



CLASSIQUES  
GARNIER

BUC (Philippe), « Evangelical Fundamentalist fiction and medieval crusade epics », *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes / Journal of Medieval and Humanistic Studies*, n° 37, 2019 – 1, p. 211-231

DOI : [10.15122/isbn.978-2-406-09701-3.p.0211](https://doi.org/10.15122/isbn.978-2-406-09701-3.p.0211)

*La diffusion ou la divulgation de ce document et de son contenu via Internet ou tout autre moyen de communication ne sont pas autorisées hormis dans un cadre privé.*

© 2019. Classiques Garnier, Paris.  
Reproduction et traduction, même partielles, interdites.  
Tous droits réservés pour tous les pays.

BUC (Philippe), « Evangelical Fundamentalist fiction and medieval crusade epics »

RÉSUMÉ – Mettre face à face les épopées de croisade et les romans américains fondamentalistes contemporains, dont la réception a été bien étudiée, permet d'émettre des hypothèses sur le régime de croyance et la réception du genre littéraire médiéval.

MOTS-CLÉS – histoire, croisades, romans fondamentalistes

BUC (Philippe), « Evangelical Fundamentalist fiction and medieval crusade epics »

ABSTRACT – Juxtaposing medieval crusade epics and current American evangelical novels, whose reception has been studied, allows one to cautiously discuss the régime de croyance of the former genre and its own reception

KEYWORDS – history, Crusades, fundamentalist novels

## EVANGELICAL FUNDAMENTALIST FICTION AND MEDIEVAL CRUSADE EPICS

This paper develops a comparison between two genres of literary fiction, on the one hand, turn of the millennium fundamentalist evangelical novels, and on the other hand, high medieval crusade romances or epics. These texts were produced at centuries of distance from one another, yet they share a number of traits owing to (as shall be explained) the structures of Christian theology. Present-day audience response, quantitatively and qualitatively known for the former genre, can (cautiously) inform hypotheses about the High medieval reception of crusade novels, and in particular, about the novels' *régime de croyance*. This question will be the focus of the first part of this paper. There, I shall put side-by-side one crusade epic (the *Song of Antioch*) and evangelical fiction, represented by Timothy LaHaye's best-selling series, *Left Behind* and *Babylon Rising*, novels set at the End of Times rich in violence and in theology. Evangelical apocalyptic fiction became a highly popular literary genre in the United States already in the 1950s, and scholars interested in eschatology and holy war may indeed profit from existing studies of its American readership<sup>1</sup>. In the second part, I shall leave aside LaHaye's novels and focus on what this crusade epic's theology can (cautiously again) tell us about the manner in which the High and later Middle Ages understood the relationship between retributive violence and Sacred History, *Vergeltung* and *Heilsgeschichte*<sup>2</sup>.

- 
- 1 Conversely, studies of the eschatological imaginary sometimes present in the modern U.S. army can benefit from crusade studies, see P. Buc, "Medieval Eschatology and Modern American Apocalypticism", video lecture at the Central European University, Budapest, dated April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
  - 2 For a cursory comparison of medieval Christian, medieval Japanese Buddhist, and Islamic eschatologies, see P. Buc, "Eschatologies of the sword, compared: Latin Christianity, Islam(s), and Japanese Buddhism", *Making Ends Meet: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on the End of Times in Medieval Christianity, Islam and Buddhism*, ed. V. Wieser and V. Eltschinger, Berlin, De Gruyter, forthcoming. I profited immensely there from M. Terrier, "Le combat sacré

The Old French Crusade Cycle, and in particular its earliest three books, the *Cycle de la Croisade* proper, has long interested, but also baffled, historians and literary scholars<sup>3</sup>. First, there are the classic questions of authorship and (especially) dating. Was the tripartite core of the *Cycle de la Croisade* – the *Chanson d'Antioche* (*Song of Antioch*), *Les Captifs* (*the Captives*), and the *Chanson de Jérusalem* (*Song of Jerusalem*) – composed close to the European crusaders' conquest of Jerusalem in July 1099, that is, in the early twelfth century? Or was it penned much later, perhaps circa 1200? The *Chanson d'Antioche*, best known, has been the most debated<sup>4</sup>. Is its author to be identified with the *Ricars li pelerins*, Richard the Pilgrim, mentioned once in the text? Or is this person a fiction? And was the real author, then, Grainsdor de Douai, named only once, and not in all manuscripts? If the *Chanson d'Antioche's* composition is late, was there a now lost primitive song in circulation around 1100? Can the *Chanson* provide historians hungry for facts, in particular military facts, data on the critical episode of the year 1098, the siege of the Holy Land's major coastal city, Antioch? The current orthodoxy tentatively places the main redaction of the *Chanson* after Saladin's victory at Hattin (1187), which would make it more relevant to studies of the climate surrounding the Third Crusade of 1189-1191 than for either the cultural or military history of the First Crusade, a hundred years earlier. But there is no reason either not to locate it closer to the Second Crusade, launched in 1146. Second, there is the issue of genre, in particular the relationship between these versified epics and the First Crusade chronicles. Generally speaking, historians are not at ease with poetry, including epics, and handle more readily chronicles.

---

des vaincus de l'histoire: Expérience et représentation du *jihād* dans le *shi'isme* imamite ancien", *Journal Asiatique*, 305/1, 2017, p. 23-31.

- 3 Still useful despite more recent controversies as a guide: K.-H. Bender and H. Kleber, *Le Premier Cycle de la croisade. De Godefroy à Saladin: entre la chronique et le conte de fées (1100-1300)*, GRLMA, III/1, *Les Épopées romanes*, fasc. 5, Heidelberg, Winter, 1986.
- 4 The received editions are by S. Duparc-Quioic, Paris, Geuthner, 1976, 2 vols., and J. A. Nelson, Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 2003, based on different texts. See now *La Chanson d'Antioche. Chanson de geste du dernier quart du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. B. Guidot, Paris, Champion, 2011, based on the same manuscript that Duparc-Quioic used, so with the same numbering of laisses and verses; ed. and trans. of the same text by S. B. Edgington and Carol Sweetenham, *The Chanson d'Antioche. An Old French Account of the First Crusade*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011. Good panorama on the debate in J. Flori, *Chroniqueurs et propagandistes. Introduction critique aux sources de la première croisade*, Genève, Droz, 2010, p. 269-276.

Reassuringly for positivistic scholars, members of this source genre sometimes proclaim loudly their veracity, sometimes label some of their information as witnessed by the author, or sometimes attribute some of this information as having been related by trustworthy witnesses. Yet the boundaries between these two genres – chronicles and epics or romances – are hazy<sup>5</sup>. Taking stock of this fluidity, it has become the dominant historiographic position that reconstructions of the First Crusade have to address the versified histories of the like of Gilo of Paris and Ralph of Caen. This has led to new editions and translations<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, it has been argued by Jean Flori, the most authoritative French expert on the First Crusade, that the *Song of Antioch* and Albert von Aachen used a common source<sup>7</sup>. In Flori's wake the same has been proposed concerning *The Song of Jerusalem*: it too is a cousin of Albert von Aachen<sup>8</sup>.

Yet despite this genealogy, a substantial gulf in tonality, concerns, and conception separates the *Song of Antioch* from the chronicles written in 1099 and shortly after<sup>9</sup>. This chasm is particularly wide *vis-à-vis* the *Liber* penned by Raymond d'Aguilers, chaplain of Count Raymond of Toulouse, one of the main princely leaders of the crusading expedition<sup>10</sup>.

5 See most recently S. Loutchisky, "Veoir et oïr, legere et audire: Réflexions sur les interactions entre traditions orale et écrite dans les sources relatives à la Première Croisade", *Homo Legens. Styles et pratiques de lecture: Analyses comparées des traditions orales et écrites au Moyen Âge*, ed. S. Loutchisky and M.-C. Varol, Turnhout, Brepols, 2010, p. 89-125 (my thanks to Christina Lutter for the reference); also M. Ailes, "Historiographical essay: Early French chronicle – history or literature?", *Journal of Medieval History*, 26/3, 2000, p. 301-312.

6 See *The Historia vie Hierosolimitane of Gilo of Paris and a Second Anonymous Author*, ed. and trans. Chr. W. Grocock and J. E. Siberry, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998; *Radulphi Cadomensis Tancredus*, ed. E. d'Angelo, Leuven, Brepols, 2011, trans. B. S. Bachrach and D. Bachrach, *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen: A History of the Normans on the First Crusade*, Burlington, Ashgate, 2005.

7 See Flori, *Chroniqueurs et propagandistes*, p. 275.

8 See F. Andrei, "Alberto di Aachen e la *Chanson de Jérusalem*", *Romance Philology*, 63, 2009, p. 1-69.

9 Albeit the trend towards epic is already visible with the widely copied chronicle of Robert the Monk, circa 1106/1110 (for which see the new edition by M. Bull and D. Kempf, *The Historia Iherosolimitana of Robert the Monk*, Woodbridge, Boydell, 2013), and with versified sources like the *Deeds of Tancred*.

10 For Raymond of Toulouse, Count of Saint-Gilles, see T. Lecaque, *Raymond of Saint-Gilles: Occitanian Piety and Culture in the Time of the First Crusade*, Farnham, Ashgate (forthcoming), initially a PhD thesis at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The earlier study is by J. H. Hill and L. L. Hill, *Raymond IV de Saint-Gilles*, Toulouse, Privat, 1959, trans. *Raymond IV count of Toulouse*, Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 1962.

The priest Raymond believed that he stood at the End of Times, and that the crusade was the Last War announced by the Apostle John's Revelation (and in this he was not alone). His so-called *Liber* is rich in visions and shot through with quasi-communist ideology<sup>11</sup>. Jean Flori has even gone as far as to call it – in a wordplay with another crusade title, Guibert abbot of Nogent's *The Deeds of God through the Franks – The Deeds of God through the poor, Gesta Dei per pauperes*<sup>12</sup>. No such egalitarianism graces the *Song of Antioch* (although it is present in the *Song of Jerusalem*<sup>13</sup>). Its listeners and readers were knightly aristocrats, and it caters to this audience's tastes. Sticking close to the actual course of the First Crusade as we know it from chronicles and crusader letters, the plot of the *Chanson d'Antioche* did not meander as epics often do. It took its audience all the way from the departure of the expedition to the crusaders' major victory before the walls of the great regional capital. Before this triumph against the relief army led by the Atabeg of Mosul, Corbaran (Kerbogha to the chronicles), the *Chanson* described the long siege of Antioch, and its capture thanks to the providential conversion to

11 See S. Schein, "Die Kreuzzüge als volkstümlich-messianistische Bewegungen", *Deutsches Archiv*, 47, 1991, p. 119-138; L. Ferrier, "La couronne refusée de Godefroy de Bouillon: Eschatologie et humiliation de la majesté aux premiers temps du royaume latin de Jérusalem", *Le Concile de Clermont de 1095 et l'appel à la croisade*, Rome, École française de Rome, 1997, p. 245-265; S. Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City: Crusader Jerusalem and the Catholic West, 1099-1187*, Burlington, Ashgate, 2005; P. Buc, "La vengeance de Dieu. De l'exégèse patristique à la réforme ecclésiastique et à la première croisade", *La Vengeance, 400-1200*, ed. D. Barthélemy, F. Bougard and R. Le Jean, Rome, École française de Rome, 2006, p. 451-486; C. Kostick, *The Social Structure of the First Crusade*, Leiden, Brill, 2008; J. Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven: The First Crusade and the Quest for Apocalypse*, New York, Basic Books, 2011; J. Flori, *L'Islam et la fin des temps: interprétation prophétique des invasions musulmanes dans la chrétienté médiévale*, Paris, Seuil, 2007, p. 271 *passim*; K. Skottki, "Vom 'Schrecken Gottes' zur Bluttaufé. Gewalt und Visionen auf dem Ersten Kreuzzug nach dem Zeugnis des Raymond d'Aguilers", *Gewalterfabrung und Prophetie*, ed. P. Burschel and C. Marx, Vienna, Böhlau, 2013, p. 445-490; *Christen, Muslime und die Erste Kreuzzug. Die Macht der Beschreibung in der mittelalterlichen und modernen Historiographie*, Münster, Waxmann, 2015; P. Buc, *Holy War, Martyrdom, and Terror. Christianity, Violence, and the West*, Philadelphia, University of Philadelphia Press, 2015, p. 167-176 and *passim*.

12 See Flori, *Chroniqueurs et propagandistes*, p. 193-217.

13 See K.-H. Bender, "Les épopées de la croisade ou la gloire épique du peuple dans la Conquête de Jérusalem", *Littérature et société au Moyen Âge*, ed. D. Buschinger, Paris, Champion, 1976, p. 159-176; a position re-iterated in Bender and Kleber, *Le Premier Cycle de la croisade*, p. 48-49. Bender notices the heightened role of the proletarian Tafurs in the *Chanson de Jérusalem* as compared to the *Chanson d'Antioche*, which suggests different purposes and/or audiences for the two *Chansons*.

Christianity of a Turkish emir, here called Daciens (otherwise known as Pirrus or Firruz). The *Song of Antioch*, as an epic should, provided much spectacular swordplay and feats of prowess with lances. The apex in warrior exploit is – by historiographic consensus – Godfrey of Bouillon’s splitting in half a Muslim knight, with a single sword-blow (apparently an actual event, if one trusts converging sources<sup>14</sup>). One part fell on the battlefield, the other half rigidly clung to the horse, which took it back into the city, spraying the streets with blood along the course of its frantic gallop. Knightly prowess, but holy war reactions: “The Franks cavorted with delight as they saw this, screaming, ‘Montjoie’ at the top of their voices [...]; the race of the Devil was terrified at the sight”, and lamented<sup>15</sup>. Throughout the Cycle, chivalric prowess leaves grass, sand, and streets splattered with brain and blood. It may suffice to cite two representative doublets of verses:

Del sanc as Sarrasins font corre grant ruisel,  
 Tout li pré sont couvert d’entraille et de boisel.  
 (“They made run out a great brook of Saracen blood; all the meadows were covered with guts and innards.”)

As espees trençans font tele occision,  
 Li sans e li cervelle en gist sor le sablon.  
 (“Shearing with swords, they made such a great slaughter that blood and brains covered the sand<sup>16</sup>.”)

For its aristocratic audiences, the Cycle de la Croisade also provided comic entertainment<sup>17</sup>. But entertainment of a gruesome sort. It developed the figures of the so-called Tafurs, a group of poor soldiers within God’s Army, attested for the first time in Guibert of Nogent’s *Gesta Dei*

14 See Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere* (one manuscript in the ed.), ed. J. H. Hill and L. L. Hill, Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 1974, p. 75; Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, 3.65, ed. S. Edgington, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2007, p. 244; and received in second-generation chronicles such as Robert the Monk, *Historia*, 4.20, ed. Kempf and Bull, p. 44-45.

15 *Chanson d’Antioche*, CLXVII-CLXVIII, v. 3687-3713, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 202-203; ed. Guidot, p. 480-483; ed. and trans. Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 193.

16 *Chanson d’Antioche*, LVI, v. 1382-1383, and CCCLV, v. 9008-9009, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 83 and 442; ed. Guidot, p. 296 and 916.

17 Also bombastic opponents, ultimately ridiculous given the defeats they shall suffer. A. J. Frykholm, *Rapture Culture. Left Behind in Evangelical America*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 102, underlines the “two primary and intertwined purposes” of the *Left Behind* series, “entertainment and edification”.

*per Francos* (c. 1108)<sup>18</sup>. One is far here from the exaltation of the poor that runs through Raymond d'Aguilers' apocalyptic chronicle. The downtrodden kept the fanatical cruelty that graces Raymond's pages, but became burlesque. In particular, these barefoot, half-naked men, armed with cudgels and Danish axes, along with their king, *le roi Tafur*, engaged in demonstrative acts of cannibalism. The Tafurs skinned dead Muslims and roasted or boiled them. This to the amusement of the aristocratic leaders of the army, who provided these proletarian cannibals with wine to wash down Turkish flesh, and claimed lack of authority over them when Turkish envoys protested about these inhuman feasts<sup>19</sup>. We are far here from Raymond d'Aguilers' apocalyptic perception of crusader cannibalism, of celestial birds that would devour the armies of Heaven's enemies (Apoc. 19:12-21)<sup>20</sup>.

Finally, like the Old French *Chanson de Roland* (itself rich in theological underpinnings<sup>21</sup>), the *Chanson d'Antioche* (and even more the *Chanson de Jérusalem*<sup>22</sup>) contains visions, sermons, prayers, and theological declarations<sup>23</sup>. These religious statements are particularly interesting.

18 See most cogently and intelligently J. Rubenstein, *Guibert of Nogent, Portrait of a Medieval Mind*, New York, Routledge, 2002.

19 See J. Rubenstein, "Cannibals and Crusaders", *French Historical Studies*, 31/ 4, 2008, p. 525-552, with relevant historiography; *Armies of Heaven*, p. 240-242; Bender and Kleber, *Le Premier Cycle de la croisade*, p. 39 and 42.

20 See Buc, *Holy War*, p. 262-265.

21 See M. Gabriele, "Asleep at the Wheel? Messianism, Apocalypticism and Charlemagne's Passivity in the Oxford *Chanson de Roland*", *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 67, 2003, p. 46-72; P. Rousset, *Les Origines et les caractères de la Première Croisade*, Neuchâtel – Genève, La Baconnière, 1949, p. 110-133 (missionizing war offering the Muslims choice only between conversion and death). Modulating, J. Flori, "Pur esbaltier sainte crestiènté. Croisade, guerre sainte et guerre juste dans les anciennes chansons de geste française", *Le Moyen Âge*, 97, 1991, p. 171-187, has underlined the absence of strictly crusading themes (and the presence of older notions of warrior service to kings in defense of the faith) in the French epics of the twelfth century's first half (the *Chanson de Roland* and the cycle of Guillaume d'Orange), here in agreement with Bender and Kleber, *Le Premier Cycle de la croisade*, p. 40.

22 See in particular Godfrey of Bouillon's long prayer in the Holy Sepulcher, which recounts sacred history from the Creation, including acts of belief rewarded by divine mercy (Mary-Magdalen and Longinus), in *La Chanson de Jérusalem*, CCXII, v. 7665-7734, ed. N. R. Thorp, Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 1992, p. 205-207.

23 See Bender and Kleber, *Le Premier Cycle de la croisade*, p. 40, 44-46, 50-51. As recently analyzed by J. Rubenstein, "Miracles and the Crusading Mind: Monastic Meditations on Jerusalem's Conquest", *Prayer & Thought in Monastic Traditions: Essays in Honour of Benedicta Ward SLG*, ed. S. Bhattacharji, D. Mattos and R. Williams, New York, Bloomsbury & Clark, 2014, p. 197-210, at p. 200-201, in Robert the Monk's *Historia Iherosolimitana*



The longest prayer in the *Song of Antioch* is a Credo of sorts, adapted to the crusaders' need for divine protection<sup>24</sup>. It is uttered by one Fulcher l'Orphelin, the first man to ascend into Antioch on the ladder provided by the Turkish emir Daciens (Daciens had been convinced by Bohemund of Taranto to convert and to deliver his six towers to the crusaders):

Lord God, Lord the Father, by Your most holy name, [protect me], You Who took birth from the Holy Virgin, saved Jonah from the stomach of the fish, and resurrected Saint Lazar bodily from the dead. You pardoned Mary Magdalen, when in Simon's dwelling she cried at Your feet; she poured out her heart's tears to such a point that she washed them all and around, and then anointed them with myrrh with good intention [motion of the soul]. She did something quite wise, and obtained a good reward. God, You suffered the passion on the Holy Cross, and Longinus struck You with the Lance with force. He had never had sight, as we well know this truth. The blood came to him through the shaft with impetuous gushing all the way to his fists; he splashed his eyes with it, and obtained sight. 'Lord, have mercy', Longinus shouted out, with good intention. You granted him pardon and great remission [for his sins]. You were put in the tomb and treated as if a thief; the third day afterwards there was the resurrection; You went to Hell, which could not defend itself, and You threw out from it Your friends, Noah and Aaron; then ascended to Heaven on Ascension day [...]. There, above, in Your holy place, there is not any traitor (*felon*). God! Just as this is the Truth – and so we do indeed well believe – let me ascend and be safe, and do You protect the French from death and prison, that we may conquer the city and its keep.

“Then”, continues the poet, Fulcher “raised his hand, made a blessing [the sign of the cross]; and grabbing the ladder, he went up<sup>25</sup>”. Fulcher's prayer weaves together motifs of pardon, salvation from death, victory and vengeance (given the vindictive charge attached to the miraculously

---

V.viii-ix, ed. Kempf and Bull, p. 51, Bohemond of Taranto explains to the Turk (Pirrus) “some of the mystery of our faith [...] what lies beneath the surface” of a literal event, to wit, how the army of martyrs fights for the living army of God. He must however call on his chaplain, so to a cleric, to provide an explanation of how dead souls can rematerialize themselves, and have material equipment (horses, shields, and banners). See the translation by C. Sweetenham, *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005, p. 141-143.

24 See *Song of Antioch*, ed. and trans. Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 75; E.-R. Labande, “Le Credo épique, à propos des prières dans les chansons de geste”, *Recueil de travaux offerts à M. Clovis Brunel*, Paris, École des chartes, 1955, vol. 2, p. 62-80. Fulcher's words are a long version of the so-called “*Prière du plus grand péril*”, present in many epics.

25 See *Chanson d'Antioche*, CCLIII, v. 6097-6126, ed. Duparc-Quioic, p. 305-306; ed. Guidot, p. 676-680; ed. and trans. Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 247-248.

discovered Holy Lance of Longinus during the First Crusade). Other prayers, shorter, take up the core of Fulcher's Credo. Godfrey of Bouillon, when pressing hard Corbaran's fleeing Turks during the great battle before Antioch, finds himself ahead of the others and cornered. He too invokes Lazar and Mary the sinner<sup>26</sup>. And before the Antioch ladder, Godfrey too uses the formula professing the truth of the Gospels and his belief in it – "God, just as this is the Truth, and just as I believe it without doubting, give us tonight that we may conquer the city<sup>27</sup>". Commonly in the *Chanson's* sermons or in moments of need, a Frank will invoke Christ's torments on the Cross at the fetid Jews' hands and Christ's sufferings, endured to redeem His Christian people. The Christians should in return be willing to suffer martyrdom to avenge Him.

Another figure who speaks theology is Daciens, this same Turkish turncoat. Repeatedly, as this "blessed Turk" anxiously waits for his allies to climb into Antioch, he confesses "Christ the Savior<sup>28</sup>". At another point Daciens exclaims "I truly believe in Christ, Mary's son". Belief in the Virgin Birth marks the convert as a convert. To encourage the French, the traitor Daciens clamors, "By the God who was born from a virgin in Bethlehem, I shall not betray you even should I lose my head<sup>29</sup>".

In the *Babylon Rising* series, conversion implies recognizing Christ with the formulaic expression of one's desire to have Him enter one's life. The hero, Murphy, a Bible archeology professor, scriptural exegete, and reluctant holy warrior, advises:

All you have to do is pray a little prayer to Him. Something like this: "God, I realize that I am a sinner and I have done wrong. I believe that You died on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins. I believe that You rose from the dead to create a new life for me. I would like to experience that new life. Please forgive me. I want to follow You. Please change my life. Please help me to learn to live for You. Thank You for doing this for me. Amen<sup>30</sup>."

26 See *Chanson d'Antioche*, CCCLXIV, v. 9289-9301, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 456; ed. Guidot, p. 938-941.

27 *Chanson d'Antioche*, CCL, v. 6035-6036, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 302; ed. Guidot, p. 670.

28 *Chanson d'Antioche*, CCLV, v. 6157, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 308; ed. Guidot, p. 684.

29 *Chanson d'Antioche*, CCLVI, v. 6161, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 308; ed. Guidot, p. 684; CCXLIX, v. 6005-6006, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 301; ed. Guidot, p. 668.

30 See the *Babylon Rising* series' third volume, T. LaHaye with B. Phillips, *The Europa Conspiracy*, New York, Random House, 2005, p. 109. In the series' second volume, *The Secret on Ararat*, New York, Bantam Books, p. 160, the troubled teenager Tiffany finds

Evangelical fiction meets evangelical hortatory. In 2003, during the first months of the ill-fated invasion of Iraq, Lieutenant-General Jerry Boykin toured fundamentalist Protestant congregations, delivering in uniform lectures on the war. On the one hand, he branded America's enemies as instruments of Satan in a conflict that was both material and spiritual; on the other hand, he explained that he was raising a spiritual army to pray for both the armed force's victory and the religious re-conquest of America itself. Boykin exhorted those among his conference's listeners who had "not joined that [spiritual] army yet", to do so "today's the day with a simple prayer, 'Lord forgive me; I accept Jesus as my Savior'<sup>31</sup>".

Take out the Virgin Mary, and Daciens' eructation comes close to the commonplace Evangelical "Sinner's Prayer", which also involves a recognition of failings and a call for divine mercy<sup>32</sup>. But Daciens (known to other sources as Pirrus or Fairouz) demonstrates his Christian profession of Faith in the most gruesome way. While he prays Jesus that his wife may convert to his desired new "law", and while he adjures her to "believe in Jesus Who was tortured on the cross and in the Holy Virgin who bore Him [...]", he does not hesitate after her refusal to precipitate her from the battlements, to her death and damnation. Her body was shattered in more than twenty places; "devils took her soul"<sup>33</sup>. The same alternative, conversion or death, awaits Daciens' brother. Hardened in paganism, he loses his head.

---

Jesus: "'Please forgive me for my sins. Change my life. Please help me learn to live for you. I believe that you died for me. I believe that you rose from the dead to make a home for me in heaven. I invite you in. Please come'".

31 For more on Boykin's sermon-lectures, see Buc, "Medieval Eschatology [...]".

32 General Jerry Boykin, Conference of June 21, 2003, Good Shepherd Church, Sandy, Oregon (Video), transcription provided to me by William Arkin, the journalist who uncovered Boykin's lecture tours. See W. Arkin, "The Pentagon Unleashes a Holy Warrior. A Christian extremist in a high Defense post can only set back the U.S. approach to the Muslim world", *The Los Angeles Times* (17 Oct. 2003), p. B17. The authenticity of Arkin's transcripts is vouched for by their correspondence with two other sources: first are the excerpts of one video showed on the NBC program (see NBC News clip 5115223939\_s06, "War Of Words: NBC News Investigates", dated 15 October 2003); second is the official Pentagon inquiry, Department of Defense, Office of the Inspector General, Case H03L89967206, August 5, 2004, "Alleged improprieties related to public speaking: Lieutenant-General William G. Boykin, U.S. Army Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Intelligence", available online.

33 See *Chanson d'Antioche*, CCXLV, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 296-297; ed. Guidot, p. 658-661.

Is theology in the *Chanson d'Antioche* an ornament or a semi-foreign body that pops here and there between battle-scenes, battle-scenes that are the text's actual essence? Or is it an integral and integrated part of the epic? From the answer to this question depends the evaluation of the longest theological section of the work, located at the beginning of the poem (and echoed at its end<sup>34</sup>). To it we now turn.

The *Chanson d'Antioche's* laisses 1 to 7 summarize very briefly the crusade; recall, intertwined with this summary, how Jesus suffered for the Christians on the Cross; and exhort its French audience that it is therefore its duty to take the cross like the First Crusaders of 1096-1100. Like them, the poet's listeners and readers too should "take revenge on the lineage of Antichrist<sup>35</sup>". In laisses 8-13, the *Song of Antioch* gives a fabulous version of the Crucifixion. Challenged on the cross by the bad thief, Christ explains to the good thief that in a thousand years a "new people" (*novele gent*), a "*gent* [which] is not yet born", will come to wipe out paganism from these lands and "take revenge for the death of their Father". Christ names them. They are the French<sup>36</sup>. And He announces the rewards for martyrdom. The poet then recounts in two laisses Titus and Vespasian's destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., which will be a first retaliation for Jesus' death (the audience would have been familiar with the legend of the Vengeance of the Lord by Titus and Vespasian, by the ninth century made into militant converts to Christianity<sup>37</sup>). The *Chanson* concludes on these paired retributions: "Thus was Our Lord avenged", immediately adding, "and so will He be again. Whomsoever

34 See *Chanson d'Antioche*, VIII-XIII, ed. Duparc-Quioic, p. 26-29; ed. Guidot, p. 196-204; ed. and trans. Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 106-108.

35 The best study on the medieval Antichrist is by G. L. Potestà and M. Rizzi, *L'anticristo*, Milan, Il Mulino, 3 vols., 2005-2017.

36 See J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986, p. 55-56.

37 See J. E. Cross and D. Brearley, *Two Old English apocrypha and their manuscript source. The Gospel of Nicodemus and the Avenging of the Saviour*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996; R. Gounelle, "Les origines littéraires de la légende de Véronique et de la Sainte Face: la *Cura sanitatis Tiberii* et la *Vindicta Saluatoris*", *Sacre impronte e oggetti « non fatti da mano d'uomo » nelle religioni*, ed. A. Monaci Castagno, Alessandria, Edizioni dell'Orso, 2011, p. 231-251. By possibly 1200, the oldest Old French version of *La Venjanse Nostre Seigneur* (ms. Paris, BnF, français, 1374, fol. 75r-90v) made Vespasian and Titus initially Muslims! This refracts the fondest hopes of the crusading movement. See *The Oldest Version of the twelfth-century Poem La Venjanse Nostre Seigneur*, ed. L. A. T. Gryting, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1952.

will go avenge Him will receive good reward, for he will wear a crown in the heavenly paradise<sup>38</sup>. One should take good note at this point of the medieval meaning of *vengeance*, in Latin *vindicta* – it means righteous retribution, and is synonymous with *ultio* and *justitia*<sup>39</sup>.

The passage dramatizes a commonplace in medieval theology. Mid-ninth century, commenting Isaiah 63, Haymo of Auxerre had placed on the cross Christ's decision to avenge Himself from the reprobate Jews and the demons, and from all unbelievers<sup>40</sup>. Haymo also assumed that this vengeance would take place twice (in 70 C.E. and at EndTimes<sup>41</sup>). This duality of the Lord's vengeance was traditional since at least the fourth century. Christ had wept over Jerusalem, predicting two great catastrophes for the city. The first would take place in 70 CE with the Jewish Temple's destruction by the Romans. The other would take place at EndTimes; by the early Middle Ages, it was identified with the final battles pitting Christendom against Antichrist<sup>42</sup>. Interestingly,

38 *Chanson d'Antioche*, xiii, v. 245-249, ed. Duparc-Quioç, p. 29; ed. Guidot, p. 206.

39 For this semantic field, see S. A. Throop, *Crusading as an Act of Vengeance, 1095-1216*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011.

40 See Buc, "Vengeance de Dieu", p. 463-464. Haymo, in Isa. 63:34, PL 116, col. 1054c-d: "The day of vengeance against the demons and the Jews was in my heart, understand, as I hung on the cross suffering from such [torments]. The year of my redemption is coming, that is, the year or time of the redemption of humankind [...] Christ's passion contained [...] the punishment of demons, of reprobate Jews, of all unbelievers, and the rewards of the just. [...] Indeed, as the Lord hung on the cross and suffered passion for us, there was in His heart that He would condemn the demons to Hell and deliver the Jews to the Romans' hands." ("*Dies enim ultionis, subaudis daemonum et Judaeorum, fuit in corde meo, subaudis dum penderem in cruce talia sustinens. Annus redemptionis meae venit, hoc est, annus vel tempus redemptionis generis humani. Iste est annus quem superius appellavit annum acceptum Domino, et diem retributionis Judaeorum. Passio Domini secundo habuit in se poenam daemonum et Judaeorum reproborum, omnium infidelium, et praemia justorum. Quae duo [1054d] etiam isto in loco dividuntur in bonam et malam partem. In malam, dies ultionis in corde. In bonam, annus redemptionis generis humani venit. Dum enim Dominus penderet in cruce passionem pro nobis sustinens, in corde ejus fuit quia daemones damnaturus erat in inferno, et Judaeos traditurus in manibus Romanorum.*")

41 See Haymo, in Isa. 2:12, PL 116, 733d-734a: "*Dies autem Domini [exercituum], id est, dies vindictae illius, dupliciter intelligitur: tempus videlicet captivitatis Judaeorum, quae venit super omnem superbum, et excelsum, et super omnem arrogantem. Quae tria unum sensum obtinent, per quae intelliguntur principes Judaeorum, sacerdotes, Pbarisaei et scribae. Tempus quoque ultimi judicii. [734a] in quo damnabitur superbus diabolus cum omnibus consecratoribus ejus, et humiliabitur super omnes arrogantes et superbos*". Interlinear gloss, in *Bibliorum Sacrorum cum Glosa ordinaria*, Venice, 1603, vol. 4, p. 45-46: "Quia dies domini exercituum super omnem superbum ¶ Sacerdotes, scribas & phariseos; vel dies iudicii super diabolum & membra eius".

42 See Jerome, *Commentarii in euangelium Matthaei*, in Matt. 24:24-25, ed. D. Hurst and M. Adriaen, Turnhout, Brepols, 1969, p. 228; for this all, see Buc, "Vengeance de Dieu", p. 476-478.

Augustine also said that the tears announced the Church's travails against heretics between the Roman siege of Jerusalem and the End of History – so a long series of spiritual conflicts<sup>43</sup>. This dual realization is what exegetes call the partial fulfillment and the total fulfillment of a type or prophecy. A type or prophecy is realized at least once, partially, within the time of the Church, and for good and totally in the Last Days of Sacred History. As we shall see, this conception of history is not foreign to modern Evangelical Protestantism, and typology was far from absent in the New World Puritan tradition that shaped so much American dispositions<sup>44</sup>.

Furthermore, the partial fulfillment is itself a type of the total fulfillment. For many participants in the First Crusade's storming of Jerusalem in July 1099, the expedition was this very last war at the End of Times. And still between 1099 and at least 1108, many understood the crusade to be the total fulfillment of Christ's tearful prophecy<sup>45</sup>. Traces of these expectations are visible in the Crusade Cycle, including several mentions of the lineage of Antichrist and a peculiar version of Godfrey's rule over Jerusalem<sup>46</sup>. But Christ did not return in glory; and Antichrist did not manifest himself. Within a few decades, the July 1099 conquest lost this apocalyptic status. Yet the First Crusade was not rejected into the category of profane history, and reduced to an event without meaning in *Heilsgeschichte*, Sacred History or History of Salvation. The demotion was relative. The *Song of Antioch* testifies to the re-evaluation of the First Crusade from total fulfillment to the status of partial fulfillment. To cite anew the poem: "Thus was Our Lord avenged, and so will He be again". The crusade was, like Titus and Vespasian's Vengeance of the Lord, a partial fulfillment, and as such both an example and a type for the final war still to come.

The import of the initial question may have by now become clear. Was this theological formula a foreign body in the epic, and as such easily bypassed, dismissed, or forgotten by its audience? Otherwise put,

43 See Augustine, Ep. 199.9, ed. A. Goldbacher, Vienna, Tempsky, 1911, p. 265-266.

44 See Buc, *Holy War*, p. 73.

45 See G. Lobrichon, 1099. *Jérusalem conquise*, Paris, Seuil, 1998, p. 108 and 130-132; Rubenstein, *Armies*, p. 310-311 and 313-314; J. Rubenstein, "Crusade and Apocalypse: History and the Last Days", *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*, 21, 2016, p. 159-189.

46 See *Chanson d'Antioche*, IV, v. 98-100, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 23; ed. Guidot, p. 192 (lignage); *Chanson de Jérusalem*, CXLVI-CLVII, ed. Nelson, p. 146-154 (élection de Godefroy).

what was – to use Paul Veyne’s concept – the *régime de croyance* here at play<sup>47</sup>? The *Song of Antioch* itself provokes the scholar to this question with its own self-evaluation: “My lords, there is no fiction (*fable*) in our song: nothing but pure truth (*pure vérité*) and the holiest account (*saintissime sermon*)<sup>48</sup>.” This assertion claims for the *Chanson d’Antioche* as a whole the status that its characters, for instance Fulcher l’Orphelin, attribute to their summary of the Christ Story. To quote his prayer at the foot of the ladder again: “God! Just as this is the Truth – and so we do indeed well believe”. Is the *Chanson’s* Theology of History, then, a truth that must be believed, like Holy Scripture? How to check whether the audience accepted this claim, and how can we surmise the causes of this acceptance, if any?

A tentative – I insist on tentative and add in conditional – answer can be found by turning to a much more recent literary genre, the American Protestant evangelical novel, and in particular to the two series authored by Timothy LaHaye, *Left Behind* and *Babylon Rising*. The genealogical metaphor (used in all earnest by the *Chanson* for the lineage of Antichrist) is dangerous, but LaHaye’s novels and the 3-part crusade cycle are relatives in the grand genre of eschatological literature. In the late 1990, Tim LaHaye, a fundamentalist pastor, self-styled prophecy scholar, and professor at Jerry Falwell’s Liberty University, penned with the professional writer Jerry Jenkins what soon became an absolute best-seller. Between 1995 and 2000, twenty million of the volumes thus far published had been bought; by the beginning of 2002, 32 million copies. By the same year, nine per cent of Americans had read at least one volume. This impact (along with the impact of other fundamentalist novels) has led Crawford Gribben to state that evangelicalism can no longer be seen as a sub-culture; evangelicalism is at the center of American culture<sup>49</sup>. *Left Behind* is the story of the survival, combats,

47 Here I have found helpful A. Boureau, *La Légende dorée. Le système narratif de Jacques de Voragine*, Paris, Cerf, 1984; “L’église médiévale comme preuve animée de la croyance chrétienne”, *Terrain*, 14, 1990, p. 113-118; P. Veyne *et al.*, “Entretien avec Paul Veyne”, *L’Homme*, 175-176, 2005, p. 223-550.

48 *Chanson d’Antioche*, III, v. 66-67, ed. Duparc-Quioc, p. 21; ed. Guidot, p. 191 (“Segnor, n’a point de fable ens en notre canson, / mais pure vérité et saintissime sermon”); ed. and trans. Edgington and Sweetenham, p. 103.

49 See C. Gribben, “Rapture Fictions and the Changing Evangelical Condition”, *Literature & Theology*, 18/1, 2004, p. 77-94, at p. 77-78; *Writing the Rapture. Prophecy Fiction in Evangelical America*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 130.

and martyrdoms of men and women after the Rapture. Unlike true Christians predestined to salvation and taken bodily out of this world to heaven, the “left behind” are people who have to endure the Great Tribulation perpetrated by Antichrist and his minions<sup>50</sup>. Left behind (not taken up in the Rapture), some of these men and women have found Christ – the Christ of Fundamentalist Evangelical Christianity. But these elect at the End of Times do not merely endure the Tribulation; they also fight with arms and ruse Antichrist’s religious and political tyranny. They are both martyrs and crusaders. The series’ final book, *Glorious Appearing, the End of Days* (2004), features the return of Christ, His victory over Antichrist, and the Last Judgment, ushering in the millennial kingdom of peace. But between the first volume and the last, violent action couples itself with prayer and professions of faith.

*Babylon Rising*, a four-book series published between 2003 and 2006, is located in time right before the Rapture. Its hero, Michael Murphy, a muscular professor of Biblical Archeology and Christian Prophecy, fights a conspiracy of European and Asian elites in alliance with Muslim Jihadis. The plot aims at weakening America, at creating a world tyranny based on the European Union and a United Nations moved to Babylon, at subverting True (understand, evangelical) Christianity, and at giving birth to Antichrist, who will take the reins of world-government and false Christianity. Like *Left Behind*, *Babylon Rising* admixes entertainment (here, romance), violent action, and religious passages. To cite the author’s preface: “*Babylon Rising* is my newest attempt to create another uniquely satisfying combination of suspense and substance”, and draws on “materials based on my continuing research on the prophecies of the Bible<sup>51</sup>”. Theological substance comprises chapter-length flashbacks to Old Testament moments, like the building of Noah’s Ark (a type for the Rapture), or the life of the Prophet Daniel (typologically tied through the vision of Nabuchodonosor to the rise of the evil empire of

50 For Antichrist in American fundamentalism, see R. C. Fuller, *Naming the Antichrist. The History of an American Obsession*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995, too psychoanalytical for comfort; P. Boyer, *When Time Shall Be no More. Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1992; M. Sells, “Armageddon in Christian, Sunni and Shia Traditions”, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Violence*, ed. M. Juergensmeyer, M. Kitts and M. Jerryson, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 467-495; recent comparative discussions in G. L. Potestà, “Ripensare i messianismi”, *Nuova informazione bibliografica*, 4, 2014, p. 721-748.

51 T. LaHaye and G. S. Dinallo, *Babylon Rising*, New York, Bantam Books, 2003, p. x.



Antichrist, but also to deliverance through faith in Christ). Evangelical beliefs are also expounded in conversations between Murphy and his pastor, or in discussions with people whom Murphy is trying to counsel to find Christ, or in Murphy's university classroom lessons. There one learns, for instance, the meaning of the opposition between Babylon and Jerusalem – a pair of cities fundamental for crusading ideology. The novels also contain their moments of Credo. In turn, the crusade chronicles depict, like the fundamentalist fictions, what one may call lay theology, insofar as the (often clerical) authors place in the mouth of knights positions about the supernatural<sup>52</sup>. Finally, no Evangelical fiction volume is without an episode of, to cite Jenkins, “believable [and] reproducible” conversion experience<sup>53</sup>. The Crusade cycle and the LaHaye novels are thus comparable in their components – entertainment, action, and theology. One could push the analogies deeper. There are, for instance, fantasies of conversion of Muslims (and Jews)<sup>54</sup>, the asymmetric pairing of Babylon and Jerusalem, and the constant reference to Antichrist<sup>55</sup>. The analogies are actually even more striking when one compares, on the one hand, the LaHaye novels and, on the other hand, the early First Crusade chronicles that convey the chiliast or apocalyptic atmosphere that many participants breathed. No wonder, since like Raymond d'Aguilers, Ekkehard of Aura, and Guibert de Nogent, LaHaye believes firmly that Christ's return is right around the corner.

Unlike in the case of the Crusade Cycle, one knows much about the reception of LaHaye's fictions. Paul Gutjahr's 2002 quantitative and qualitative study of reader response to the first six volumes of the *Left Behind* series has yielded instructive results. Gutjahr mined 1700 amazon.com reviews of the books, and obtained detailed answers to a questionnaire sent to those reviewers whose email addresses he had<sup>56</sup>. Both sets were overwhelmingly made up of Christians, principally evangelicals – the

52 See Robert the Monk, *Historia*, 5.8-9, ed. Bull and Kemp, p. 51-52; already discussed by Rubenstein, “Miracles and the Crusading Mind”, p. 200-201.

53 Gribben, *Writing the Rapture*, p. 143.

54 See *Chanson de Jérusalem*, LXXXIV, v. 2476-2481, ed. Nelson, p. 89-90.

55 A. Derbes, “Crusading Ideology and the Frescoes of S. Maria in Cosmedin”, *The Art Bulletin*, 77/3, 1995, p. 460-478, at p. 474-476, provides a good introduction to the plural “Babylons”; see also Buc, *Holy War*, p. 291-293 and *passim*.

56 See P. C. Gutjahr, “No Longer Left Behind: Amazon.com, Reader-Response, and the Changing Fortunes of the Christian Novel in America”, *Book History*, 5, 2002, p. 209-236. A return rate of 36 percent, 233 surveys were mailed, 83 filled the surveys.

largest religious constellation in contemporary America. The readership liked the action-oriented stories. But fully one-tenth of the 1700 reviews saw and/or used the books as tools for evangelization. 15 percent of the 1700 considered the volumes to be “biblical interpretive assets” – aids in their understanding of Scripture, and in particular of John’s Revelation. For one person, the books were all at once a fiction and a revelation of the Truth<sup>57</sup>. It motivated them to read, and cleared up confusing passages. Of the 83 people who filled surveys, 70 percent said that the books had influenced their understanding of various passages of the Bible. They understood better the materiality of biblical symbolism – its literalness – and all the same that a sword in Revelation would be a modern warfare weapon at EndTimes. For 11 percent, it was clear that the novels were not just stories, but were quasi-scriptural themselves. One exclaimed: “I believe that these books are not just great fiction, but PROPHETIC fiction. This stuff WILL happen!” The books were true. Gutjahr comments: “Their novel readings and Bible readings are not hermetically sealed activities [...]. Such a connection [between readings in different genres] forces one to reconsider how best to define the term *sacred text*<sup>58</sup>.” Amy Johnson Frykholm has even proposed that the mode of reading is comparable to that classically attributed to pre-modern audiences: involving networks and communities, and sometimes orality<sup>59</sup>. Tantalizingly also, *Left Behind* audience’s reading practices are presented as “Calvinist”, involving living “along with the text”, which living along in turn stamps religious “practice and experience”. Para-biblical stories translate apocalyptic or prophetic canonical texts and allow the reader to incorporate them, apply them to the lived world, and understand his or her own place in the overall “scheme” of things<sup>60</sup>. Another study, unlike Gutjahr’s but like Frykholm’s qualitative in nature, confirms the role of the books as a go-between object, serving discussions among evangelicals and missionizing attempts, but also self-definition as a born-again. One read the volumes; one also employed them to shape the self and one’s environment. This is what LaHaye and Jenkins wanted, and they documented their first series’ impact in their 2003 *These Will not be Left Behind: True Stories of Changed Lives*<sup>61</sup>.

57 Frykholm, *Rapture Culture*, p. 54.

58 Gutjahr, “No Longer Left Behind”, p. 222-227.

59 See Frykholm, *Rapture Culture*, p. 40.

60 Frykholm, *Rapture Culture*, p. 103 and 111-115.

61 See Gribben, *Writing the Rapture*, p. 142.

West European culture circa 1200 is obviously different from North American culture circa 2000. Yet one can cautiously advance that it is possible, and even likely, one, that the consumption of the Crusade Cycle followed analogous patterns; two, that the military action and the religious teachings worked together; and three, that the stories were seen by many readers or listeners as true, and even as possessing the grade of truth that one accorded to the Scriptures. It is thus possible and even likely that the knightly audiences took as quasi-Scripture the message of the *Chanson d'Antioche's* opening stanzas: Sacred History was punctuated by a limited number of gleeful acts of righteous violence perpetrated at God's command. Each of these moments was related to the others in a deeply meaningful way. Each was an example for all those that followed. But each was more than an example; it was a type. Holy wars for Christendom were, to use the Old French term, "estoires" within a chain of *estoires* announcing the Final Battles. Vespasian's sword materialized this chain between past and present histories. It was in Godfrey of Bouillon's hands as he purged Jerusalem from the blasphemous Muslims<sup>62</sup>. The *Chanson d'Antioche* informs us that the sword had once belonged to Alexander, had passed on to Antiochus, then to Judas Maccabeus – the righteous Jew who had purified Jerusalem and its Temple from pagan idolatry and Jewish collaboration with the Greeks – and then to Vespasian, who had used it to execute vengeful justice against the Jews of the Holy City<sup>63</sup>. How far this scheme was internalized by some among the crusaders, how far they may have seen their armed violence as looking forward, essentially, along a chain of fulfillments, to the End, is of course unfathomable. But here again well-researched present New World Evangelical fictions may suggest

62 See *Extraits de la Chronique de Matthieu d'Édesse*, dans *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Documents arméniens*, Paris, Imprimerie impériale, 1850, vol. 1, p. 45 (with French translation); trans. A. E. Dostourian, *Armenia and the Crusades. Tenth to Twelfth Centuries: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*, Lanham, University Press of America, 1993, p. 173: "Taking the sword of the emperor Vespasian, Godfrey fell upon the infidels with all his might and slaughtered 65,000 men in the Temple, not counting the other inhabitants who were slaughtered in the city. In this way the holy city of Jerusalem was captured, and the Sepulcher of Christ our God delivered from subjection to the Muslims. Now this was the third time since the crucifixion of the Lord that the sword of Vespasian had been used against Jerusalem."

63 See *Chanson d'Antioche*, CLXXVII, v. 4165-4179, ed. Duparc-Quioic, p. 222-223; ed. Guidot, p. 516.

something about past Old Word dispositions. LaHaye's dispensationalist evangelical readers consider that their own actions may typify events at Christ's Second Coming<sup>64</sup>. And they tend also to see their own present in echo with the Apocalyptic future, with a sort of paradoxical double Tribulation (that is, the era right after the Rapture has removed from this world those predestined to salvation, in which Antichrist will rage as retributive judgment on humankind before Christ's final and triumphant Second Coming). The Tribulation "is both now *and* yet to come". Glenn Shuck, here quoted, describes how this takes place:

LaHaye and Jenkins create a narrative space in which their visions of the future and its possibilities can be explored in a time much like our own. This has the dual effect of giving readers insights into contemporary developments, along with tactics for altering them. The reader can acknowledge such texts as future-oriented, while still experiencing them as intense reflections of contemporary and not merely future concerns. Even those who expect to forego the Tribulation must still face the issues presented in the texts. For the evangelical reader, the Tribulation is both now *and* yet to come<sup>65</sup>.

Thus the typological mechanisms present in medieval theology have their equivalent in contemporary Evangelical readership culture. This in turn authorizes a cautious and hypothetical retrojection of current reader response into the premodern past. More specifically put, the attested American reader's ability to see present tribulations as both God-willed realities and in a relationship of semi-identity to EndTimes suggests that medieval listeners and readers could well see their military actions as both eschatological (really oriented to the End) and as pointing to the Apocalypse war to end all wars.

The *Chanson d'Antioche's* diffusion of this typological formula is contemporary of a major turning point for biblical exegesis, the moment when the Bible and in particular John's Revelation began to be interpreted historically. It is in the twelfth century that the different seals, plagues,

64 See S. Harding, "Imagining the Last Days: The Politics of Apocalyptic Language", *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 48/3, 1994, p. 14-44, at p. 27.

65 G. W. Shuck, *Marks of the Beast: The Left Behind Novels and the Struggle for Evangelical Identity*, New York, New York University Press, 2004, p. 26 (emphasis his). I owe the reference to C. Gribben, "Left Behind, Prophecy Fiction and the Clash of Civilizations", *Left Behind and the Evangelical Imagination*, ed. C. Gribben and M. Sweetnam, Sheffield, Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2011, p. 49-68, at p. 49. See Buc, "Vengeance de Dieu", p. 477; *Holy War*, p. 75-77.

and trumpets of John's vision began to be associated with key events in the history of Christendom, most of them in the past, some yet to come. In most of these schemes, the 1099 Conquest of Jerusalem constituted one of these special moments (exegesis may have been helped here by liturgy, since July 15 1099 had been commemorated from early on as a turning point in Sacred History, on a par with Biblical events<sup>66</sup>). For instance, in his commentary of Revelation 17-19, Peter Aureol (Pierre Auriol, d. 1322) summarized in detail the First Crusade proper and the reign of Baldwin, second Christian ruler of Jerusalem (1100-1118)<sup>67</sup>. Here is again a hypothesis impossible to prove, to wit, that episodes in history that were seen in their own times as apocalyptic could transmute themselves, precisely because of their apocalyptic charge, into special nodes of Sacred History. The hypothesis is impossible to prove, and I do not mean to say that each and every historical moment featured in, for example, Pierre Auriol's interpretation of Revelation was generated by this mechanism. But as argued elsewhere, it has some evidence for itself<sup>68</sup>.

The *Chanson* called on the audience to journey, again, to avenge Christ from "Antichrist's lineage". Here was a history that would meaningfully reiterate itself until the End. Said in passing, it may be that Augustine's position – that Christ's tears announced 70 CE, travails at the Eschaton, but also in between the constant struggles of the Church against heretics – helped create this semi-continuum. History's meaningfulness was imparted by the performance of violent justice – vengeance. Singing for a new crusade, the poet Rutebeuf fictionalized an advent of Christ, but in this ordinary earthly historical time of the Church, prior to the Eschaton:

66 See M. C. Gaposchkin, "The echoes of victory: liturgical and para-liturgical commemorations of the capture of Jerusalem in the West", *Journal of Medieval History*, 40/3, 2014, p. 237-259, and see now the same's splendid *Invisible Weapons. Liturgy and the Making of Crusade Ideology*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2017; see earlier Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, p. 21-33.

67 See Pierre Auriol, *Compendium sensus litteralis totius divinae scripturae*, ed. P. Seeboeck, Quarachi, Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1896. The sixth angel was Gregory VII; the seventh angel was Alexius, in moving Urban to preach the crusade. The fifth vision covered the times from the recuperation of Jerusalem to Antichrist and Judgment Day, covering Revelation all the way to the end of chapter 20, and including Hattin, the rise of Franciscans and Dominicans, Frederick II, and the Mongols.

68 The hypothesis is strengthened by two odd details, one from the eleventh century (the scrapbook of Benzo of Alba), and one from the sixteenth (the prison confessions of Jan of Leyden), for which see Buc, *Holy War*, p. 284-286.

See now the time has come when God comes to seek you,  
 His arms stretched out, stained with His blood  
 Through which He will extinguish the fire  
 Both of Hell and Purgatory.  
 Start anew a new history [*recommenciez novele estoire*],  
 Serve God with an entire heart  
 For God shows you the path  
 Of His land and of His steps [...].  
 For this reason you should have the understanding  
 To vindicate and defend  
 The Promised Land<sup>69</sup>.

Crusade literature, thus, was (evidently) a crucial component in the education of the Latin West into the crusade's theological significance. At the same time, it educated this public in a notion of History that reminds one of Hegel – a history moved forward by violence, here vindictive retribution, *Vergeltung*<sup>70</sup>. Jan Assmann has written of “*Recht und Gerechtigkeit als Generatoren von Geschichte*” (Law and Justice as History's generators). So entitled, the article proposes that the Ancient Near-East developed the notion of divine retribution for injustice, thus a notion of historical causality and linearity that accompanied the dominant cyclical notion of time. Gods intervened to punish, through natural catastrophes, wars, and bloody massacres, breaches of pacts and contracts, especially between states. Because kings and nations would be judged on their deeds, they developed a historical record to plead for these deeds. In this cultural ensemble centered on Mesopotamia, there emerged Ancient Israel, which put at the center of its religion a covenant with God involving retribution and vengeance, *Vergeltung*. After a detailed analysis of these early religious systems, Assmann travels quickly from Israel to Hegel, with only Moses Maimonides as an intermediary. I am equally incapable of reconstructing a continuum between the thirteenth and the nineteenth century. It may not be necessary. In the more general continuum, picking and assembling from the virtual library composed of real books and general understandings, Westerners can re-make in any era very similar unpleasant violent forms. But I hope to have at

69 Rutebeuf, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. M. Zink, Paris, Bordas, 1989-1990, vol. 2, p. 313-223, at p. 314.

70 See J. Assmann, “Recht und Gerechtigkeit als Generatoren von Geschichte”, *Die Weltgeschichte – das Weltgericht?*, ed. R. Bubner and W. Mesch, Stuttgart, Klett-Cotta, 2001, p. 296-311.

least suggested how the First Crusade, in being a retributive apocalyptic event, generated a broadly received conception of *Heilsgeschichte* in which successive acts of just retribution paved the road to the End. *Die Weltgeschichte als Weltgericht*, the world-encompassing violent dialectic adjudicating between national spirits is Universal History<sup>71</sup>.

Philippe BUC  
Institut für Geschichte  
Universität Wien (Austria)

---

71 Hegel in his *Philosophy of the Spirit* (§ 548-549) borrowed the expression from Friedrich Schiller, transposing it from the individual to the totality.