. Elements of the expedition narrative suggest, as we shall see, that the *capitaine-général* was keenly aware of the historical weight of this concordance. Wavrin refers to Nicopolis in a way that ennobles Waleran's own adventures; yet at the same time, in their tacit undertones, the harsh lessons of Nicopolis seem both to inform and to amplify his critique of temerity. I turn now to a brief discussion of this oddly ambivalent signifier.

*'La douloureuse journée': Memories of Nicopolis*

There has been a tendency amongst Burgundian historians to assume that Duke Philip's crusading enthusiasm was motivated from the start by a desire to avenge his father's humiliation and captivity by Bayezid, an ancestor of Sultan Murad. This sort of claim is terribly hard to prove, even in a *prima facie* sense; and as

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<sup>677</sup> Schefer (ed.), “Le discours,” 310.

<sup>678</sup> See Paviot, *Les ducs*, 13. For a contrary opinion – that the crusade was “a specifically Burgundian enterprise” – see Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 63. On the Burgundians' contributions to the expedition, see Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 63-7, and Bertrand Schnerb, *L'État bourguignon*, 124.

Jacques Paviot has argued, it is not supported by the textual evidence.<sup>679</sup> But as Paviot also suggests, the *memory* of Nicopolis did endure for decades in the literary and discursive environment of the Valois court.<sup>680</sup> At different times, and in different contexts, it was marked by different complexions: immediately after John's return from captivity, he was fêted as a great hero,<sup>681</sup> and there is no reason to think that courtiers did not continue to conflate the late duke's chivalric status with his crusading experience long after his death.<sup>682</sup> Yet other, more critical accounts of the expedition gained wide circulation in the Burgundian ethos, especially after the mid-fifteenth century.<sup>683</sup> We may suppose, moreover, that the Valois court, which had been deeply affected (both financially and emotionally) by the disaster, recalled for generations the loss and suffering that had been visited upon it.<sup>684</sup> Hence as Paviot's sample of relevant texts reveals, there was no one way to construct or "remember" Nicopolis; ambient political and social forces helped to shape its different formulations.

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<sup>679</sup> Paviot, *Les ducs*, 59-63.

<sup>680</sup> "Le souvenir s'était cependant conservé...." (*Les ducs*, 60).

<sup>681</sup> See e.g. Paviot, *Les ducs*, 49; Schnerb, *L'État bourguignon*, 124; Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 76.

<sup>682</sup> Consider, for instance, Olivier de la Marche's enumeration of John's chivalric merits in the reference to Nicopolis contained within his *Mémoires*: "Cestuy Turc fut le propre filz de l'Amorault Bays qui desconfit le duc Jehan de Bourgoingne en Honguerye, josne prince vertueulz en sa loy, et de haulte entreprinse." The link between chivalric merit and crusading is further developed in the lines that follow: "Et le bon duc Philippe... tousjours avoit, à son povoir, labouré pour la deffense de la foy chrestienne...." (La Marche, *Mémoires*, t. II, p. 205-6; cited in Paviot, *Les ducs*, 59).

<sup>683</sup> See my notes on Jean Froissart's account of the battle of Nicopolis, below. On the importance of Froissart's account of Nicopolis in the Burgundian court, see Laetitia Le Guay, *Les princes de Bourgogne*, 102-5, and Paviot, *Les ducs*, 60.

<sup>684</sup> On the ransom of John the Fearless, see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 40-9, Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 76-8, and Vanderjagt, "Ritualizing Heritage," 3. Note, as an important counterpoint, Vaughan's suggestion that despite the vast sums required for John's ransom, the costs did not place a "severe strain" on ducal finances. For a sense of the initial shock caused by the disaster, see the letter written by the statesman and mystic Philippe de Mézières to Duke Philip, the *Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, which was partially edited and published by Kervyn de Lettenhove in *Oeuvres de Froissart: Chroniques (1392-96)*, t. XVI (Osnabrück: Verlag, 1967 [orig. 1867-77]), p. 444-523.

The expedition narrative seems to testify to this rather complex and ambivalent state of affairs. The narrator is careful, in the first place, to draw our attention to the parallels between Waleran's journey and the heroic precedent of Jean de Nevers. In a curious scene occurring shortly before the fleet's efforts to besiege Nicopolis, the *capitaine-général*, lying in his sickbed aboard a galley, is brought to his window by an elderly Wallachian tutor. "[I]l y a maintenant cinquante ans ou environ que le roy de Hongrye et le duc Jehan de Bourguioigne estoient a siege devant ceste ville de Nicopoly que veez la," says the man, who was present for the events of 1396, "et a moins de trois lieues dycy est le lieu ou fut la bataille."<sup>685</sup> This introduction marks the clear parallels, both temporal and geographic, between the two Burgundian expeditions; not only is Waleran fighting on a virtual anniversary of the great battle, but he is doing so in its exact precincts, sites visible with the naked eye. His curiosity is whetted, and the old tutor continues:

"[V]eez la ou le roy de Hongrye et les Hongres se tenoient; la estoit le connestable de France; et la se tenoit le duc Jehan," qui estoit contre une grosse tour ronde laquele, comme il disoit, ledit duc Jehan avoit fait miner, si estoit toute estagie pour y bouter le feu le jour que nouvelles vindrent de la bataille.<sup>686</sup>

This description of John's personal activities is bound to engage Burgundian audiences: by reporting on the late duke's activities amongst these eminent

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<sup>685</sup> "It is fifty years or thereabouts since the King of Hungary and Duke [John] of Burgundy laid siege to the town of Nicopolis which you can see before you. The place where the battle was fought is three leagues from here" (transl. Imber, 160); Wavrin-Hardy, 108. For a scholarly overview of the Battle of Nicopolis, see Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 67-72; Paviot, *Les ducs*, 38-40.

<sup>686</sup> "'You can see there where the King of Hungary and the Hungarians were stationed. The Constable of France was there, and Duke John there.' The Duke was up against a great round tower which, as the guardian said, he had mined. It was all ready for firing on the day that the news of the battle arrived" (transl. Imber, 160); Wavrin-Hardy, 108.

personalities, it underscores the prestige inherent in his leadership role. And by reporting on his own activities prior to the battle, it reinforces the sense that he contributed well and astutely to the Christian effort.

Waleran, for his part, benefits simply by association; few courtiers could boast of having ventured – led alone having led a multinational fleet – to the very site where John’s famous battle took place. The tutor’s scene, like the “rescue” of the Bulgarian Christians discussed in Chapter 3 (above), thus tends to ennoble the captain’s efforts, colouring them in the language and mnemonics of crusading. Yet Nicopolis is, as I mentioned above, an ambivalent memory – and the narrator seems to mark this ambivalence with a sudden, even embarrassed, shift into silence. After recounting the heroics of another leading knight, Enguerrand de Coucy, on the eve of the battle, he concludes abruptly: “[E]t, pour habregier, il conta au seigneur de Wavrin toute la maniere de la bataille.”<sup>687</sup> That “maniere,” of course, is tragic; and unlike Vladimir Agrigoroaei, I do not believe that this abridgement simply conceals Jean de Wavrin’s ignorance of a story which the tutor revealed to Waleran.<sup>688</sup> It seems to me instead to elide a set of events that the narrator, a Burgundian nobleman, *knew*...but was loath to discuss in detail.<sup>689</sup>

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<sup>687</sup> “In short, he told the Lord of Wavrin all about the battle” (transl. Imber, 160): Wavrin-Hardy, 109.

<sup>688</sup> If Agrigoroaei is right in assuming that Jean redacted this passage, it is not impossible that, at the time that he did so, the *seigneur de Forestel* was ignorant of the details of the battle of Nicopolis (see “Literary Leakings,” *passim*). But it is far more likely, for reasons I describe below, that he was familiar at least with Froissart’s account of the battle. Hence his elisions here seem both motivated and strategic (see also [f.n. 694](#), below).

<sup>689</sup> In positing this hypothesis, I am suggesting a third option not considered by Ovidiu C. Cristea, who, in his excellent study of contemporary descriptions of the defeat at Nicopolis, concludes by reflecting on Wavrin’s account of the tutor’s testimony. “On ne retrouve aucune trace des causes de la défaite et la seule allusion à la fin tragique de l’expédition reste l’épisode de la captivité du

This is not the first time, moreover, that Wavrin refers to the battle in an abbreviated and allusive fashion. Prior to the Danube campaign, as we saw, Sir Pietre Vast negotiates a joint attack with the Hungarian lords (Chapter XVI); the two parties plan to meet in “la ville de Nycopoly, laquele sied en Vulgarie.”<sup>690</sup> This is Wavrin’s first mention of the city in his own narrative, and he quickly points out that “cest la ville ou lempereur Sigmond d’Allemaigne et le duc Jehan de Bourguoigne tenoient le siege quant ilz eurent la doulloureuse journee, contre les Turcqz.”<sup>691</sup> We may suppose, by virtue of both the article and the truncated allusion, that “la doulloureuse journee” needs no further explanation in the narrator’s eyes: his readers presumably know all about it, and presumably they also mourn it. Yet despite Wavrin’s politic silence here, the memories of Nicopolis as a disaster *do* continue to inform his narrative – albeit in a tacit, even subterranean fashion. This is most evident, I think, in the third and final allusion to the disaster, which occurs near the end of the narrative.

After the Christian fleet abandons its own siege of the city, it follows the Danube further inland, exchanging fire with, and playing a prank against, the Ottoman forces on the south bank. Soon the galleys reach “une petite ville assise sur le rivage quy estoit abatue et ruynee des le tempz que lempereur Sigmond

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seigneur valaque,” he writes. “On peut se demander si ce silence est dû à l’oubli ou l’habitude des gens de préserver seulement les bons souvenirs d’un événement.” The correct response, in my opinion, is neither of the above. See Cristea, “La défaite dans la pensée médiévale occidentale: Le cas de la croisade de Nicopolis (1396),” *N.E.C. Yearbook* (1999-2000): 57.

<sup>690</sup> “The city of Nicopolis, which is in Bulgaria” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 68.

<sup>691</sup> “This is the town which Emperor Sigismund of Germany and Duke John of Burgundy were besieging when they had their fatal encounter with the Turks” (transl. Imber, 139): Wavrin-Hardy, 68-9.

d'Allemaigne et le duc Jehan de Bourguoigne eurent la bataille aux Turcqz devant Nycopoly."<sup>692</sup> It is here that the Burgundians disembark and the Wallachians cross the river; and here they try to engage the Turks in battle, only to see them engage in a scorched-earth retreat. This occasions Hunyadi's grim concession speech – "Il me souvient comment l'annee passee...nous perdismes nostre roy avec grant plente de seignourie" – which, as we have seen, articulates a powerful critique of chivalric temerity. What we have not yet considered, however, are the effects of the narrator's geographical and temporal marker, which summons explicit memories of Duke John's disastrous "bataille aux Turcqz." It is hard to imagine that a noble Burgundian, mindful of the historical significance of these precincts, could read Hunyadi's words without thinking of that other "doulloureuse journee," when a prince and a great many noble knights were also lost. And hearing about Hunyadi's unwillingness to "mettre en hazart" a kingdom "duquel jay maintenant la charge," he might easily recall the uncertainty and danger faced by the house of Valois when the heir to the duchy fell into the clutches of the sultan – a particularly poignant recollection in Philip's court.

The "absent presence" of these memories of Nicopolis thus informs and amplifies the critique of temerity precisely at the point where it is most fully articulated. Nor is this the only such point: Wavrin's account of Wladyslaw's foolhardy advance at Varna likewise seems to call up tacit memories of the failures of Nicopolis which any reader with a general knowledge of the previous conflict

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<sup>692</sup> "A small town situated on the riverbank, which had been in ruins ever since Emperor Sigismund of Germany and Duke John of Burgundy had fought the Turks before Nicopolis" (transl. Imber, 163); Wavrin-Hardy, 114-15.

would be hard-pressed to miss.<sup>693</sup> This is particularly true if we accept the hypothesis that the redactor, and some of his intended readers, were familiar with Jean Froissart's account of Nicopolis – a version that criticized the vainglory of the French knights using remarkably similar themes and images.<sup>694</sup> Froissart, as we have seen, was a tremendously important source for Jean de Wavrin's *Anciennes Chroniques*; some 40 per cent of his vast compilation was based on the historian's *Chroniques*, and the *seigneur de Forestel* included in his text an abbreviated version of Froissart's account of Nicopolis.<sup>695</sup> It therefore seems likely, though not certain, that at the time the Varna passage was redacted into the expedition narrative in its present form, either or both Jean de Wavrin and Waleran de Wavrin were familiar with the author whom Laetitia Le Guay has called "le chroniqueur par excellence de l'expédition des Chrétiens en Hongrie" for the court of Burgundy.<sup>696</sup>

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<sup>693</sup> For an account of the many structural, strategic and cultural parallels between the two battles, see Emmanuel C. Antoché, "Les expéditions de Nicopolis (1396) et de Varna (1444): une comparaison," *Medievalia Transilvanica* IV, no. 1-2 (2000): 28-74.

<sup>694</sup> It is worth noting that another important account of Nicopolis, that of the Religieux de Saint-Denys, is likewise highly critical of this vainglory; and it is certainly possible that Wavrin and/or his original source crafted this passage with the Religieux's *Chronique* in mind. Colin Imber points out a fascinating concordance which support this hypothesis: both the Religieux and Wavrin end their battle accounts by presenting a similar anti-Islamic *topos*: in the aftermath of the *melée*, pigs eat only the Turkish corpses on the field, leaving the Christian bodies intact. See Imber, 132, f.n. 50.

<sup>695</sup> On this see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 238-41.

<sup>696</sup> Le Guay, 105. Some additional facts are required here, both to support my hypothesis and to demonstrate its possible shortcomings. First, as Le Guay notes, Duke Philip first commissioned a Livre IV of the Froissart's *Chroniques* – the volume containing the account of Nicopolis – in 1453. Though the fourth book appears not to have been contained in the ducal library prior to that time, the duke's purchase does seem to "prouve un intérêt tout particulier de Philippe le Bon pour la fin des *Chroniques*" in the early 1450s (Le Guay, 100). A commensurably strong interest seems to have blossomed in the wider Burgundian ethos, where several illuminated manuscripts were commissioned, beginning in 1455 (see Le Guay, 27-42; see also Paviot, *Les ducs*, 60). For his part, Jean de Wavrin started composing his *Anciennes Chroniques*, using Froissart extensively, in either 1446 or 1455 (see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 204). If, as is certainly possible, the Varna scene as it appears here was redacted into the expedition narrative after the mid-1450s, then we may suppose that not only the redactor (be he Waleran or, as seems especially likely, Jean de

If my hypothesis is valid, the Varna scene could not help but summon memories of chivalric *outrecuidance* which would have haunted Burgundian readers of Froissart. The concordances between the two accounts are striking; indeed, the texts tend to mirror each other thematically, if not in every detail. In both cases, a chivalrous leader – Hunyadi in the Varna scene, Enguerrand de Coucy in Froissart's Nicopolis – defeats a contingent of Turks by outmaneuvering them strategically, throwing them into disarray and performing valiant feats of arms.<sup>697</sup> Others are jealous of this success; and in the climactic battle against the sultan, they argue for rash action that will secure them a share of the martial glory. It is the prickly Philip d'Artois, the comte d'Eu and marshal of France, who voices this *outrecuidance* in Froissart: "Ouy, ouy, le roy de Honguerie veult avoir la fleur de la journée et l'onneur," he cries. "Nous avons l'avant-garde, et jà le nous a-il donné. Si la nous

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Wavrin), but also some of his intended readers, were familiar with Froissart's account of Nicopolis. Even if the Varna scene was crafted in this form in the late 1440s, however, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the redactor was familiar with the broad contours of Froissart's text. As Le Guay has remarked, Enguerrand de Monstrelet, writing well before 1453, makes reference to Froissart's account in a way that appears to suggest that his readers were familiar with it (105). Though it is not clear whether Monstrelet himself was well-known in Burgundian courtly circles at that early date (see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 248-53), his assumption that some knightly readers were familiar with Froissart may have applied equally well to the *literati* there.

<sup>697</sup> See "Chevauchée du Sire de Coucy," in Lettenhove, *Oeuvres de Froissart*, t. XV, 264-9; and Wavrin-Hardy, 54-5. Note a significant (though thematically unimportant) difference: Coucy's engagement occurs some time before the battle of Nicopolis, whereas Hunyadi's engagement with Karaca Bey at Varna occurs as part of the major battle, immediately preceding the climactic struggle against Sultan Murad. It is interesting to note that Coucy's engagement is referred to elsewhere in Wavrin's account: in Chapter XVIII, the Wallachian tutor praises Coucy, his former master, "lequel...avoit le jour devant la bataille rue jus bien six mille Turcquz quy estoient venus en intencion de sourprendre les fourrageurs christiens" (Wavrin-Hardy, 109). Though this does not match Froissart's account precisely in terms of the date or the number of warriors involved, it does tend to suggest that the narrator was familiar with and mindful of Froissart's broad version of events.



veult retollir et avoir la première bataille.”<sup>698</sup> His words seem to anticipate those of the Polish lords at Varna, who, as we have seen, resent the fact that Hunyadi “a fait sa bataille dont il a honneur” and demand “la second bataille” for themselves.<sup>699</sup>

In both cases, the chivalrous protagonist – whose previous *gestes* tend to underwrite his prudence, precluding any charges of cowardice – opposes this rash behaviour. Coucy “tint la parole [du connestable de France] en grant presumption,”<sup>700</sup> and his companion, Jehan de Vienne, voices an objection that is more philosophical (but no less pointed) than Hunyadi’s pragmatic speech: “Là où vérité et raison ne pèvent estre oys,” he says, “il convient que oultre-cuidance règne.”<sup>701</sup> But as in Wavrin’s account, his dissent is futile; the *sage* heroes are forced to support an attack that is seriously ill-advised. And in both texts, the sultan takes advantage of this rashness by luring the Christians into a trap: Bayezid by deploying a vanguard to create the impression that the Turkish force is much smaller than it is,

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<sup>698</sup> “Yes, yes, the King of Hungary wants all the honour and glory of the day for himself. He has put us in the van, but now he wants to remove us” (transl. John Joliffe in *Froissart’s Chronicles* [London: Penguin, 2001], 382); Lettenhove, *Oeuvres de Froissart*, 314. Here, of course, the comte d’Eu is reacting to Hungarian King Sigismond’s orders that the French knights refrain from attacking until they learn more about the Ottoman enemy. It is worth noting that Eu reacts similarly to the earlier news of Coucy’s success against the Turks – a fact that suggests a further parallel between his jealousy and that of the Polish lords at Varna. “[I] [i.e. Coucy] le deust avoir signifié, avant que assaillis les eüst, à leur chief et souverain, messire Jehan de Bourgoingne, conte de Nevers, qui désire à faire armes, par quoy il en eüst eu l’onneur et la renommée,” Eu complains – “par envie, ce doit-on supposer,” Froissart adds. Ironically, perhaps, Eu also accuses Coucy of *outrecuidance* in the incident. See Lettenhove, *Oeuvres de Froissart*, 268.

<sup>699</sup> “Has fought this battle and has the honour of it”; “this second battle” (transl. Imber, 131): Wavrin-Hardy, 55.

<sup>700</sup> “The Lord de Coucy thought this a very foolish speech” (transl. Joliffe): Lettenhove, *Oeuvres de Froissart*, 315.

<sup>701</sup> “When truth and reason cannot be heard, rashness and folly must reign” (transl. Joliffe 383): Lettenhove, *Oeuvres de Froissart*, 317.

Murad by waiting, “tout coy,” to engage the Christians on a mountain.<sup>702</sup> The crusaders, in each case, fight fiercely and manfully<sup>703</sup>; but in the end their impetuosity leads to vulnerability, entrapment and defeat.<sup>704</sup>

The losses in each case are staggering – a fact made all the more regrettable to contemporaries because they were essentially self-inflicted. “A considerer raison,” Froissart avers, “les Franchois en furent cause et coulpe; car par leur orgueil et désarroiance tout se perdy.”<sup>705</sup> Wavrin, for his part, makes no such proclamation; the dark prescience of Hunyadi’s speech and (I believe) the echoes of Froissart’s critique are sufficient to drive home the point. But it is interesting to note that in the highly abbreviated summary of Froissart’s account which Jean de Wavrin crafted for the *Anciennes Chroniques*, the *seigneur de Forestel* himself foregrounds precisely the same criticism: “[E]n fin pour lorgueil envie et outrecuidance privee des dis francois ilz firent tous destruis par la puissance de lamorachin.”<sup>706</sup> If Jean was indeed

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<sup>702</sup> Froissart, to be sure, offers a much more detailed account of the tactics of Bayezid, who “sçavoit de guerre quanques on en pavoit sçavoir”; see Lettenhove, *Oeuvres*, 311-12. On Murad, see Wavrin-Hardy, 55.

<sup>703</sup> “A la verité dire,” writes Froissart, “les chevalliers et escuiers de France et les estrangers d’autres nations se acquittèrent et portèrent très-vaillamment à combattre” (319); compare with Wavrin-Hardy, 56-7.

<sup>704</sup> Wavrin, as we have seen, is more reluctant than Froissart to concede an unequivocal Christian defeat. Nonetheless, his account of the decapitation of the king, the death of Caesarini, and the communication of the “dollereuses nouvelles” to the Christian kingdoms certainly calls to mind the “moult grand meschief et dommage” suffered at Nicopolis. See Wavrin-Hardy, 56-7; Lettenhove, *Oeuvres de Froissart*, 317-21.

<sup>705</sup> “To look at it reasonably, the French caused [the disaster] and were to blame for it; for all was lost because of their pride and ill discipline” (my transl.); Lettenhove, *Oeuvres de Froissart*, 319.

<sup>706</sup> “In the end, because of the personal pride, jealousy and vainglory of the French, they were all destroyed by the forces of Bayezid” (my transl.). Wavrin repeats this point in his short text, making clear both his reliance on Froissart and his investment in Froissart’s critique: “Et si les francois eussent voulu croire ledit roy de hongrie il ne leur en feust pas ainsi advenu.... Et toute ceste mesadventure advint par lorgueil et outrecuidance du conte deu, car sil eust voulu croire le Roy de hongrie et le seigneur de couchi co[mm]e dit est la chose nen feust pas ainsi alee...” (“And if the French had been willing to believe the King of Hungary, things would not have turned out

involved in redacting the Varna scene, and especially if he did so after crafting his abridgement of Froissart, it is hard to imagine that this seminal concern was not once again in the back of his mind.<sup>707</sup>

Together, then, the various references to and echoes of Nicopolis serve a set of rhetorical objectives that are not merely divergent, but also curiously discordant. Even as Waleran's journey is ennobled by its mnemonic resonances with the adventures of John of Nevers, the unspoken trauma of that event informs a critique calling into question the ideals promoted in and underwritten by the Burgundian "cult of prowess." Nicopolis, then, is a different kind of memory than that invoked by the epic references and conventions contained in the Long Campaign episodes: one that is not only gilded with heroic resonance, but also burdened *in itself* by historical tragedy. It is, in this sense, the most complex of the bellicose precedents called to mind in Wavrin's chronicle.

But it is not necessarily the most culturally evocative. As it happens, another dramatic circumstance attended Waleran's journey: his fleet, as we have seen, sailed to the shores of mythic Troy, to the land of the Amazons – and even to ancient,

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this way.... And this entire misadventure came about because of the pride and vainglory of the Count of Eu; for if he had been willing to believe the King of Hungary and the Lord of Coucy, as I have said, the day would not have gone like this": my transl.). This portion of Wavrin's *Anciennes Chroniques* (Vol. 4, Bk. 3, Ch. 26) has never been published in an edition. It is available only in manuscript form: BnF ms. fr. 81, fol. 187r-187v.

<sup>707</sup> It is worth noting, as Andrew Gow has pointed out, that Wavrin's warnings here tend to problematize tidy distinctions between the character of "medieval" and "Renaissance" texts – at least as Jacob Burckhardt defined them. Wavrin's objectives here, he writes, "are not merely to alert the reader so as to avoid similar problems in the future, but" – as Burckhardt said of Renaissance political treatises – "to make the reader(s) wise for life – and this in a markedly 'medieval' text, not a work of classicizing humanism" (personal correspondence, July 2008). I shall consider other ways in which the rhetorical and discursive complexity of the text tends to militate against teleological claims in Chapter 5, below.

magical Colchis. In the court of Duke Philip, who had established one of the greatest crusading orders in the west, the *Toison d'or*, in honour of Jason's exploits, there could be fewer seaborne adventures more symbolic than this one.<sup>708</sup> Yet Wavrin's references to these mythic precedents are curiously limited and truncated. His silences and gaps speak as loudly as his utterances; they seem to point, as we shall see below, to the particular (and particularly prosaic) demands of a new kind of naval warfare.

### **Part 3. 'La ou les Grecz estoient descendus': Mythic resonances, political suppressions and the problems of chivalric warfare**

In reporting on Waleran's journey through the storied waters of the East, Wavrin mentions the Greek *mythos* only twice – once in narrating events at Tenedos, near the site of Ancient Troy, and once in describing the Black Sea port of "Panguala" (Mangalia), said to have been built by the Queen of the Amazons.<sup>709</sup> Yet these brief scenes testify both to the court's engagement with stories of mythic heroism, and to the narrator's literary and historical (one might even say scholarly<sup>710</sup>) interest in Eastern geography. The first occurs soon after Waleran sets sail from Venice (Chapter IX): the captain, as Constantin Marinesco notes, "is driven, during

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<sup>708</sup> On the political motivations for, and ideological value of, chivalric renderings of the ancient past, see Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 116. For an important discussion of the mythic resonances of Wavrin's journey, see also Arjo Vanderjagt, "En in de zomer doorkruisten zij de hele Zwarte Zee: De Bourgondische vloot in de Oriënt," *Madoc: Tijdschrift over de Middeleeuwen* 13, no. 4 (1999): 236-45.

<sup>709</sup> The two scenes appear in Hardy's edition on pages 38-9 and 66.

<sup>710</sup> Georges Le Brusque notes that Wavrin's interest in these facts may suggest his engagement with the ideal of the "learned knight" at the Burgundian court. "Être un valeureux chevalier," as he writes, "n'empêche pas d'avoir de la culture" ("Des chevaliers," 262).

his journey to Constantinople, by memories of the ancient world.”<sup>711</sup> Learning that “les princes de Grece” had stopped at Tenedos on the way to their siege of Troy,<sup>712</sup> he asks “aulculns quy scavoient ces marches” whether the ancient city itself is far away. “[I]l ne pouvoit passer oultre le destroit,” they tell him, “sans transverser devant le port de Dardanelle quy jadis avoit este le havre principal de la grande cite Troyenne, la ou les Grecz estoient descendus.”<sup>713</sup> Waleran is excited by the news, resolving straightaway to imitate his mythic forebears:

Adont messire Pierre Vas et messire Gauvain Quieret quy estoient a ceste interrogation, pour ce que le seigneur de Wavrin avoit tres grant desir que se a celluy port on trouvoit les Tucqz de descendre a terre et davoit a faire a eulz, ilz luy loerent que la premiere descendue quil feroit feust audit port de Dardanelle....<sup>714</sup>

And so he does, spilling the blood of Turks and Christians on the shores of ancient Troy. It is hard to imagine more vivid testimony, as Marinesco points out, to Johan Huizinga’s dictum that “la vie chevaleresque est une imitation; imitation des héros du cycle d’Arthur ou des héros antiques, peu importe”<sup>715</sup> – or to the fact that, however pragmatic and measured a soldier Waleran may have been, he was fully

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<sup>711</sup> “Est poursuivi pendant sa navigation vers Byzance par des souvenirs du monde classique”: Marinesco, “Philippe le Bon (Pt. 1),” 160.

<sup>712</sup> “The Greek princes” (transl. Imber, 121): Wavrin-Hardy, 38. This refers to Agamemnon, Achilles, Ajax and other heroes, who seized the island prior to the first battle between the Greeks and Trojans. The episode was recounted in numerous accounts of the Trojan myth known to the Burgundian court – notably, for our purposes, in versions of Guido delle Colonne’s thirteenth-century *Historia destructionis Troiae*, a translation of Benoît de Ste-Maure’s *Roman de Troie* (1160-65), which was itself based on the ancient works of Darès and Dictys. See below.

<sup>713</sup> “The people who knew the area”; “he could not go through the straits without passing by the port of Dardanelle, which had once been the principal harbour of the great Trojan city, and exactly the place where the Greeks had landed” (transl. Imber, 121): Wavrin-Hardy, 38.

<sup>714</sup> “Now Sir Pietre Vast and Sir Gauvain Quieret were present when he asked this, and because, if there were Turks at this port, the Lord of Wavrin was eager to go ashore and have done with them, they advised him to land first at the port of Dardanelle...” (transl. Imber, 121-2). Imber identifies Dardanelle as Çanakkale (see 122, f.n. 36).

<sup>715</sup> “The chivalrous life is a life of imitation – whether of the heroes of the Arthurian cycle or of ancient heroes, it matters little” (my transl.): cited in Marinesco, “Philippe le Bon (Pt. 1),” 161.

conscious of the reputational benefits of this *imitatio*. The captain-general's first landing, his first battle, mimics the opening acts of Achilles' conquest; the fact that the Ottomans were commonly regarded as descendants of the Trojans, as Colin Imber notes, is surely *not* insignificant here.<sup>716</sup>

We shall return to these imaginative resonances in a moment. First, it is important to consider the ways in which Wavrin's second mythic reference both complements and differs from the first. Sailing up the coast of the Black Sea to investigate rumors that King Wladyslaw has survived the débacle of Varna, Waleran comes upon an ancient port, "lequel estoit bien estrange." This is Mangalia, the site where "people believe" that "Panthasilee royne d'Amazonnes le fist faire aprez que Hercules et Theseus eurent entre oudit royaume celeement et combatu Ypolite et

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<sup>716</sup> See Imber 122, f.n. 35. It is true, of course, that the Burgundians and the French *also* claimed Trojan origins during this period. With this in mind, Arjo Vanderjagt and Jan Veenstra have suggested that Waleran's interest in the site of Troy stemmed from an ethnographic and political interest in this presumed lineage, which was deployed – by Jean Wauquelin, among others – in the service of Duke Philip's dynastic claims. I am inclined, however, to agree with Colin Imber's reading of this passage. The narrator's focus on the landings of the Greek princes (that is, Achilles, Agamemnon and company, who are mentioned three times in this short passage) suggests that Waleran's primary interest was in the mythic battles themselves – and in re-enacting them in the footsteps of the *Greek* warriors. This seems especially probable in light of the intense Burgundian interest in the exploits of Greek heroes such as Hercules and Jason who *also* invaded and destroyed Troy – in their case, after returning from Colchis with the golden fleece. For their views, see Vanderjagt, '*Qui sa vertu anoblist*': *The Concepts of Noblesse and Chose Publique in Burgundian Political Thought* (PhD Dissertation, U. Groningen, 1981), 24-5, and Jan R. Veenstra, "'Le prince qui se veult faire de nouvel roy': The Literature and Ideology of Burgundian Self-Determination," in *The Ideology of Burgundy: The Promotion of National Consciousness, 1364-1565*, ed. D.J.D. Boulton and J.R. Veenstra (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 208-9. For a related discussion (which agrees in broad terms with my analysis), see Huguet, "Gauvain Quiéret," 39-42. For an excellent overview of the various permutations of the myth of Trojan origins, see Collette Beaune, "L'utilisation politique du mythe des origines Troyennes en France à la fin du moyen age," in *Lectures médiévales de Virgile: Actes du Colloque organisé par l'École française de Rome* (Palais Farnèse: EFR, 1985), 331-55. For a study of Duke Philip's interest in Trojan genealogy, see Christiane van den Bergen-Pantens, "Traditions généalogiques et heraldiques troyennes à la cour de Bourgogne," *Revue française d'heraldique et de sigillographie* 50-51 (1990-91): 83-97.

Menalipe.”<sup>717</sup> It is protected by an ancient, decaying sea wall, now collapsing in many places. Yet it was strong in ancient times: “nulz ne povoit entrer ou royaume des Amazonnes par mer, qui maintenant est dit autrement le royaume de Cycie, quil nentrast entre la muraille et la terre.”<sup>718</sup> As he describes these things, Wavrin adopts a rather different tone from that of the Tenedos scene; evaluative and tactical, it offers no sense of the excitement of living crusading history in the precincts of the ancient heroes. His gaze is distanced by markers of modernity: the description of the ancient place as exotic (“estrange”); the delineation of mythic belief from empirical knowledge (“maintient on”); and the distinction between ancient and current nomenclature (“qui maintenant est dit”).

There is no easy way to account for the narrative differences between these two scenes, though it is possible, assuming that Jean de Wavrin was involved in their redaction, that their curious juxtaposition of chivalric *imitatio* and historical skepticism results from a particular configuration of the two men’s bases of knowledge. In any case, the differences *do* illustrate the curious tensions, the fluctuating semantics, that characterize Wavrin’s engagement with Greek myth in the narrative. On one hand, these episodes speak in complementary ways to the mythic aspirations and ceremonial preoccupations of the Burgundian court: the

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<sup>717</sup> “It was a curious place. People believe [‘mantient on’] that Penthesilia, Queen of the Amazons, had it built after Hercules and Theseus had secretly entered the kingdom and fought with Hippolyte and Melanippe” (transl. Imber, 136): Wavrin-Hardy, 64. The reference is to a legendary *geste* involving Hercules, Theseus and the two Amazon princesses, associated in some sources with the ninth labour of Hercules; see below.

<sup>718</sup> “No one could enter the realm of the Amazons [by sea] – which is known today by a different name, the Kingdom of Scythia – unless they went between the land and the wall...” (transl. Imber, 136): Wavrin-Hardy, 64.

Greek landing at Troy (as related by medieval redactors) is a bloody story of epic conquest; Hercules and Theseus are depicted in contemporary narratives as romantic questing knights and paragons of chivalric virtue.<sup>719</sup> Wavrin's decision to invoke these themes, and to remind readers about the mythic regions through which Waleran wandered, thus serves to ennoble his text in especially evocative ways. Yet his partial and oddly truncated references, and his politic silence concerning *other* seemingly natural references, tend also to subvert these effects – betraying his awareness of the limitations of these old ideals of chivalric warfare against new “Eastern” enemies. I turn now to a study of these rhetorical countercurrents, and to the concessions exacted from heroic myths by the inconvenient facts of the fifteenth century.

(a) *Achilles and Waleran: Problematizing epic conquest.* Despite its emotive undertones, the scene reporting Waleran's interest in re-enacting the landing of the “princes Grecs” is reported in sparing, almost abbreviated terms; the narrator seems to assume his readers' familiarity with the names and *gestes* behind the local myth.<sup>720</sup> The reference is probably to a story contained in Guido delle Colonne's *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, a loose translation of Benoît de Sainte-Maure's sprawling

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<sup>719</sup> On the Burgundian literary “pedigree” of these texts, see below.

<sup>720</sup> “[T]ant naga quil vint a Thenedon ung port de mer la ou jadis les princes de Grece lesquelz alloient assegier Troyes prindrent terre,” he tells us simply; and when Waleran asks whether the site of Troy is close, the answer is equally brief: nearby Dardanelle was the main harbour of the great city, “la ou les Grecz estoient descendus” (Wavrin-Hardy 38).



chivalric compendium *Le Roman de Troie* (1160-65).<sup>721</sup> Guido's thirteenth-century confection was favoured in Philip's court, where it served as a privileged source for the story of Jason and the Golden Fleece – the lofty (albeit contested) tale upon which the duke founded his chivalric order in 1430.<sup>722</sup> French translations of the *Historia* circulated in numerous manuscript copies, some of which may have been produced well before 1450.<sup>723</sup> There is therefore a great likelihood that, at the time Waleran sailed to Constantinople, both he and his noble fellows were familiar at least with the broad contours of Guido's stories – not only of the Argonauts' adventures at Colchis,

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<sup>721</sup> It is possible, as we shall see, that Wavrin's recollection of the Greek landing may also be indebted to the *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*, a thirteenth-century compilation which seems to have influenced our narrator (see below). The first iteration of the *Histoire* contained a section devoted to the myths of Troy; in a later (fourteenth-century) redaction, this was replaced by a longer section based directly upon Benoît de Ste-Maure's accounts of the Colchis and Troy expeditions in the *Roman de Troie*. Both redactions seem to have been available to the Burgundian court at some point during Philip the Good's reign; see Doutrepont, *La littérature*, 135-6. Unfortunately, given that there are no edited versions of the appropriate sections of either of the redactions (Marijke de Visser-van Terwisga's edition of the first [Orléans: Paradigme, 1995-9] ends just prior to the section devoted to Troy), I have not been able to determine either (a) the exact form of the Troy narratives as they appeared in the first redaction, or (b) the extent to which the redaction of Benoît's landing scene in the second resembles Guido's. Future archival research will allow me to clarify these issues. In any case, given the importance of Guido's narrative within the Burgundian court and the fact that Jean de Wavrin himself owned a copy of the latter (though probably after the time of Waleran's travels), it seems reasonable, for the time being, to treat Guido's text as the primary source for the Tenedos episode.

<sup>722</sup> On the legend of Jason in the court of Burgundy, see e.g. Danielle Quérue, "Le personnage de Jason: De la mythologie au roman," in Caron and Clauzel, *Le Banquet du Faisan*, 145-62; Quérue, "Jason et le mythe troyen," in Cockshaw and Van den Bergen-Pantens, *L'ordre de la Toison d'Or*, 91-98; Quérue, "Jason, heros d'une biographie chivalesque?" *Bien dire et bien apprendre* 20 (2002): 158-70; Doutrepont, *La littérature*, 147-71; Claudine Lemaire, "Histoire d'un mythe et de ses possibles interprétations," in Cockshaw and Van den Bergen-Pantens, *L'ordre de la Toison d'Or*, 84-90; Lacaze, "Sentiment national," 361-2; and J. Devaux, "L'identité bourguignonne et l'écriture de l'histoire," in *Le Moyen Age* 92, no. 3-4 (2006): 470. For a superb recent study of the political and imaginative resonances of the myth of Jason and the Argonauts, see Arjo Vanderjagt, "Ritualizing Heritage: Jason and the Argonauts at the Burgundian Feast of the Pheasant (1454)" (forthcoming).

<sup>723</sup> On this see Alphonse Bayot, *La légende de Troie à la cour de Bourgogne* (Bruges: Plancke, 1908), 17-25. It is noteworthy that Jean de Wavrin's library likewise contained a copy of Guido's text, though as Antoinette Naber shows, this copy probably dates from after 1450. See Naber, "Les manuscrits," 36.

but also of the “Greek princes” sanguinary assault on the shores of King Priam’s lands.<sup>724</sup>

It will be useful to compare the contours of this tale with the facts, as Wavrin reports them, of Waleran’s landing at Dardanelle. In Guido’s narrative, the Greek sailors assault a vast Trojan army in an almost inconceivably dangerous landing; noble warriors on both sides accomplish countless feats of arms, and the fortunes of battle swing back and forth as reinforcements and heroes arrive. The beachhead is finally secured, and Troy besieged, when Achilles, “drenched in the blood of the slain,” drives the defenders into the city.<sup>725</sup> Wavrin does not refer explicitly to these events, though Waleran’s landing is similar in certain ways: the Christians face ominous weather and land in stages; the enemy troops, waiting menacingly on the shore, come up to attack; the fortunes of battle fluctuate, but the Christians finally show such valour “et se portèrent si bien...que force fut auz Turcqz tant de cheval comme de pie, prendre la fuite.”<sup>726</sup> There are dead and injured on both sides. One suspects that Wavrin’s readers saw enough of Achilles in this scene to enhance their appreciation of Waleran’s prowess – an especially welcome development given the

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<sup>724</sup> On the legend of Troy in the Burgundian court, see e.g. M. Cheyns-Condé, “L’Épopée troyenne dans la ‘librairie’ ducal bourguignonne au XVe siècle,” *Publication du Centre Européen d’Études bourguignonnes (XIVe-XVie s.)* 31 (1991): 37-67; Collette Beaune, “L’utilisation politique,” 331-55; Bayot, *La légende de Troie*; Doutrepon, *La littérature*, 171-6.

<sup>725</sup> Guido delle Colonne, *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, transl. Mary Elizabeth Meek (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 122. For the entire battle account, see Bk. 14, p. 114-23.

<sup>726</sup> They “conducted themselves so well that...they compelled the Turks, both the infantry and the cavalymen, to take flight” (transl. Imber, 122): Wavrin-Hardy, 40.

good press that Geoffroy de Thoisy, who fought without his captain at Rhodes, receives in the preceding passage.<sup>727</sup>

At the same time, however, there is much about the landing scene which tends to undermine its grandeur. As we have seen, the Christians jeopardize their own position through personal pride and vainglory; and the Turks, fighting strategically, “firent samblant de fuyr” in order to trick their impulsive foes. When Murad’s men finally retreat in earnest, the Christians seize their weapons – which turn out to be substandard – and, smarting from their thirty injuries and two deaths, they board their galleys and sail away with empty pockets and quivers. There is as much prose as poetry in all of this; and though Wavrin aspires, at least on one rhetorical level, to depict chivalric conquest on the shores of Troy, what he achieves is an ambiguous portrait of occasional heroism, pragmatic resistance, and gratuitous warplay that encodes other concerns into his text – including, it seems, an admirable penchant for strategic analysis.

In so doing, he pushes his mythic reference to its historiographical limits, redeeming its ideological value even as he problematizes it. For while the landing episode serves to ennoble Waleran, who seems in some manner to be following in Achilles’ footsteps, it also betrays the essentially sterile character of such chivalric *imitatio*. In its divergence from Guido’s narrative, moreover, the text reveals the limitations of such rigid models of chivalric warfare – models which are impractical in a military and geographical context where espionage, *guerres de course*, restraint

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<sup>727</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 33-38. As I argued in Chapter 2 above, Wavrin seems to make a concerted effort to temper Thoisy’s claims to chivalric pre-eminence; hence the defence of Rhodes passage tends to downplay his leadership in that event.

and stealth are all required. This is as far as the Achilles reference can take Wavrin; hence he never refers to it explicitly in his description of the landing, and he never again cites epic Trojan warfare as a model for Waleran's *gestes*. From this point, in fact, it is his *suppression* of mythic precedents, rather than their invocation, which is especially revealing from our point of view.

(b) *Jason and Geoffroy: The wages of chivalric quests*. There remains, of course, a second "invocation" to be considered: Wavrin's observations on mythic Mangalia, the site supposedly built by Penthesilia after Hercules' and Theseus' adventures in the Amazon realm. The story of the Greek heroes' struggles against the fierce women of Scythia takes any number of forms in ancient myth; it is commonly recounted in tales of Hercules' labours, and in accounts of the life of Theseus, a king (and local hero) of Athens.<sup>728</sup> The version of the tale to which Wavrin refers seems to be that of the *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*, a thirteenth-century compilation of ancient tales which appeared in the ducal library,<sup>729</sup> and which contains, in some

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<sup>728</sup> In his life of Theseus, for example, Plutarch writes: "Concerning his voyage into the Euxine Sea, Philochorus and some others write that he made it with Hercules, offering him his service in the war against the Amazons, and had Antiope given him for the reward of his valor; but the greater number...write that he made this voyage many years after Hercules." See Plutarch's *Lives*, ed. A.H. Clough (Boston: Little, Brown, 1909), 25-6. For a sense of the many permutations of the myth, see e.g. C.H. Oldfather, *Diodorus of Sicily*, Vol. II (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 1935), 393-7; *The Library of Greek Mythology of Apollodorus*, transl. Robin Hard (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997), 141; *The Myths of Hyginus*, transl. Mary Amelia Grant (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1960), 48.

<sup>729</sup> See Doutrepont, *La littérature*, 135-6. One (partial) edition of the first redaction of the *Histoire ancienne*, that of Marijke de Visser-van Terwisga, is available at present (t. I, Orléans: Paradigme, 1995).

manuscripts, a redacted version of Benoît de Ste-Maure's *Roman de Troie*.<sup>730</sup> The *Histoire ancienne* also provides a pre-history of Hercules and Jason and their struggles against the Amazons of Scythia – offering a graphic description of their stealthy invasion of the kingdom and their tournament-style combat against the princesses Hippolyta and Melanippe.<sup>731</sup> The same tale, interestingly, seems to have influenced the Burgundian *écrivain* Raoul Lefèvre, whose monumental *Le Recueil des Histoires de Troyes* (1464) testifies to the court's enduring interest in Trojan myth.<sup>732</sup> Though it introduces certain novelties,<sup>733</sup> the *Recueil* episode retains the basic contours of the story which impressed itself upon Wavrin and his peers: a chivalric quest, in which Hercules and Theseus are transformed into the knights-errant of romance, travelling to distant lands and performing great deeds of love and war.<sup>734</sup>

The narrator's very brief (and rather prosaic) reference to these events tends to distance them, as I suggested, from Waleran's own *gestes* – except inasmuch as they point to the exotic places he travelled and the geographical and cultural

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<sup>730</sup> This is true of the second and third redactions of the text; manuscript copies of both the first and second redactions were contained in the ducal library by the end of Philip the Good's reign. See [f.n. 721](#) above.

<sup>731</sup> See de Visser-van Terwisga, t. I, 83-4. It is worth noting that the passages dealing with Hercules' and Theseus' combats against the Amazons are contained in roughly the same form in all three redactions of the *Histoire*; see de Visser-van Terwisga, t. II, 245-6.

<sup>732</sup> As Bayot notes, "Le commande d'une compilation générale... par Philippe le Bon à Raoul Lefèvre, sur la fin de sa carrière, n'est que l'aboutissement naturel de tout un cycle de lectures" (Bayot, *Légende*, 37). The *Recueil* also retains the singular honour of being the first book printed (in translation) in the English language.

<sup>733</sup> Lefèvre's combat, for example, takes place in Africa, and there is no mention of the heroes entering Hippolyta's realm "celeement." For a discussion of the concordances between Lefèvre and the *Histoire*, see Raoul Lefèvre – *Le Recueil des Histoires de Troyes. Édition critique*, ed. Marc Aeschbach (Bern: Lang, 1987), 99 and 515. On the *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César* more generally, see e.g. W.A. Kibler and G.A. Zinn, *Medieval France: An encyclopedia* (London: Routledge, 1995), 451. It is interesting to note that Penthesilia, who appears in both Guido and Benoit, is likewise highlighted in the *Histoire ancienne* (see de Visser-van Terwiga, t. I, 82).

<sup>734</sup> As a result of their combats, Theseus wins the hand of Hippolyta; see Aeschbach, *Recueil*, 358.

knowledge he gained (all valuable commodities in the Burgundian chivalric economy). But they also remind us tacitly that the court was interested in such models of chivalric behaviour, the likes of which Waleran's contemporaries, men such as Jacques de Lalaing, commonly emulated; and they raise a fascinating question. Given that our narrator so easily recalls the *gestes* of Hercules and Theseus, why does he not mention Jason: the Jason who was pre-eminent in Burgundian courtly ritual and symbology, and who sailed *precisely* to the same territory, ancient Colchis, as did Waleran's doughty lieutenants Geoffroy de Thoisy and Regnault de Confide?

It is not impossible that Wavrin was unaware of these concordances. But this seems extremely unlikely, given the evidence of Waleran's keen interest in the mythic geography of the region. The more probable situation, as several scholars have remarked, is that Thoisy, who left Constantinople in April 1445 to cruise along the southern and eastern coasts of the Black Sea, viewed the expedition at least in part as an opportunity to imitate the exploits of the patron of Philip's knightly order. Jason had crossed the "Mer Majeure" to plunder the treasure of Colchis through acts of prowess and guile – acts so memorable to Geoffroy's peers that they were celebrated in a "mini-drame" at the *Banquet du Faisan* in 1454 – and his Burgundian protégé intended to do the same thing.<sup>735</sup> "Geoffroy de Thoisy is said to have sailed...to the land of Colchis, and to have reached the river Phasis," writes Heribert Müller. "The Turk was far away, but the Golden Fleece was near. They were

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<sup>735</sup> On the Golden Fleece legend and ritual, see Vanderjagt, "Ritualizing Heritage," 4-11.

chasing a dream, though without forgetting quite practical interests.”<sup>736</sup> That “dream,” moreover, was cast in especially familiar colours: the Jason revered at the Burgundian court was a fearless knight, not merely a sailor but also a keen warrior who proved his prowess through combat on land. He also could be read as a kind of chivalrous plunderer, seizing the treasures of the mythic East.<sup>737</sup> Given Thoisy’s penchant for acts of piracy and his apparent boldness in matters of war, the parallels between life and legend must have seemed particularly vivid to those who knew him.<sup>738</sup>

All of this, as I have suggested, renders Wavrin’s apparent suppression of the Jason myth especially intriguing – but not in the end surprising, given the way that events unfolded. Thoisy’s landing at “Colchis” ended so disastrously that any concurrent reference to the patron of the *Toison d’Or* is likely to have provoked embarrassment. Wavrin thus offers only a drily succinct account of the fiasco: spying a ship full of merchandise which he hopes to seize, Thoisy is warned by the Emperor of Trebizond that the sailors are orthodox Christians. He ignores the warning, “alleguant quil avoit commandement de guerroyer tous scismatiques non obeissans a nostre saint pere” – a questionable piece of casuistry which is reported

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<sup>736</sup> “Geoffroy de Thoisy sei an die kaukasische Schwarzmeerküste zum Land Kolchis gesegelt und bis zum Fluss Phasis gelangt,” writes Müller. “Der Türke war fern, das Goldene Vlies nahe. Man verfolgte einen Traum, ohne darüber handfeste Interessen zu vergessen...” (Müller, *Kreuzzugspläne und Kreuzzugspolitik*, 35; English translation by A. Gow). Prof. Müller also provides a helpful list of scholars who have speculated on Thoisy’s possible interest in imitating Jason’s deeds at Poti; these include Marinesco, Paviot, Taparel, and Jean Richard. See p. 36, n. 13.

<sup>737</sup> For Guido’s version of the Jason myth, see Meek, *Historia*, Books 2 and 3, p. 9-32. On Jason’s chivalric boldness, see e.g. 18 and 26; on the fleece as “golden plunder,” and Jason’s craft in “despoiling” King Aeëtes of his greatest treasure, see e.g. 30-1.

<sup>738</sup> On Thoisy’s boldness, see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 104.

throughout the countryside.<sup>739</sup> Informed of the Burgundians' approach, the people in the Georgian village of Poti lay an ambush for Thoisy, "quy avoit grant voullente de pillier le village"; he is captured and many of his men are killed.<sup>740</sup> The crisis is only resolved when Waleran himself, "moult doullent" at the fate of his lieutenant, intervenes with the Emperor of Trebizond.<sup>741</sup> The latter makes "incontinent grant dilligence denvoier au pays de Georgie par tel fachon que ledit messire Greffroy luy fut rendu et il le remist saulvement en sa gallee."<sup>742</sup>

It is also not surprising that Wavrin's version of these events differs significantly from Thoisy's own report, which makes of the landing a more impressive chivalric exercise. He describes his approach to Poti "cuidant là prandre pluseurs Tartres," who come there from the East to sell their silks<sup>743</sup>; upon landing, he does battle with a local prince and his barons, dominating them at first but falling into their hands when the tides of battle turn and he cannot reach his ships. Held for a month until the emperor's intervention, Thoisy is treated mildly by his captors, who are honourable (if "estrangle") foreigners.<sup>744</sup> Wavrin's far more ambivalent

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<sup>739</sup> "Claiming that his orders were to fight all schismatics who did not obey our Holy Father" (transl. Imber, 138): Wavrin-Hardy, 66.

<sup>740</sup> "All eager to plunder the village" (transl. Imber, 138): Wavrin-Hardy, 66.

<sup>741</sup> Other sources suggest that it was in fact one "Jérôme de Nigro" who was responsible for Thoisy's release; see Jacques Paviot, "La piraterie bourguignonne," 203-14 (esp. 206 and 213, f.n. 59).

<sup>742</sup> "The Emperor was quick to send to Georgia and, by these means, Sir Geoffroy was returned to him, and put safely on board the galley" (transl. Imber, 138): Wavrin-Hardy, 66. For scholarly summaries of this episode, see Taparel, "Un épisode," 20-1; Paviot, "La piraterie," 205-6.

<sup>743</sup> "Hoping to capture several Tartars there" (my transl.): in Iorga, "Sarrazines," 33. These Easterners are said to be from "Sammaqui"; Henri Taparel identifies this with Semakha, in Azerbaijan ("Thoisy," 288), while Müller suggests that it may refer to Samarkand (*Kreuzzugspläne*, 35, f.n. 10).

<sup>744</sup> Though the people of "Mygrelye" "soient estranges gens et d'estrangle vie," he remarks, "entre eulx cely s'est deshonorés qui aroit mal traicter ne faire vilonnie à ung prisonnier": in Iorga, "Sarrazines," 33.



treatment of these events, and in particular of Thoisy's implied culpability, seems to underscore the political stakes of the two chronicles: in a chivalric economy, one must take care to temper and modify the glory afforded to one's rival.<sup>745</sup> Still, and significantly, neither of the texts mentions the Jason myth – a tacit acknowledgement that Thoisy's adventure had not lived up to the weighty expectations of following in the hero's footsteps. Wavrin's text in particular, by virtue of its previous epic and mythic references, seems curiously truncated in its silence; and it is worth considering the significance of this elision in more detail.

My first observation – an aleatory one, to be sure, but no less feasible for that – is that the absence of Jason's tale may *also* point obliquely to Wavrin's critique of temerity, and to Waleran's awareness of the dangers of romantic models of warfare on crusading fronts. If I am correct in thinking that the story of Jason's boldness and prowess on Eastern shores, of a "noble nature...led by youthful daring"<sup>746</sup> to plunder unknown places, truly fired the imagination of Philip's courtiers, then it also provided a kind of chivalric "gold standard" against which men such as Thoisy could measure and promote themselves. By undertaking such quests, they might find a way to join "ces héros de l'Antiquité, modèles de toute la chevalerie bourguignonne" – and to profit reputationally from that association.<sup>747</sup> All of this, however, presupposes a particularly aggressive and narcissistic model of combat; for

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<sup>745</sup> See my discussion in Chapter 2 above. In this regard, it is also significant that Thoisy does not mention Waleran's role in securing his release – just as he had previously said little about the *seigneur de Wavrin's* role in planning the Rhodes episode, "ayant sans doute quelque jalousie vis à vis du chef de l'expédition" (Paviot, *Les ducs*, 101).

<sup>746</sup> See Meek, *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, 18.

<sup>747</sup> "These heroes of Antiquity, models of all Burgundian knighthood" (my transl.): Taparel, "Thoisy," 393.

there is little in the tradition of the chivalric quest, which asserts the superiority of western *moeurs* and martial techniques, that promotes site-sensitive diplomacy, local espionage or judicious restraint.<sup>748</sup> Thoisy's fiery boldness may have served him well in the battle at Rhodes, but in the more culturally, militarily, and politically complex region around the Black Sea, his lusty (and, one suspects, fatally naïve) pursuit of booty produced a bloody disaster.

The failure of the Burgundian Jason at "Colchis," therefore, might be appreciated in broader terms, by a warrior as experienced as Waleran, as the failure of the Jason-*model* in the contemporary East – a testimony to the importance of familiarity with one's foe, and of prudence and flexibility in the face of economic and cultural alliances that were at least as complex any seen in the West.<sup>749</sup> Disinclined as I am to accuse the Burgundians of any sort of cultural philistinism, it seems clear that some of their other acts of piracy in the region, which continued for a few years, were characterized by the same kind of naivety and cultural myopia<sup>750</sup> – a

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<sup>748</sup> Indeed, the Jason myth seems to imply that bold knights will have good fortune and the aid of gods and grateful maidens bestowed on them as a kind of dividend for their courage: "And I knew that you are noble and that, led by youthful daring, you have sought this kingdom to obtain the Golden Fleece," Medea tells Jason in the *Historia*, "and you know that in this quest you will risk obvious danger and expose your life to the peril of certain death. And so I have pity on your noble nature and your youthful ardor, and I desire to supply you with a safe plan and beneficial assistance...." In Meek, *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, Bk. 2, p. 18. For a related discussion, see Lafortune-Martel, *Fête noble*, 127.

<sup>749</sup> With this in mind it is interesting to note that Wavrin's treatment of suppressed, implied and explicit references to the Greek *mythos* recalls the tense and carefully negotiated treatment of Ptolemaic traditions in a world map crafted by Fra Mauro, a Camaldulian monk, around 1459. "Traditional knowledge and sceptical critique...co-exist in tension and yet in equilibrium on the Catalan atlas," Andrew Gow notes in a study of the map. "There was not merely room for both: both were, for different reasons, necessary." See Gow, "Fra Mauro and the End of Authority: Legends and Empirical Evidence on the 'Last' Mappamundi," in *Mappa Mundi: The Hereford World Map*, ed. Paul Harvey (London: British Library, 2005), 405-14 (esp. 409).

<sup>750</sup> See e.g. Huguot, "Gauvain," 44-6. This is not to suggest that the Burgundians' piracy was not informed by purely pragmatic motives, including the urgent need for funds to support the

disposition that often resulted in unwelcome consequences, such as the decision of the Genoese at Caffa to relieve Geoffroy de Thoisy of much of his piratical booty, or their near-execution of the galliot commander Jacques de Ville after his attempts to seize both a Trebizonian ship and a Turkish vessel seeking refuge at the port.<sup>751</sup> Waleran himself, as we have seen, suffered long-term losses from his ventures in the Black Sea.<sup>752</sup> It is not unreasonable to think that he returned to Lille wizened and wary – and far less inclined to invoke the legend of a headstrong chivalric plunderer of “Colchis,” however ideologically resonant that legend might be.<sup>753</sup>

None of these losses is recorded in our narrative, no doubt for political reasons. The Jason suppression, however, remains the most interesting – not least because he was already the most contested hero in the Burgundian ethos. As scholars have pointed out, Jason’s infidelity to Medea, and its perceived incompatibility with notions of chivalric courtesy, had prompted introspection and debate in the court not long after Philip adopted him as the patron of his chivalric order. By abandoning a woman to whom he had promised his love – and to whom

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expedition – nor that all of the Burgundians’ piratical efforts were impractical or disastrous. It also seems possible that such sailors as Geoffroy and Jacot de Thoisy improved in their piratical skills as time went on. See Paviot, “La piraterie bourguignonne,” esp. 205 [and 212, n. 46] and 207. On Waleran’s own financial needs, see Yans, “Waleran de Wavrin,” 136.

<sup>751</sup> See Paviot, “La piraterie bourguignonne,” 206.

<sup>752</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>753</sup> This is not to suggest that Jean de Wavrin – the probable redactor or co-author of Waleran’s story – did not find the Jason myth intriguing from a *literary* point of view; his library eventually contained a copy of Lefèvre’s *Istoire de Jason*, among other classical works (see below). It is true, in fact, that Jean’s collection – like those of several of his contemporaries – was in many ways a literary repository of the Burgundian “cult of prowess”; it contained numerous chivalric romances, some of which he even may have authored. But Jean’s apparently lively interest in such texts by no means unsettles my suggestion that he may have shared, and even amplified, Waleran’s apparent misgivings about excessive chivalric temerity in the context of real wars against the Turks. He may thus have contributed to a critique which positioned itself, as we shall see below, on the margins of a courtly discourse which underwrote some of his own literary endeavours.

he owed his success in Colchis – the Greek hero struck such authors as Michaut Taillevent and Jean Germain as insufficiently chivalrous and imperfectly Christian; they therefore proposed the biblical Gideon as a more appropriate patron of the Golden Fleece.<sup>754</sup> Curiously, Wavrin's suppression of the Jason myth seems to stem from nearly opposite considerations: a disastrous defeat reflecting the limitations of the Burgundian ideology of prowess – its *impractical* and *impolitic* qualities – in eastern precincts. If the Greek hero had not been sufficiently domesticated under the pens of Benoit and Guido to satisfy all of the Burgundians, he had also forgotten enough, through his transformation into a noble knight, to be a reliable guide through the hazardous and unpredictable waters of the East.

There is some good news, in all of this, for Geoffroy de Thoisy. Even if his aborted and rather pathetic adventures in “Colchis” earned him no special acclaim in Wavrin's text, he appears to have won a kind of literary fame elsewhere, serving as a model for the hero of the Catalan romance *Tirant lo Blanc*, written between 1460 and 1468. Here of course, as in Jean Germain's *Liber de virtutibus*, it was his successful defence of Rhodes, rather than his efforts on the Black Sea, which seems especially to

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<sup>754</sup> Gideon never completely supplanted Jason as the favoured patron; courtly literature and symbology made room for both heroes. Around 1460, Raoul Lefèvre wrote his *Istoire de Jason* for the purpose of rehabilitating the hero's honour; and in his monumental work *Le premier et le second volume de la Thoison d'or* (beg. 1468), Guillaume Fillastre, the bishop of Tournai and second chancellor of the order, made a spirited argument, based on the claims of the *Ovide Moralisé*, for the Greek hero's primacy. For useful studies of the fluid status of Jason at the Burgundian court, see Danielle Quérue, “Le personnage de Jason,” 145-62; Doutrepont, *La littérature*, 147-71; Vanderjagt, “Ritualizing Heritage,” 4-8.

have inspired the author.<sup>755</sup> Still, it is not impossible, as Henri Taparel suggests, that the mere fact of his travelling and fighting in the precincts of the Golden Fleece, “tel un nouveau Jason,” did contribute to Thoisy’s fame, which remained quite substantial in the years following the expedition.<sup>756</sup> Speculation on such questions, necessarily aleatory given the availability of source texts, may find support from future research. At the moment, however, it is the political and ideological resonances of Wavrin’s text which particularly concern us: and in the case of the expedition narrative, Thoisy’s Black Sea adventures occasion a silence that is, in its way, more telling than many forms of rhetorical emphasis.

This is the site, as Kinoshita puts it so elegantly, of important historical work; and it is a fitting end for our study of rhetoric, recollection, and narrative tension in Wavrin’s portraits of crusading warfare. Every time, and on every level, that our text endeavours to ennoble the deeds of contemporary Christian warriors by recalling the glories of the epic or mythic past, those references are destabilized, truncated or problematized, revealing pressing concerns and anxieties. Those concerns – the true limits of Christian military power, even in cases of apparent, and deeply desired, success; the problems of chivalric pride and vainglory in the face of the Ottomans’ demonstrated tactical acuity; and the limitations of traditional models

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<sup>755</sup> For more on the important concordances between the events of 1444-45 and the contents of *Tirant lo Blanc*, see Constantin Marinesco, “Du nouveau sur *Tirant lo Blanc*,” 148-64; Dominique de Courcelles, “Le roman de *Tirant lo Blanc* (1460-1490) à l’épreuve de l’histoire bourguignonne du XVe siècle,” in Cockshaw and Van den Bergen-Pantens, *L’ordre de la Toison d’Or*, 71-84; de Courcelles, “Voeu chevaleresque et voeu de croisade dans le roman de *Tirant lo Blanc* (1460-1490),” *Les Cahiers du Centre de Recherches Historiques* 16 (1996) [on line], posted 27 Feb 2009 (URL: <http://ccrh.revues.org/index2852.html>), consulted 29 Apr 2009.

<sup>756</sup> Taparel, “Thoisy,” 393.

of warfare in a cultural, political and economic environment that calls for different strategic solutions – speak to the lived experiences of the men and women who wrote, redacted and read our text and its components. It is precisely here, where Wavrin’s rhetorical garment gapes, that one may catch glimpses, *not* of facile “mentalities,” but of complex and fluid meditations that must have troubled some of the best-informed Burgundians as they contemplated their bold, and ultimately futile, crusading project.

**'Intervening Reflections':**

How the expedition narrative unsettles the claims of Johan Huizinga – and his interlocutors

In the preceding chapters, I have undertaken a close and detailed – some might say an almost *ascetically* detailed – reading of Wavrin's expedition narrative. I have probed its uneven contours for evidence of the contending political and cultural concerns which shaped and underwrote it. This has opened a particular window on the thought-world of the Wavrins, and of the court they served so assiduously for such a long time. Yet my inductive project remains far from complete; for, having ventured certain historical claims on the basis of textual evidence, I have yet to push them to their logical conclusions. It remains for me to consider the implications of my findings in light of contemporary scholarship, and to ponder the broader claims they support regarding culture and politics in the Burgundian era, a period that is ostensibly so radically "other than," so different from, our own. It is time, in short, to rejoin the scholarly conversation.<sup>757</sup>

Any such effort must begin by surveying the master narratives of modern historiography. In the field of Burgundian studies, there are many renegade narratives but only one master: the brilliant and problematic analysis offered by

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<sup>757</sup> My terminology here is indebted to Gary Olsen; see his "Publishing Scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition: Joining the Conversation," in *Publishing in Rhetoric and Composition*, ed. Gary A. Olsen and Todd W. Taylor (New York: SUNY Press, 1997), 19-34. On the duty of the dissertation-writer to contribute to the scholarly "conversation," see Irene L. Clark, *Writing the Successful Thesis and Dissertation: Entering the Conversation* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2006), esp. 41-3.

Johan Huizinga in his 1919 *chef d'oeuvre*, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*.<sup>758</sup> One of the glories of *Autumn* is its narrative complexity, which meets and exceeds that of the cultural artifacts it surveys.<sup>759</sup> Combining nuanced reflections on the power and complexity of Burgundian chivalric ideology with a sternly reductive moralism vis-à-vis the supposed infantilism and decadence of the knightly class, the book continues to influence the research agenda, inspiring interest and provoking resistance a full nine decades after it was first published. It is hard to count the number of studies which attempt to rationalize, respond to or rebut Huizinga's arguments – or, for that matter, the number of scholars who tacitly accept or sublimate them.<sup>760</sup> This is nowhere more evident than in the various works of

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<sup>758</sup> Some might argue that this claim gives short shrift to Henri Pirenne, whose *Early Democracies in the Low Countries* located the cultural and intellectual roots of the Belgian “state” in Philip’s Flemish cities. Pirenne’s interest in state formation has been mirrored in a great many recent studies. I do not mean to suggest, moreover, that there have not been innovative and fiercely independent claims concerning the cultural and intellectual climate of the Burgundian court in the period since *Autumn* was published; such scholars as Richard Vaughan, Werner Paravicini, Wim Blockmans, Walter Prevenier, Marie-Thérèse Caron – and more recently, Graeme Small, Bertrand Schnerb, Peter Arnade, David Wrisley, and Andrew Brown, among many others – have offered valuable and wide-ranging insights. For my purposes, it is also important to underscore the novelty of Arjo Vanderjagt’s work; beginning with his landmark *Qui sa vertu anoblist*, the Groningen medievalist has done much to rehabilitate our understanding of the juridical and philosophical spheres of the Burgundian court. As we shall see, this work, which has been complemented by the efforts of Wrisley, Jan Veenstra, Jan Dumolyn and several others, has influenced my own efforts to rethink the evidence of rhetorical and discursive sophistication at the level of the courtier-knight.

<sup>759</sup> The tensions and ambiguities inherent in Huizinga’s works have prompted some penetrating studies of his thought. Eric Hicks, for example, argues that Huizinga actually betrays a certain admiration for a culture which, even if it succumbed to spiritual and intellectual “decadence,” also proved capable of detaching itself in measured ways from the barbarities of contemporary politics. See Hicks, “L’histoire est un roman qu’on promène sur la grande-route: en relisant *L’Automne du Moyen Âge* de J. Huizinga,” in *Apogée et déclin*, ed. C. Thomasset and M. Zink (Paris: Presses de l’Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1993), 281-92.

<sup>760</sup> This has been true for decades. For notes on the influence of Huizinga on Burgundian scholarship, see Andrew Brown and Graeme Small, *Court and Civic Society in the Burgundian Low Countries c. 1420-1530* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2008), 21-3; E. Peters and W.P. Simons, “The new Huizinga and the old Middle Ages,” *Speculum* 74 (1999): 587-620; and Small’s “Introduction” to the 2002 reedition of Richard Vaughan’s *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002 [orig. 1970]), xix-li. On contemporary responses to his work, see F.W.N. Hugenholtz,



Burgundian history – Malcolm Vale’s (1981) and Peter Arnade’s (1996) among them – which frame their introductory chapters around interpretations and rebuttals of the Dutch master’s key positions.<sup>761</sup>

The conversation has continued into the twenty-first century. Just two years ago, Andrew Brown and Graeme Small published *Court and Civic Society in the Burgundian Low Countries* – an attempt by these leading scholars “to unite and translate some of the key texts which informed” *Autumn*, and to test “whether Huizinga’s controversial vision of the period still stands.”<sup>762</sup> Grappling with the book’s uneven legacy, its chauvinism and its insights, Brown and Small offer an equivocal assessment: while Huizinga’s “view that symbolic images and gestures in the later Middle Ages had...become mechanical and disconnected from original meanings and from social life may be unsustainable,” his “emphasis on the medieval need to express the inexpressible through visible signs...may be worth recall.”<sup>763</sup> This judgment echoes that of Peter Arnade<sup>764</sup>; as we shall see, it also prefigures my findings in this chapter.

Huizinga, then, remains unavoidable – even as scholars struggle to dispense with his Calvinist contempt for the supposedly ludic character of the Burgundian mind, a mind for which “every experience had that degree of directness and

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“The Fame of a Masterwork,” in *Johan Huizinga, 1872-1972*, ed. W.R.H. Koops et al. (The Hague, 1973), 91-103.

<sup>761</sup> See Vale, *War and Chivalry*, 1-13; Arnade, *Realms of Ritual*, 2-5.

<sup>762</sup> Brown and Small, jacket.

<sup>763</sup> Brown and Small, 32.

<sup>764</sup> See *Realms of Ritual*, 3.

absoluteness that joy and sadness still have in the mind of a child.”<sup>765</sup> In the past few decades, as Brown and Small note, revisionists have turned to anthropological models, including Geertzian theories of political symbology, to recast chivalric ceremony as a political tool – a means, among other things, of “strengthen[ing] ducal authority against rebellious urban subjects.”<sup>766</sup> Far from being a self-indulgent and juvenile form of *ludos*, that is, Burgundian chivalric ideology and its symbolic manifestations served the political interests of a naissant state. This is a far-reaching insight, and it has produced impressive results: studies into the effects of ducal appropriation of urban political symbology<sup>767</sup> and articles on the uses of chivalric

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<sup>765</sup> This clause forms part of the beautifully-crafted (and famously condescending) first paragraph of Huizinga’s *Autumn*; see 1.

<sup>766</sup> Brown and Small, 23. For examples of these and other, roughly equivalent approaches, see Andrew Brown, “Bruges and the Burgundian ‘Theatre-state’: Charles the Bold and Our Lady of the Snow,” *History* 84 (1999): 573-89; Jesse D. Hurlbut, “The City Renewed: Decorations for the ‘Joyeuses Entrées’ of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold,” *Fifteenth-Century Studies* 19 (1992): 73-84; and Peter Arnade, “City, State, and Public Ritual in the Late-Medieval Burgundian Netherlands,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 39 (1997): 300-18. Both Arnade and Brown do, however, express some thoughtful reservations about the Geertzian approach; see *Realms of Ritual*, 5, and “Bruges,” 575. For a dissenting opinion on the theatre-state model, see David Nicholas, “In the Pit of the Burgundian Theatre State: Urban Traditions and Princely Ambitions in Ghent, 1360-1420,” in *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*, ed. B.A. Hanawalt and K.L. Reyerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 271-95. For other useful qualifications, see Nadia Mosselmans, “Les villes face au prince: L’importance réelle de la cérémonie d’entrée solonelle sous le règne de Philippe le Bon,” in *Villes et campagnes au Moyen Âge*, ed. J.M. Duvosquel and Alain Dierkens (Liège: Perron, 1991): 533-48. For a broader survey and related discussion, see Part 2, “Symbolic Communication and Ceremonial Entries,” in *The Mediation of Symbol in Late Medieval and Early Modern Times*, ed. R. Suntrup, J. Veenstra and A. Bollmann (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2005), 145-217. For an early treatment of the “theatre state” in the context of a much more expansive (and influential) economic and political history of Valois Burgundy, see Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier, *The Burgundian Netherlands*, transl. P. King and Y. Mead (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) (esp. 214-15).

<sup>767</sup> See e.g. Andrew Brown, “Civic Ritual: Bruges and the Counts of Flanders in the Later Middle Ages,” *English Historical Review* 112 (1997): 277-99. For a related study concerning the dukes’ manipulation of urban crowds, see Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, “Les lumières de la ville: recherche sur l’utilisation de la lumière dans les cérémonies bourguignonnes (XIVe-XVe siècles),” *Revue historique* 301, no. 1 (1999): 23-43. For other insights, see Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies: espace public et communication symbolique dans les villes des Pays-Bas bourguignons (XIVe-XVe siècles)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004).

imagery and ceremony in the consolidation of princely power<sup>768</sup>, among others. The value of this work cannot be understated, though Brown and Small offer a salutary corrective to some of the Geertzians' most ambitious claims – reminding their readers, for instance, that meanings were often contingent and negotiated, seldom fixed, in the ambivalent arenas of medieval representation.<sup>769</sup> No one, however high and mighty, had a monopoly on meaning.

It is also important to stress – and herein lies *my* particular interest – that these attempts to rethink Huizinga do not exhaust the possibilities of reading chivalric culture and ideology as complex system of representing and understanding the cosmos. The tendency among studies of political symbology in the Burgundian “theatre state” to concentrate on the exercise and contestation of ducal power often prompts scholars to overlook the ways in which individual knights and bishops and squires-banneret *themselves* redacted chivalric texts, and performed chivalric *gestes*, in deliberate and self-serving – and, to the modern reader steeped in Huizinga's prejudices, often surprisingly subtle – ways. Literate in the codes and *topoi* that mattered, speaking and fighting in a courtly ethos that both promoted and subverted romantic ideals, Duke Philip's courtier-knights participated in a discursive economy that was every bit as complex and contingent as our own.

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<sup>768</sup> See e.g. Évelyne van den Neste, *Tournois, joutes, pas d'armes dans les viles de Flandre à la fin du Moyen Ages* (1300-1486) (Paris: École des Chartes, 1996); Marie-Thérèse Caron, “17 février 1454: le Banquet du Voeu du Faisan, fête de cour et stratégies de pouvoir,” *Revue du Nord* 78, no. 315 (1996): 269-88; Jeffrey Chipps-Smith, “Portable Propaganda: Tapestries as Princely Metaphors at the Courts of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold,” *Art Journal* (Summer 1989): 123-9.

<sup>769</sup> Brown and Small, 34.

This is, as I noted in the introduction, the most important claim underpinning my study of the expedition narrative – a position which challenges not only Huizinga’s assessment of the medieval mind as “childlike,” but also Jean Dufournet’s reading of the Burgundian courtly chronicle as narrowly derivative.<sup>770</sup> I aspire to understand the expedition narrative as an *adult* confection: that is, a deceptively complex and polyphonic blend of rhetorical efforts that reveals the Wavrins’ facility in speaking both within *and* on the margins of key chivalric discourses to articulate their concerns and achieve their goals. This chapter will consider these phenomena in turn, reading them for insights into the political and discursive environment in which the Wavrins lived and worked. In the first part, I shall draw some qualified conclusions about knightly *self-fashioning* in the Burgundian ethos – about the self-interested use of chivalric *topoi within* key discursive traditions of the court. I shall argue that knights were both able and inclined to use this symbolic vocabulary to burnish and enhance their status in the duke’s circle. As such, my analysis will both challenge and refine other studies which tend to read courtly self-fashioning in other sites and eras as the sign of a new, “modern” impulse toward individualism.<sup>771</sup>

The second part of the chapter will make a complementary claim: that the

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<sup>770</sup> In the context of his superb and insightful treatments of Philippe de Commines, Prof. Dufournet tends to position earlier chroniclers as literary foils. He reserves particularly pointed scorn for Jean de Wavrin, dismissing the *seigneur du Forestel* as a “mere compiler” and a “less intelligent” writer than many of his contemporaries. See Dufournet, *La Destruction des Mythes dans les Mémoires de Ph. de Commines* (Geneva: Droz, 1966), 18.

<sup>771</sup> I have in mind particularly the work of Jacob Burckhardt and Norbert Elias; as we shall see, the Burgundian court, read against the work of both writers, provides anomalous and problematic evidence.

sophistication and complexity of the chronicle militates against the prejudices of Huizinga and his successors concerning the alleged infantilism and decadence of the knightly class in fifteenth-century Burgundy. Narrators such as Wavrin were not only willing, but also able, to write *on the periphery* of key discursive traditions in order to articulate the complex and pragmatic concerns that they as warriors were uniquely positioned to convey. And they were perfectly content to abide by, and indeed to manipulate, this tension between chivalric idealism and professional pragmatism. These careful negotiations, which frequently result in the kinds of discursive ambiguities we have examined above, speak not only to the rhetorical sophistication of Wavrin and his courtly colleagues, but also to the linguistic complexity of the court itself.

I shall arrive at these insights presently. First, however, it is important to consider how the notion of “modern,” “self-conscious” individualism has been marshalled in the service of teleologies great and small, including the most influential – and most resonantly Hegelian – formulations of the past two centuries.

### **Part 1. Chivalric self-fashioning: Speaking within the discursive tradition**

Where and when did the “modern” cult of the individual take hold, disrupting the somnambulant corporatism of the Middle Ages, driving commercial and diplomatic and intellectual progress through the refined force of competitive self-interest? The question and its epistemological categories are of course fraught and problematic. But they inform such important and overarching claims of

traditional historiography that it is well worth considering who has responded – and how. The most influential voice of the nineteenth century was no doubt that of Jacob Burckhardt, who famously argued that the individual was born, his self-regard solidified and matured, in the urban society (including the courts) of Renaissance Italy. “In the Middle Ages,” by contrast, “both sides of human consciousness – that which turned within as that which was turned without – lay dreaming or half-awake beneath a common veil”:

The veil was woven of faith, illusion and childish prepossession, through which the world and history were seen clad in strange hues. Man was conscious of himself only as a member of a race, people, party, family or corporation – only through some general category. In Italy this veil first melted into air; an objective treatment and consideration of the state and of all things of this world became possible. The subjective side at the same time asserted itself with corresponding emphasis; man became a spiritual individual and recognized himself as such.<sup>772</sup>

This fascinating passage not only echoes Hegel’s prejudices – the Renaissance man, Burckhardt goes on to say, is like “the Arab [who] had felt himself as an individual at a time when other Asiatics knew themselves only as members of a race”<sup>773</sup> – but also anticipates Huizinga’s claims about the “childlike” medieval mind. It provides a teleological context for Burckhardt’s ideas about the genesis of the “individual,” a figure exemplified in Italy by the “many-sided man,” part scholar, part soldier, part

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<sup>772</sup> Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, transl. S.G.C. Middleton (London: Penguin, 1990), 98.

<sup>773</sup> Burckhardt, *Civilization*, 98. Compare this formulation with Hegel’s claim that “nothing subjective in the shape of disposition, Conscience, formal Freedom, is recognized” in the “Oriental World.” See *The Philosophy of History*, transl. J. Sibree (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2004 [orig. 1840]), 123. On traces of Hegelian thought in Burckhardt, see Peter Burke’s “Introduction” to the Penguin edition of Middleton’s translation of *Civilization* (esp. 11).

rhetor and jurist, who dazzled court and society with his distinctive personality and his unique and varied achievements.<sup>774</sup>

I have no intention of critiquing either the substance or the details of Burckhardt's foundational argument here. Nor is it my purpose to discuss the remarkable Burgundian interest in matters of antiquity, an interest which produced "learned knights" far more similar to Burckhardt's Florentines than the great Baseler wished to admit. A number of scholars, among them Arjo Vanderjagt and Gordon Kipling, have already pursued these questions admirably well.<sup>775</sup> My concern lies in the more subtle, and surprisingly tenacious, assumptions concerning medieval *psychology* which are coded into Burckhardt's formulations.<sup>776</sup> His claim that the medieval "mind" is corporatist and indiscriminating, bound up in "illusion and childish prepossession," certainly underwrites Huizinga's claims concerning the decadent courts of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold.<sup>777</sup> And in my view, it is *not* sufficiently exorcised by some of the recent scholarship focussing on the symbology

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<sup>774</sup> Burckhardt, *Civilization*, 98-119.

<sup>775</sup> See e.g. Vanderjagt, *Qui sa vertu anoblist*; Kipling, *The Triumph of Honour: Burgundian Origins of the Elizabethan Renaissance* (Leiden: Leiden UP, 1977).

<sup>776</sup> For a fascinating and provocative discussion of the ways in which radical and postmodern critics have tended to replicate these highly conservative formulations in their own work – presenting a "basic picture...of a static [medieval] homogeneous collective in which there simply could not be any self-conscious concern with individual identity or subjectivity because these could simply not exist in that society" – see David Aers, "A Whisper in the Ear of Early Modernists; or, Reflections on Literary Critics Writing the 'History of the Subject,'" in *Culture and History, 1350-1600: Essays on English Communities, Identities and Writing*, ed. D.Aers (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1992), 177-202.

<sup>777</sup> To his credit, Huizinga does acknowledge a certain kinship between the late medieval quest for honour and renown and the drive for fame which Burckhardt posits as an "essential quality of the Renaissance man" (see *Autumn*, 74). He also acknowledges the influence of "sober and calculating" politicians and strategists in "making history" during the period (103). But this does nothing to diminish his own reductive portrait of Burgundian noble psychology – of courtiers' "boyish insatiability" vis-à-vis "primitive romantic motifs" (84) – which seems at least partly indebted to Burckhardt.

of ducal power; for “propaganda,” as chivalric discourse is therein understood, serves merely as a tool for the manipulation of pliable collective opinions. With some important exceptions, scholars of Valois Burgundy have yet to grapple with questions of courtly *self-fashioning*, a subject which has attracted much attention in other (especially “early modern” and “Renaissance”) fields.<sup>778</sup>

Where, then, should we turn for guidance – and for the kinds of thinking tools necessary to engage such questions? Certainly Norbert Elias, the most famous student of courtly fashion and social change, is an indispensable source. Elias offers a rather less teleological, more culturally nuanced account of the rise of the “modern” individual than his Swiss predecessor: self-fashioning, he writes, was largely a product of *courtly* society – a category that does not exclude the courts of

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<sup>778</sup> For an influential example from the field of literary and cultural studies, see Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980). A recent collection of essays, *Self-Fashioning/Person(selbst)darstellung*, ed. R. Suntrup and J.R. Veenstra (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003), presents some of the most important contemporary work on these subjects. It is important to note that my own use of the term “self-fashioning” differs slightly from that of Suntrup and Veenstra, who write in their introduction that the Renaissance man is “free from restriction and coercion and is hence able, like an artist, to fashion himself into whatever image he prefer. ‘Self-emplotment’ and self-fashioning are part of Renaissance and early modern consciousness and hence find expression in the written and depicted testimonies of that period: the self ‘discovered’ is a self ‘fashioned’” (9). In this study, I have described a kind of “self-emplotment” which is not predicated on this sort of epochal “freedom,” but which nonetheless serves very particular, positioned and “personal” rhetorical ends. Without denying these scholars’ powerful insights into new senses and ideas of the individual that pervaded Renaissance culture, I therefore problematize the dichotomy between the “mature” self-consciousness of the early modern period and the “childlike” medieval mind that continues to exert an influence in other scholarly quarters. In its own way, I argue, the chivalric ethos is *also* an environment in which humans “fashion, are fashioned, and are aware of being fashioned by discourse” (the phrase is Veenstra’s; see his “The New Historicism of Stephen Greenblatt: On Poetics of Culture and the Interpretation of Shakespeare,” *History and Theory* 34, no. 3 (Oct. 1995): 182). It is also worth noting that, in focusing my analysis on a detailed explication of a single text, I have sought to avoid certain kinds of analytical anachronism and reductionism which Veenstra identifies in a critique of Greenblatt contained in another essay, “Self-Fashioning and Pragmatic Introspection” (in *Self-Fashioning*, 287-90). For more on this, see [f.n. 785](#) (below).



northern Europe, even in their fifteenth-century forms.<sup>779</sup> Princely courts, it is true, occupy a “transitional” position in Elias’s scheme, standing between the emotionally primitive culture of the landed nobility and the studious self-consciousness of *ancien régime* aristocrats; the chivalric culture of the Burgundian dukes, moreover, still strikes him as primarily unmediated and spontaneous, primarily *medieval*. Nonetheless, he does conceive the princely courts of the Valois era as a step in the development of the courtly society which was partly responsible for the birth of the “modern” individual.<sup>780</sup>

The key movements in this thesis are appealingly intuitive; they presume an instrumental relationship between the economic and political conditions of the aristocracy and its collective psychology. Free lords in their *demesnes* had no need to control their emotions; but once they found themselves breathing rarefied air, competing for the attention and favour of a prince, “the armour-plating of self-constraint” and a variety of newly-evolved “masks” tended to “distance [them] from each other more than before.” This produced a veritable revolution in *mentalités*:

The deliberate sizing up of a situation, the taking of bearings, in short, *reflections* intervene more or less automatically between the affective, spontaneous impulse to act and the actual performance of the action in word or deed. Often enough the people...are well aware of reflection as a component of their armour.<sup>781</sup>

“Intervening reflections,” then, stemming from courtly pressures and anxieties, played a key role in the process of “civilizing” “modern” “Western” “man.”<sup>782</sup>

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<sup>779</sup> The two most important works by Elias on this subject are *The Civilizing Process* (1939) and *The Court Society* (1969); I shall refer to both texts below.

<sup>780</sup> See Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, transl. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994 [orig. 1939]), 177.

<sup>781</sup> Elias, *Court Society*, 42-3.

Despite a certain common-sense appeal, these claims raise at least two objections. The notion, in the first place, that the demands of courtly life simply *created* mannered men and women out of “spontaneous and unrestrained” creatures strikes one not merely as reductive and patronizing, but also as fundamentally unprovable, given the paucity of relevant documents.<sup>783</sup> Second and more important, the search for the birth or emergence of “individualism” is, as I suggested above, a problematic exercise in *any* of its iterations. Elias, to be sure, appears less interested in the politics of cultural valorization than his predecessors; neither free-spirited Italians nor sombre Protestants emerge as protagonists. Nonetheless, his notion of “individualism” retains its positivist, and chauvinistic, élan: at a certain moment, a “dawn” of modernity, the psychology of the noble classes evolved from an emotionally primitive state to one of more clear-headed self-consciousness and strategic restraint.<sup>784</sup>

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<sup>782</sup> For a good introduction to Elias’s use of these terms, see *The Civilizing Process*, xi.

<sup>783</sup> It is perhaps telling that in one part of *The Civilizing Process*, Elias bases his sprawling argument on the analysis of just a single set of images, dated from around 1475-80, which, he argues, “convey particularly strongly the special quality of the atmosphere [of the knightly class] or, as we may call it, its emotional character, and the way it differs from our own”; see *The Civilizing Process*, 168-76. It is important to acknowledge, of course, that Elias does moderate the scope of his claims; the “expressions of feeling of medieval people,” he acknowledges, “are not unrestrained or without social molding in any *absolute* sense” (see 176). This does not rescue him from a form of patronizing reductionism that, as Robert van Krieken has written, “smells just a little, [being] reminiscent of how many used to view ‘primitive’ culture.” See van Krieken’s penetrating critique, “Violence, self-discipline and modernity: beyond the ‘civilizing process,’” in *Sociological Review* 37, no 2 (May 1989): 193-218 (esp. 212). For other useful (and related) critiques of Elias, see Malcolm Vale, “Ritual, Ceremony and the ‘Civilising Process,’” in *The Court as a Stage: England and the Low Countries in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. S. Gunn and A. Janse (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), 13-27, and Jan Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995).

<sup>784</sup> See Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 50-2, 110-14, 177, *et passim*. For an important qualification to my claims here, see [f.n. 778](#) (above).

In the past half-century, cultural and discursive theory has challenged and unsettled the very possibility of such self-regard – and in the process has disrupted the teleologies to which earlier thinkers subscribed. Even Elias is revealed to be something of an Hegelian, in practice if not in spirit (or in Spirit). Still, we must not let our critical scruples obscure the potential of his work; for even if we do not subscribe naively to notions of individual autonomy<sup>785</sup>, we can read Burgundian texts for evidence of various *personal* or *situated* symbolic and discursive negotiations – negotiations that cross temporal, epochal and geographical frontiers, challenging concepts of Burgundian “harvests” and Italian “dawns.” To do so, we need only read these texts with Elias, and *against* Huizinga and Burckhardt. For notwithstanding the fact that the student of the “civilizing process” understands medieval corporatism in a sense very similar to his predecessors, his reading of the *court* as a site for the taking of bearings – considered in combination with Huizinga’s

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<sup>785</sup> Susan Crane warns against this tendency in her brilliant and influential study *The Performance of Self: Ritual, Clothing and Identity during the Hundred Years War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002). Siding with the medievalist and literary scholar Lee Patterson, she argues that “chivalric performance is [best] imagined as the very origin of the chivalric subject, not the place where a prior, private self strives to incorporate performance” (128). It is a compelling argument, and a useful corrective to theoretically naïve positions; I am not sure, however, that it offers us the tools we need to analyze Waleran’s subterranean and self-interested manipulations of his discursive environment. I also fear that, in the case of studies such as mine, it could underwrite a kind of false choice. Chivalric performance, the “habitus” of medieval courtiers, did indeed “shape consciousness from the outside in, pressing people to identify with their learned but profoundly habitual ways of conducting their lives” (5). But that does not mean that we should limit our analysis of the many *other* discursive and bodily influences which contributed to medieval self-understanding and self-awareness – characterizing the courtier’s identity solely or primarily as a distillation of chivalric practices (or regarding his “sense of interiority” as a merely negative consequence of an uneven ascription of renown; see 136-7). I worry that, despite Crane’s own brilliant work in this area, such formulations may in other cases tend to replicate the reductionism of the Cartesian binaries they attempt to unsettle. This is unfortunate, because it tends to obscure the particularly local, contingent, strategic and *self-interested* rhetorical and discursive negotiations in which individual courtiers and knights regularly engaged – and which contribute to the fascinating tensions and ambiguities that emerge in Wavrin’s text. For a useful overview of current debates over “selfhood” in chivalric culture, see Crane, 125-8.

own insights into the importance of chivalric symbols in the Burgundian world – produces a revealing contradiction at the heart of the earlier teleologies. For it is precisely within and through the scope of chivalric symbology that Burgundian courtiers like Wavrin fashioned themselves. The stuff of their allegedly facile dreams and “fantasies,” the discursive tools and resources available to them, were exactly what they used to behave like moderns – as Elias and even Burckhardt understand the term.

Once we acknowledge this, it becomes hard to read chivalric culture as either strictly ludic and derivative, on one hand, or merely manipulative and propagandistic on the other. The stories and legends and images of Valois Burgundy come to look much more like sources of cultural meanings, ways of imagining self and “other” and the wider world, which Philip’s courtiers were both influenced by *and* prepared to redact and manipulate for various, often strikingly different and ambivalent, reasons. One of these, as I have suggested, concerns the imperative of *self-fashioning*: the courtier speaks and acts strategically in the interests of his own reputation, a privileged currency in the prestige economy of the court.<sup>786</sup> And it is precisely here that my reading of Wavrin’s chronicle, especially the tensions and ambiguities between its apologetic and strategic modes of depicting the *bon chevalier*,<sup>787</sup> begins to address wider questions concerning Valois culture. The text

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<sup>786</sup> The second “reason” which I shall explore in the next section of this chapter is, of course, the subtle and canny articulation of professional knowledge on the *peripheries* of chivalric discursive tradition – an effort to refine princely policy on the basis of personal experience, neither dispensing with nor fully underwriting the chivalric ideal.

<sup>787</sup> This forms the core of my argument in Chapter 3 (above).

offers a particularly vivid – if partial, implied, and often interstitial – perspective on this process: one which tends to be obscured in other sources.

It is important, of course, not to overstate this exceptionalism. Our narrative is certainly not the only contemporary text to speak to issues of courtly self-fashioning – nor am I the first reader to notice or comment on the process. Indeed, in a field dominated by structuralist studies of ducal symbology, a few essays do offer models for parsing the politics of expression at the level of the *courtier*.<sup>788</sup> A recent piece by Bernhard Sterchi, “The Importance of Reputation in the Theory and Practice of Burgundian Chivalry” (2006), for example, offers an insightful reading of Jean de Lannoy’s (1465) treatise on the duties of a nobleman. This little-known manuscript lays bare the stakes of chivalric discourse in the world inhabited by the Wavrans: “Across several passages,” Sterchi notes, “Lannoy evokes noble life and the court as a place where the spoken word has to be measured with care. The word is the arrow which cannot be taken back.”<sup>789</sup> Careful self-representation is necessary not just to prosper, but even to survive:

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<sup>788</sup> *Showing Status*, an important collection of essays edited by Wim Blockmans and Antheun Janse, is helpful in this respect. On the process of self-fashioning through symbolic interaction in late medieval social spheres, see Blockmans, “The Feeling of Being Oneself,” in *Showing Status: Representation of Social Positions in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 1-16. On the role of fiction in reflecting and reinforcing status codes, see Danielle Quérue, “Attitudes and Social Positioning in Courtly Romances,” 35-50. On the display of noble “talents” in the courtly context in general, see Paul de Win, “The Lesser Nobility of the Burgundian Netherlands,” in *Gentry and Lesser Nobility in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. Michael Jones (New York: St. Martin’s, 1986), 95-118. Finally, for a useful treatment of courtly self-consciousness in the Burgundian context, and its relationship with the development both of *mémoires* and of other written and spoken genres, see D.A.L. Morgan, “Memoirs and the self-consciousness of the court,” in Gunn and Janse, *Court as Stage*, 118-31.

<sup>789</sup> Bernhard Sterchi, “The Importance of Reputation in the Theory and Practice of Burgundian Chivalry: Jean de Lannoy, the Croÿs, and the Order of the Golden Fleece,” in *The Ideology of*

The *cop de langhe* is so important because someone's utterances are always judged by moral standards, creating someone's renown.... The crucial importance of reputation can make a man at court, or destroy him. A courtier is what people think of him.<sup>790</sup>

And if his peers think badly of the knight, it becomes "impossible for him to exert any influence, and in this respect he virtually ceases to exist."<sup>791</sup>

Sterchi's observations take us a long way from the bemused paternalism of a Huizinga, who tends to regard courtly exchange as mostly playful and superficial. They even take us beyond the premises of a Jeffrey Chipps-Smith, concerned with chivalric codes as "portable propaganda."<sup>792</sup> What we discover in Lannoy – and, just as decidedly, in Wavrin – is a self-conscious reflection upon both the stakes *and* the techniques of effective self-representation. No mere spectators, no naïve "players," Waleran and Jean are *contestants* in the broadest sense: conscious of the rules of the game, they measure their words carefully and exhibit their *gestes* to rivals and lords with a combination of defensiveness and aplomb. It is here that my observations on "strategic" discourse and rhetoric in the expedition narrative (articulated in Chapter 3 above) take on special relevance. Waleran's zealous, and apparently cynical, efforts to evade certain oaths and fulfill others on a *pro forma* basis speak to a keen awareness of the politics and symbology of promise-keeping in the Valois court.<sup>793</sup> Likewise, his craftily subterranean efforts to humiliate a hostile churchman – and crusading bishop – against whom he cannot act mutinously; his impulse to endure

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*Burgundy: The Promotion of National Consciousness, 1364-1565*, ed. D.J.D. Boulton and J.R. Veenstra (Leiden: Brill, 2006): 100.

<sup>790</sup> Sterchi, 101.

<sup>791</sup> Sterchi, 101.

<sup>792</sup> See Chipps-Smith, "Portable Propaganda," esp. 123.

<sup>793</sup> See Chapter 3 (above).

numbing pain rather than risk “murmurings” against his reputation; and his resolve to stage a purely emblematic “victory” over the otherwise invincible Turks point to a similar conclusion.<sup>794</sup> This veteran of the Duke Philip’s court and Duke Philip’s wars, who had long ago learned to act pragmatically in the face of defeat<sup>795</sup>, also understood the critical importance of mitigating loss with the signs and trappings, the words and symbols, of chivalric rectitude.

The fact that he spoke this language so fluently, and that he chose his words so carefully, does not in itself suggest that Waleran (or for that matter Wavrin) was a mere propagandist, a cold and disinterested manipulator of the system – any more than it suggests that he was a hedonistic *naïf*. Indeed, the most fascinating thing about our warriors’ semantic and symbolic games is that they cannot be understood as either purely credulous or entirely disinterested – or, in any meaningful sense, as either “medieval” or “modern.” To be sure, as I have suggested, the structures and *topoi*, the values and expectations, which these passages invoked were authentically “chivalric” formulations. We have every reason to believe that our knights were invested personally in those values and standards; yet we also have indisputable

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<sup>794</sup> See Chapter 3 (above).

<sup>795</sup> M. Yans notes, for example, that Waleran played a crafty and successful role in the disastrous siege of Calais (1436). “The failure of that expedition provoked the anger of the Ghent militias, who wanted to retaliate against the chiefs who involved them in the adventure: the lords of Croy, of Noyells, and Jean de Brimeu,” he notes. “By a ruse, Waleran protected the lord of Croy from the vengeance of the Genetars” (my transl.). See Yans, “Waleran de Wavrin,” in *Bibliographie Nationale* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1938), 133. For more on Waleran de Wavrin’s career as a soldier and courtier of Philip the Good, see Yans, 132-6; Antoinette Naber, “Jean de Wavrin, un bibliophile du quinzième siècle,” *Revue du Nord* 69, no. 273 (Apr-Jun 1987): 284-5; Jacques Paviot, “Waleran de Wavrin,” *Lexicon des Mittelalters* 8 (1997): 2081-2; H. Kruse, “Die Hofordnungen Herzog Philipps Des Guten von 1438,” in *Hofe und Hofordnungen 1200-1600*, ed. H. Kruse and W. Paravicini (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1999): 157. On Waleran’s estates and revenues, and his place in the regional nobility, see Cools, “Le prince,” 404, and Caron, “Enquête,” 415-20. In the latter text, Caron remarks that nobles such as Waleran “vivaient par tradition dans l’ambiance de la cour de Bourgogne” (418).

proof that they manipulated their stories and symbols of chivalric with a self-regard as clear-headed as that which might be expected of any “modern.”

Does this mean, as Elias might suggest, that Waleran de Wavrin lived and talked, wrote and fought, at a “transitional” moment in the development of the individual – a moment comparable to that of awakening from a dream, when the pragmatic demands of reality press in on the residual, irrational fantasies of the preceding night? This is certainly not impossible, at least not on the basis of evidence I have presented. I would prefer to argue, however, that the interactions between human desire, faith, belief and self-regard are *always* more complex and contradictory than schemes of psycho-historical “development” are inclined to suggest. When historians are blessed with the time to examine so-called “medieval” lives – and, more important, when they are blessed with sources as complex and richly ambiguous as the expedition narrative – these complex negotiations come alive. Reductive characterizations of the medieval “mind” fall away; and a preliminary, dawning, but still vivid sense of the complexity of medieval discursive *milieux*, and of medieval cultural moments, takes shape and increases in intensity with every turn of the manuscript page.

## **Part 2: Critiques, silences, suppressions: Speaking from the margins of the ‘cult of prowess’**

Gabrielle Spiegel recently reminded me of the dangers inherent in cavalier dismissals of Johan Huizinga’s conclusions – ideas which were by no means



diminished, and were indeed sharpened and animated, by his peculiar analytical prejudices. She was exactly right. Huizinga was a great thinker, and there is something curiously prescient about his close attention to the pressures exerted by cultural scripts upon the attitudes and actions of Europe's *Herfstijd* courts. It is as if he, a pioneer of that *other* cultural history, were close to practising cultural history as we understand it: a kind of post-modernist *avant le mot*. I once wrote (in a passage I still find pleasing) that Huizinga's Boucicaut and Jacques de Lalaing are men of a peculiarly linguistic turn: the sorts of chaps who might ride up mid-*pas*, flip their visor, and gravely acknowledge that "Il n'y a pas d'hors-texte." The poncing, preening Lalaing, we come to understand, was only freed from that particular prison-house when a cannon-ball shot by a sensible bourgeois artilleryman smashed his skull outside of Ghent in 1453 – bringing his conceits, and with them the "medieval" era itself, crashing to the ground.

For all its prejudices, this line of inquiry is still useful in ways that are seldom acknowledged. Huizinga's appreciation of the complexity of those powerful chivalric scripts, and of their curious and contradictory interpolations within textual and visual artifacts, reveals a keen sensitivity to ambiguity and difference.<sup>796</sup> Yet in depicting the primary source of these differences as a kind of cultural schizophrenia, a naïve psychological fluctuation between gilded ideals and ugly realities, Huizinga stunts his otherwise insightful project.<sup>797</sup> He ignores the possibility that differences

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<sup>796</sup> For a useful example of this critical sensitivity, see Huizinga's discussion of the ambivalent character of chivalric vows (*Autumn*, 97-8).

<sup>797</sup> Raymond L. Kilgour, an intellectual successor of Huizinga, framed this reductive psychological claim in the starkest terms: "[P]eople of violent passions, as were the people of the Middle Ages,

in art may speak to complex and *deliberate* negotiations in the society that produces and refracts it – reflecting both self-interested manipulations of key discursive traditions (as we saw above), and strategic transgressions of some of their normal boundaries. There *is*, in other words, a space outside of the text encoding the Burgundian cult of prowess. It is a space for strategic discourse<sup>798</sup>, and for appeals to values, including recessive chivalric values, that were also at times extolled in the Burgundian ethos.<sup>799</sup> Wavrin positions himself there from time to time; and in so doing, he demonstrates the willingness of the Burgundian nobleman to accept – and

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could never hope to maintain a life of strict control without dropping occasionally to the opposite extreme, as a natural relief” (*Decline of Chivalry*, 230). For Huizinga’s own account of this psychological infantilism and its effects on late medieval warfare and tactics, see *Autumn*, 111-18. For a brilliant discussion of an historical case of (apparent) chivalric self-abnegation which tends to problematize this thesis, see David Morgan, “From a Death to a View: Louis Robessart, Johan Huizinga, and the Political Significance of Chivalry,” in *Chivalry in the Renaissance*, ed. S. Anglo (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1990), 93-106.

<sup>798</sup> It is important, as I discussed in Chapter 3, to distinguish “strategic” modes of writing from “realist” ones. Though I argue here that lived experiences often prompted Burgundian writers to write in more strategic, and sometimes more transgressive, modes, it would be an error to conceive of their products as somehow transparently “realist” in character.

<sup>799</sup> In this regard, it is important to stress that members of the Burgundian nobility also became interested in, and were influenced by, ideas of a more humanistic and classical cast – particularly in the latter years of Philip’s principate. These concepts also provided the grist for critical reappraisals of the “cult of prowess” and other chivalric values. There is an important story to tell here; but because it is not as directly relevant to Wavrin’s texts as to other Burgundian works, I shall defer to the scholars who have specialized in the subject. See e.g. Blondeau, “Arthur et Alexandre,” 232-3; Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, “Choosing a Book in Late Fifteenth-Century England and Burgundy,” in *England and the Low Countries in the Middle Ages*, ed. C. Barron and N. Saul (Stroud: Allan Sutton, 1995), 72-4; and various works by Arjo Vanderjagt, including “Between Court Literature and Civic Rhetoric. Buonaccorso da Montemagno’s *Controversia de nobilitate*,” in *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context*, ed. K. Busby and E. Kooper (Amsterdam: John Benjamin, 1990), 561-72. Likewise, it is important to emphasize that other courtly genres, including diplomatic memoranda, correspondence and other political and administrative documents, testify to the great facility of noblemen in writing pragmatically about “real-world” concerns on the basis of lived experience and professional expertise. At times, these texts also reflect a careful and strategic (but still sensitive and delicate) approach to chivalric ideas; see for example Mark Warner, “Calculation and Miscalculation in Fifteenth-Century Politics: The Memoranda of Hue de Lannoy,” *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 49 (2005): 105-24. My choice not to include most of these texts – which tend to support the arguments I have laid out here – in my study is not meant to limit the scope of this analysis, but only to focus more rigorously on questions of chivalry and chivalric identity as they were broached and negotiated in the kinds of writing with which the Wavrins were most closely associated.

to articulate – the tensions between the ideal of the *preux* crusading knight and the professional knowledge that sprang from his lived experience.

There is no better example of this faintly transgressive speech than the critique of temerity in wars against the Turks – a critique, as we have seen, that punctuates the narrative at important junctures and in heavy moments. There is nothing, to be sure, that is specifically “unchivalric” about urging prudence and *sens* in contacts with an enemy; as we have seen, such things were regarded as virtues – albeit subordinate ones – in the Burgundian court.<sup>800</sup> But even in the oldest and most venerable chivalric texts, the tension between *prouesse* and prudence could be acute and destabilizing.<sup>801</sup> For its part, the expedition narrative offers a critique of temerity which not only problematizes King Wladyslaw’s heroism at Varna but culminates in János Hunyadi’s provocative suggestion that crusading enemies should be approached “soubtillement et malicieusement.”<sup>802</sup> It thus veers perilously close to the edge of a key discursive tradition of the court.<sup>803</sup> As texts such as Hugues

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<sup>800</sup> See above, Chapter 3.

<sup>801</sup> As argued at length in Chapter 3 (above). For related discussions, see Gaucher, *La biographie chevaleresque*, 590-3, and Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 296-304.

<sup>802</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 116.

<sup>803</sup> Here I agree with Elisabeth Gaucher, who argues in an important essay that the virtue of prowess (“un culte rendu à la prouesse”) was pre-eminent within Burgundian chivalric ideology, partly as a result of that society’s active resistance to the “modernizing” (and centralizing) impulses of clerics at the French court and their new prescriptions for the nobility. Hence I argue that Wavrin’s critique of temerity and his call for “malicieuse et soubtille” warfare against the infidel is at least somewhat transgressive of the mores articulated within that *culte* (see below and [f.n. 805 and 807](#)). It is admittedly true, as I noted in Chapter 3, that a number of writers, including those who were not simply purveying a “foreign” ideology, acknowledged that the virtues of *sens* and tactical acuity helped to characterize the *bon chevalier*. But ultimately the imperative of demonstrating “la prouesse,” especially against a crusading enemy, was the most pressing task for a warrior; for courage itself, in the words of Philippe Contamine, was “always threatened and continually called into question.” As such, arguing against crusading zeal was potentially dangerous. See Gaucher, “La confrontation de l’idéal chevaleresque,” 3-25, and Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, transl. M. Jones (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), 259. For a related discussion of

de Lannoy's *L'instruction d'un jeune prince* make clear, the "saint voyage" was regarded as a lofty chivalric attainment because it involved valour against "sarassins mescréans"<sup>804</sup>; in such a light, Hunyadi's efforts to temper or limit traditional forms of heroism seem at least faintly subversive.<sup>805</sup>

Yet as we have seen, Wavrin weaves them into his text deftly, carefully insulating himself from the scent of unorthodoxy. Indeed, emphatic as his critique appears to the sensitive reader, it never unsettles our sense of his (or Waleran's) chivalric rectitude, the markers of his belonging in Philip's world. The epic toning of the Varna passage blends approbation for King Wladyslaw's heroism with a critical

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(and some important qualifications to) my claims here, see [Chapter 4, f.n. 663](#); and see Jacques Paviot, "Noblesse et croisade à la fin du moyen âge," *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales* 13 (2006): 69-84 (esp. 84).

<sup>804</sup> As Lannoy notes, one of the few situations in which knights traditionally have been dubbed is "es guerres sur sarassins mescréans nostre foy," where warriors, "confians en la grace de Dieu et en la diligence de leurs corps, en espérance ad ce jour d'acquérir honneur et bonne renommée, ont à telz grans besoingz et périlz requis ordre de chevalerie, espérans que par icelle leur force et vertu en croistroit" (Potvin, *Oeuvres*, 413).

<sup>805</sup> In making this claim, I do not wish to suggest that the Burgundian court was naïve in matters of tactics and strategy; other writers and warriors, as I noted above, negotiated the boundaries of the "cult of prowess" with appeals to pragmatics. It is also important to acknowledge David Whetham's recent claim (in *Just Wars and Moral Victories*, 2009) that many late medieval noblemen considered some forms of tactical "craft and fraud" allowable in certain contexts – notably in "feuds" which had been duly declared between princes (59, 244-51). Theorists such as Honoré de Bouvet even allowed for the possibility of fleeing from Saracens in some cases (57). And indeed, the *De re militari* of Vegetius and Christine de Pisan's *Faits d'armes et de chevalerie*, both of which were known in the Burgundian ethos, seem to reinforce the substance of Hunyadi's words at Nicopolis: "A rash and inconsiderate pursuit," the Roman notes in Book III, "exposes an army to the greatest danger possible, that of falling into ambushes and the hands of troops ready for their reception" (see *Military Institutes of Vegetius*, transl. John Clarke [London, 1757]: 151; on Christine, see Whetham, *Just Wars*, 60-68). This work seems to have influenced Charles the Bold, Philip's son, in the 1470s; see Christopher Allmand, "Did the *De Re Militari* of Vegetius influence the military ordinances of Charles the Bold?" *Publication du Centre Européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes (XIVe-XVe siècles)* 41 (2001): 135-44. None of this, however, unseats my contention that both the specific form of Hunyadi's utterance and Wavrin's broader critique of impolitic courage are positioned in a "strategic" space that occupies the carefully negotiated edges of mainstream crusading discourse in the court of Philip the Good – a fact attested not only by the contents of other contemporary works (see [f.n. 807 below](#)), but also by Wavrin's delicate efforts to distance Waleran from the "source" of the critique. See below; and for a related discussion, see Monica Barsi, "Le 'passage d'outremer': Un segment historiographique de l'actualité à la cour de Philippe le Bon," *L'analisi linguistica e letteraria* 1 (1998): 31-46 (esp. 35).

treatment of his zealous folly; neither sentiment, as Le Brusque observes, completely overtakes the other.<sup>806</sup> Hunyadi, who articulates the critique, is an ideal proxy: both a crusading knight who – in light of his chivalric *bonae fides* – is entitled to say such things *and* a third-person voice which is safely distant from the narrator's pen. Likewise, in the scene outside of Giurgiu, it is the Cardinal's "notables docteurs en phizique et cyrurgie" who lecture Waleran on the dangers of temerity. The captain himself, having already demonstrated his self-abnegating valour, cannot now be blamed for his subsequent non-participation in the castle siege. The point is made, and the lord of Wavrin's integrity remains intact.

The most fascinating case of this strategic ambiguity is certainly the passage recounting Hunyadi's final speech near Nicopolis. His call for restrained, underhanded and opportunistic action against the Turks seems curiously base and worldly when read against the portraits of "noble" crusading drawn by a number of Burgundian writers and *romanciers*.<sup>807</sup> It thus falls to the margins of a courtly discourse which – even as it sanctions appeals to prudence – is so concerned with

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<sup>806</sup> See above and Le Brusque, "Des chevaliers," 266-7.

<sup>807</sup> Both the pragmatic undertones and the gritty candour of Hunyadi's demand, which stymies the pursuit of great deeds of arms (and thus potentially calls into question Waleran's courage), seems at least somewhat transgressive of the image of crusading presented in many contemporary chivalric texts. For just a few portraits of "orthodox" heroism in the East, see selected passages in the *Livre de Beaudouin, Comte de Flandre* (ca. 1440-55; see e.g. Régnier-Bohler, *Splendeurs*, 23-6, 96-100); Wauquelin's *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople* (1448; see e.g. Régnier-Bohler, *Splendeurs*, 125-6, 164-7); Lannoy's *L'instruction d'un jeune prince* (ca. 1450); *Gillion de Trazegnies* (1450; see e.g. Régnier-Bohler, *Splendeurs*, 264-6, 270-2, 277-82); *Jehan d'Avesnes* (mid-15<sup>th</sup> century; see e.g. *L'histoire de tres vaillans princez monseigneur Jehan d'Avennes*, ed. D. Quéruel (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 1997), 165-80); and the newsletters depicting events at Belgrade (1456) and Arzilla (1471) contained in Jean de Wavrin's own *Anciennes Chroniques d'Angleterre*. (On crusading in *Jehan d'Avesnes*, see also Danielle Quéruel, "Jean d'Avesnes ou la littérature chevaleresque à la cour des ducs de Bourgogne au milieu du XVe siècle," *Perspectives Médiévales* 14 (1988): 41-4, esp. 43.)

crusading courage as to render such talk uncomfortably transgressive. Hence the fascinating responses of Waleran and Cardinal Condulmer, who leave the field of battle in some confusion (“ne scavoient mettre bonnement conseil en eulx”), feeling angry and frustrated that they have not been able to do better.<sup>808</sup> Wavrin places a strong emphasis on Hunyadi’s pragmatic words, which our protagonists neither challenge nor gainsay. Yet their complete detachment from the Hungarian’s sentiments, which justify their strategic retreat, serves to reinforce Waleran’s *own* chivalric *bonae fides*. He did not say such things; he wanted nothing more than to fight the Turks. A tense balancing act is at work again: integrity preserved, point made.<sup>809</sup>

If these careful negotiations speak to Wavrin’s facility in speaking from the margins of a dominant discourse, so too do the telling omissions – or, more accurately, the suppressions – of chivalric themes in moments when circumstances seem to call for their inclusion. In Chapter 4, I discussed the curious paradox surrounding Wavrin’s references to the Greek pantheon: even as he invokes the journeys of Hercules and Achilles to enhance the grandeur of Waleran’s Eastern adventures, he fails to mention the most obvious, most resonantly *Burgundian* precursor – Jason – whose plundering of the Golden Fleece bears a certain

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<sup>808</sup> “Courrouchies et doullentz de ce quilz navoient peu mieulz faire”: Wavrin-Hardy, 116-17.

<sup>809</sup> It is interesting to note, as Jean Devaux has, that the *indiciaire* Jean Molinet presents a similar exchange between a pair of captains who are facing an ambush. The Burgundian captain’s first impulse is to undertake deeds of arms, while his companion, a *condottiere*, only wants to protect his convoy. Molinet agrees with the prudent *condottiere* – and the Burgundian eventually comes to share his view. But it is noteworthy that here, as in our narrative, the voice of restraint does not emanate from the Burgundian knight, whose first impulse betrays his selflessness and desire to achieve great deeds of arms. See Devaux, “L’image du chef de guerre,” 122.

resemblance to Geoffroy de Thoisy's *guerres de course* on the coasts of the Black Sea. Perhaps this elision was meant merely to compensate for (and de-emphasize) Thoisy's miserable failures in these exercises; but as I argued above, it also seems possible that Wavrin, who had the benefit of Waleran's mature hindsight, perceived that the Jason-model *itself* presented a dangerously naïve way of imagining warfare in the region. For want of diplomatic subtlety and cultural understanding, the Burgundian pirates suffered a number of unnecessary setbacks; those bitter experiences, *hors-texte*, exerted a significant editorial influence on Wavrin's "chivalric" confection.

Strategic omissions and silences, then, join carefully framed, carefully hedged critiques in a text that defies simple or reductive categorization. What are we to glean from all of this – from Wavrin's rhetorical subtlety, from his uneven, and at times ambivalent, treatment of prowess? The most important conclusion serves to modify our prejudices, steeled in Huizinga's forge, concerning the political, diplomatic and military naïveté of the late medieval nobility. Raymond Kilgour describes a Burgundian noble culture that is "inherently theatrical" – a "child's game...where no real sincerity is possible," and where "tradition and etiquette...exercise a tyrannical sway over the court."<sup>810</sup> He is wrong in at least two ways. Malcolm Vale has already demonstrated that Burgundian military practices – jousts and the like – served definite and pragmatic functions for the gilded knights.<sup>811</sup> I hope that my analysis helps to demonstrate that courtly *discourse* was likewise

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<sup>810</sup> Kilgour, *Decline of Chivalry*, 228.

<sup>811</sup> See Vale, *War and Chivalry*, *passim*.

sophisticated, likewise attuned to the “recent” and the “real.” These factors, to be sure, stood in a kind of tension with elements of chivalric ideology; but even as warriors such as Wavrin continued to imagine their world through traditional narrative lenses, they were able to think critically and write subversively about the *limits* of that vision. Living in the shadow of Crécy and Agincourt, acutely conscious that a Genetar’s stone could fell a noble knight, they were neither intellectually nor culturally “premodern” in the sense that Kilgour’s formulation implies.

The cult of prowess, in sum, lived on as an interpretive framework; but burghers’ arrows and Turkish bombards often pointed men’s thoughts in other directions. Evidence of that tense and dynamic process can be found in works that literary scholars have until recently tended to disparage or ignore<sup>812</sup> – most particularly, in the uneven prose of Burgundy’s advisors, chroniclers and historians, whose texts bear special witness to the challenges of making rhetoric responsive to encounters between ideology and lived experience.<sup>813</sup> The search is worth the effort:

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<sup>812</sup> Huizinga does deal briefly with the tensions between the ideal of prowess and the evidence of “treason and cruelty” in knightly warfare as presented in the courtly chronicles. But in his highly condescending reading, the former, a rhetorical conceit, tends often to be unseated by the “journalistic” requirement to report on the latter. Several courtly chroniclers “begin with high-sounding declarations that they write for the glorification of knightly virtue and glorious feats of arms,” he writes. “But none of them can stick to it.... It was as if the spirit of these writers – a superficial spirit, one has to admit – employed the fiction of knighthood as a corrective for the incomprehensibility their own time had for them. It was the only form that allowed for even an imperfect understanding of events” (72).

<sup>813</sup> A similar awareness of Turkish military craft and guile, for instance, animates a few of the advisory texts commissioned for the duke, including Thoisy’s *Advis pour faire conquête sur le Turcq* (in Finot, cited above). On the “strategic” contours of these texts, see also Heron, *Il Fault Faire Guerre*, 81-6. As concerns the historians: for a useful and relevant study of George Chastellain’s evolving *political* views vis-à-vis the crusade project, see Le Brusque, “Une campagne qui fit long feu,” esp. 541-3. It is also useful to note Elisabeth Gaucher’s argument that one can find evidence of a similar “conversation” in the ambiguities evident in some fifteenth-century chivalric biographies. See “Entre l’histoire et le roman: la biographie chevaleresque,” in *Revue des Langues Romanes* 97, no. 1 (1993): 15-25 (esp 24-5); and see Quérue, “Jean d’Avesnes,” 43. The romance *Le*



for just as one need not look to the works of dissidents to discover polysemy in Soviet literature, one need not look to Philippe de Commynes to discover pragmatism, self-awareness, and other markers of cultural “modernity” in the historical literature of the Valois dukes of Burgundy. It is all there, in Wavrin’s chronicle, unsettling the prose and pulling at the seams.

### **Concluding remarks: The potential for future study**

Michel Foucault was once asked how he presumed to speak authoritatively across disciplines, in so many specialist registers. What sort of scholar did he consider himself to be? His answer – that he was “a reader” – should serve both to challenge and to comfort students of medieval texts and cultures. Armed with less subtlety than a Foucault, groping our way through a vast and stubbornly “foreign” cultural terrain, we may feel a sense of hubris in positing claims that cross disciplinary boundaries and unsettle the epistemological categories of the traditional thesis. Yet however preliminary, however naïve, our findings may prove to be, a good-faith effort to read the traces of medieval discourse sensitively in their context *always* constitutes a worthy apprenticeship in the field. We are entitled to be “readers” – to craft new and contingent interpretations based on encounters with

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*Petit Jehan de Saintré* has likewise attracted the attention of scholars interested in its thematic tensions and its seemingly subversive passages. See e.g. Quérue, “Attitudes and Positioning in Courtly Romances: Hainault, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries,” in Blockmans and Janse, *Showing Status*, 35-50 (esp 48-50); Guy R. Mermier, “Le message paradoxal du *Petit Jehan de Saintré* à courtoisie et à chevalerie au XVe siècle,” *Studi Mediolatini e Volgari* 26 (1978-79): 143-59 (esp. 159); and Allison Kelly, “Abbreviation and Amplification: *Jehan de Saintré*’s Rewriting the Artifice of History,” *French Forum* 11, no. 2 (1986): 133-50. Finally, on the rhetorical techniques used to urge prudence in a hortatory text (Fillastre’s *Histoire de la Toison d’Or*), see Heron, 169-77.

texts – because reading is disorienting in fruitful ways. It entails humility, not arrogance: for by eschewing certain disciplinary procedures and avoiding certain fashionable questions, we suspend comfortable heuristics in an effort to engage with the historical “other” on something closer to its own terms. And if our subsequent analysis tends, despite our best intentions, to recolonize the past, it stands at least in a kind of tension with other, more traditional colonial projects – resisting their impulse towards self-replication, and problematizing the entire historical enterprise in salutary ways.

That’s why reading is important. And as I reflect, in these closing passages of my own reader’s report on Wavrin’s expedition narrative, on the potential for future research in this area, I can reduce my primary suggestion to a single phrase: *more readings*. In the past decade, the field of Burgundian studies has benefited immensely from careful and illuminating studies of texts and manuscripts, many of which were previously relegated to catalogues and surveys. The work of Bernhard Sterchi on Jean de Lannoy, of Graeme Small on Georges Chastelain, of Arjo Vanderjagt on the Latin authors, of David Wrisley on crusading manuscripts, of Danielle Quérue! on chivalric biographies, and of Jacques Paviot on crusading romances<sup>814</sup> – to name just a few – have added nuance and complexity to our understanding of an ethos which has too often been maligned and caricatured in the service of presentist narratives. I hope that my special focus on narrative complexity,

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<sup>814</sup> I have in mind, for example, Sterchi, “Importance of Reputation”; Graeme Small, *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1997); Vanderjagt, *Qui sa vertu anoblist*; Wrisley, “Situating Islamdom in Jean Germain’s *Mappemonde Spirituelle*,” *Medieval Encounters* 13, no. 2 (2007): 326-46; Quérue!, “Attitudes and Social Positioning”; Paviot, “La croisade et l’orient dans la bibliothèque des ducs de Bourgogne,” in *Les ducs*, 201-38.

on the tensions and ambiguities that trace out multiple, often contending rhetorical currents in Wavrin's chronicle, has made a small contribution to this larger project – providing an heuristic which might be applied to other readings that enhance (and simultaneously challenge and problematize) our understanding of the remarkable Burgundian moment.

I imagine, for example, that this approach might be well suited to studies of the memorialists and chroniclers writing in and around the Burgundian court and its satellites in the mid-fifteenth century; such neglected writers as Jean Lefèvre de St-Remy and Enguerrand de Monstrelet produced especially stilted and uneven – and potentially revealing – texts. As the pioneering work of Livia Visser-Fuchs suggests, one might use the heuristic of textual difference to consider what the compilation and redaction of contemporary newsletters in their confections reveals about the range and diversity of narrative forms which were “allowable” and current in the Burgundian milieu.<sup>815</sup> Nor does the present study, which focuses so narrowly on the poignant and ambiguous expedition narrative, exhaust the scholarly potential of this approach to Jean de Wavrin's work. The final volume of the *Anciennes Chroniques d'Angleterre* alone offers a dazzling compendium of contemporary texts and newsletters which deserve to be read critically both beside and against each other for insights into the milieux that produced them.<sup>816</sup>

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<sup>815</sup> Visser-Fuchs is the scholar most responsible for helping us to understand the redaction and compilation of Wavrin's *Anciennes Chroniques* – and, by extension, that of similar works undertaken by the Monstrelet-continuator, Lefèvre and others.

<sup>816</sup> I am grateful to David Wrisley for pointing out and reflecting on this important potential area of investigation.

And despite the great depth of field, the thick description, employed in this study, there remains a great deal to be said about – and to be *done with* – the expedition narrative itself. Indeed, as I noted in a series of parenthetical comments throughout the thesis, Georges Le Brusque, Vladimir Agrigoroaei and I have only begun to explore the cultural and political significance of the text – and to consider what it might reveal when read against contemporary works. My brief survey of various Hungarian, Polish, Greek and Turkish accounts of the Battle of Varna, and of the crossing of the Straits by Murad’s troops, for example, points not just to a need for more comprehensive study of these difficult chronicles, but also to the value of a comparative analysis examining their textual differences and probing their political and cultural meanings.<sup>817</sup> This would involve a project of reading, translation and analysis that far exceeded the scope of the present study. But it would almost certainly reward the effort – offering insights, in a way that few studies have yet managed, into the political, ideological and rhetorical cross-currents between East and West, and into various perceptions of the place of Burgundy in contemporary crusading politics.

All of this is both promising and intellectually tempting; indeed, on several occasions I have considered expanding this thesis to respond to these questions. But this would surely strain the rhetorical tendons of an already diverse study. I have therefore kept a narrow focus on the expedition document and its *internal* social logic – guided in this direction by the gentle and timely interventions of colleagues and

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<sup>817</sup> The same could be said of Le Brusque’s interesting but still preliminary comparison between Wavrin’s and Chalcocondylas’ versions of the Battle of Varna; see “Des chevaliers,” 266-7.

mentors, who have reminded me of the practical importance of maintaining an effective and manageable argument, not to mention a reasonable scholarly appetite. The moveable feast that is *la maison de Wavrin* remains, however, only lightly sampled. It promises to support a great deal more than this journeyman's essay. If I am fortunate enough to continue my studies in the coming years, I will surely undertake broader inquiry into the works of Jean and Waleran de Wavrin, and into their complicated politics and their diverse preoccupations. This is, as I suggested above, precisely the sort of reading that can open wider windows on the thought-world of the Valois court. But for now, for reasons of economy and rhetorical solidity, they must stay closed. "Cy preut fin le premier livre...des chroniques d'Angleterre," as Jean de Wavrin wrote some 540 years ago.

"Et sensieut de second."<sup>818</sup>

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<sup>818</sup> "Here ends the first book...of the chronicles of England. The second will follow" (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 119.

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**Authorship and composition of the expedition narrative:**

Toward a working hypothesis

Fundamental textual questions, when applied to medieval texts, are often deceptively complicated. This is especially true in the realm of historiography, where both unattributed borrowings and extensive redactions often blur the line between the “original” and the “interpolated.” Who wrote the expedition narrative that appears in Jean de Wavrin’s compilation? If more than one person was involved in its composition, who redacted it, and when, and which strategies did they use? Answers – *clear* answers – are frustratingly elusive. As Livia Visser-Fuchs has demonstrated, the mere inclusion of a text in Wavrin’s *Chroniques* is no guarantee of his authorship; her survey of his work reveals relatively few traces of his authorial pen, only a handful of them substantial. There is no explicit attribution of authorship in the expedition narrative, nor is there compelling external evidence to help us settle, with total confidence, on one or more authors or redactors. Even the narrative interventions which appear sporadically in the text say nothing conclusive about its *écrivain*.

This uncertainty is reflected in the contradictory – and often carefully qualified – hypotheses that have been proposed by scholars and editors over the years. William Hardy, the second person to edit the narrative,<sup>819</sup> suggests that the

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<sup>819</sup> In *Recueil des Croniques et Anchiennes Istories de la Grant Bretagne*, ed. William Hardy, 39, 5, p. 5-119. The first editor, Emilie Dupont (1863), offered no specific suggestions concerning the authorship of the narrative, though she did provide useful insights into the literary relationship between Jean de Wavrin and his nephew; see Dupont, *Anchiennes Chronicques d’Engleterre par Jehan*

text “may have been prepared by Wavrin at his nephew’s desire” immediately upon Waleran’s return from the crusading expedition. This seems feasible, Hardy notes, in light of the close literary relationship between the two men, which was the catalyst for the preparation of the *Anciennes Chroniques* themselves: “apres votre retour...de Constantinople,” Jean tells his nephew in the dedicatory preface, “par pluseurs fois vous pleut prendre vos devises a moy, touchans de plusieurs belles et anchiennes hystoires....”<sup>820</sup> Hardy even speculates that the “interesting and entirely original” expedition narrative served as a kind of literary pilot project for the *Chroniques*; its success “probably suggested to [Waleran] the advantage of a compilation of chronicles of England, and the fitness of [Jean] for the task.”<sup>821</sup> This early thesis – positing the narrative as the product of an early literary collaboration between uncle (*écrivain*) and nephew (oral informant) – continues to be embraced by literary scholars and historians; Antonia Grandsen’s landmark *Historical Writing in England* asserted it in 1982, as did studies by both Alain Marchandisse and Vladimir Agrigoroaei in 2006.<sup>822</sup>

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*de Wavrin, Seigneur de Forestel: Choix de Chapitres Inédits* t. III (Paris: Renouard, 1863), xxxiii-xxxiv. For the sake of economy, I shall follow Visser-Fuchs’ convention below, referring to these to editions as Wavrin-Hardy and Wavrin-Dupont respectively.

<sup>820</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 39, 1, p. 2. Wavrin goes on to say that it was Waleran who suggested to him the possibility – and desirability – of undertaking his history of the English kingdom.

<sup>821</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 39, 1, p. cxliv.

<sup>822</sup> Grandsen writes: “Waurin probably began writing history in 1446, with an account of the naval expedition sent by Duke Philip to Constantinople to fight the Turks in 1444.” “The clarity and detail of the narrative and the prominence given to Waleran’s exploits suggest that Waurin must have written on Waleran’s information and probably at his request.” See Grandsen, *Historical Writing in England c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), 189. See also Alain Marchandisse, “Jean de Wavrin, un chroniqueur entre Bourgogne et Angleterre, et ses homologues bourguignons,” *Le Moyen Âge* 112, no. 3-4 (2006): 511; and Vladimir Agrigoroaei, “Literary Leakings into Wavrin’s Danube: Three Strongholds and a Broken Bombard,” in *Between Worlds: John Hunyadi and his Time. Acts of the Symposium Held at Alba-Iulia, 8-11 August 2006*



But other writers, mindful, perhaps, of the many personal and psychologically penetrating elements of the text, have ascribed a more active literary role to the crusader himself. Nicolae Iorga, who prepared a third edition of the narrative in 1927, suggested that Waleran “dictated” much of the text to Jean.<sup>823</sup> Livia Visser-Fuchs, as we have seen, speculates that Waleran “wrote a report of his campaign for Duke Philip,”<sup>824</sup> and gave a “more detailed and circumstantial [version] to his uncle,”<sup>825</sup> which the latter chose to interpolate into the *Chroniques* near the end of his life. This, she notes, would be in keeping with Jean’s *modus operandi* of drawing upon, and often only slightly redacting, pre-existing newsletters concerning contemporary events.<sup>826</sup> The most equivocal assessment comes from Georges Le Brusque, whose thoughtful essay on the contents of the expedition narrative is the only one to appear in a major scholarly journal to date.<sup>827</sup> Like Iorga, Le Brusque

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(forthcoming). Accessed online (28 Sept 2007): <http://www.patzinakia.ro/StudiaPatzinaka/Agrig-WavrinDanube.htm>.

<sup>823</sup> Nicolae Iorga, “Les aventures ‘Sarrazines’ des Français de Bourgogne au XVe siècle,” *Mélanges d’histoire générale de l’université de Cluj* 1927: 15. Iorga here seems to give Waleran more creative credit than does Hardy, who – though he also refers to the nephew’s “dictation” – notes that Jean “derived” his information from it. See Wavrin-Hardy, cxliv.

<sup>824</sup> Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 265. It is not clear to me, based on the passage Visser-Fuchs cites, that Waleran necessarily *wrote* a report for the duke; Wavrin notes that “il luy eut raconte leffect de son voyage,” a phrase Colin Imber translates to mean that he “informed Philip about the outcome of his journey” (see Wavrin-Hardy, 119; and Colin Imber, *The Crusade of Varna: 1443-45* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 166). One suspects that this may have been done orally.

<sup>825</sup> Writing in 1938, M. Yans suggested in similar (but more general) terms that Waleran “lui a fourni de multiples renseignements écrits, surtout sur les événements dont il fut témoin.” Yans, “Wavrin, Waleran de,” in *Biographie Nationale, publiée par l’Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*, t. 27 (Bruxelles: Brulant, 1938), 136.

<sup>826</sup> See Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 264-6.

<sup>827</sup> Georges Le Brusque, “Des chevaliers bourguignons dans les pays du Levant: L’expédition de Walleran de Wavrin contre les Turcs dans les *Anchiennes Croniques d’Engleterre* de Jean de Wavrin,” *Le Moyen Âge* 106, no 2 (2000): 255-75. In the preceding chapters I examined and critiqued parts of Le Brusque’s article, and of the more elaborated version of the essay which appeared in his doctoral thesis, “From Agincourt (1415) to Fornovo (1495): Aspects of the Writing

suggests that the “main source for Jean’s report was Waleran’s own oral narration of his adventures to his uncle.” But the ambiguities of the text, and the relative paucity of comparator texts ascribed to Waleran,<sup>828</sup> make it hard decide how much of the prose style to attribute to the uncle, and what (if anything) to credit to the nephew. “Probably both [Waleran] and Jean should be considered as the narrative’s authors,” he writes. “In fact the absence of one single author helps us to see ‘*l’oeuvre [se transformer] en oeuvre ouverte.*’”<sup>829</sup>

Le Brusque’s hesitations, and his carefully qualified conclusion, are both salutary. Given the sparseness of evidence, the task of assigning authorship is indeed fraught with dangers. Nonetheless, thinking through the problem in a detailed way is a foundational step for my analysis, which is concerned not only with the rhetorical motives of particular author(s)/redactor(s), but also with the possibility of *composite* authorship, of multiple voices and discourses operating in the same textual space. In the pages that follow, I shall propose an hypothesis that tries to account for these voices, and for the techniques of composition that brought them together. I will not make sweeping or dogmatic claims; but I *am* confident that steps in this process will help to provide an understanding of the text’s thematic structure and narrative economy.

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of Warfare in French and Burgundian 15<sup>th</sup> Century Historiographical Literature” (King’s College London, 2001).

<sup>828</sup> Note, however, that Le Brusque does not here consider Waleran de Wavrin’s 1464 *Avis* to Duke Philip concerning recent crusading proposals – an unfortunate oversight, given certain concordances between the two texts which I shall explore below. I am indebted to Livia Visser-Fuchs for this suggestion, and I look forward to reading her study of the *Avis*, which will be included in her forthcoming monograph on Wavrin.

<sup>829</sup> Le Brusque, “From Agincourt to Fornovo,” 187; he is using terminology drawn from Umberto Eco. See Eco, *L’oeuvre ouverte* (Paris: Seuil, 1979).

The first step in forging such an hypothesis is taking stock of the facts one knows. Limited as these may be, they do support some basic propositions – such as the claim, made by scholars from Hardy to Visser-Fuchs, that the narrative, or some version of it, was composed long before its insertion into the *Anciennes Chroniques d'Angleterre*. Given the remarkably vivid recollections contained in parts of the text, it seems probable that these were recorded shortly after Waleran's return from the Balkans in 1446, "while...the facts and incidents were yet all fresh in the memory of the relater."<sup>830</sup> It is also reasonable to assume that these accounts – whether they stood alone for a time or appeared from the start in the form of our narrative – may have lived a "separate life" from the *Chroniques*.<sup>831</sup> The expedition story certainly wasn't intended for inclusion in the original compilation, which was envisioned as a four-volume history of England extending from mythical origins to the end of Henry IV's reign, some 30 years prior to Waleran's expedition. And even as Jean expanded his masterwork, adding a fifth and later a sixth volume covering events up to Edward IV's restoration in 1471, he seems to have had no intention of interpolating the crusade narrative; it was only while planning a second, revised redaction of the sixth volume – perhaps around 1470 – that he decided to insert it.<sup>832</sup> There is, therefore, a kind of lacuna, a gap of more than two decades between the most likely dates of its composition and compilation. And the best explanation for that gap is

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<sup>830</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 39, 1, p. cxliv.

<sup>831</sup> The phrase is Visser-Fuchs'; see *Warwick and Wavrin*, 266.

<sup>832</sup> For a detailed overview of ways in which the *Anciennes Chroniques* were first envisioned and then expanded, see Wavrin-Hardy, 39, 1, p. xlvi-xlvii. On Wavrin's decision to insert the expedition narrative, see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 212-13. The 1470 estimate, as noted in Chapter 2 (above), is Visser-Fuchs'.

that this text – or, more probably, a source text on which it was based – existed, circulated, and was shared by and among *la famille Wavrin* during the intervening years.<sup>833</sup>

It is with these facts in mind – and attending to Jean’s familiar practice of “importing” integral reports into his *Recueil* – that Visser-Fuchs proposes Waleran’s personal authorship of the narrative, and suggests that Jean interpolated it whole, at a much later date, into the *Chroniques*.<sup>834</sup> This is certainly possible; yet I think that internal evidence of the sort that Le Brusque begins to unveil in his article – evidence of internal ambiguities, differences, tensions – prompts us to reconsider it. Certain parts of the narrative, especially a number of contextual episodes dealing with events that predated the expedition, seem strikingly different from the rest of the text. They betray various chronological inconsistencies, thematic and stylistic differences, and forms of uneven characterization which suggest the traces of different hands, different sources.<sup>835</sup> Moreover, they contain historical distortions and forms of political naivety that would seem odd emanating from the well connected and

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<sup>833</sup> Visser-Fuchs provides intriguing evidence that the expedition narrative, or a source text, may have circulated as an independent report in the Burgundian ethos. A collection of documents (BN ms. fr. 1278) compiled by the prominent de Lannoy family, many of them concerned with crusading matters, contains an account of János Hunyadi’s 1448 battle against the Turks in Kosovo; in it a “contemporary hand made a note in the left corner of the first page...: *Il fault relier ce coier cy avoecq le voyage de monseigneur de Wavrin.*” The owner or scribe the manuscript “must have owned a copy of some version of Waleran’s report...even if the plan to bind them together was never carried out. It was probably a physically separate copy....” (Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 266).

<sup>834</sup> See Chapter 2 (above).

<sup>835</sup> I am certainly not the first person to notice this “composite” texture, nor indeed is Le Brusque. Iorga, who as we have seen was keen to ascribe to Waleran the primary creative role in the production of the narrative – a suggestion which I will problematize below – wrote in the introduction to his 1927 edition that it was “dictée, certainement d’après des lettres contemporaines, dont quelques-uns ont été retrouvées, par Waleran à son oncle Jean” (emphasis mine). In Wavrin-Iorga, 3.

politically involved Burgundian *capitaine-général*. These and other facts lead me to believe that the present version of the expedition narrative is in fact a *composite* text – redacted, as it happens, in a manner quite consistent with the way in which Jean de Wavrin assembled and compiled other parts of his *Anciennes Chroniques*.<sup>836</sup> Far from being an integral newsletter, lightly redacted and spliced into Jean’s compilation, the expedition narrative may be Jean de Wavrin’s *own* heavily-redacted historiographical mosaic, a compilation of Waleran’s testimony – whether written, oral or both – and a number of reports about contemporary diplomacy and warfare. It may be an *Anciennes Chroniques* in miniature.

This insight lies at the heart of my authorship hypothesis, which goes as follows: the expedition narrative, a composite and redacted text, presents a complex amalgam of Jean de Wavrin’s editorial interests, styles and perspectives, Waleran de Wavrin’s first-hand insights, memories and sentiments, and the discursive traces of at least three<sup>837</sup> and probably several contemporary accounts from other sources.<sup>838</sup>

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<sup>836</sup> This is true on several levels, though as I shall discuss below, there are also differences between the expedition narrative, which seems to have been redacted very carefully with an eye to Waleran’s chivalric reputation, and the larger and more rhetorically variegated *Anciennes Chroniques*. For a comprehensive summary of Wavrin’s editorial method and his use of sources, see Visser-Fuchs’ *Warwick and Wavrin*, esp. 233-63.

<sup>837</sup> Three episodes offer especially compelling reasons to accept the “composite authorship” thesis. They are: an account of Geoffroy de Thoisy’s adventures defending Rhodes, which seems to be based in part on a text contained in a collection of documents owned by the Lannoy family (or on a source common to both texts); a description of Vlad Dracul’s imprisonment in 1442, which may be based in part on a version of the legend redacted by Bartholomew of Genoa in his letter of 1443; and a self-contained narrative of King Wladyslaw’s coronation (1440) and the Hungarian “long campaign” against the Ottoman Turks (1443), episodes which occur out of sequence in the expedition narrative (as if they were inserted from an integral source) and which are repeated later in the narrative (as if from a separate contemporary account). See my additional notes on the “composite authorship” thesis (below); and see my extended discussion of these issues in Appendix B.

<sup>838</sup> We should not discount the possibility, given the relative paucity of extant sources and the lack of evidence of contemporary reports “travelling” from the East to France, that some of these texts

Waleran seems to have been involved closely with the composition of the episodes in which he was a participant; whether he “informed” Jean about his adventures, “dictated” certain passages to him, or provided a written report of his adventures that Jean adapted or interpolated is difficult to determine.<sup>839</sup> For his part, Jean seems to have been the primary editor of the narrative we retain; not only does the compilation of chronicles based on contemporary reports reflect his *modus operandi* elsewhere in the *Chroniques*, but – as we shall see – certain of his stylistic trademarks seem to appear, here and there, throughout the narrative. We may never know when Jean undertook his final editorial work on the text, or whether he did so with the (limited) aid of a scribe; but we do know that, whether it occurred in the 1440s, 1450s or (as seems most probable) the 1460s, it was during a period of intense (if variable and uneven) crusading interest in the Burgundian courtly milieu.<sup>840</sup>

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(or some of the details therein) reached the redactor in oral rather than written form – conveyed, perhaps, by Waleran himself. Georges Le Brusque speculates, for example, that the crusader had been told about the hardships suffered by Christians at Zlatitsa Pass by “some Hungarian or Wallachian knights”; see “From Agincourt to Fornovo,” 191. On the other hand, we need not rely on extant archival copies to hypothesize that at least some of the reports *were* originally available to the narrator in written form. Both the internal evidence that I shall describe below and the fact that the narrator seems to have made use of extant source texts in other cases give us reasons for confidence here.

<sup>839</sup> Given the very extensive detail contained in the Black Sea and Danube episodes, and considering Waleran’s apparent skills as a stylist, the latter is not only possible but the most likely of the three options (see my discussion below).

<sup>840</sup> It is important to note that certain elements of the text do suggest the possibility of a later redaction. For example, as I shall argue in Appendix B, portions of the scene depicting Murad’s feast for Vlad Dracul (Chapter II) seem to recall Bertrand de la Broquière’s depiction of the sultan’s court – a text which was redacted in 1455 and which Jean de Wavrin obtained for his library in 1460. The fact that the formulaic transitions contained within the narrative seem to “blend” so nicely with those employed by Jean de Wavrin himself in his redaction, ca. 1470, of the revised version of the sixth volume of the *Anciennes Chroniques* may also testify to this possibility (see below, Section c).

### Testing the hypothesis: A study of textual evidence

Having laid out my hypothesis, I shall now fix it in my critical crosshairs, interrogating the evidence to identify the elements which we can embrace confidently and those which must remain qualified and tentative. I shall do so in two phases, mindful of the fact that my proposal makes two categories of claims – one concerning authorial *identity*, the other concerning authorial or redactive *process* – which are best evaluated in that order. The first issue, of *whose* voice(s) can be heard in the expedition narrative, is (as I have suggested) both intellectually seductive and difficult to resolve. Spending too much time on it, one might be tempted to reduce the complexities of the text to the self-interested utterances of one or more autonomous subjects: a modernist conceit that literary theory has taught us to mistrust. But there can be no doubt that there are fascinating, revealing, and often contradictory rhetorical currents in this text; and one cannot study rhetoric responsibly without first evaluating the range of authorial and redactive possibilities – the sites and contexts of writing – that may have informed it. The remainder of this Appendix will consider these possibilities.

In Appendix B, I shall shift my attention to the less aleatory, less speculative, and ultimately more important question of *process*. How, I shall ask, is this composite narrative constructed? Which redactive and rhetorical strategies are employed in the service of particular objectives? What kinds of internal differences, tensions and ambiguities result – and what can they tell us about Burgundian

courtiers and “crusaders”? Answers, albeit preliminary ones, will appear in my critical synopsis of the early (“geopolitical”) episodes of the text.

*Composite authorship and Waleran’s ‘voice’*

This is the plan; yet despite my best organizational intentions, I must frame my discussion of the authorial “who” in terms of an issue that touches on the procedural “how.” This is my theory of composite authorship, which is, I think, the most compelling of the numerous, carefully-qualified claims that I have made in this chapter. Were I to recite all of the evidence suggesting that the expedition narrative is a *recueil* of the sort that Jean de Wavrin delighted in producing – albeit a more carefully-edited and rhetorically-pitched collection than the *Anciennes Chroniques in toto* – I would pre-empt the detailed analyses underpinning my argument below.<sup>841</sup> For the moment it is sufficient to recall and supplement my earlier comments as follows: the most compelling evidence for composite authorship lies in a variety of textual anomalies and redactive traces in the text, including external concordances<sup>842</sup>, episodic repetitions<sup>843</sup>, chronological distortions<sup>844</sup>, inconsistencies in style and

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<sup>841</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>842</sup> As I noted above, and shall explore in detail below, two episodes in the narrative – the imprisonment of Vlad Dracul (Ch II) and the defence of Rhodes (Ch VI) – appear to be based on, or to share sources with, other extant texts. See my extended discussion of these issues in Appendix B (Dracul) and Chapter 2 (Rhodes).

<sup>843</sup> See my extended analysis in Appendix B.

<sup>844</sup> See my extended analysis in Appendix B; on distortions in the account of Waleran at court, see Chapter 2. The nature of the chronological errors and/or distortions that appear in parts of the text may also support my contention that Jean de Wavrin was more likely than Waleran to have been the final redactor; see below.



characterization<sup>845</sup>, narrative interventions<sup>846</sup>, and differences in the composition of chapters.<sup>847</sup> Taken together, this evidence strongly supports the claim that a number of voices are speaking in the narrative – voices that are shepherded along, at times suppressed, at times re-written, by the guiding hand of a final redactor.

This is a fruitful realization for the textual scholar, but it also poses dangers in terms of one's analytical language. A theory of composite redaction unsettles modern conceptions of "authorship"; rather than revealing the traces of a unitary and stable subjectivity, the narrative remains, on some levels, fragmentary and dispersed. The final redactor of the text may not have been the *rhétoricien* who crafted all or even most of it; conversely, those who *did* provide source material might not have recognized their words in the final confection. There may be no "author" in any traditional sense; and yet, despite a theoretically-informed inclination to reject the terminology of authorship outright, I worry that doing so might divert our attention from the specificities of writerly context, the local

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<sup>845</sup> Examples of inconsistent characterization include the depictions of Vlad Dracul, his son Mircea, and their Wallachian forces (compare esp. Ch. II-III with Ch. XVII), and of the crusaders' Turkish foes (compare esp. Ch II-III, Ch XII, and Ch XVI-XVIII).

<sup>846</sup> As Livia Visser-Fuchs has pointed out, the inclusion of narrative transitions such as "Or vous lairay de parler..." ("Now I shall leave off speaking about...") may in some cases reveal the redactive "seams" between separate source texts. Such devices occur frequently in the first half of the narrative where, as I have suggested, a number of separate sources appear to be blended together. On the significance of these conventional transitions to my authorship thesis, see Section (b), below.

<sup>847</sup> Visser-Fuchs has also observed that in Wavrin's work, chapter divisions may also mark the introduction to or inclusion of separate blended source texts. In this respect, too, the expedition narrative appears to support our contention: of its 18 chapters, the first 13 occur in the (apparently) more variegated first half of the text, and their organization/rationalization seems in keeping with our suggestions concerning the redaction of the text.

inflections which Gabrielle Spiegel has observed in her studies.<sup>848</sup> I shall therefore use the terms “authorial layers” and “discursive traces,” respectively, in referring to textual elements for which we can theorize the contribution of a particular writer or speaker, and those which reveal only a particular (and separate) discursive environment to which we cannot attach the name either of a person or of a workshop or *atelier*.<sup>849</sup>

Certainly the most important authorial “layer” in the text is the testimony provided by Waleran de Wavrin. Waleran’s perspectives, his sentiments, and his concerns leave an unmistakable – and, in the context of late medieval historiography, quite remarkable – trace in the text. As we saw in Chapter 2, the eighteen chapters of the expedition narrative can be divided roughly into three sections; these deal with crusading history and the geopolitical context of the crusade, Burgundian preparations for and participation in the 1444 crusade of Varna, and Waleran’s subsequent adventures on the Black Sea and the Danube in 1445. The *capitaine-général* is indisputably a source for much of the “Burgundian” material in the third section; he provides not just highly particular, detailed information – information that helps to render the chronicle more *circonstancié* than many other sources – but also remarkably personal perspectives. Thus we read, in the lengthy account of his adventures on the Danube, about Waleran’s shock – and subsequent fury – at being accused of insubordination by the cardinal legate: “le sire de Wavrin moult esbahy

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<sup>848</sup> As Spiegel notes, “We should...seek to locate texts within specific social sites that themselves disclose the political, economic and social pressures that condition a culture’s discourse at any given moment.” See *The Past as Text*, 27.

<sup>849</sup> These are merely convenient working terms at present; I may find practical or theoretical reasons to revise them at a later stage of my research.

de ceste maniere [parla] au cardinal en soy humiliant devers luy”<sup>850</sup>; we hear about the incredible pain he suffers from an artillery wound: “tous ses doitz de la main dextre lui cheyrent en sa palme, les jambes et les bracz lui racrucifierent”<sup>851</sup>; and we sense his discomfort with a Wallachian plan to slay Turkish prisoners: “a quoy ledit seigneur de Wavrin ne respondy mot, ne mal ne bien.”<sup>852</sup>

It is hard to imagine such colourful and “psychological” language<sup>853</sup> emerging from anything other than Waleran’s direct testimony – be it oral, written or a combination of the two. This impression is reinforced when we compare the contents of the narrative with other accounts of the expedition which were demonstrably written by the *capitaine-général*: texts such as a financial report on naval expenses prepared for Duke Philip in 1446<sup>854</sup>, and a testimonial letter for the translator Jacques Galois penned in February 1464.<sup>855</sup> In both cases, we find a number of factual, and even a few syntactic, concordances between the information

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<sup>850</sup> “The Lord of Wavrin was completely taken aback at this behaviour and, bowing humbly, [spoke] to the cardinal” (transl. Imber, 149): Wavrin-Hardy, 87.

<sup>851</sup> “[He was racked by gout raging through all the limbs of his body.] All the fingers of his right hand bent in towards his palm; his legs and arms crucified him” (transl. Imber, 154; I might suggest the term “tormented” rather than the literal “crucified”): Wavrin-Hardy, 97.

<sup>852</sup> “To which the Lord of Wavrin said not a word, either good or bad” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 101. I consider all three of these fascination quotations, and their personal and strategic implications in the context of the Burgundian “glory economy,” in the second part of Chapter 3 (above).

<sup>853</sup> Georges Le Brusque notes that the Black Sea and Danube expedition scenes are depicted with a “down-to-earth realism” which reveals “the mentality of our 15<sup>th</sup> century crusaders, whether Wallachian, Hungarian, Venetian or Burgundian.” This assessment, while insightful and useful in many ways, relies on a form of essentialism which I critiqued in Chapter 3 (above). LeBrusque, “From Agincourt to Fornovo,” 201.

<sup>854</sup> This text is preserved in the Archives du Nord (ADN) in Lille, France, which possesses a wealth of Burgundian administrative documents first retained by the ducal *chambre des comptes* in that city. Its shelfmark is Lille ADN B1984/59234. I am deeply indebted to Prof. Jacques Paviot for providing me with his transcription of this text, which will appear in his forthcoming collection of *Documents relatifs à la politique navale des ducs de Bourgogne*.

<sup>855</sup> Lille ADN B2074/65309, transcribed in Henri Taparel, “Le duché Valois de Bourgogne et l’orient Ottoman au XIV et XVe siècle.” Thèse de 3e cycle (Université de Toulouse le Mirail, 1982), 274-76.

provided in Waleran's letters and the expedition narrative. Read closely, these similarities appear more than coincidental; they suggest a parallel between the *capitaine-général's* most prominent memories and some of the main emphases of the expedition text.

The accounts document (59234), for example, contains a wealth of financial information but is rather limited in its military reportage. Yet Waleran does make a point of noting that the Burgundians' adventures included a landing at Dardanelle, the "port de Troy"; he also takes pains to mention his knighting of Christofle Cocq, a "parent du duc de Venise."<sup>856</sup> These details, which underscore both the mythic resonances and the chivalric prestige of the voyage, are emphasized (and elaborated colourfully) in Chapter IX of the narrative.<sup>857</sup> Likewise, the Galois letter (65309) reports that Duke Philip responded to the pleas of the Greek ambassador Theodore Karystinos<sup>858</sup> by promising to send "sept gallees, une galliotte, sa grant nave et une cravelle" to the aid of the imperial city – exactly the same phrase as appears in the narrative.<sup>859</sup> Both sources also mention, and both emphasize, the fact that Waleran ("indigne que jestoie," as he protests in 65309) was appointed *capitaine-général* at the time of the embassy.<sup>860</sup>

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<sup>856</sup> The "port of Troy"; a "relative of the duke of Venice" (my transl.): Lille ADN B1984/59234, fol. 3r. Cf. Paviot, *Documents relatifs*.

<sup>857</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 38-41.

<sup>858</sup> See below, Section (c). I also discuss the Karystinos embassy in some detail in Chapter 2 (above).

<sup>859</sup> "Seven galleys, a galliot, his great ship, and a caravel" (my transl.). The expedition narrative, Ch VI, has "sept gallees, une gallyace, ung grant nave et une cravelle." See Wavrin-Hardy, 22.

<sup>860</sup> "Undeserving as I was" (my transl.). See Waleran de Wavrin in Taparel, *Le duché*, 274; and Wavrin-Hardy, 23.

There are, to be sure, a variety of differences between the contents of Waleran's administrative documents and the claims made in our text. These differences range from the pedestrian<sup>861</sup> to the dramatic<sup>862</sup>; I shall say more about them presently, and as we shall see, they may (but do not necessarily) support the claim that Jean de Wavrin or another redactor intervened in Waleran's written or oral testimony. Before considering these things, however, we must turn to one last comparator text which may help us to "tune into" the register of Waleran's voice. This is a piece of advice literature, Waleran's *Avis touchant le voyage de Turquie*, written in 1464 to rebut the bold (one might say rash) counsel provided by Geoffroy de Thoisy<sup>863</sup> concerning a new crusading venture being planned by the elderly Duke Philip. Regrettably, the generic and rhetorical differences between the *Avis* and our narrative, and the relative brevity of the former, preclude the sort of stylistic analysis which might offer clear insights into the presence (or absence) of Waleran's "pen" in our narrative. But the two documents do share certain thematic similarities which reward careful examination.

As Monica Barsi has noted<sup>864</sup>, the *Avis* is a short but well-informed text; it vigorously contests some of Thoisy's suggestions, urging the duke in each case to

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<sup>861</sup> The report in 59234, for example, dwells at much greater length than the narrative on the business conducted in sites such as Constantinople and Venice; this is natural, given that the purpose of the document is to record such transactions.

<sup>862</sup> See, for example, my notes in Section (c) (and Chapter 2, above) on the revisionist aspects of the Karystinos account in the expedition narrative.

<sup>863</sup> Geoffroy, as I noted in Chapters 1 and 2, was the other major figure of the Burgundian court who was involved in the expedition of 1444-46; though under the command of Waleran, he led a fleet of galleys to the defense of the island of Rhodes and won renown (and a knighthood) in the summer of 1444.

<sup>864</sup> Barsi's essay on Burgundian crusading texts, which contains a brief study of the *Avis*, is one of the finest I have read. See "Constantinople à la cour de Philippe le Bon (1419-1467): Compte

pursue a more pragmatic course of action. The most important – and most passionately argued – of Waleran’s points is that Philip must delay his excursion for a year or risk disaster. “J’ay grand douleur et desplaisir en mon cuer,” he writes, to think of the dangers facing Philip’s territories should he leave prematurely on crusade; worse still, “se l’armée se rompt, sans conquerer Constantinople, ce sera ung grant orgueil aux Turcs, et fort en seront encouragez les ennemis de la foy....”<sup>865</sup> We hear in this pragmatic and measured approach the echoes of a theme that recurs frequently in the expedition narrative: a critique of chivalric temerity, a call for prudence and restraint.<sup>866</sup> Indeed, even as Wavrin recruits the crusading hero János Hunyadi to articulate a bold, even radical, critique of temerity in the second-last chapter of the narrative – thereby distancing the critique from the *capitaine-général* himself, as we have seen – Hunyadi’s words are thematically similar to those of Waleran in the *Avis*. “[S]e j’estoie rue jus le royaume seroit perdu,” he says, “et est necessite de combattre les Turcqz soubtillement et malicieusement quy les voelt vaincre, car ilz sont gens cauteleux.”<sup>867</sup> Both speakers emphasize the catastrophic consequences of knightly *outrecuidance*; both frame their recommendations pragmatically in terms of the character of their opponents. In light of the

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rendus et documents historiques,” in Liana Nissim and Silvia Riva (eds.), *Sauver Byzance de la Barbarie du Monde*. Gargnano del Garda (14-17 maggio 2003). Cisalpino: Istituto Editoriale Universitario, 2004, 132-95 (esp. 166-69).

<sup>865</sup> “I feel a great grief and sadness in my heart”; “If our forces are defeated without conquering Constantinople, it will be a source of great pride to the Turks, and it will greatly encourage the enemies of the faith” (my transl.). Waleran de Wavrin, “L’avis...touchant le voyage de Turquie,” in Baron de Reiffenberg (ed.), *Monuments pour servir à l’histoire des provinces de Namur, de Hainaut et de Luxembourg*, t. V (Bruxelles: CRHB, 1848), 553.

<sup>866</sup> For a detailed discussion of Wavrin’s critique of temerity, see Chapter 4 above.

<sup>867</sup> “[I]f I were struck down the kingdom would be lost. Anyone who wishes to conquer the Turks must fight them cunningly in an underhanded way, because they are a crafty people” (transl. Imber, 164); Wavrin-Hardy, 116.

concordances, it is hard not to read the expedition narrative as a vehicle for the politic (and at times veiled) expression of Waleran's strategic sentiments.

Indeed, the resonances of Waleran's voice in the narrative are so clear and so *personal* that they have prompted some of the most prominent scholars of the period to speculate on his personality and mindset. "Un homme indécis, hésitant, soumis à l'autorité du cardinal de Venise," Jacques Paviot says of the *capitaine-général*<sup>868</sup>, while Livia Visser-Fuchs calls him a "sensible, perhaps rather quiet, realistic man, unlike the slightly loose cannon Geoffroi de Thoisy."<sup>869</sup> Yet however vivid and compelling his words may be, the medium through which Waleran speaks in the expedition narrative is rather less transparent. While it is certainly possible that the text is crafted strictly on the basis of oral testimony – Iorga's "dictation" – we must also acknowledge the strong possibility that it also contains or is a redaction of an integral report written by the crusader himself.<sup>870</sup> This raises a question with important implications for my analysis: How likely is it that Waleran worked on two "layers" of our narrative – that he was both *an* author and *the* redactor of the final work?

This, as we have seen, is Iorga's conclusion, and it is one to which Visser-Fuchs seems friendly. We certainly lack conclusive evidence to reject it, so we must leave it open as a possibility. However, as I suggested above, a consideration of

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<sup>868</sup> Paviot, *Les ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade et l'orient* (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2003), 104.

<sup>869</sup> Livia Visser-Fuchs, personal correspondence, 12 December 2007.

<sup>870</sup> Future analysis of the expedition narrative, especially the portions of the text that recount Waleran's own adventures, may provide further insights into this possibility. For the moment it is worth noting that the extensive detail contained in the second half of the narrative may help to make the case that the crusader himself provided a written source. It is also important to note that some parts of the Black Sea and Danube expedition account – such as the seizure of Tutrakan – do seem to reflect literary techniques favoured by Jean de Wavrin (see Section (d) below); this may suggest that the crusader's uncle took an active role in redacting his nephew's (hypothetical) text.

some internal (and some intertextual) features of the narrative suggests another, more probable redactive configuration: Jean de Wavrin or a scribe working under his supervision seems to have served as the final editor of the text.<sup>871</sup> Jean's task may have involved extensive intervention into Waleran's written or oral testimony; it also seems to have involved setting the rhetorical direction of the compilation *in toto*. I shall now turn to an investigation and defence of these claims.

*The case for Jean de Wavrin's editorship*

Livia Visser-Fuchs has provided a salutary reminder that the best arguments for particular redactive possibilities are often the simplest and most obvious ones.<sup>872</sup> So it goes, I suspect, with arguments in favour of particular *redactors*. However much I might wish, for the sake of clarifying my rhetorical analysis, to read this text as "exclusively" Waleran's, a variety of mostly simple objections force me to leave open the possibility that Jean de Wavrin intervened in it, perhaps with the help of a scribal proxy. This basic evidence tends to unsettle sweeping claims concerning authorship; as we shall see, it thus forces upon me a more complex and carefully-qualified form of analysis.

(a) *Jean's editorial and literary activities.* Certainly the simplest, and one of the most compelling, arguments for Jean de Wavrin's editorship is that the fact that Jean

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<sup>871</sup> This is not to rule out the possibility that Jean consulted with Waleran, and perhaps involved him directly, in parts of this process. However, as I noted above and shall argue in section (c) below, certain errors and distortions do seem to argue for his editorial independence at this stage.

<sup>872</sup> "Among these not-so-literary authors..., when they copy something the copying seems to be rather evident in a simple sort of way and rather obvious." Personal correspondence, 19 June 2008.



was an editor by vocation and by inclination. This would not make a difference if the expedition narrative did not seem so extensively and purposefully redacted; but despite the relative thematic consistency of many of the “Burgundian” adventure scenes, the early portions of the narrative seem to have been blended from various sources following a form of literary pastiche for which Jean was renowned.<sup>873</sup> He was not the only late medieval historiographer, to be sure, who crafted chronicles in this way; but most of the men who did so were practising *literati* who devoted substantial time and effort to their projects, and who left multiple traces of their work.<sup>874</sup> Within this small coterie of *écrivains*, Jean held a respectable position: a noted collector of books and manuscripts, he was also a diplomat who used his connections to gather information and documents concerning world affairs.<sup>875</sup>

Now, admittedly, it is not impossible that Waleran involved himself in this sort of activity as well. My reading of the *Avis* suggests that he was both a

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<sup>873</sup> See Appendix B. Those familiar with Visser-Fuchs’ work might object that Jean typically did edit or revise the “newsletters” he imported as extensively as seems to have been the case here. But it should be noted that he *did* put a great deal of effort into rewriting existing accounts of certain episodes contained in the *Anciennes Chroniques d’Angleterre*, including the account of the battle of Verneuil (see below), in which he was personally involved. If Jean was inclined to intervene extensively in such texts, we can assume that he *also* would have been strongly motivated to ensure that the expedition narrative, which concerned itself with the chivalric reputation of his nephew and patron, took the right tone and achieved certain rhetorical objectives. For a detailed discussion of the latter, see above, Chapters 3 and 4.

<sup>874</sup> Jean had left active military service in 1445; see M. Yans, “Wavrin, Jean de” in *Biographie Nationale* t. 27 (Bruxelles: Bruylant, 1938), 130. Several late medieval historians and memorialists, including Enguerrand de Monstrelet, Georges Chastellain, Adrien de But, Thomas Basin and (later) Jean Molinet made use of letters, heralds’ reports and other such texts. Indeed, some of the very materials interpolated into the *Anciennes Chroniques* also appeared in very similar forms in the works of contemporaries such as Jean Chartier and the so-called “Monstrelet-continuator.” See Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 284-86. For a useful study of one of Chastellain’s reputed sources, see A.C. de Nève de Roden, “Les Mémoires de Jean de Haynin: des ‘mémoires,’ un livre,” in *A l’Heure encore de mon écrire: Aspects de la Littérature de Bourgogne sous Philippe le Bon et Charles le Téméraire*, ed. C. Thiry (Louvain: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1996), 42-52 (esp. 47).

<sup>875</sup> See Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 285-86.

reasonably talented stylist and a writer possessing the tools necessary for producing a detailed report of his eastern adventures. But as far as we know, he was neither a bibliophile nor a regular chronicler; and there is no evidence that he was ever involved in the more sedentary business of collecting and redacting multiple sources into composite texts.<sup>876</sup> This lack of historical evidence, read with an eye to Ockham's razor, tilts the balance of probabilities toward his uncle.<sup>877</sup>

(b) *Editorial interventions and the narrative 'je.'* A second simple observation offers more support for my thesis: the redactor of our text, it happens, is not narratively invisible. He speaks to us at several points in the text – mostly in the first and more “composite” half, and mostly in the form of conventional transitions between narrative threads and between the contents of different source texts.<sup>878</sup> There is certainly an ambiguous character to this narrative voice; it is never identified explicitly with Jean de Wavrin (using, for example, the formula “moy aucteur” that

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<sup>876</sup> One of the most comprehensive biographical notices on Waleran de Wavrin, that of M. Yans in *Biographie Nationale* (1938), tends to support this claim. It offers no evidence that Waleran engaged in literary or redactive activity, but it does suggest that he provided his uncle with “multiples renseignements écrits” concerning the events he had witnessed. See Yans, 136.

<sup>877</sup> One might object that, given Jean de Wavrin's numerous courtly and diplomatic activities, and given his work elsewhere on the *Anciennes Chroniques*, he would have had little time to undertake such an extensive redaction – especially in the 1460s, when he served important courtly and diplomatic functions (see Yans 130-1; Livia Visser-Fuchs, “Waurin, Jean de” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, v.57 (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 764; and esp. G. Tyl-Labory, “Jean de Wavrin” in *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: Le Moyen Age* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 861-2). However, considering the reputational importance of the expedition narrative, and mindful of Visser-Fuchs' insights into the “shortcuts” Jean was able to take in preparing his less politically-sensitive redactions, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that he was both inclined and able to find time to devote to this text.

<sup>878</sup> The frequent use of such devices to “join” different episodes together is a key aspect of my argument concerning composite authorship; see note that the narrative *je* also occasionally serves an elaborative or evaluative function, and is not strictly (and conventionally) “editorial” in form.

appears in other texts within the *Anciennes Chroniques*).<sup>879</sup> But it is clearly distinguished from Waleran's persona, which is invoked throughout the narrative with the third-person "il" and the honorific "le seigneur de Wavrin."

The effects of the distinction are especially pronounced in passages where the narrator refers directly to Waleran. "Atant vous laisseray le parler dudit filz de la Vallaquie...et parlerons de nos Christiens," he writes in a rare transition late in the narrative, "a scavoir le cardinal et le seigneur de Wavrin, comment ilz se partirent de ce lieu..."<sup>880</sup> This overture makes use of all three verbal persons and both tenses: the narrator and his audience are distinguished from Waleran and his company (as

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<sup>879</sup> See for example Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 109 and p. 114. With this in mind, it is worth noting Elisabeth Gaucher's important insights concerning the use of the "je" in much fifteenth-century historical writing: "Le je ne renvoie pas pour autant à la figure historique de l'auteur," she cautions. "Simple revêtement lexical, il confère au texte le support d'une autorité qui ne cautionne rien d'autre que la parole elle-même. L'instance narrative impose son autorité au lecteur, sans laisser paraître le Moi individualisé, extérieur au texte." Gaucher, *La biographie chevaleresque: Typologie d'un genre (XIIIe-XVe siècle)* (Paris: Champion, 1994), 229. This does not, however, render the question of the narrative "je" moot for our purposes; for as I shall argue below, the convention functions narratively *within* the expedition account to distinguish the persona of the narrator from that of Waleran – both in its explicit formulations and by referring back to earlier depictions of the narrator as redactor of the *Anciennes Chroniques*. These earlier utterances, moreover, suggest that Jean de Wavrin was rather more willing to "laisser paraître le Moi individualisé" than Gaucher suggests is normally the case; in announcing the expedition narrative in the final chapter of his fifth volume, he adopts the narrative "je" while indulging in personal reflections on his method, on the novelty of the text, and on his reasons for including it (see below). For more on Jean de Wavrin's "voice" in the *Anciennes Chroniques*, see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 216-21; and for other helpful remarks on the role of the narrator in fifteenth-century prose, see Jens Rasmussen, *La prose narrative française du XVe siècle: Étude esthétique et stylistique* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1958), 127-31.

<sup>880</sup> "Now I shall leave off speaking of the said son of (the lord of) Wallachia...and talk about our Christians, that is to say the cardinal and the lord of Wavrin, and how they left that place..." (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 102. The transition introduces a new chapter (XVIII). Imber, incidentally, renders "nos Christiens" as "us Christians"; but the narrator's use of "ilz" in the same phrase to describe Waleran and the Cardinal seems to argue against this translation. Imber moreover translates Wavrin's use of the collective pronoun "on" in the early parts of Chapter VIII as "we" and "us": Mircea "asked us...whether we would like to go there to besiege [the castle of Giurgiu]" (Imber 157). Though I would prefer to understand the phrase "si prioit...quon vouldist aller devant...car se ainsi on le faisoit ce seroit chose legiere de le prendre" (Wavrin-Hardy 103) in the impersonal, collective sense – "he asked whether the company wished to go" – Imber's translation in this case may be more faithful. If so, it is tempting to think that the language of an original report by Waleran may have left its traces in this redaction.

distinct *personae*), even as they are linked to them as fellow-Christians with common interests. Certainly it is not impossible that the *capitaine-général* himself framed the narrative in this manner, following contemporary conventions or adopting a separate persona for rhetorical reasons.<sup>881</sup> The burden of proving this claim, however, strikes me as rather heavy; it seems counterintuitive that a soldier penning a “newsletter” would be inclined to use such self-conscious literary techniques.

The burden becomes even greater when we consider the ways in which these interventions relate to other parts of the *Anciennes Chroniques*. The narrator who intervenes in the seams and fissures of the expedition narrative appears to announce himself to us earlier in the fifth and sixth volumes of Wavrin’s *recueil*. At the end of his “chincquiesme volume,” Jean de Wavrin writes that “je voeil selon ma premiere intencion terminer et baillier fin a mon present...volume”; “je parsievray ma matiere autant que oportunité me durera selon la fourme encommencie.”<sup>882</sup> The next book will begin, he adds, with a notable adventure “advint en Sarrazine terre, laquelle a mon semblant debvra grandement plaire a tous pour recreer les esperitz.”<sup>883</sup> This “je” is indisputably the voice of Jean, the redactor who follows a plan and selects his stories according to their value to the reader. And it appears to be the same “I” as speaks to us in Chapter I of the *sixième volume*, a short and truncated description of English domestic politics in 1447-50: “Toute le commun furent grandement

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<sup>881</sup> See [f.n. 879](#) above.

<sup>882</sup> “I wish, according to my original intentions, to end my present...volume”; “I shall continue my tale for as long as I am able according to the established format” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 386.

<sup>883</sup> “Which took place in Saracen lands, and which – it seems to me – will be very pleasing to all, and will lift their spirits” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 387.

troublez,” the narrator reports midway through his excursus, “comme jay dit en la fin du chinquiesme volume precedent.”<sup>884</sup>

The narrator ends this chapter by signalling his intention to commence the expedition narrative; his transition takes the form I recounted at the beginning of Chapter 2: “Or vous lairons ung petit des besognes dAngleterre....”<sup>885</sup> This is significant, for the narrator’s words here take the same form as do no fewer than *five* of the editorial interventions contained within the expedition narrative. “Or vous lairay (or lairons) a parler de [quelque chose],” “Now I (or we) shall leave off speaking [of something],” is a formulaic transition common to many epics, chronicles and romances – including a group of chivalric biographies and *mises-en-prose* which Jean de Wavrin owned, and whose author(s) may have belonged to a community of *écrivains* of which he was a part.<sup>886</sup> Jean himself seems to have relied on the formulation, which appears a number of times in the sixth volume of his historical *recueil*.<sup>887</sup> We cannot rule out the possibility that Waleran happened to employ the

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<sup>884</sup> All of the commons were greatly upset...as I stated at the end of the fifth, preceding volume” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 4.

<sup>885</sup> “Now we shall leave off for a short while speaking of the affairs of England...” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 4.

<sup>886</sup> On “Or vous lairons/lairay” as a conventional transition, see Alphonse Bayot, *Le Roman de Gillion de Trazegnies* (Louvain: Peeters, 1903), 132; F.M. Horgan, “A Critical Edition of the Romance of Gillion de Trazegnies from Brussels Bibliothèque Royale ms. 9629” (PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1985), xliii; Rasmussen, 72-3; and Beer, *Villehardouin*, 40-2. On Jean’s possible connections with the authors/redactors of romances produced near Lille in the mid-fifteenth century, see below.

<sup>887</sup> See, based on my preliminary reading, Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 325, 358, 639, 657. A great deal more research is required, however, to establish the precise ways that Jean de Wavrin uses these transitions, and to consider how well they support my tentative assertions here. Unfortunately a comprehensive stylistic analysis of the *sixième volume* – or of the *Anciennes Chroniques in toto* – is beyond the scope of the present project. Such a study, which I hope to see in the future, would also help to confirm whether, as I suspect, the formulation is also common in the earlier volumes of the *Anciennes Chroniques* – most notably in those texts which are likely to have been carefully redacted by Jean himself.

same convention (and syntax) in his own writing; but under the circumstances, it does seem unlikely that a soldier writing a report would so closely anticipate the literary and “romantic” style of the *écrivain* in whose collection his work would later be compiled.<sup>888</sup>

Ockham’s razor once again pushes us in a different direction: the voice that intervenes in the expedition narrative seems to refer back (syntactically) to the transition employed in Chapter I, wherein a narrative “je” also appears; the latter refers back (explicitly) to *Jean de Wavrin’s* “je” of the *cinquième volume*. I noted earlier that there is a certain conventional ambiguity around that narrative voice; in the end, this may result only from reading the expedition narrative in isolation from the passages which precede it.<sup>889</sup> A wider and more comprehensive reading of Jean de Wavrin’s *recueil* makes it hard to rule out the possibility – even, perhaps, to deny the probability – that the crusader’s uncle and/or a scribal proxy were involved editorially in the final text.

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<sup>888</sup> It is important, to be sure, to acknowledge the ubiquity of transitions beginning with variations of “or je lairay” in romances and other fifteenth century genres, including historiography (see e.g. Jean Le Fèvre de Saint-Rémy, *Chronique*, t. 2, 12, and Rasmussen, 72-3). Yet it is worth noting that the form of this transition – the “or vous lairons” formulation, including the pronomial indirect object – is virtually identical in its occurrences both immediately before and in several instances within the expedition narrative (compare Wavrin Hardy 39, 5, p. 4 with Wavrin-Hardy, 30, 38 and 44). This syntactical recurrence within a short series of chapters may also tend to argue for Jean’s editorship. See also Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 334; Horgan, xliii.

<sup>889</sup> With this in mind, it is also revealing to consider the first line of the expedition narrative: “Environ ce tempz dont nous parlons presentement estoit seigneur des Turcz ung nomme Moradbey....” (“Around the time about which we are now speaking, the lord of the Turks was a man named Moradbey....”) (my transl. and emphasis): Wavrin-Hardy, 5. This initial intervention seems to refer directly to the contents of the previous chapter, once again linking the narrator’s voice in the expedition text with the narrative “je” in the text that precedes it.

(c) *Errors and distortions.* The next bit of evidence I shall adduce is rather more complex and ambivalent in its implications; but it is well worth examining for the authorial issues it raises. As my critical synopsis will reveal – and as some historians regrettably have failed to recognize – the expedition narrative, for its many remarkable insights and vivid details, occasionally gets its facts and chronology wrong. These errors are relevant to our discussion, for they seem occasionally to be at odds with the kind of knowledge that Waleran de Wavrin, a crusading lieutenant who was involved in Duke Philip’s naval diplomacy from an early date, presumably possessed. They may therefore reveal the involvement of Jean de Wavrin’s less-informed, or more politically inclined, editorial hand in the compilation of the narrative.

The first such error lies in the narrator’s (mis)use of two episodes detailing the “Long Campaign,” a Hungarian offensive into Ottoman territory which took place in the autumn and winter of 1443-44. Various details of the offensive are repeated in separate chapters (V and VIII) as if they constituted distinct and sequent events; as I shall explain below, this apparently naïve repetition offers compelling support for the claim that the narrative was compiled from discrete textual sources.<sup>890</sup> For the moment, it is sufficient to note that the first of the Long Campaign episodes is said to have occurred before Duke Philip began his crusade negotiations with the pope, the Greeks and the Venetians – negotiations which, as Jacques Paviot

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<sup>890</sup> See Appendix B.

has shown, were actually well underway in late 1442.<sup>891</sup> Our narrator remarks that it was news of the successful Long Campaign which first stirred the duke's crusading zeal, his "grant desir et voullente de faire armee quy feust a la loenge de Nostre Seigneur"<sup>892</sup>; this contains an element of truth but masks a confused chronology. It was, in fact, a set of *earlier* (1442) victories by the Transylvanian hero János Hunyadi (among other diplomatic and political events) which seem to have provoked something of a kinetic reaction in the Valois court the year before the Long Campaign.<sup>893</sup>

Given that Waleran himself was involved in Duke Philip's crusading diplomacy from mid-1443 at the latest, and given that he must have been aware of the events of the Long Campaign soon after they occurred, it is difficult to reconcile such a glaring error with the possibility of the *capitaine-général's* editorial oversight. One is tempted to conclude *ipso facto* that Jean de Wavrin was responsible for the clumsy redaction; but we must be cautious, for certain objections present themselves. Livia Visser-Fuchs has sensibly noted that redactors sometimes admitted errors into their compositions to ease the rigours of editing multiple texts; it is possible that Waleran de Wavrin simply may have indulged in such laxity.<sup>894</sup> For his part, Jean

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<sup>891</sup> "Les choses se précisèrent à la fin de...1442," notes Paviot (*Les ducs*, 92; see 92-5).

<sup>892</sup> His "great desire and will to make an expedition which would be in praise of Our Lord" (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 20.

<sup>893</sup> See Paviot, *Les ducs*, 94.

<sup>894</sup> She points out (personal correspondence, 19 June 2008) that, elsewhere in the *Anciennes Chroniques*, Jean de Wavrin inserts an account of a Bohemian "crusade" in which he participated in the wrong chronological order (Wavrin-Hardy 39, 2, p. 324-26; see *Warwick and Wavrin* 164-65). As she suggests, this may highlight the kinds of compromises that tended to be reached by contemporary redactors in the face of editorial difficulties; yet one might also be inclined to argue that it underscores Jean de Wavrin's *particular* willingness to overlook chronological errors – an argument that offers additional support to our thesis.



may not have been as historically naïve as our thesis presupposes; he seems to have had multiple conversations with his nephew, and he knew enough about crusading issues to participate in an embassy to Pope Pius II in 1464.<sup>895</sup> Thus the conceptual dichotomy between the ignorant editor and the experienced *rapporteur* may not be as clear-cut, or as analytically convenient, as we would like it to be.

We are forced, therefore, to deal with the balance of probabilities; and on balance it remains much more likely that the responsible party was Jean – a man who *may* have known better but who, as a practising editor, sometimes distorted his historical accounts – than Waleran, a man who *very probably* knew better and had neither a motive for nor a record of such distortions. This impression is reinforced when we consider a second (and equally intriguing) error in the expedition narrative: an historical inversion that the younger Wavrin must have known to be incorrect. Chapter VI, as we have seen, contains an account of the embassy of the Greek envoy Theodore Karystinos to the Burgundian court. Though the tale is remarkably detailed and precise, it indulges in some revisionism: the embassy is said to take place before other diplomatic events which antedated it, and which were crucial in setting the parameters of the crusading project.<sup>896</sup> It also makes the (apparently apocryphal) claim that Waleran de Wavrin, who attended the Karystinos embassy,

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<sup>895</sup> See Yans, 131; Tyl-Labory, 861; Visser-Fuchs, “Waurin,” 764.

<sup>896</sup> Specifically, as we shall see below, the Karystinos embassy is said to take place after the departure of a Burgundian envoy, the Lord of Conté, to consult with Pope Eugenius IV, but before his return. In fact, the Conté embassy took place between December 1442 and March or April of 1443, when the ambassador returned to Dijon with extensive papal instructions. The Karystinos embassy only took place in June/July of 1443. For an excellent summary, see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 96-7.

was the first person to suggest that Duke Philip should lease ships from the Venetians.<sup>897</sup>

I have already considered the rhetorical effects (and reputational benefits) of these errors in Chapter 2. For now, we may also note that by rearranging events in this way, the narrator enhances Waleran's profile and status – positioning him as a key ducal counsellor and a participant *ab initio* in the holy project. It is not inconceivable that the crusader himself was responsible for this rhetorical conceit, though such crass manipulation of the facts, not likely to go unnoticed by his fellow-courtiers, seems a cynical and unlikely method of self-promotion. I am more inclined to think that Jean or an editorial proxy assembled this revisionist account based on prior (and more correct) text(s) or oral testimony – *and* on his own rhetorical priorities and limited familiarity with the facts of the mission. Certain features of the redaction – the redundancies created by the inversion<sup>898</sup>, the seemingly naïve recitation of accurate details in an *inaccurate* order<sup>899</sup>, and the stylistic differences between the Karystinos scene and the remainder of the

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<sup>897</sup> Paviot, *Les ducs*, 97.

<sup>898</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>899</sup> I have in mind especially the narrator's affirmation that the Karystinos embassy took place in Chalon-sur-Saône (which it did; see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 96, and Waleran de Wavrin in Taparel, *Le duché*, 274) and that the Lord of Conté returned to Dijon to report to Duke Philip (which he did; see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 95-6). Our narrator suggests that the former preceded the latter – when, in fact, we know that Philip was in Dijon earlier in 1443 and only held court in Chalon that summer. This curious combination of specific/correct place markers with garbled chronology may offer evidence both of richly-detailed preliminary source(s) and of the subsequent intervention of a less-informed editorial hand.

diplomatic episode, which is contained in Chapters VI and IX<sup>900</sup> – seem to offer support for this hypothesis.

Waleran's writings also reinforce the notion that the scene is reminiscent of, but not precisely aligned with, his own recollections of the Karystinos episode. His testimonial letter for Jacques Galois<sup>901</sup>, which contains some notes on the circumstances of the embassy, does not directly contradict the expedition narrative; but when read carefully, it seems to imply some key differences. The letter does nothing to confirm our narrator's faulty chronology, nor does it refer to Wavrin's purported advice to lease galleys from the Venetians. Instead, it relates Philip's promise to send the ten ships "pourveu que nostre saint pere le pape, les autres provinces et la seigneurie de Venise armassent gallees et navires chascun en son endroit et envoiassent audit secours."<sup>902</sup> This reflects the actual state of diplomatic affairs in the summer of 1443 – some six months after the Burgundians had begun arranging the leases with the Venetians, presumably *not* at Waleran's behest, and three months after the Conté embassy had announced the pope's intentions to arm a fleet of his own.<sup>903</sup> Nor does the report refer to the dispatch of a messenger to the *seigneurie* "pour scentir se on pourroit a eulz finer de quatre gallees."<sup>904</sup> Philip the Good, it says, did resolve to send Jacques Galois as a messenger to his allies; but the

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<sup>900</sup> The Karystinos episode differs significantly from the remainder of Wavrin's account of Duke Philip's crusading diplomacy. It features, among other things, more (and lengthier) direct quotations and state-of-mind descriptors. See Chapter 2.

<sup>901</sup> In ADN 2074/65309, transcribed in Taparel, *Le duché*, 274-75; see above.

<sup>902</sup> "Provided that our holy father the pope, the other provinces and the seigneurie of Venice armed galleys and ships, each in their own place, and sent them in aid (as well)" (my transl.): Waleran de Wavrin in Taparel, *Le duché*, 274.

<sup>903</sup> See Paviot, *Les ducs*, 97.

<sup>904</sup> "To find out whether they could provide him with four galleys" (transl. Imber, 117): Wavrin-Hardy, 22.

purpose of the embassy – to “bring news of the fleet that...[they] wished to build”<sup>905</sup>  
– again reflects a more advanced state of affairs than our narrator suggests.

Waleran, then, remembered the Karystinos episode “correctly” – or at least in accordance with the claims made in other archival sources – and he recorded those recollections “correctly” in at least one other document. Certainly this does not prove our thesis conclusively; the curious errors of our narrative – some of them naïve, some perhaps rhetorically motivated – are not necessarily incompatible with his authorship. But they do offer another good reason to think that some of the narrative’s more ambiguous and puzzling features may have resulted from Jean de Wavrin’s editorial interventions.

(d) *Literary style and redactive techniques.* I turn, in the last instance, to a discussion of authorial and redactive style – an issue that is dauntingly complex. Stylistic evidence is in fact the most speculative, the most tentative, and the most fallible basis for attributing editorship to a composite work such as ours; this is true for a variety of reasons, all of them bound up in the problematics of comparison.<sup>906</sup> When, as in this case, we have access to few or none of the redactor’s source texts, we cannot be certain which ones he chose to interpolate in an integral form, and which he actively adapted. We can speculate on the reasons he might have intervened in particular places – to flesh out incomplete accounts, to emphasize events for

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<sup>905</sup> “Rapporterait nouvelles de l’armée que voudroient faire notre saint pere, le roy darragon et les venisiens”: Waleran de Wavrin in Taparel, *Le duché*, 275.

<sup>906</sup> For a useful discussion of these problems, see Visser-Fuchs, “‘Warwick, by himself’: Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, ‘The Kingmaker,’ in the *Recueil des Croniques d’Engleterre* of Jean de Wavrin,” *Publication du Centre Européen d’Etudes Bourguignonnes* 41 (2001): 145-56 (esp. 147-8).

rhetorical reasons, to join together or rationalize disparate episodes – but we can seldom be certain that a specific line or transition is “his.” In Jean de Wavrin’s case, this is further complicated by the scarcity of comparator texts which we can confidently ascribe to him, and which may offer evidence of his preferred redactive strategies, tropes and *tournures de phrase*. In searching for the traces of his “pen,” we thus face an equation made up of dependent variables – a comparison hobbled on both sides by uncertainties and suppositions.

Our efforts are aided, albeit modestly, by a recent critical debate over the possibility that Jean composed one or more contemporary romances produced in the north of France. The debate has deep roots: about 100 years ago, scholars Alphonse Bayot and Camille Liégeois noticed a number of stylistic and syntactic similarities between three chivalric biographies composed in the region.<sup>907</sup> Scholars have since added several titles to this list of apparently filiated texts; many of them were decorated by the Master of Wavrin, a prominent Lillois illustrator with probable connections to the *seigneur de Forestel*, and several were contained in Jean’s extensive

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<sup>907</sup> These are: *Le roman de Gillion de Trazegnies*; *La chronique du bon chevalier messire Gilles de Chin*; and *Le livre des faits de Jacques de Lalaing*. See Camille Liégeois, *Gilles de Chin: L’Histoire et la légende* (Louvain: Peeters, 1903), esp. 78-85; and Alphonse Bayot, *Le roman de Gillion de Trazegnies* (Louvain: Peeters, 1903), esp. 7-12. *Gilles de Chin* is a prose *remaniement* of an older crusading romance in verse. *Trazegnies* is a seemingly original prose composition; it too is a sprawling romance that treats crusading themes. *Jacques de Lalaing* is the composite biography of an actual Hainault knight who performed a number of *faits d’armes* in the mid-fifteenth century. For a useful overview of Bayot’s and Liégeois’ findings, see Gaucher, *Biographie*, 225-27. For more on these and other filiated romances, see Antoinette Naber, “Les manuscrits d’un bibliophile bourguignon du XVe siècle, Jean de Wavrin,” in *Revue du Nord* 72, no. 284 (Jan-Mar 1990): 23-48; Gaucher, *Biographie*, 159-75, 209-28, *et passim*; Georges Doutrepont, *Les mises en prose des épopées et des romans chevaleresques du XIV au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Brussels: Palais des Académies, 1939), *passim*.

library.<sup>908</sup> Not surprisingly, critics have begun to test – and in some cases to champion – the idea that Jean was not merely a collector but also the *romancier* responsible for one or more of these works.<sup>909</sup> In one of the most talked-about studies, Frances Horgan (1983) argued that Jean’s manuscript of the crusading romance *Gillion de Trazegnies* presented both physical and stylistic evidence suggesting his authorship.<sup>910</sup> Unfortunately, as René Stuij has suggested, the fascinating manuscript evidence she cites is inconclusive<sup>911</sup>; and Livia Visser-Fuchs has shown that the episode from the *Anciennes Chroniques* with which she compared *Gillion*’s stylistic features may not have been composed by Jean, but may have been copied from another source.<sup>912</sup>

Several other scholars, citing varying degrees of probability and various kinds of circumstantial evidence, have suggested that Jean was the author of one or

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<sup>908</sup> Antoinette Naber has undertaken important studies of Jean de Wavrin’s library in the past few decades. In addition to “Les manuscrits d’un bibliophile bourguignon” (cf. [f.n. 907](#) above), see her “Jean de Wavrin, un bibliophile du quinzième siècle,” in *Revue du Nord* 69, no. 273 (Apr-June 1987): 281-93; and “Les goûts littéraires d’un bibliophile de la cour de Bourgogne,” in *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context*, ed. Keith Busby and Erik Cooper (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1990), 459-64.

<sup>909</sup> For a concise summary and analysis of these claims, see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 178-84; see also Gaucher, *Biographie*, 225-27.

<sup>910</sup> See Horgan, “A Critical Edition of the Romance of Gillion de Trazegnies,” xvi-l (esp. xlix-l); and see the critical summary in Gaucher, *Biographie*, 225-26. Horgan’s findings are nonetheless impressive, especially as concerns the common features and attributes of the Wavrin *atelier* romances; she builds substantially on the foundation laid by Bayot and Liégeois. Moreover, the Albion excerpt she examines – a myth of English origins preceding that of the *Brut*, which is also contained in the *Anciennes Chroniques* – is strikingly similar to the filiated romances; this may indeed argue, notwithstanding Visser-Fuchs’ objections, for common origins within the Wavrin *atelier*, if not for Jean de Wavrin’s personal authorship in every case. It is important to note that Visser-Fuchs’ study leaves open the possibility that Wavrin *was* the source of the excerpt in question, and that it was his text which was copied by another contemporary author (of the fragmented and disparate *remaniement* of *Guiron le Courtois*); see *Warwick and Wavrin* 222-32 (esp. 232).

<sup>911</sup> René Stuij, “Introduction: Langue et Style,” in *Histoire des Seigneurs de Gavre*, ed. R. Stuij (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1993), xlv.

<sup>912</sup> Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 228 and 232.

more of the other filiated romances. The most convincing of these is Jacques Paviot's recent (2003) suggestion that he penned the *Histoire des Seigneurs de Gavre*, a sprawling adventure tale that was "cobbled together, copying a number of passages from existing prose romances," including manuscripts produced in the *atelier* of the Master of Wavrin.<sup>913</sup> Paviot notes that certain geographical and plot details closely recall the Burgundian naval expedition; the author, "assez bien renseigné" on these events, could easily have been the *seigneur de Forestel*.<sup>914</sup> If he is right, and if these findings are supported by future studies, the *Gavre* may someday stand as a useful comparator text for stylistic analysis.<sup>915</sup>

Yet despite the great value of such studies, it remains true, as Visser-Fuchs notes, that none of the texts with which Jean has been associated "can be ascribed to his pen with any certainty."<sup>916</sup> It is perhaps safest to suppose, along with René Stuij, that the "sorte de style conventionnel" common to those texts was imposed upon a community of writers or copyists in an *atelier* – perhaps that of the Master of Wavrin – by a "maître d'oeuvre," and that Jean was affiliated with that community, whether as "maître," as a member *écrivain* or merely as a reader.<sup>917</sup> With this in mind, we may

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<sup>913</sup> Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 182.

<sup>914</sup> See Paviot, *Les ducs*, 220-21.

<sup>915</sup> Other scholars, including Ruth Morse, have also speculated on the possibility of Jean's authorship of the *Gavre*; see Morse, "Historical Fiction in Fifteenth-Century Burgundy," in *The Modern Language Review* 75, no. 1 (1980), esp. 58-9.

<sup>916</sup> Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 184; see also Gaucher, *Biographie*, 225-6.

<sup>917</sup> Stuij, "Introduction: Langue et Style," xlv-xlv. For her part, Elisabeth Gaucher has argued that though we cannot be certain of Jean's authorship of any of the (seemingly) filiated romances, "nous pouvons...affirmer qu'il existait, sous le patronage de Jean de Wavrin, un ou plusieurs ateliers d'écriture d'où sortaient des oeuvres romanesques présentant le même style et les mêmes motifs narratifs" (see *Biographie*, 226-7). The idea that Wavrin served as *patron* to this posited *atelier* (or these *ateliers*) may offer strong support for my thesis, below, that Jean was inclined to make use of the stylistic devices common to the filiated romances in his own writing. It may also increase the

reasonably speculate that he employed some of the *topoi* and chivalric commonplaces favoured by the *atelier* author(s) in his own writing.<sup>918</sup> Yet we must be careful to acknowledge the relative ubiquity of these devices, and to recognize that their appearance in the expedition narrative does not necessarily support either a specific concordance with the *atelier* romances or a broader case for Jean's editorial involvement.<sup>919</sup>

This still leaves us with rather uncertain terms for comparison. But another, rather more concrete, option does present itself. Though there is little evidence of demonstrably "original" writing in the *Anciennes Chroniques*, one of the military episodes included in Jean's historical *recueil* reveals his extensive editorial interventions in a turgid source text which seems to have been shared by Enguerrand de Monstrelet.<sup>920</sup> This is his account of the battle of Verneuil (1424), in

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possibility that a scribal proxy was involved, at least to some extent, in the redaction of the expedition narrative. However, I have opted to be as conservative as possible in imagining the potential connections between Jean de Wavrin and the filiated texts: partly because I am not qualified to mediate between the superb literary scholarship of Gaucher and that of Stuij, and partly because a troubling feature of one of the filiated texts – the disavowal of Waleran's naval expedition in *Lalaing* (see Chapter 3, above) – seems to me to problematize the claim that Jean de Wavrin exercised any sort of oversight over *all* of the texts.

<sup>918</sup> For my purposes, I shall follow Visser-Fuchs' lead in using Bayot's inventory of the chivalric commonplaces shared by *Chin*, *Trazegnies* and *Lalaing* as a basic guide to this tropological toolkit. See Bayot 129-94; and see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 334.

<sup>919</sup> It is also important to note that the first *atelier* romance, *Gillion de Trazegnies*, appeared in 1450; it is therefore not impossible that the redaction of one or both of the texts which I shall examine actually predates that of the filiated *remaniements*, and that the concordances between them simply reflect syntactic and semantic habits that were more broadly typical of fifteenth-century historical and romance literature. We can reasonably suppose that this literary tradition had inspired Jean de Wavrin from a much earlier date.

<sup>920</sup> See Monstrelet, *Chronique*, t. 4, 189-98. Though previous scholars, including Dupont, have assumed that Wavrin borrowed his materials from Monstrelet, Visser-Fuchs makes a convincing argument that the two chroniclers shared common sources; see *Warwick and Wavrin*, 248-53.



which he participated as a soldier on the English side.<sup>921</sup> Conveniently, we also possess the apparent source text for one episode in the expedition narrative: Geoffroy de Thoisy's brief and successful campaign to defend the isle of Rhodes from an Egyptian naval assault.<sup>922</sup> Like the Verneuil piece, Wavrin's version of the Rhodes episode seems to have been revised substantially from its more prosaic source; by comparing both sets of editorial inscriptions, therefore, we may have grounds to speculate whether the same "pen" redacted both texts.

Our answers, even here, must be tentative and contingent; for there are significant differences between these texts which stem in large part from their generic and rhetorical particularities. In his expanded account of the Verneuil conflict<sup>923</sup>, Jean revises and reorganizes the Monstrelet-source to reflect his own extensive knowledge of the battle; he inserts long passages offering vivid and colourful observations on the knights' heraldic finery, their battle array, their war-cries and martial rage, and the heroism of individual noblemen.<sup>924</sup> These additions, crafted in an epic register, indulge in a lavish poetics of knightly combat. By contrast, the additions to the much shorter Rhodes text seem rather less exuberant, the final product more naturalistic: the editor inserts a long passage at the beginning explaining and excusing Waleran's non-participation in the expedition, then dresses

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<sup>921</sup> Between the Treaty of Troyes (1419) and the Peace of Arras (1435), Valois Burgundy was allied with the English Plantagenets against the forces of the Dauphin, the future Charles VII. Jean de Wavrin, like many contemporaries, remained an anglophile even after Arras; see Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 172-5.

<sup>922</sup> The source text, which seems to have originated with Thoisy or those close to him, is contained in BN fr. 1278. For evidence that it served as a source for (or shared a common source with) Wavrin's account, see Chapter 2.

<sup>923</sup> Contained in Volume 5, Book 3, Chapters XXVIII-XXIX of the *Anciennes Chroniques d'Angleterre*; see Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 99-122.

<sup>924</sup> See, respectively, *op. cit.*, p. 102-4; p. 107-9; p. 111-12; p. 113-15.

up Thoisy's bland exposition with a number of vivid factual assertions and elaborations. The difference in tone is not surprising given the different kinds of information available to the redactor and his different rhetorical agenda in each case<sup>925</sup>; but it does tend to complicate our work, and to throw into question the hypothesis that Jean was responsible for both editions.

Yet upon reading the two redactions closely, we find considerable evidence that they *were* edited using similar techniques, and with similar priorities in mind. The most important concordance involves the insertion of terms that focus on the affective and experiential dimensions of knightly service – words and phrases we might call “state of mind” descriptors.<sup>926</sup> This is an important editorial gesture that transforms both source texts from unadorned exposition – accounts of “ce qui s’est passé” – into more humanized and psychologized accounts of “ce qui se pensait.” It often involves the insertion of conventional phrases common to the “literary” texts of the fifteenth century (including the Wavrin *atelier* romances): sentiments of joy, in particular, and of “douleur/déplaisir.”<sup>927</sup> Thus both the Duke of Bedford in the Verneuil redaction and the Grand Master of Rhodes are “moult joyeulz” to hear of

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<sup>925</sup> The redactor of the Rhodes edition, for example, lacked first-hand information on the conduct of the battle. One of the most important rhetorical differences between the two texts, as we shall see, is the Rhodes redactor's apparent desire to downplay, or at least modulate, the chivalric attainments of Geoffroy de Thoisy – an objective that contrasts sharply with Jean de Wavrin's panegyric depictions of individual heroism in the Verneuil account (the Duke of Bedford and Earl of Salisbury are singled out for special praise; cf. Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, 101-2). On the narrator's rhetorical intentions in the Rhodes redaction, see Chapter 2 (above).

<sup>926</sup> For a related discussion concerning the use of psychological descriptors in medieval historical and fictional texts, see Michèle Perret, “Writing History/Writing Fiction,” in *Melusine of Lusignan: Founding Fiction in Late Medieval France*, ed. D. Maddox and S. Sturm-Maddox (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 201-26 (esp. 202; 218-23).

<sup>927</sup> See Bayot 145-46. For more on these “conventional” sentiments, see Rasmussen, *La prose narrative*, 109-10.

the arrival of their Burgundian allies; in both cases, their victorious armies re-enter their cities “moustrant grant exaltation de joye.”<sup>928</sup> The protagonists’ foes, by contrast, suffer from both grief<sup>929</sup> and concern.<sup>930</sup>

At times, these sentiments are rather more nuanced and complex.

Protagonists in both texts are said to yearn for combat that eludes them; the Burgundians in Bedford’s party “mieulz amassent demourer dempres luy pour l’accompaignier a la bataille” but must leave to return to a siege “a grant regret.”<sup>931</sup> Waleran, for his part, “avoit grant desir et voullente daller secourir Rhodes”; but, prohibited by his Venetian hosts, he is urged to inform the pope that “il noseroit muer ou transgresser” his orders.<sup>932</sup> Common themes, and certain syntactic parallels, also emerge in references to soldiers’ perceptions of the pragmatics of warfare. In the Rhodes passage, “il sambloit audit grant maistre” that Castilian mercenaries were demanding excessive wages “par paour quilz avoient,” for they knew that he

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<sup>928</sup> “Very joyful”; “exulting very joyfully” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 121. The Wavrin editor, in particular, “writes in” several references to happiness and pleasure that do not appear in the Thoisy account. It is hoped that the pope “voulüst estre content” with Waleran’s delegation of duties to Confide and Thoisy (Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 34); the two sailors are “moult joyeulz” to hear the news (p. 34); the Burgundians’ words of encouragement “encouraga grandement” the Castilians, who reach an agreement with the grand master “tant que raisonnablement devoient bien estre contentz” (p. 35); etc.

<sup>929</sup> In a touching scene in the Verneuil passage, for example, the duke of Alençon, a foe of the English, mourns a son who has succumbed to his wounds: “Le duc d’Alençon fut moult desplaisant en cuer, car parfaitement lamoit” (Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 120).

<sup>930</sup> The Wavrin editor, for instance, notes that the Saracens, having lost their bombards and large cannons to a Christian sally, “furent grandement troublez”; the reference is absent from the Thoisy account. Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 37.

<sup>931</sup> “They would greatly have preferred to remain with him in order to accompany him to the battle”; “with great regret” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 108.

<sup>932</sup> “He does not dare change or break” his orders (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 34. Thoisy and Regnault de Confide, to whom he delegates the task, are – not surprisingly – “moult joyeulz” to have the opportunity to do battle against the sultan.

couldn't afford the costs and would have to release them.<sup>933</sup> Likewise, a group of chivalricly challenged Dauphinois sympathizers in the Verneuil redaction refuse to let fleeing French forces enter the city "pour paour quilz avoient que les Anglois leur annemis nentrassent dedans avec les fuyans."<sup>934</sup>

This shared emphasis upon the "thinking and feeling" aspects of noble life may suggest a common editorial disposition – one which seems consistent with Jean de Wavrin's redactive work elsewhere in the *Anciennes Chroniques*.<sup>935</sup> (Visser-Fuchs notes, for example, that his apparent revisions and additions to newsletter sources concerning King Edward IV appear to be concerned with affective issues and with conveying states of mind: "all are emotional rather than factual details or have emotional overtones."<sup>936</sup>) And our thesis receives support from other editorial concordances: both texts feature the "writing in" of other *non-affective* topoi common

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<sup>933</sup> "It seemed to the Grand Master"; "out of the fear that they had" (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 5, p. 34. Interestingly, the Thoisy account also makes reference to this episode, in one of very few instances where it *does* include state of mind descriptors (in most other cases the Wavrin editor "writes them in"; see Chapter 2). Wavrin has, however, significantly revised Thoisy here; the latter does not explicitly mention either the Grand Master's apprehension of this situation or the fear felt by the Castilians. According to Thoisy, the foreigners "n'avoient bonne volenté d'atandre ledict siège et, pour avoir couleur de eulx en aler, pour ce que ilz scavoient que...le Maistre...n'avoit point d'argent, luy demandoient la paie de quatre ou cinq mois....": Thoisy in Iorga, "Aventures," 31.

<sup>934</sup> "Out of the fear that they had that the English, their enemies, would gain entry along with the retreating (French)" (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 115.

<sup>935</sup> I must stress that this is a very preliminary assessment, based on my (necessarily) limited and partial reading of portions of the *Anciennes Chroniques*. Further research will be required both to substantiate this claim and to add necessary nuance and qualifications to it. It is also important to acknowledge that while the stylistic devices I have described here do recur throughout the expedition narrative itself, they do *not* appear evenly or consistently within every chapter and episode. This does not unsettle our hypothesis concerning Jean de Wavrin's editorship, since it is reasonable to assume that he would have responded differently to, and would have been more or less inclined to intervene in, different source texts according to different circumstances and priorities, and in light of the availability of different kinds of information. There are, as a result, enough stylistic contrasts remaining, especially within and between the early episodes, to support our hypothesis that the expedition narrative was cobbled together from a number of different sources.

<sup>936</sup> Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 283.

to the Wavrin *atelier*. These include conventional scenes in which the knightly protagonist is “honourably received” by a superior,<sup>937</sup> and scenes in which victorious soldiers give thanks to God for their victories.<sup>938</sup> If, by virtue of his interest in chivalric romance in general (and his presumed connections with the *atelier* in particular), Jean de Wavrin was inclined to use such formulations in his historiographical writing, these might be the watermarks of his editorship.<sup>939</sup>

They *might* – but of all the “mights” and “ifs” attached to my arguments in this section, those provided above are surely the most contingent and problematic. The evidence I have adduced is purely circumstantial; it is, moreover, *selective*, having been drawn from a pair of complex and ambivalent texts which contain other elements that might lead other readers to different conclusions. Certainly the specificity of details in the Rhodes narrative concerning Waleran’s own activities, together with the inclusion of certain factual details not present in the Thoisy account, argue for his involvement at some point in the process of redaction.<sup>940</sup> We cannot rule out the possibility that Waleran edited the Rhodes text alone. But as I believe my arguments have shown, we have no *stylistic* basis for rejecting the possibility, or shaking our faith in the probability, that Jean de Wavrin (working, perhaps, with a

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<sup>937</sup> See #64, “Réception,” in Bayot (157-8). Wavrin-Hardy, 33 and 35; Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 121.

<sup>938</sup> See #43, “Actions de grâces à Dieu,” in Bayot (150). Wavrin-Hardy, 37; Wavrin-Hardy 39, 4, p. 121-2.

<sup>939</sup> There is another reason to think that Jean de Wavrin may have been involved with this redaction, or at least with the insertion of the text into the expedition narrative. The episode concludes with the “Or vous lairons...” transition – another possible “watermark” of his editorship, for reasons we discussed above. See Wavrin-Hardy, 38.

<sup>940</sup> In addition to the precise details of Waleran’s correspondence with the pope and his subordinates, the Wavrin redaction includes a number of key details – including the name of the site, Chateau-Rouge, where Thoisy’s fleet first encounters the Saracens, and the strategy of dividing Christian forces into four groups for the defence of Rhodes – which are not present in Thoisy’s account. See Wavrin-Hardy, 35-7.

scribal proxy) played a primary role in the redaction of this text, and of the expedition narrative as a whole.<sup>941</sup>

### **Composite authorship, discourse and rhetoric: Implications for my analysis**

Two brief but important tasks remain to be completed here. The first is considering the possibility that Jean de Wavrin may have deputed his redactive duties to a scribe; the second is examining the implications of my findings for my broader analysis. As readers will recall, I have several times left open the possibility that either Jean or a *scribal proxy* was responsible for elements of the redaction; I have made this concession with an eye to Livia Visser-Fuchs' impressive analysis of the ways in which the *seigneur de Forestel* probably compiled the *Anciennes Chroniques* as a whole, and the sixth volume in particular. "It would have been physically impossible for Jean to pen down all of his own book, let alone produce some prose romances as well," she says; "he would have had little time left for a social life at court....."<sup>942</sup> Hence she notes the strong possibility that the chronicler merely collected documents, "stacked them in the right order, marked them up and added linking and explanatory sentences." Even those tasks, moreover, could have been "left to a competent, professional scribe who was also a translator and editor...."<sup>943</sup>

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<sup>941</sup> Moreover, though the evidence I have presented here may offer another reason to leave open the possibility of Jean's redactive involvement in the text, it does *not* provide us with a toolkit or a roadmap for tracing that involvement throughout the narrative. The only way I might develop a clearer sense of the nature and meaning of stylistic consistencies/differences that occur throughout the text is through further reading and research.

<sup>942</sup> Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 216; see 215-17.

<sup>943</sup> Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 216.

The first of these redactive options seems possible in the case of the expedition narrative<sup>944</sup>, but the second strikes me as extraordinarily unlikely. A variety of considerations suggest that if Jean was responsible for the text (that is, if he rather than Waleran oversaw its final redaction), he either compiled it himself or maintained very direct supervision over the process. Given the reputational stakes of the text for Waleran and for *la famille Wavrin*, and given Jean's close "literary" relationship with his nephew (which almost certainly included conversations about the crusader's adventures abroad<sup>945</sup>), it is very hard to believe that he would have farmed out its redaction to a third party. Some of the features we have examined point toward his close involvement; so do the detailed and complex transitions between episodes we shall examine in Appendix B.<sup>946</sup> We saw that Jean treated the Verneuil narrative as a special opportunity to inscribe his personal insights into an historical episode he regarded as particularly important; it seems reasonable to conclude that the expedition narrative was another such privileged text, which he

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<sup>944</sup> This possibility is increased if we conclude, along with Elisabeth Gaucher, that one or more Lillois *ateliers* were working under Jean's direct patronage; see f.n. 917 above.

<sup>945</sup> In this regard it is useful to note that, according to our archival evidence, Waleran seems to have returned to his uncle's hôtel in Bruges in the first instance, following his return from the East; in 59234, he reports that he ordered his Venetian host to "moy envoyer a Bruges a l'ostel Jean de Wavrin" several items of booty. See ADN B1984/59234, fol. 3v, in Paviot's forthcoming *Documents relatifs*.

<sup>946</sup> Transitional materials such as those included in Chapters IV and VII are at times naively mismatched or chronologically inaccurate; nonetheless, they are detailed compilations of facts which reveal a complex engagement with the recent history of the Balkans. It is hard to imagine a mere scribe crafting such transitions without the guidance of either of the Wavrins. See Appendix B, below.

was inclined to deal with differently than the many other documents which were compiled more “casually” within the *Anciennes Chroniques*.<sup>947</sup>

And so, after 40 pages of careful (indeed, sometimes torturously careful) argumentation, I have concluded that we must take two facets of my authorship hypothesis seriously. The first is that Waleran de Wavrin was closely involved in the composition of the expedition narrative, probably as the author of a source text but perhaps also (or alternatively) as an oral informant; and the second is that Jean de Wavrin or a scribe working directly under his supervision probably redacted the final version of the narrative, though it is possible that Waleran also did that work (or that he contributed substantially to Jean’s efforts). I have taken great care to justify these rather prosaic claims because, as I noted above, establishing the circumstances of composition – or at least a *range* of possible circumstances – is an essential prerequisite for the kind of rhetorical and discursive analysis I have undertaken in this thesis. One cannot speak responsibly about the didactic goals and narrative textures of a work without knowing whence that work may have emanated (and whence it probably did *not* emanate).

What, then, are the implications of these specific findings for my study? Two broad responses suggest themselves, one of them concerning textual *differences* and one concerning rhetorical *consistency*. In the first place, my insights into the composite nature of the narrative – the fact that parts of it were drawn from “non-indigenous” textual sources, and that it may also include distinct “layers” of

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<sup>947</sup> Once again, I am grateful for the opportunity to discuss this hypothesis with Livia Visser-Fuchs, who likewise commented that it is highly unlikely that an independent third party was involved in the redaction of the expedition narrative. Personal correspondence, 19 June 2008.



Waleran's composition and Jean's redaction – might seem at first blush to present us with a range of possibilities that is analytically unmanageable. But this is misleading. It is not always important to know with absolute certainty *who* wrote a particular text in order to analyze important facets of its composition – indeed, as literary theory reminds us, the fetishization of the *auteur* can even prompt us to lose sight of the “nestedness” of any text within its discursive environment. In this case, the awareness of these possibilities of “composite” authorship helps us to comprehend a number of otherwise puzzling tensions and anomalies that emerge within the expedition narrative. More importantly, as we shall see, it helps us to interpret the text as a tapestry of discursive modes – different themes, different tropes, different ways of depicting and making sense of the world, the self and the other – which were available to Burgundian writers in the middle of the fifteenth century.

This has been one of my primary goals for this study; another was to examine the rhetorical operations of the text. I have argued in the preceding chapters that despite the variability implied by composite authorship, the final redactor of this text has written certain sustained rhetorical objectives into the narrative; he has infused it with a coherence that coexists with differences that he did not manage to overwrite or suppress. My findings in the present chapter are very important here, for in the context of rhetorical analysis, traditional questions of authorship take on a greater importance. As I suggested above, the effort to lead, to provoke, to convince a reader – “rhetoric” as understood in its broadest and most

generic sense<sup>948</sup> – must be rooted in a particular set of interests. These are normally nested in the concerns and priorities, if not of an individual, then of an identifiable social or ideological group to which that *écrivain* belongs. If we misidentify this authorial context, we risk misunderstanding the reasons for and consequences of rhetorical operations in the text.

Here again my inability to name a redactor with absolute certainty may seem to cause problems for my analysis. Fortunately, however, the range of editorial possibilities I have identified leaves open to us a very viable set of claims concerning that editor's concerns, interests and priorities. Whether Jean or Waleran was responsible for the redaction, and whether or not the editor made use of a carefully-supervised scribe, we can assume that he shared the same set of rhetorical concerns as his chivalrous relative: promoting Waleran's status and prestige; justifying and rationalizing his failures in the expedition narrative; articulating Waleran's martial advice to Duke Philip; and so on. All of these efforts redound to the glory of *la famille Wavrin*; and so, for the purposes of our rhetorical study, we may "bracket out" the question of *which* Wavrin produced them in their final form. I have therefore referred to the editor merely as Wavrin, a term which allows for both possibilities

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<sup>948</sup> In this regard I am following the lead of Catherine Emerson, whose superb study of Jean Molinet's works makes use of a similar definition: "The rhetoric examined in this volume...is rhetoric in a sense which is both its colloquial modern acceptance and the earliest classical usage: it is an examination of what La Marche's *Mémoires* have to say and how they say this. This definition is in accordance with modern theoreticians who have described rhetoric as 'discursive techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent.'" Emerson, *Olivier de la Marche and the Rhetoric of Fifteenth-Century Historiography* (London: Boydell, 2004), 3. Here she cites Chaïm Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (Notre Dame: UND Pres, 1969, paperback edn. 1971), 4.

and points to the familial bond which defines the higher-level rhetorical objectives of the text.

With these things in mind, we may turn from the sometimes pedantic question of “who” to the more invigorating question of “how” – how the redactor selected, blended, and revised his sources, how he framed a Burgundian expedition in the context of a global crusade, and how he structured a chronicle blending panegyrics, apologetics and vitriol. These are the concerns of Appendix B, which will offer answers by undertaking a critical synopsis of the first few chapters of the narrative.

## *Appendix B*

### **Techniques of source redaction:**

A close reading of the narrative's 'geopolitical' episodes

Of the many differences and tensions residing in the expedition narrative, the most vivid is the series of stylistic and factual anomalies that distinguish the early, "contextual" chapters from later accounts of Waleran de Wavrin's adventures. These differences, as I argue here, stem primarily from the variegated character of the sources which the redactor appears to have consulted in his efforts to position Waleran's journey in the context of a larger, nobler, and more "holy" crusading project. For the purposes of our study, I have divided these chapters into two sections – one detailing the surprising events of 1442, and one concerned with the dramatic early days of the crusade in 1443. The first of these sections, as we shall see, provides special insights into the narrator's techniques of redaction and history-writing; the second offers both compelling support for my composite authorship hypothesis *and* some intriguing evidence concerning the types of sources – and the types of authorial voices – which he appears to have favoured.

### **Section 1. Dracul's imprisonment and Hunyadi's victories of 1442 (Ch II-III)**

This vivid introductory section, which comprises the second and third chapters of the first book of Wavrin's *Sixiesme Volume*, describes unexpected victories on the frontier of Hungary and Rumelia that astonished Christian Europe, setting the stage for a new crusade against the Ottoman Turks. It does so with elements of

drama, chivalric moralism and revisionism that are reminiscent of many contemporary historical romances. The narrative opens with a tale of treachery: “Moradbay,”<sup>949</sup> the avaricious “seigneur des Turcz,” so envies the voivode<sup>950</sup> of Wallachia, Vlad Dracul, that he resolves to trick him and invade his territories. He sends a “tres soubtil et eloquent” ambassador to the Wallachian court to invite Vlad to the Porte; Dracul, who is “moult fame de vaillance et sagesse,” first hesitates but is then swayed by the subashi’s seductive words. He is received at the sultan’s court with great honour; but after a sumptuous banquet, he is seized, chained, and imprisoned at the castle of Gallipoli.<sup>951</sup>

Having deprived Wallachia of its ruler, Murad moves quickly to invade; as his armies advance into Romania,<sup>952</sup> the Vlachs retreat into the mountains. But under the leadership of “Johannes de Hongnac” – the Transylvanian voivode and crusading hero Janos Hunyadi, here described as the “Cappitaine des Vallaques”<sup>953</sup> –

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<sup>949</sup> “Murad Bey,” i.e. Murad II, the Ottoman sultan who later crosses the Bosphorus despite Waleran’s efforts to contain him in Asia (Ch XII) and defeats the Christian forces at Varna (Ch XIII to XIV).

<sup>950</sup> Each of the Romanian territories of Wallachia and Moldavia, located on the frontier between the kingdom of Hungary and Ottoman Rumelia, was governed by a prince or “voivode.” During the unsettled period of the late 1430s and early 1440s, the voivodes of Wallachia and Moldavia were often sympathetic to, and served as vassals of, the Ottoman sultan. Vlad Dracul was one such vassal (see below). The province of Transylvania, by contrast, was subordinate to and subsumed by the kingdom of Hungary.

<sup>951</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 5-7.

<sup>952</sup> Wavrin writes that the Turks are led by a “conducteur et capitaine” named “Beirlabay” (*beylarbeyi*); as Colin Imber argues, this seems to reflect Wavrin’s (or his source’s) confusion between the subashi’s military title and his proper name. The leader of this expedition was actually Mezid Bey (see below; and see Imber, *Crusade of Varna*, 108, f.n. 7).

<sup>953</sup> This seems to reflect Wavrin’s confusion over Hunyadi’s relationship with the Wallachians (or Vlachs). The latter, as Joseph Held has shown, had Wallachian parentage but had long served the kings of Hungary, from whom he earned his appointment as voivode of Transylvania in 1441. His forces were *not*, therefore, Wallachian – in March 1442, in fact, the Wallachians were still commanded by Vlad Dracul – but Transylvanian. Wavrin’s characterization of the victorious

the Christian forces engage in guerilla warfare, attacking the Turks remaining in their camp after most forces have been sent on raiding expeditions. The wily Vlachs then dress in the dead Turks' clothing; they surprise and slaughter the forces returning triumphantly from raids into Christian territory, making them, as the narrator tells us drily, "soon forget their joy."<sup>954</sup>

Deeply aggrieved by this setback, the "Grant Turcq" appoints a new "bailarbay"<sup>955</sup> and prepares a second expedition "pour vengier loultrage quil disoit que les Vallaques lui avoient fais."<sup>956</sup> Once again the Turks pour into Wallachia in great force; once again the Christians withdraw into the mountains, hoping for a guerilla opportunity. This time, however, the Turkish forces guard their camp carefully; it is only when they re-cross the Danube, laden with Hungarian booty, that the "Vallaques" strike, overwhelming those who have not yet traversed the river. The sultan's force is greatly reduced; and despite its ample booty, the "grant Turcq" is enraged by the setback. He lectures his general on chivalric ethics, cuts off his head, and swears never again "to have a captain-general that [goes] by the name of Beylarbey."<sup>957</sup>

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Christian forces as "Vlachs" may reflect an effort to create narrative continuity between disparate source texts; see my discussion below.

<sup>954</sup> Transl. Imber, 109; Wavrin's exact diction is: "les Vallaques...leur firent tantost muer leur joye...." Wavrin-Hardy, 9. This passage spans Wavrin-Hardy, 7-9, and extends over the break between Chapters II and III.

<sup>955</sup> The commander in charge of this punitive expedition was Sihabeddin Pasha; see Imber 110, f.n. 9, and my discussion below.

<sup>956</sup> "To avenge himself for the outrage which he said the Vlachs had perpetrated against him." Transl. Imber, 109; see Wavrin-Hardy, 10.

<sup>957</sup> "Et adont ledit Grant Turcq fist sollempnel serment...que jamais de ce jour en avant nauroit capitaine general quy portast nom de beylarbay," Wavrin-Hardy, 12. Transl. Imber, 111.

Wavrin<sup>958</sup> provides no dateline for these chapters. But three editors – Dupont, Hardy and Imber – agree that they recount the pivotal events of 1442, the year that Hunyadi reversed a series of major Christian setbacks<sup>959</sup> by defeating the forces of sultan Murad in two important encounters in Transylvania.<sup>960</sup> These were the battles of Gyulafahérvár (March 23), in which Hunyadi routed the raiding army of Mezid Bey, the master of the sultan's stables, and killed its general; and of the Ialomita Valley (September), where Hunyadi's heavy cavalry overwhelmed a much larger force of Ottoman janissaries, siphahis and akinjis in a bloody battle on narrow terrain.<sup>961</sup> The editors are correct, I think, about Wavrin's motives; but they do not tell us as much as we need to know about his sources and redactive method. I shall deal with these two observations in turn.

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<sup>958</sup> For the sake of convenience, I refer to the redactor of the full expedition narrative as "Wavrin." As I noted in Appendix A (above), I think it probable that the editor was Jean de Wavrin; but because I do not wish to foreclose on the possibility, proposed by Iorga and Visser-Fuchs, that Waleran himself was creatively responsible, I have chosen to use the generic "Wavrin."

<sup>959</sup> These setbacks dated to 1438, when Murad's armies – with the aid of Vlad Dracul (see below) – invaded and laid waste parts of Transylvania, carrying away thousands of slaves and a great wealth of booty. In 1439, Murad besieged and conquered Smederevo, and with it nearly the entire despotate of Serbia; this was followed in 1440 by more devastating incursions into Transylvania and Hungary, and by the unsuccessful siege of Belgrade. For a useful summary of these events see Franz Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, transl. Ralph Manheim (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1978), 16-18.

<sup>960</sup> Only Imber specifically describes the first incursion (in Ch II-III) as Mezid Bey's and the second (in Ch III) as Shihabeddin Pasha's; see 108-10, f.n. 7-9. Hardy locates both battles in 1442, but makes no other remarks; see Wavrin-Hardy, 5-12 (marginalia). For her part, Dupont identifies the *first* battle in Wavrin's account with the Ialomita Valley conflict of September 1442 – an important insight, as I argue below. She offers no critical remarks on the second battle scene (Wavrin-Dupont 2, p. 12-20, esp. 17, f.n. 1).

<sup>961</sup> The best English-language study of these two battles that I have found is in Joseph Held, *Hunyadi: Legend and Reality*. Eastern European Monographs No. CLXVIII (New York: Columbia UP, 1985), 86-90. The lack of abundant scholarly sources in English (or French) on medieval Hungarian history in general is a serious obstacle to western scholarship; as I note below, it imposes significant limitations on my own study.

In the first place, it *does* seem clear that Wavrin intended to dramatize Hunyadi's exploits of 1442, successes which were trumpeted throughout western Christendom and which added to the crusading din during the following two years.<sup>962</sup> This makes good rhetorical sense, given the importance of Hunyadi's exploits to Duke Philip's project<sup>963</sup>; it is further confirmed by a number of concordances between the plot of his mini-narrative and the broad contours of these events as reconstructed by modern scholars.<sup>964</sup> In Wavrin, as elsewhere, the glories of 1442 accrue in three phases: a massive Ottoman raid is endured and overcome, an enraged sultan organizes a punitive invasion, and a second victory is won – all thanks to the wiles and heroism of János Hunyadi. Wavrin's description of the first battle likewise seems to echo other sources, though in a problematic way: instead of relating the complicated (but breathlessly heroic) details of Mezid Bey's invasion contained in János Thuróczy's chronicle and other "western" texts,<sup>965</sup> it appears to provide a short version of the *second* battle – Sihabbedin Pasha's invasion of

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<sup>962</sup> As Joseph Held asserts, "Hunyadi's name became a household word in Western courts" soon after Ialomita (*Legend and Reality*, 89). The Burgundian court was certainly one of these: Jacques Paviot and others have noted that the victories of 1442 provided a key theme for both papal and ducal propagandists seeking crusading assistance from the Burgundian territories (see Paviot, *Les ducs*, 95-6). Moreover, by including in its pages two other contemporary reports detailing Hunyadi's exploits, Wavrin's *Anciennes Chroniques* itself testifies to the special place held by the "Blancq Chevalier" (the "white knight," an honorific which may have emerged as a bastardization of "chevalier vlacq," "Wallachian knight") in the Burgundian chivalric imagination; see Vol. 6, Book 4, Ch. V and VII (Wavrin-Hardy, 39, 5, p. 361-2 and 366-7).

<sup>963</sup> These battles, as noted above, earned Hunyadi his "spurs" as a crusading hero in the minds of many Burgundians. It therefore seems sensible that, in framing his narrative about a collaborative effort between Hunyadi and Waleran, Wavrin would have started with them.

<sup>964</sup> It is important, of course, to acknowledge the fallibility of such "modern reconstructions," which are themselves subject to the limitations of their primary source texts. Held, to his credit, relies on a wide range of Greek, Hungarian and Turkish sources to support his claims; see *Legend and Reality*, 217-23.

<sup>965</sup> Summarized in Held, 86-7.



September 1442 – that is similar to an account published by the Greek chronicler Chalcocondylas.<sup>966</sup>

The case for Wavrin's "substitution" of a Ialomita narrative in place of the details of Gyulafahérvár, first intimated by Emilie Dupont in her annotations, is far from conclusive – but it appears to be strong.<sup>967</sup> In both our text and the Greek story, the overconfident Ottoman commander sends raiders into the countryside, keeping only a small contingent with him; in both, Hunyadi first attacks the vulnerable Ottoman camp and then ambushes the returning *sipahis*.<sup>968</sup> Other details of Wavrin's

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<sup>966</sup> See Chalcocondylas, *Historiarum de Origine ac Rebus Gestis Turcorum*, Lib. V, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*. Patrologiae Graecae Tomus 159 (Paris: Migne, 1866; Repr. Brepols, 1966), 254-58. (I am indebted to Patrick Conway for his assistance with, and his excellent English translations of, the relevant portions of this text.) As Held notes, Chalcocondylas bases his reports on Turkish sources, "according to whom Sehabeddin was a coward and an incompetent commander." These include the chroniclers Nesri and Sead-eddin (222-3).

<sup>967</sup> It is certainly also conceivable that Wavrin had access to a source, oral or written, that attributed these errors to Mezid. At least one Turkish source, *The Chronicle of Uruç b. 'Adil el-Kazzaz* (transl. in Imber, 181-2), accuses both Ottoman commanders of the same laxity, and says they suffered the same fate. Hence we need not necessarily conclude that Wavrin's account derived from a treatment of Ialomita; but given other striking concordances with contemporary accounts of the second battle and discrepancies with those of the first (see below), this still strikes me as a more likely possibility.

<sup>968</sup> See Chalcocondylas, 135-6, and Held's summary of Chalcocondylas (222-23). There are other striking similarities between Chalcocondylas' account and Wavrin's. The Greek chronicler notes in his preamble to the battle scene that "Jangus Choniates, whom they call 'Joannes Huniadis,' an outstanding man at that time among the Pannonians, to whom the region of Ardelium had been entrusted by the council of the Pannonians, collected as large an army as he could from Ardelium and Pannonia" (transl. P. Conway): 254. As Patrick Conway has observed, this is the first mention of Hunyadi in Chalcocondylas' account – one reason, perhaps, that a contemporary reader might have mistakenly believed that the scene referred to the first of Hunyadi's 1442 battles. The details provided here appear to be related in Wavrin, albeit in a factually degraded form: "When the Vlachs knew that [the Ottomans] had come, they assembled as many men as they could and appointed a captain called Johannes de Hongnac" (transl. Imber, 108): see Wavrin-Hardy, 7. There are also some minor differences between Chalcocondylas and Wavrin, though none so significant as to overshadow the striking concordances. The Greek chronicler, for example, recounts Hunyadi's ambush of the returning Ottoman raiders as follows: "The camps having been captured, Jangus placed some men in an ambush, by which means he caught the enemy arriving, laden down with their booty of property and other things, and destroyed them all" (transl. P. Conway): 254. (The reference to "the enemy arriving" is ambiguous here, but a contemporary reader might well have understood it to mean the raiders returning to their camp.) This accords nicely with Wavrin's plot, but it makes no mention of the Christians dressing in dead Turks' clothing, nor of the raiders'

first battle narrative seem to agree with the “facts” of Ialomita as we know them: receiving “certain news” that the Turks are about to advance, soldiers and peasants take refuge in the mountains – preparations that did not occur prior to Meziđ’s surprise attack.<sup>969</sup> And though both battles resulted in immense gains of booty for the Christians, the magnitude of Ottoman losses at Ialomita generated the kinds of staggering winnings which may have motivated our narrator’s exclamation: “Si conquirent yceulz Vallaques grans richesses et tresors.”<sup>970</sup>

Attractive as the “substitution” hypothesis appears, it raises a variety of objections and supplementary questions to which I can now suggest only tentative answers.<sup>971</sup> Future research will help me to address the feasibility of the claim that Chalcocondylan formulations, themselves based on Turkish sources, might have circulated in a form accessible to western writers<sup>972</sup>; it will also allow for more fine-grained comparisons between Wavrin’s account and various other Hungarian, Polish, Turkish and Greek sources.<sup>973</sup> And it will help to answer the most vexing question of

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ironic and short-lived celebrations. The fact that Wavrin’s ambush scene is embroidered with such details (which include “state of mind” descriptors) – and the fact that it follows a sudden chapter break (see below) – leads one to suspect that our narrator paid special editorial attention to this scene and may have “written in” these additional contents.

<sup>969</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 8 and Held, 88.

<sup>970</sup> “The Vlachs acquired enormous riches and treasures” (my transl.): See Wavrin-Hardy, 9.

<sup>971</sup> The obscurity of relevant sources, the densely elaborate Latin and Greek prose contained in those few sources available through library requests, and most seriously, the paucity of secondary studies on medieval Hungary written in western European languages all prevent me from undertaking sufficiently detailed studies at this time. For the sake of focussing upon the keynote problems of this study, I shall therefore raise these issues in this preliminary and skeletal form here, and return to them later in my studies, perhaps as part of postdoctoral research.

<sup>972</sup> Given that Chalcocondylas wrote around 1462, it does not seem *prima facie* impossible that this version of the story – so clearly different from those of Thuróczy (who probably wrote later) and other sources – was disseminated throughout Christendom in various forms around the time that Wavrin might have been redacting the expedition narrative.

<sup>973</sup> Studies by Joseph Held and Radu Florescu point us usefully in the direction of these sources; they include a letter from the Polish king Władysław (1443) and a patent issued by László V (1453),

all: if the first battle scene is drawn from a description or recollection of Ialomita, whence is the second derived? Is it *also* based on the events of September 1442 – perhaps as related in a heretofore undiscovered source?

This is certainly possible. The second scene does include key details which correspond with the “facts” of Ialomita: here again the Vlachs, warned of the arrival of the Turks, withdraw to the mountains and abandon the plains.<sup>974</sup> But it also complicates matters by introducing new details which seem strikingly at odds with most accounts of the September campaign.<sup>975</sup> These are, first, Hunyadi’s decision not to attack the Turkish forces “sinon quant ilz repasseront la Dunoe,”<sup>976</sup> resulting in his engagement with only a fraction of the departing army; and second, the narrator’s affirmation that the Ottomans escaped with an enormous amount of booty (“grant proye”) – winnings, however, that did not save the Turkish “beylarbey” from being executed for his cowardice.<sup>977</sup> All of this seems rather to dampen the heroic tenor

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both contained in collections of medieval documents; a number of Ottoman sources contained in József Thury’s *Török-Magyarkori emlékek: Török történetirők*, a collection, edited in Hungarian in 1896, of documents on Hungarian-Turkish relations; portions of the *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades* of Antonius de Bonfinis, an apologist for the Hunyadis writing later in the fifteenth century; documents from the *Raguza és Magyarország összeköttetésinek levéltára*, a collection, edited in Hungarian in 1887, of texts concerning the relations between Ragusa and Hungary; and a number of secondary studies, many of them very old, in Hungarian (by György Székely, József Teleki, Ármin Vámbéry, and others) and German (by Nicolae Iorga, Ludwig Kupelwieser and others). See Held, 174-5 and 217-23. For a useful summary of chronicle sources on Dracul and the military campaigns during this period, see Florescu, “Vlad II Dracul and Vlad III Dracula’s Military Campaigns in Bulgaria, 1443-1462,” in *Dracula: Essays on the Life and Times of Vlad Tapes*, ed. Kurt W. Treptow (New York: Columbia UP, 1991), 103-4 and 113-14. As noted above, I plan to examine all of these sources, including several which are too obscure for me to obtain now, at a later date. My present observations are based strictly on studies of Bartholomew of Genoa’s 1443 letter (see below), as well as portions of the chronicles of the Byzantine scholars Chalcocondylas and Doukas, the Polish chronicler Jan Długosz, and the Hungarian writer János Thuróczy.

<sup>974</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 10.

<sup>975</sup> In this case, again, I am relying on Held’s synthesis; see 88-90.

<sup>976</sup> “Until they were re-crossing the Danube” (transl. Imber 110): Wavrin-Hardy, 10.

<sup>977</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 11-12.

and the world-historical significance of Ialomita; and it raises another question:

Where might such curious anomalies have originated?

It is possible, of course, that they were derived from a separate account which Wavrin echoed in his own recitation, or imported directly into his text.<sup>978</sup> But more compelling possibilities emerge when we read these details in light of the chronologically-misplaced narrative that *follows them* in Chapters IV and V – an account of events, as we shall see, that actually began in 1439-40. Both chapters begin by acknowledging the need to defend against devastating Turkish raids (causing untold “griefz and dommages” including the seizure of “men, women and children and all kinds of victuals and moveable property”<sup>979</sup>); and such attacks, we know, did occur on a grand scale in both Transylvania and Serbia in 1438-39.<sup>980</sup> Discordant as they are with the “facts” of 1442, these details seem to fit this retrospective gaze ideally.<sup>981</sup> This raises two interesting possibilities: Wavrin may have “written in” the false details of Ialomita to create narrative continuity, or he

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<sup>978</sup> They may also have appeared in an integral newsletter recounting *all* of the events of 1442 – one which Wavrin simply imported directly into his compilation. This explanation is favoured by Iorga, who asserts that “Tout ce récit est sans doute la reproduction d’une lettre” (see Wavrin-Iorga, 7, f.n. 1). As demonstrated below, however, I *do* have doubts about this claim.

<sup>979</sup> “Injuries and losses” (my transl.; Imber has “calamitous losses.”) The subsequent translation is Imber’s (111). See Wavrin-Hardy, 12.

<sup>980</sup> See Babinger, 16-20; Held, 12-16.

<sup>981</sup> It is important to note, however, that details of the closing episode, in which the Turkish commander is slain by the indignant sultan, are not *entirely* misleading in the context of 1442. Sihabeddin Pasha, to be sure, was not killed by Murad upon his return from the Ialomita Valley, nor was the title of *beylerbeyi* discontinued. But Karaca Bey, who is introduced here, *was* active against the Christians in subsequent battles; he was killed at Varna in 1444 (see Babinger 38).

may have based these details on an earlier “raid-and-resistance” narrative – one which was, perhaps, contained in the source he used for the following chapters.<sup>982</sup>

Whatever the case, the factual ambiguities implicit in both of these battle scenes are significant, for they seem to shine a light on Wavrin’s redactive method. To date, most scholars have explained his “production” of the geopolitical episodes in two ways: some, such as Georges Le Brusque, suggest that he composed them largely on the basis of Waleran’s knowledge and recollections of the East (and on things the crusader was “told” by Hungarian knights<sup>983</sup>); others, such as Nicolae Iorga, argue that these episodes are based on integral “letters” which the narrator interpolated whole, or with minor revisions, into his text.<sup>984</sup> We cannot discount either possibility; Iorga’s thesis, in particular, is tremendously useful for explaining the repetitions and tensions which emerge in the Long Campaign episodes (see Section 2 below). But neither thesis fully accounts for the complex texture of this section, which seems to reflect both “foreign” narrative traditions and uniquely “local” rhetorical concerns. With these things in mind, I have proposed a two-part hypothesis: first, that in crafting these chapters, our *écrivain* has “blended” the contents of a number of textual (and, perhaps, oral) sources; and second, that in “creatively rewriting” the material, he has filtered it, to varying degrees, through his

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<sup>982</sup> One such text, which seems to describe a Turkish incursion of 1438, appears in the *Historia Turco-Byzantina* of the contemporary Greek chronicler Doukas. Though it is only glancingly similar to Wavrin’s account, it does suggest the possibility that other such “raid-and-resistance” stories circulated during this period. See *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks by Doukas: An Annotated Translation of ‘Historia Turco-Byzantina’*, ed. and trans. by Harry J. Magoulias (Detroit: WSU, 1975), 175.

<sup>983</sup> See Le Brusque, “From Agincourt to Fornovo,” 191.

<sup>984</sup> See below.

own knowledge base and tropological toolkit, framing it with the interests and concerns of his Burgundian readers in mind.

This is an ambitious hypothesis; it rests on certain premises – including the availability of multiple sources to our redactor – which some scholars might dispute.<sup>985</sup> But it also has remarkable explanatory power, helping to elucidate certain textual features and irregularities that emerge within these chapters. It may account, for instance, for Wavrin's placement of a chapter break near the end of the first battle scene – a marker that does not cleanly separate the two episodes, but *does* introduce a colourful dénouement which seems to have been embroidered with details not included in Chalcocondylas' account. It may help to explain apparent inconsistencies in characterization, offering a credible reason why a "Grant Turcq" who is so subtle and treacherous at the beginning of Chapter II should see fit to lecture his general using chivalric language at the end of Chapter III.<sup>986</sup> And it may help us to identify other differences in tone and diction which suggest that special attention was paid to "rewriting" certain parts of the text for the benefit of a Burgundian audience.

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<sup>985</sup> Scholars may also object on *stylistic* grounds. As Livia Visser-Fuchs has pointed out, the evidence of redaction in Jean de Wavrin's texts is usually more obvious than is the case here; it is seldom buried within chapters, and seldom lacking in narrative seams or transitions (Visser-Fuchs, personal correspondence, 19 June 2008). It is important to qualify this claim, however, by noting that in his treatment of the battle of Verneuil (see Appendix A, section (d) above), Jean *does* blend a source text seamlessly, and in an interlocking fashion, with his own narrative additions. Hence it seems reasonable to hypothesize that he was inclined to undertake careful and subtle redaction in the case of texts that were especially meaningful to him.

<sup>986</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 11-12.

This seems especially true of the remarkable tale of Vlad Dracul's betrayal and imprisonment by the sultan – an episode that sets both a rhetorical and a stylistic tone for the entire expedition narrative. This is a notoriously difficult story to pin down in historical terms; both the timing and the very historicity of Dracul's seizure remain a matter of dispute amongst scholars.<sup>987</sup> What *is* clear, as Georges Le Brusque has pointed out, is that the tale seems to have circulated widely in the fifteenth century.<sup>988</sup> It is told by sources as distant as the Greek chronicler Doukas, who reports that the voivode came to Adrianople to pay tribute to the sultan prior to the siege of Belgrade in 1440; he was imprisoned, the Greek writes, on "trumped up charges" that he intended to betray Murad to the Hungarians.<sup>989</sup> And it came to Burgundy in at least one written text: a crusading screed penned in 1443 by the Franciscan Bartholomew of Genoa, which was read and preserved by members of

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<sup>987</sup> Some, including Iorga, doubt that it ever occurred; others, including Nicholae Klepper, suggest that events took place in 1442 exactly or very nearly as Bartholomew indicated. See Iorga, "Les aventures 'Sarrazines,'" 15, and Klepper, *Romania: An Illustrated History* (New York: Hippocrene, 2002), 66. Radu Florescu and Raymond McNally take a more equivocal (and probably better-informed) approach, suggesting that Dracul was driven out of his capital by Hunyadi after the offensive of March 1442. The crusader, they write, was angered by Dracul's neutrality, which allowed the Ottomans "free access into Transylvania." "In these circumstances it was natural for Dracul to seek refuge on Turkish soil at the close of 1442 together with his family. He likely was placed under house detention at Gallipoli but not bound and in chains, as some authorities have stated." See Florescu and McNally, *Dracula: A Biography of Vlad the Impaler* (New York: Hawthorn, 1973), 35.

<sup>988</sup> See Le Brusque, "From Agincourt to Fornovo," 189-90, and Iorga, "Les aventures 'Sarrazines,'" 14-16.

<sup>989</sup> Doukas, *Decline and Fall*, 177. The Greek chronicler's placement of the imprisonment of Dracul at an earlier date may be an example of what Florescu and McNally have described as contemporary observers' tendency to "lump together and fail to distinguish between the separate Turkish campaigns of 1438 and those of March and September 1442." See *Dracula*, 34.

the Valois nobility.<sup>990</sup> Bartholomew, for his part, says the sultan summoned Vlad to the Porte *after* the battle of Gyulafahérvár in March 1442. The Grand Turk received “son serf” “honnourablement au disner”; then, after the banquet, he imprisoned him – and later decapitated him – for collaborating with the enemy.<sup>991</sup>

In 1927, Nicolae Iorga noted certain correspondences between Bartholomew’s letter (which also recounts Hunyadi’s battles of 1442) and Wavrin’s account; “on a l’impression,” he wrote of the latter, “que tout cela ne fut pas recueilli sur les lèvres du vétéran de la croisade, mais bien dans une lettre de tout point pareille à celle de Barthélemy de Gênes.”<sup>992</sup> This is, as I suggested above, an important but potentially misleading suggestion. Though there are indeed parallels between the Dracul episodes in both texts – both authors, for instance, depict Murad receiving Vlad honourably, and both portray him seizing the voivode treacherously after a banquet – they differ on important facts: on chronology, on Dracul’s political independence, and on his alleged execution. Their accounts of the battles of 1442, moreover, appear even less compatible.<sup>993</sup> If Wavrin *did* interpolate a contemporary

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<sup>990</sup> Bartholomew’s letter is contained in a collection of documents related to crusading (and other courtly matters) which was compiled for the de Lannoy family; it is currently housed in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (ms. fr. 1278). Interestingly, as Nicolae Iorga observed, Bartholomew seems to have been present during Waleran’s expedition on the Danube (cf. Wavrin-Iorga 67-8) – a fact which may increase the likelihood that Bartholomew’s letter, or some version of his account, was available to Wavrin (see below).

<sup>991</sup> “Lettre du Franciscain Barthélemy de Gênes,” reproduced in Iorga, “Les aventures ‘Sarrazines,’” 39-40.

<sup>992</sup> “One has the impression that all of this did not come from the lips of the crusade veteran [i.e. Waleran], but rather from a letter entirely similar to that of Bartholomew of Genoa” (my transl.): Iorga, “Les aventures ‘Sarrazines,’” 16.

<sup>993</sup> Unlike Wavrin, for example, Bartholomew seems *not* to substitute the Chalcocondylan Ialomita story for his account of the Gyulafahérvár battle of March 1442; there is no mention of the Ottoman commander’s foolhardy choice to send out his raiders, leaving his camp vulnerable. The Franciscan writes only that the sultan “sent a very great and very powerful force of Turks into the



newsletter into his account in an integral form, it certainly was not Bartholomew's letter, nor was it a text "de tout point pareille" to the Franciscan's. It was a more comprehensive, more detailed, different – yet not *entirely* different – source.<sup>994</sup>

We have no grounds, as I noted above, to discount the latter possibility. But in light of the facts, it seems more likely that Wavrin himself blended written (and perhaps oral) sources, probably including Bartholomew's<sup>995</sup>, and that he devoted special editorial attention to the Dracul episode, crafting it in a form that would be particularly pleasing to Burgundian readers. Three types of evidence support this suggestion, the first of them stylistic: the language of this opening scene, where the "famous and valiant" Dracul is seduced into visiting the Porte, is both elevated and formulaic in a manner common to Jean de Wavrin's other confections. Here we find the state-of-mind descriptors ("il ne s[']en tint mye bien content") and chivalric commonplaces ("le recheupt moult honnourablement") which, as we have seen, he

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said kingdom; ...they took and enslaved a great number of Christians. Then with God's help, the Hungarians attacked them during their return, and killed thirty-six thousand of them" (my transl.): Wavrin-Dupont, 2, p. 8. Bartholomew's own version of Ialomita describes a "cruel battle" in the mountains and makes no mention of a Christian plan to surprise and ambush the Turks as they were re-crossing the Danube. It also dwells on the seizure of booty *from*, and not by, the sultan's forces; and it provides a dénouement, in which the Christians, heartened by their victories, proceed to raid Ottoman territories (in a passage that may be apocryphal or may refer – in terms different from Wavrin's – to the Long Campaign of 1443). But despite these broad differences, there are some curious similarities between the two texts – including a description of the enraged sultan dressing in black to express his grief (this occurs after the March battle in Wavrin and after Ialomita in Bartholomew). This suggests the possibility, as noted above, that Wavrin blended elements of Bartholomew's text (or a similar source) with other textual and/or oral sources.

<sup>994</sup> In an interesting aside, Iorga notes that one place-name contained in Wavrin's (but not Bartholomew's) account of Dracul's imprisonment, "le bras Saint George," appears to reflect the misreading of a name originally rendered in Greek (Wavrin-Iorga 7, f.n. 1). It is not clear whether this error was unique to a source text which Wavrin consulted (as Iorga implies) or whether it had wider currency in western parlance.

<sup>995</sup> See [f.n. 993](#) above.

appears to have favoured in his writing.<sup>996</sup> The passage also makes use of syntactic formulations (“belles parolles et blandices,” “sallus et amisties,” “vaillance et sagesse”) that are typically employed in the depiction of the great soldiers and princes of courtly literature: precisely the sort of language that would have appealed to his readers.<sup>997</sup>

Wavrin’s noble audience was also famously interested in courtly finery and courtly protocol – and in this respect, the Dracul account, which includes a unique and detailed description of the sultan’s court, does not disappoint. Iorga noted that this “couleur locale” betrays “une incontestable authenticité,” and he was probably right – though that authenticity may have reached the narrative through more indirect channels than he supposed. If Wavrin sought to depict Vlad Dracul’s reception at the sultan’s camp near Adrianople in his own imaginative terms, it seems reasonable that he would have consulted contemporary literature for insights into Murad’s courtly practices. An obvious choice would be the most famous contemporary Eastern travelogue – Bertrandon de la Broquière’s *Voyage en la terre d’oulremer* (1455) – which was one of just a handful of non-fiction works contained in Jean de Wavrin’s personal library.<sup>998</sup> And as it happens, the *Voyage* contains a

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<sup>996</sup> “He was not at all happy”; “received him very honourably” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 6. The latter is one of the commonplaces identified by Bayot as common to the romances of the Wavrin atelier: see Bayot, *Gillion*, 157-58.

<sup>997</sup> The presentation of complementary and (often) synonymous terms in this “binary” style is a form of *amplificatio* which, though common to a number of fifteenth-century prose genres, derives principally from courtly literature. See Rasmussen, *La prose narrative*, 46-51. As we shall see, Wavrin’s description of Duke Philip’s court makes use of a number of similar *binaires*; a kind of stylistic (and ethical) parallel is thus established between the two courtly scenes.

<sup>998</sup> Jean’s copy of the *Voyage* was contained in a collection of documents called a *Recueil d’Orient*; the full manuscript is now housed in the Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal in Paris (no. 4798). According to

description of Murad's court that is markedly similar to the one in the expedition narrative.

The parallels between the two texts, to be sure, are neither perfect nor comprehensive; the reception scene in the *Voyage* takes place in a gallery in the sultan's court in Adrianople, while Wavrin's scene occurs in a military camp outside the city. Several of the features in each account are absent from the other.

Nonetheless, there are concordances – enough, perhaps, to support the hypothesis that Wavrin internalized Bertrandon's account and replicated it in his own work. In each case the sultan, who is associated with the colour crimson<sup>999</sup>, is seated on a raised space<sup>1000</sup> in front of his courtiers; his highest noblemen are placed near him, and others sit facing him around the perimeter of the court – “in a wide circle starting at his left and right” in Wavrin, “along the walls and partitions around the gallery, as far from the lord as possible” in Bertrandon.<sup>1001</sup> Dracul himself is granted a place of honour near the king, rather like a “lord of Bosnia” who comes to do

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Georges Doutrepoint, Jean de Wavrin had it copied in 1460; see *La littérature française*, 202. For more on the *Receuil*, see Antoinette Naber, “Les manuscrits d'un bibliophile,” 38.

<sup>999</sup> In Bertrandon, Murad wears a crimson satin robe; in Wavrin his pavilion is lined with crimson. See Wavrin-Hardy, 6 and *Le Voyage d'Outremer de Bertrandon de la Broquière*, ed. Charles Schefer (Paris: Leroux, 1892), 189. It is worth noting that the “Grand Turk's” tent captured at Nish in Wavrin's first account of the Long Campaign is also said to be “completely lined with crimson velvet” (transl. Imber, 114); see Section 2 below and Wavrin-Hardy, 18.

<sup>1000</sup> In Bertrandon, this is a raised divan with “four or fives steps up to it”; in Wavrin, it is an elevated pavilion “set up to a height of about ten feet, so that he could see his captains and men.” The translation of Bertrandon here is by Galen R. Kline, *The Voyage d'Outremer by Bertrandon de la Broquière: Translated, Edited, and Annotated with an Introduction and Maps* (New York: Peter Lang, 1988), 120; Wavrin is translated by Imber (108). For original references, see Bertrandon-Schefer, 189 and Wavrin-Hardy, 6.

<sup>1001</sup> “En une grant carolle partant de la main dextre et senestre en tele maniere que le Grant Turcq les pouoit tous veoir manger” (Wavrin-Hardy, 7); “selon les murz ou parois qui estoient autour de ladite galerie, le plus loing bonnement du seigneur qu'il se puelit faire” (Bertrandon-Schefer, 189). Translations by Imber (108) and Kline (120).

homage in the *Voyage*.<sup>1002</sup> Finally, and most strikingly, the same curious metaphor is used in both texts to describe the sultan's manner of sitting on his seat (which is adorned with velvet in Bertrandon, and with "silk cloth" in Wavrin): he is compared to a tailor on his workbench. Despite some minor differences in diction and syntax – Bertrandon's sultan resembles "des cousturiers qui se assient quant ilz cousent"; Wavrin's is "assis comme sur lestable dun parmentier"<sup>1003</sup> – the concordance seems too remarkable to be coincidental.

Both stylistic and external source evidence, therefore, tend to support the idea that Wavrin intervened extensively in the Dracul episode, blending the contents of "local" and "foreign" sources and rewriting the tale with his audience's preferences in mind. Our case gets further support on the rhetorical level; for the differences between Wavrin's account and those of the other sources appear to serve his ideological and cultural interests admirably well. Wavrin, as it happens, does more than either of the writers I have cited to exculpate Vlad Dracul for his past collusion with the Turks; the fact that he was a Turkish "serf" (Bartholomew) or that he participated in the raids of 1438 (Doukas) is never mentioned.<sup>1004</sup> The Vlad we

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<sup>1002</sup> The lord of the kingdom of Bosnia "fu mené seoir en ladite galerie avecques les bachas" (Bertrandon-Schefer, 189, transl. Kline: "He was placed in the gallery with the Pashas," 120); similarly, Vlad "estois assis...a la dextre dudit Turcq et a sa senstre estoit assis son bellarbay" (Wavrin-Hardy, 6; transl. Imber: "the lord of Wallachia was sitting...to the right of the Turk.... To the Turk's left was his Bellarbay," 108).

<sup>1003</sup> Schefer, 189; Wavrin-Hardy, 6. The Old French "parmentier," as Colin Imber notes in his English translation of the expedition narrative, means "tailor"; technically the OF "cousturier" means "tailor's assistant," though both Galen R. Kline and Thomas Wright, in their English translations of the *Voyage*, use the term "tailor" as well. See Imber, 108; Kline, 120. For Wright, see *Early Travels in Palestine*, ed. Thomas Wright (New York: Ktav, 1968), 350.

<sup>1004</sup> For an excellent overview of Dracul's chequered career and his ambivalent diplomatic and military policies toward his Christian and Muslim neighbours in the 1430s and 1440s, see Florescu and McNally, *Dracula*, 29-39.

meet is – and seemingly always was – a wise and courageous Christian prince. And the treachery he suffers at the hands of the sultan serves not only as a starting point for the narrative, but also a kind of “original sin”: a dramatic overture that serves to justify acts of violence, and even acts of treachery, against the Turks in subsequent episodes.

This revisionism clearly works to the Burgundians’, and especially to Waleran de Wavrin’s, advantage. To have represented Vlad as a frequent sympathizer with Murad and an even more frequent enemy of János Hunyadi – as the Wallachian prince certainly was – would have mitigated the sultan’s “original sin”; for given Hunyadi’s heroic status in the narrative, a man depicted as his foe could hardly serve as a sympathetic foil to the evil infidel. Nor indeed would it be seemly for a Burgundian crusader to take up arms with such a man, as Waleran did on the Danube in 1445. Instead, Wavrin’s Vlad Dracul – one of very few such Vlad Draculs in fifteenth-century historiography – is cut from a chivalric cloth that is bound to be pleasing to Burgundian audiences.<sup>1005</sup>

## **Section 2. Wladyslaw and the Long Campaign of 1443 (Ch IV-V, VII-VIII)**

If the evidence of Wavrin’s sophisticated redactive techniques in Section 1 tends to make the identification of source texts maddeningly difficult, the second

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<sup>1005</sup> These pro-Dracul apologetics appear to be continued, albeit with a hint of ambivalence, in the Long Campaign episodes; see [f.n. 1024](#) below. However, it is interesting to note that Wavrin’s depiction of Vlad’s son Mircea and his forces becomes decidedly more ambivalent in later chapters depicting the joint campaign on the Black Sea and the Danube; there, the Vlachs tend to function as scapegoats for some of the failures, errors and unchivalric “turns” of the expedition. This is another one of the narrative tensions resulting from the different, often contending, rhetorical objectives encoded in the text.

section – an account of the coronation and early crusading campaigns of King Wladyslaw of Poland/Hungary – seems to trace out the contours of its sources in a much clearer way.<sup>1006</sup> In four chapters – two of which appear before and two after the first “indigenous” account of Burgundian crusading diplomacy (Ch VI) – the narration betrays more internal stylistic differences and more redactive “seams” (including historical distortions and inversions) than in any other part of the work. Moreover, as I noted above<sup>1007</sup>, this is the only section in which a major campaign is described *twice* – presented as though it were two separate and sequent events. This suggests that at least one, if not both, of the episodes were drawn from separate and integral source(s), and that the redactor either did not recognize or could not deal editorially with the problem of their repetition.<sup>1008</sup>

I offered a brief summary of the Long Campaign episodes in Chapter 4; for the purposes of our analysis, it will be helpful to present a more detailed synopsis here. The section begins with a short chapter (IV) that provides a somewhat smooth, if historically distorted, segue between Ialomita and the so-called “Long Campaign” of 1443.<sup>1009</sup> Despite the “*belle et evidente victore*” just won, Wavrin writes, “grans

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<sup>1006</sup> I do not, however, wish to overstate these differences for rhetorical effect. Though there is a strong possibility that the narrator interpolated reports of the Long Campaign into the expedition narrative in a more “integral” form, it also seems likely that he continued to intervene extensively in his text by employing various redactive strategies and, possibly, by creatively rewriting certain passages. See my discussion below.

<sup>1007</sup> See Chapter 4.

<sup>1008</sup> I am grateful to Livia Visser-Fuchs for her insights into this matter, and especially for raising the latter possibility. It is with this in mind, and conscious of the special relevance of these passages to my “composite authorship” hypothesis, that I provide an especially detailed synopsis in the paragraphs that follow.

<sup>1009</sup> The Long Campaign was a psychologically important (though territorially fruitless) assault against Ottoman positions in Rumelia which lasted from late July 1443 to January 1444. Led by Wladyslaw of Poland/Hungary (see below), and combining the forces of Hunyadi and the exiled

pleurs et grans cris”<sup>1010</sup> are heard throughout Hungary and Transylvania. The Turks have caused massive damage with their raids; and because the Habsburg emperor Frederick is holding young king “Lancelot” (Ladislás) prisoner, the Hungarian lords have no one to defend them against future incursions.<sup>1011</sup> So the general council elevates the victorious János Hunyadi to the dignity of “Vayevode du pays de Hongrie,” in hopes that he will continue to defend them forcefully and successfully against the Ottomans’ attacks.<sup>1012</sup>

Curiously, however, it is not Hunyadi but Władysław III of Poland who figures as the crusading hero in the following chapter (V). After their deliberations, the Hungarians recognize that they are powerless to regain their natural lord, so they send a delegation “devers le roy Lancelot (Władysław) qui estoit jenne, en leage de

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Serbian despot George Brankovic, among others, the Christian army won a number of engagements. They pressed through Nish and Sofia all the way to the Zlatitsa mountain pass, where they were finally turned back by Turkish resistance and terrible weather conditions. Nonetheless, during their return march, the Christians won another victory against the Turks, and seized booty and prisoners, in the pass of Pirot. In February, they returned, exhausted, to Buda, where they were greeted as crusading heroes. For an excellent English-language summary of these events, see Martin Chasin, “The Crusade of Varna,” in *A History of the Crusades*, Vol. VI, ed. K. Setton (Madison: Univ of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 291-94.

<sup>1010</sup> “Great weeping and lamentation” (Imber, 111). Wavrin-Hardy, 12.

<sup>1011</sup> “Lancelot” is Ladislás V the Posthumous, the infant son of King Albert of Hungary who died suddenly, before the child’s birth, in 1439. The story of the child-king’s “captivity” in Vienna, and of the relations between his mother, Queen Elizabeth, Władysław III of Poland, and Emperor Frederick of Habsburg, is infinitely more complex than Wavrin’s account leads us to believe. Following Albert’s death, a faction of Hungarian noblemen met in a royal council and opted to offer the crown to the young and bellicose Polish king Władysław. But before he could be crowned, Elizabeth gave birth to a boy. The contending claims between the “two Ladislás” produced a bloody and protracted civil war, which ended with Elizabeth’s sudden death and the Polish king’s victory in December 1442. From the beginning of the conflict, Emperor Frederick protected the young Ladislás in Vienna, and he continued to promote his cause after Elizabeth’s death. For a useful summary, see Pál Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen: A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 280-83.

<sup>1012</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 12-13.

vingt ans, mais la renommeee couroit que son sens estoit bien de quarante”<sup>1013</sup>;

offering homage and allegiance, they beg him to save them from the “wicked and villainous” Turks.<sup>1014</sup> Having taken counsel with his noblemen, Wladyslaw accepts the offer and rides south to Buda, accompanied by a large contingent of Polish warriors who are ready to fight the infidel; he is received by the grateful Hungarians “en grant reverence et honneur,”<sup>1015</sup> and crowned King of Hungary in great pomp.

The zealous Wladyslaw immediately begins to make plans for his crusade.<sup>1016</sup> At a “great parliament,” he resolves to assemble a force from across “Poullane, Hongrye et la Vallaquie” and sends an embassy to Pope Eugenius IV to announce his intentions. The pope is enthusiastic and sets the wheels of crusade in motion; the Cardinal of St. Angele<sup>1017</sup> is dispatched with indulgences and the crusade is preached throughout the two kingdoms. Soon the army is on the march. It encounters the Turks near the city of “Souffies” (Sofia, in present-day Romania) and in a brutal battle in “narrow passes,”<sup>1018</sup> the Turks are routed and slaughtered. The Grand Turk “sen fuy villainement foursenant et maugreant ses dieux,”<sup>1019</sup> and the Christians win

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<sup>1013</sup> The ambassadors are sent “before King Lancelot, who was young – only twenty years old – but who was reputed to have the wisdom of a forty-year-old” (my transl.). See Wavrin-Hardy, 14.

<sup>1014</sup> Imber, 112; Wavrin-Hardy, 14

<sup>1015</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 14.

<sup>1016</sup> As we shall see, this an important historiographical distortion. Wladyslaw only convened his crusading diet three years after his coronation; in the intervening period he was preoccupied by his civil war with Elizabeth (see f.n. 1011 above).

<sup>1017</sup> Cardinal Julian Cesarini, papal legate to Hungary, 1442-44. See Engel, 285-86.

<sup>1018</sup> Imber suggests that this passage conflates two battles – one which took place on 3 November 1443, near Nish, and one which occurred on 12 December in the Zlatitsa Pass. I shall discuss the historiographical structure of both Long Campaign episodes in more detail below. See Imber, 114, f.n. 17.

<sup>1019</sup> The Grand Turk fled ignominiously, cursing his gods for this misadventure” (transl. Imber, 114): Wavrin-Hardy, 17. This is a fascinating, and rare, example of the use of the so-called Tervagant convention – the tendency for authors of medieval French epics to depict Muslims as pagan – in



a remarkable haul of booty. But they make the unfortunate decision, “which has since done great damage to Christianity,”<sup>1020</sup> not to press onward to the sultan’s court at Adrianople. Instead, they return to Buda; and though they thank God for their victories, it is said “that the [bad] weather had made them afraid to cross the mountains.”<sup>1021</sup> Stung, perhaps, by the criticism, the king convenes a great council and decides to conquer Greece the following autumn.

The narrative then takes a smooth – and chronologically inaccurate – digression to the court of Philip the Good who, hearing about these “splendid victories,” resolves to “do everything he [can] to help Christendom” (Ch VI).<sup>1022</sup> The chapter that follows (VII), like Chapter IV above, provides a short and informative segue into what must be a second iteration of the Long Campaign of 1443; this time, however, it is the tale of Vlad Dracul which is woven back into the narrative. Chastened by his losses, the Grand Turk takes counsel with “the wise men of his realm”; they conclude that the Wallachians and Hungarians together are dominant in battle, and that their alliance should be shattered. So Murad sends for Vlad, who has been languishing in prison for “a miserable four years,”<sup>1023</sup> offering him freedom

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Wavrin’s work. It may be one of several indicators that this episode is based on an independent source (see my discussion below). For more on the Tervagant convention, see Norman Daniel’s classic *Heroes and Saracens: An Interpretation of the Chansons de Geste* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1984).

<sup>1020</sup> Transl. Imber, 114. See Wavrin-Hardy, 18.

<sup>1021</sup> Transl. Imber, 114. See Wavrin-Hardy, 18.

<sup>1022</sup> Transl. Imber, 115. Ch VI appears in Wavrin-Hardy, 19-23. In fact, the victories announced to Philip, in late 1442, were those of Janos Hunyadi in September. See Paviot, *Les ducs*, 92-4.

<sup>1023</sup> Here we find not one but two key chronological errors involving the insertion of the Dracul story after the first account of King Wladyslaw’s campaign. First, Florescu and McNally have suggested that Dracul’s imprisonment occurred *before* the campaign, between 1442 and spring 1443 (in fact, some sources, though not Wavrin, suggest that he participated in the campaign). Second, the reference to “four years’ imprisonment,” as Hardy noted, is impossible to reconcile with any

in exchange for a peace treaty. The voivode, “moult joyeux en ceur,” accepts the offer and is received home warmly by his countrymen, though his younger and more bellicose subjects regret the peace with the Turks.<sup>1024</sup>

The second Long Campaign account begins with a narrative shift a few lines before the chapter break (Ch VIII).<sup>1025</sup> Wladyslaw and Cesarini, the papal legate, receive word in April 1443<sup>1026</sup> that the Venetians and Burgundians are prepared to support their war effort with a “great fleet”<sup>1027</sup>; they also learn that Murad is preparing to invade Hungary before the end of August. Assembling the estates of the realm,<sup>1028</sup> the two men resolve to summon troops from throughout Wladyslaw’s realms and prepare for battle. Vlad Dracul, having vowed not to attack the sultan, refuses to join them – even when Cesarini offers to absolve him from his oaths. “Tres mal contens” but undaunted, the legate and the king march southward to meet the Turkish force in a plain below the mountains of northern Rumelia – and after a

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version of events as described by Wavrin. It may provide evidence of his use of another independent source.

<sup>1024</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 24. It is worth noting that, just as the “imprisonment” scene in Chapter I enables the reader to forgive Vlad for his non-participation in Hunyadi’s military victories, this helps to exculpate the voivode for his refusal (described in Chapter VIII with, admittedly, a touch of ambivalence) to repudiate his oaths to Murad and participate in the Long Campaign of 1443.

<sup>1025</sup> “Or vous lairay a parler du seigneur de la Vallaquie tant que il sera heur dy retourner, et vous diray de ceulz que le cardinal legat et le roy de Hongrie avoient envoyez a Romme”: Wavrin-Hardy, 25. Wavrin seems to use references to embassies – whether or not they map accurately against previous references, as this one seems not to – as a narrative strategy for linking and “blending” disparate episodes.

<sup>1026</sup> This is the first use of a dateline in the expedition narrative – a fact which may suggest the appearance of a new source text in Wavrin’s repertoire. See my discussion below.

<sup>1027</sup> “Grant armee par mer” (transl. Imber, 118): Wavrin-Hardy, 25.

<sup>1028</sup> This seems to refer to the diet convoked by Wladyslaw in the spring of 1443 (see [f.n. 1016](#) above).

trembling herald-at-arms is sent to the Turkish camp to confirm it, a great battle ensues.<sup>1029</sup>

Preceded by the trappings of a great chivalric conflict – masses, absolutions – the battle is a complete success. “Par layde de Nostre Seigneur Jhesu Crist,” the Turks are completely routed<sup>1030</sup>; and this time the zealous Christians *do* press southward into the mountains. But “dame fortune” turns her back on them; they are met with so much snow, and such “great cold with wind and frost,” that their leaders “wisely” order a withdrawal.<sup>1031</sup> By this time the Christians have suffered huge losses, prompting the narrator to meditate on theodicy: Why would God allow His people to die “en si grant distresse”? His answer is part Matthian, part Cistercian: “Il en fault laisser le secre en Nostre Seigneur quy avoit esprove leurs bonnes affections et voullentez, pour remuneration desqueles choses il les vouloit herbregier en son paradis par tel martire.”<sup>1032</sup>

*Analysis: Traces of composite authorship*

So ends Wavrin’s account of an ambivalent expedition, the Long Campaign, which contemporary Christians chose to celebrate as a victory. Of the four editors of

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<sup>1029</sup> Wavrin-Hardy 26-8. The story of the herald’s embassy, to which more than a page of text (in Hardy’s edition) is devoted, is both incongruous and seemingly truncated. This editorial unevenness may point to the use and redaction of a separate and integral source document. See my discussion below.

<sup>1030</sup> Imber states, correctly I think, that this reiterates the Christian victory at Nish on 3 November 1443.

<sup>1031</sup> Wavrin-Hardy, 29. As Imber notes, this passage describes the battle of the Zlatitsa Pass of 12 December 1443. See Imber, 121, f.n. 38.

<sup>1032</sup> The “mystery must reside with our Lord who had tested their devotion and will, and who, as a reward for their sufferings, would, through martyrdom, give them a place in His paradise” (transl. Imber 120-1): Wavrin-Hardy, 29-30.

the text, only Imber – an expert on the political circumstances of the campaign – explicitly notes the repetition of these episodes in our narrative.<sup>1033</sup> For our purposes, however, this repetition is significant – partly because it offers insights into the ways Wavrin dealt with problems of consistency, historicity and narrative flow, and partly because it (along with other narrative features) suggests that one, and perhaps both, of these accounts may have been based primarily on separate *and* integral textual source(s). Although I have as yet found no archival trace<sup>1034</sup> of this (or these) source text(s),<sup>1035</sup> there is a good deal of internal evidence which should prompt us to take the hypothesis seriously.

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<sup>1033</sup> Imber 114, f.n. 17. Iorga, of course, was a superb scholar and a leading authority on the Balkan crusades; but because his edition of the expedition narrative offers only very brief and cursory critical notes, it makes no mention of the probable repetition of these Long Campaign episodes.

<sup>1034</sup> Accounts of the Long Campaign are nearly absent from most French and Burgundian historiography, and I have found no evidence that these hypothetical reports appeared in the work of any other chronicler or memorialist. They do not appear, for example, in the work of Thomas Basin, Jacques du Clercq, the Bourgeois de Paris, or Olivier de la Marche; nor are they included in the chronicles of Mathieu d'Escouchy or Jean Chartier, both of which *do* contain later crusading reports and texts (such as an apocryphal letter from Mehmet II) which are compiled in the *Anciennes Chroniques*. The chronicles of Georges Chastellain do not cover this period, nor do those of Jean Le Fèvre, whom Wavrin knew and consulted. The so-called "continuator" of Enguerrand de Monstrelet, with whom Wavrin seems to have shared a number of sources and documents, includes only a very brief (and apparently unrelated) reference to the Long Campaign; so do the Latin chronicle of Adrien de But and the chronicle of Gilles Le Bouvier, the so-called Berry Herald.

<sup>1035</sup> Chasin notes that the extant sources for the Long Campaign are "sparse": there are a few diplomatic letters from Hunyadi and Wladyslaw, "a poem by [the minnesinger] Michael Beheim, and the chronicles of [the humanist] Callimachus, [the Pole] Jan Dlugosz, and [the Greek] Chalcocondylas." He also mentions useful letters written in 1444-45 by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (a crusade advocate and the future Pope Pius II); see Chasin, "The Crusade of Varna," 291-92. He overlooks at least two key sources: the Greek chronicler Doukas (the *Historia Turko-Byzantina*), and the Hungarian chronicler and Hunyadi apologist János Thuróczy (the *Chronica Hungarorum*). It is possible that a fine-grained reading of this entire collection of documents, which I have proposed for a later phase of my studies, will reveal traces of possible shared sources. In particular, given the concordances noted in Section 1 above, it will be important to undertake a close study of Chalcocondylas' account (which I shall do with the aid of a skilled Latinist). For the moment, having reviewed some of these sources in translation (Beheim, Dlugosz, Doukas and Thuróczy), I can report that I have not found any clear evidence that they shared a common source with Wavrin – though the detailed accounts of Beheim, Dlugosz and Thuróczy do share certain factual concordances with our narrative.

I have divided this evidence into two categories, which I shall consider in turn: one concerns the historiographical contents of the two episodes, and one focusses on their stylistic features. In the first place, it seems clear that the earlier Long Campaign account (of Ch IV and V) functions as a self-contained historical narrative – one that is both highly abbreviated and sweeping in its scope. In just a few manuscript pages, it recounts key events from the Hungarians’ appeal to and coronation of King Wladyslaw (1440) through the appointment of Cardinal Cesarini as legate (1442), the crusade bull of Eugenius IV (1443), the Long Campaign (1443), and the diet of Buda (1444).<sup>1036</sup> This “telescopic” précis sits uncomfortably in Wavrin’s narrative, confounding events recounted both before and after; Wladyslaw was king long before Hunyadi defeated Mezid Bey and Sihabeddin (Ch III), and he suffered at Zlatitsa Pass long after Philip the Good had been enticed to join the naval expedition (Ch VI). The best explanation for this awkward redaction is the simplest one: an integral text appears to have been “spliced” into Wavrin’s narrative at a point where he deemed it necessary to introduce its main protagonist to his own composite report.<sup>1037</sup> The insertion results in a kind of parallel chronology, a second

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<sup>1036</sup> Only one event presented in Chapter V – the “grant parlement avec les trois estas du pays de Hongrie” at which Wladyslaw resolves to undertake the Long Campaign – is presented out of chronological order. In fact, as Dlugosz and others recount, Wladyslaw only convened his crusading diet three years after his coronation, at the behest of Cesarini and others (see f.n. 1011 and 1016 above). This inversion has the effect of magnifying Wladyslaw’s role and status as a crusader prince, making him the “prime mover” of the crusade: a rhetorical gesture for which either Wavrin or the author of his (hypothetical) source may have been responsible.

<sup>1037</sup> For an example of the kind of summary which may have been available to Wavrin, and which may have informed either the first or the second Long Campaign accounts, see the published letters of Piccolomini (the future Pius II) in *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*, Abt. I: Briefe aus der Lainzeit (1431-1445), Bd. I: Privatbriefe, ed. R. Wolkan (Vienna: Hölder, 1909), 278-83, 487-90, and 562-79. I have no evidence that any of these texts *per se* was an exemplar, but one

narrative “dimension,” which makes this part of the text difficult to read against more detailed and linear accounts such as those of Jan Dlugosz and János Thuróczy.<sup>1038</sup>

None of this is to suggest that Wavrin played a passive editorial role here – nor that he may not have rewritten portions of the episode according to his own tastes and preferences. Indeed, one intervention – the use of a conventional phrase, “pour doncques habregier la matiere,” to signal an elision midway through the chapter – may offer a clear trace of Wavrin’s editorial “hand.”<sup>1039</sup> And while it is impossible to know how clearly he understood the historiographical problems created by the insertion of the episode into his narrative, his short and curious transitional chapter (IV) suggests that he went to some effort to smooth over the discontinuities. The chapter, as its title notes, is meant to explain Hunyadi’s continued presence in, and influence upon, the crusade effort – despite his absence from both subsequent accounts of the Long Campaign.<sup>1040</sup> Wavrin is apparently conscious of the need to fill a gap in the *dramatis personae* depicted in his sources, a

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wonders whether Jean de Wavrin might have obtained an integral report in this genre from Pius himself – perhaps during their crusade discussions in 1463.

<sup>1038</sup> See [f.n. 1035](#) above. It is important to note that this theory helps us to account for elements of the episode that would otherwise be confusing or inscrutable. These include its references to previous Turkish raids (presumably those of 1438-9; see above and Wavrin-Hardy, 14) and to a forthcoming Hungarian invasion of Greece (almost certainly the crusade of Varna itself) being planned at the Diet of Buda (see Wavrin-Hardy, 18).

<sup>1039</sup> “So, to abridge the tale” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 16. Imber’s translation, “To cut a long story short” (113), may be slightly misleading, because Wavrin seems *not* to be reducing the amount of descriptive content in his narrative; both before and after the ligature, it is extremely detailed. Instead, this intervention may suggest that other facts, other episodes, have been left out of the account. It is tempting to think that Wavrin may have expurgated some inconvenient or peripheral details here: perhaps material related to Wladyslaw’s “civil war” against Elizabeth.

<sup>1040</sup> This absence is ironic from an historical point of view, since Hunyadi was actually the most important, most active, and most successful war leader of the Long Campaign in 1443. See Chasin, 291-92.

gap which might be especially striking to Burgundian readers for whom Hunyadi stood as a chivalric “worthy” of the first order.<sup>1041</sup> The gesture is not completely successful; Hunyadi’s absence from the battles of 1443 remains jarring, and the resulting narrative unevenness offers support for our “composite authorship” hypothesis.<sup>1042</sup>

But the best evidence, as I noted earlier, emerges when we consider the two crusading episodes together. Chapter VIII clearly reiterates the events depicted in Chapter V – the Christian victory at Nish, the withdrawal from the mountains in the face of bad weather<sup>1043</sup>, the celebrations in Buda – and by virtue of its ligatures and ordering, the narrative presents the two chapters as occurring *in sequence*.<sup>1044</sup> It is very hard to imagine that an original raconteur, familiar with some version of these

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<sup>1041</sup> See my discussion of Hunyadi, and of depictions of the “chevalier blanc,” in Chapter 4 (above). It is worth noting that this passage plays another important role in the narrative: it orients the reader to the changes in Hunyadi’s rank and status (as Wavrin incorrectly perceived them) between his adventures as “Captain of the Vlachs” in 1442 and as “Voivode of Hungary” in 1443–43. In fact, Hunyadi was voivode of Transylvania throughout this period, having been named to the office in 1441 by King Wladyslaw for service in the civil war against Queen Elizabeth.

<sup>1042</sup> This evidence may be found within the transitional chapter as well. Here the narrator appears to blend details of the royal council of 1440 with events that occurred at the diet of Pest in 1445: specifically, the Hungarian lords’ appeal to Emperor Frederick to return the young Ladislas the Posthumous (who was not yet alive at the time of the 1440 council), and the appointment of Hunyadi as captain in East Hungary and Transylvania during the uncertain period following the death of King Wladyslaw at Varna. Ottoman “raids” were anticipated at the diet of Pest as well. See Held, *Hunyadi: Legend and Reality*, 113–18. It is hard to know whence Wavrin derived this information, or precisely how he went about “blending” it with the contents of his (hypothetical) source on Wladyslaw and his wars.

<sup>1043</sup> It must be noted that there is a curious difference here between the two texts; while Chapter VIII recounts the Christians’ struggles in the snowy, icy mountain pass, Chapter V notes that it is “pour le chault tampz [the hot weather] quil faisoit ilz avoient cremu a passer les montaignes” (Wavrin-Hardy, 18). Imber (114) translates the later phrase using “the cold weather,” presumably on the grounds that this was a likely scribal or authorial error. Given that “chault” seems not to make sense in any context, I tend to agree.

<sup>1044</sup> Wavrin’s “segues” clearly create this impression: following the first iteration of the Long Campaign, Philip the Good is advised of the Christian victories and resolves to support the naval expedition; then, at the beginning of the second Long Campaign sequence, the king and legate are informed of the preparation of Burgundian and Venetian ships. See Wavrin-Hardy, 19 and 25.

events, would have done this; using Ockham's razor we are almost bound to conclude that it results from an error – or, perhaps, from deliberate laxity – in “blending” and redacting disparate sources.<sup>1045</sup> And either of *these* possibilities, as I noted in Appendix A, tends to suggest the editorship of Jean de Wavrin, a man who knew less than his nephew about the circumstances of the Long Campaign, but who collected and compiled innumerable contemporary reports in precisely analogous ways.<sup>1046</sup> This evidence may also buttress our suspicions that the final redaction of the expedition narrative occurred rather late – at a time when Jean was more editorially independent from Waleran, and when he might have had the opportunity to collect and consult a number of contemporary sources.

This raises another important question: given the strong possibility that the first Long Campaign episode was derived from a separate and integral source, might the second (Chapter VIII) also have been “imported” and interpolated in this way? Here our hypothesis becomes even more aleatory, for there are fewer historiographical differences between this chapter and the passages that surround it. It is narrow in scope and quite specific in its chronology<sup>1047</sup>; it does not make claims that are at odds with things that an informed Burgundian courtier might have

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<sup>1045</sup> If this was an error, however, the redactor seems to have made a conscious effort to “write in” at least one detail – beyond the transitions noted above ([f.n. 1042](#)) – that creates continuity between, and rationalizes the relationship between, the two Long Campaign episodes. Chapter V reports that the victorious Christians seized “a miraculously large tent” among the booty; in Chapter VIII, the king is said to “reside in his own person in the great tent which he had won from the Turk in the previous year” (transl. Imber 114, 119); Wavrin-Hardy, 18, 26-7.

<sup>1046</sup> See above, Appendix A, Section (c).

<sup>1047</sup> This episode contains the first datelines of the narrative: news about the fleet preparations, our narrator says, arrives in Hungary in April 1443 (“ou mois d’apvril, l’an mil IIIc et XLIII”); the army marches south to meet the Turks in October, and in “November 1443” the battle – almost certainly that of Nish – is fought (Wavrin-Hardy, 25-27). Note that the April 1443 date may be problematic; see below, [f.n. 1048](#).



known.<sup>1048</sup> At first blush, it seems perfectly conceivable that the second episode formed part of an integral report on contemporary events written by Waleran himself. To test our suspicions, therefore, we must look to internal evidence – to the stylistic and narrative features of both Long Campaign episodes, comparing and contrasting them with each other and with other parts of the expedition narrative.

The results are revealing. In the first place, as I noted above, both episodes contain numerous courtly and epic “commonplaces” – ways of describing warriors and princes that were favoured, as we have seen, by the authors of the *Wavrin atelier* and other courtly writers.<sup>1049</sup> Chapter V offers an especially ceremonious description of the crusading king Wladyslaw, who is seized by “la bonne, grande, et digne voullente” to defend Christendom after having “reverently” received an embassy of Hungarian lords who beg to serve as his “vrays et obeissans subjectz.”<sup>1050</sup> We saw

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<sup>1048</sup> This is not to suggest that the episode is without its historiographically puzzling features. The transitional chapter which introduces it (Chapter VII), for example, seems to conflate events of early 1444 (Murad’s return to Edirne in a state of dejection after the Long Campaign; see Wavrin-Hardy, 23) with the reinstatement of Vlad Dracul as voivode of Wallachia in the spring of 1443 (see Florescu, *Dracula*, 35). And while it seems historically accurate to report, as do the closing lines of Chapter VII, that the Hungarians learned about Burgundian and papal plans to arm a fleet in “April 1443” (see e.g. Housley, *The Later Crusades*, 85; Paviot, *Les ducs*, 96; Chasin, “Crusade of Varna,” 290), Dupont says the report referred to here occurred at the “fin de l’année” (by which I presume she means the end of 1443 on the Gallican calendar, or April 1444 by our reckoning). Imber does *not* suggest this revision. If Dupont is right, and if, in “framing” the second Long Campaign episode, Wavrin tends to confuse events that occurred prior to and after the battles of 1443, this might explain his curious choice to mention the Venetians – who were not involved in the Long Campaign – in the title of Chapter VIII (“How our Holy Father the Pope, the King of Hungary and the Venetians decided to bring aid...to Christendom,” transl. Imber, 118).

<sup>1049</sup> Some of these formulae are listed in Alphonse Bayot’s classic study of the romance of *Gillion de Trazegnies*, a work that emanated from the literary circle around Jean de Wavrin and shares a great deal in common with historical romances that were read, owned and – as some have speculated – perhaps even written by him (see Appendix A). Formulations in this text which may reflect these traditions include “portraits morales des personnages” (no. 29 in Bayot, 144) and “réceptions” (no. 64 in Bayot, 157).

<sup>1050</sup> “The excellent, great and honourable desire”; “good and obedient subjects” (transl. Imber, 113; 112); Wavrin-Hardy, 15; 14.

equally lofty diction applied to Vlad Dracul in Chapter I; it appears again in Wavrin's account of Philip the Good's court (see below), drawing a line of moral kinship between the three crusading princes – a line which seems neither coincidental nor rhetorically innocent, but which probably originated with the redactor himself.

As we saw in Chapter 4, Wavrin's chapters also make use of epic conventions to depict warfare; here too there are parallels with Jean's other confections. But they differ from other parts of the narrative in relying very heavily – indeed, almost exclusively – upon such *topoi*. The battles of the Long Campaign are neither prosaic guerilla skirmishes nor richly-detailed conflicts; they are, in many respects, formulaic routs.<sup>1051</sup> In both cases, Christian soldiers are blessed and granted absolution; they engage in “prodigious” battles marked by great slaughter, and they praise God for their victories.<sup>1052</sup> These and other *topoi* take the place of detailed synopses of battle; they mark out the crusaders' adventures as lofty, as *preux* – and, in a sense, as timeless. This recourse to convention suggests a few possibilities: Wavrin may have made use of original sources that were framed, partially or entirely, in these ways; or he may have written these conventional details into source texts that lacked clear or specific battle reports – a strategy that, as Visser-Fuchs notes, Jean de Wavrin seems

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<sup>1051</sup> Admittedly, the first of the battle scenes (in Chapter V) does contain a few additional geographical and strategic details which are absent from the second. Wladyslaw is “advised to keep to the narrower passes, more suitable for his small numbers”; and the Saracens, “squeezed into the narrows,” are unable to move (transl. Imber, 114; see Wavrin-Hardy, 17). As noted above, Colin Imber speculates that these additions may result from Wavrin's (or his source's) conflation of details from the events at Zlatitsa Pass with this account of the battle at Nish. Likewise, the specific references to the “tents, pavilions, baggage, jewels and silver” captured from the Turks may derive from actual source reports, as the Christians did occupy the Turkish camp at Nish. See Imber, 114, esp. f.n. 17.

<sup>1052</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 17-19 (Ch V) and 28-30 (Ch VIII). See also Bayot, *Gillion*, 149-50.

to have pursued in other instances.<sup>1053</sup> Either way, the narrative differences between the Long Campaign accounts and other battle scenes seem pronounced enough to support the idea that they reflect the collation, and conflation, of different textual originals.<sup>1054</sup>

Yet despite their shared conventions, the two episodes also differ from *each other* in ways that suggest unique and independent points of view. Chapter V contains a number of pointedly “epic” formulations that contribute to a distinct narrative tone: its source either was, or was rewritten to be, ruggedly bellicose in its outlook. The Turks are slaughtered “comme bestes mues”; the Christians gain “miraculous” booty and remain on the field of battle for three days “comme il appartient de faire auz vrais champions victorieux.”<sup>1055</sup> And though, as we saw in Chapter 4, the narrator suppresses the reasons for the final Christian retreat from the mountains, he does not hesitate to criticize the decision, implying a bit archly that the king was dissuaded by fear.<sup>1056</sup> In Chapter VIII, this judgment is reversed: the narrator *applauds* the decision to withdraw, noting that retreat was the only “wise” course in the face of such obstacles and such human suffering.<sup>1057</sup>

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<sup>1053</sup> See Visser-Fuchs, *Warwick and Wavrin*, 247. She refers here to Jean de Wavrin’s apparent embellishment of a sparse newsletter concerning the Battle of Shrewsbury.

<sup>1054</sup> This theory is further supported by the fact that both chapters appear better-informed about the diplomatic and political circumstances surrounding the Long Campaign battles than about the battles themselves. We might speculate that this narrative unevenness results from differing interests on the part of their source authors.

<sup>1055</sup> “Like wild animals”; “as is proper for true victorious champions” (my transl.): Wavrin-Hardy, 17-18.

<sup>1056</sup> “Lequel conseil...a depuis porte moult grant prejudice et dommage a la crestiennete” (Wavrin-Hardy, 18).

<sup>1057</sup> See Wavrin-Hardy, 29.

This divergence is not the only trace of a different narrative “voice” in the second episode. Its chivalric narration is blended with a dose of “Cistercian” devotion and symbology – melding the tropology of Villehardouin, as we saw in Chapter 4, with that of William of Tyre. The cross is set up and the king’s banner unfurled “against the Turks in the name of Jesus Christ”; the Cardinal Legate sings mass before and after the battles; and though God’s reasons for causing the Hungarians to suffer at Zlatitsa are inscrutable, the Christian “martyrs,” whose “devotion and will” have been tested, are promised a place in paradise.<sup>1058</sup> The latter formulation, and the theodicy which underwrites it, are unique in the expedition narrative. One is thus tempted to speculate that a different author – an ecclesiastical writer, perhaps – was responsible for at least part of the material upon which this chapter was based.<sup>1059</sup>

One is indeed tempted; but in the end this, like my other authorship hypotheses, must remain tentative and speculative. What we *can* observe confidently is the fact that, however many tensions and ambiguities this section may create in the longer expedition narrative, it – like Wavrin’s introductory chapters on Dracul and Hunyadi – serves his rhetorical objectives very well. By placing Waleran’s travels in the context of an epic crusading victory, Wavrin frames the

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<sup>1058</sup> Transl. Imber, 120-1; see Wavrin-Hardy, 28-30.

<sup>1059</sup> Chapter VIII boasts another curious episode which tends to support this thesis: the day before the battle, a Hungarian herald-at-arms is summoned to go and announce King Wladyslaw’s battle intentions to the Grand Turk. The man, who knows no Turkish, is petrified, but the king is insistent. “Il convient que tu y voises,” Wladyslaw tells him. “Jay esperance en Dieu quil te conduira” (“You must go there. I have faith in God that he will guide you,” transl. Imber, 119); Wavrin-Hardy, 27. The herald accomplishes his mission and returns safely to the Hungarian camp – protected, presumably, by God’s grace. This episode, interestingly, is nearly as lengthy as the battle-scene itself. It is also a good deal more specific and detailed; the king’s expression of faith in God is the only direct discourse to appear in the chapter.

Burgundian expedition as an extension, a legitimate part, of the great struggle against the infidel. Whatever the consequences of his journey, Waleran, like Hunyadi and Wladyslaw, was a true *crucesignati*; he thus shared a claim to the loftiest ideas, the most cherished values, of the Burgundian court.

These, then, are the lessons of Wavrin's historical and contextual chapters – passages which are every bit as revealing as the remarkable (and rhetorically distinctive) accounts of Waleran de Wavrin's own adventures. They testify not just to the ways in which recent history was understood in the Burgundian ethos, but also to the cosmopolitan character of Wavrin's sources, and to his intriguing and complex methods of assembling an historical narrative. These methods, as we have seen, seem to have included both "light" and "heavy" editing – both simple pastiche and more intrusive interventions into the internal logic of source texts. The evidence for all of this, to be sure, is uneven and aleatory, but it points to an important conclusion: Wavrin's crusade narrative is no casual redaction, no disorderly fusion of "chroniques." It is the product of deliberate, careful editorial work, and it holds together as an important rhetorical and political statement – a sustained defence of the rather tepid *gestes* of a moderate and measured, and often seemingly hapless, crusading captain in the court of Philip of Burgundy.