

# **Crusaders Under Siege: The Battle of Antioch in Documents and Historical Narrative**

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**B**y the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, 1098, Crusading armies of the West during the First Crusade had been laying continuous siege to the Turkish-held city of Antioch for nearly 8 months. On the 2<sup>nd</sup>, they took the city of Antioch only to find they were themselves under siege in the very city they had fought so hard to take. This siege of the city by the atabeg of Mosul, Kerbogha, was to last from the 7<sup>th</sup> of June to the 28<sup>th</sup> and would try the very heart of the Crusading army as they attempted to break the siege. There was no time to replenish their supplies or even to clear the streets of the rotting dead left over from the previous battle. Because of this, the Crusaders suffered from starvation and disease throughout this grueling period. The Crusading army was trapped and unable to flee, leaving them with quite literally only two options, victory or annihilation. In their desperation, rather than collapse into disorder and chaos, their suffering found its way to the safety valve of mysticism and credulity. A monk, Peter Bartholomew, came forward reporting visions of the Holy Lance which he claimed could be found buried under the floor of the cathedral of St. Peter. The chronicles agree that a relic was indeed found and presented as the Lance, but many of the chroniclers and participants considered it a fraud placed there for

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political gain by one of the Crusade leaders. Chroniclers of the battle report others claiming holy visions as well, both before and after the Lance's discovery. Regardless of the widespread suspicion of Bartholomew's character and the doubt held by many of the Crusade leaders (including the Papal legate, Adhemar) as to the Lance's authenticity, the Crusading army accepted the visions and took up both the search for the Lance and the celebration of its discovery with the greatest zeal. Undoubtedly, the boost in morale resulting from this played a crucial role in the Crusaders' victory.

The spectacular nature of the Crusaders' victory as well as the captivating episode of the Lance made the Battle of Antioch an intensely popular subject among historians in modern times as well as contemporary. However, the events surrounding the siege share a highly politically and religiously charged backdrop of rivalry between Crusade leaders, zeal for the Crusade as a divinely sanctioned undertaking, as well as the obvious religiously sensitive issues surrounding the Holy Lance. Due to this, the chroniclers had ample cause to report these events in different ways from one another, and often did. Three chronicles in particular stand out, The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres (or the *Historia Hierosolymitana*), the anonymously-authored *Gesta Francorum*, and Raymond d'Aguilers' *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*. Each of these was written by an eye-witness participant, but even more importantly, these accounts served as the chief sources for contemporary, non-eye-witness chroniclers and historians of the First Crusade. These authors often copied in full the works of these early eye-witness chroniclers, often with no addition of their own other than to tidy up the language and style. Furthermore, even other eye-witness accounts borrowed extensively from these versions, often only adding a few personal remembrances and leaving the rest

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untouched. Because of this, their traditions of events persist in various combinations throughout all of historical analysis of the First Crusade. Even modern historians remain shackled to the biases and perceptions of these early authors.

This naturally creates many problems for historians attempting to construct historical narratives from these accounts. Modern historians have met this problem by compiling their narratives using select details from multiple accounts each considered to be the most authoritative or most probable for individual episodes during the Crusade. Of course, this is an unavoidable problem associated with document-based histories, and historians have little choice but to construct their narratives thusly. However, this is often done without due consideration to the unresolved differences between the accounts. The result has been the creation of influential modern historiographical traditions, such as those of Sir Steven Runciman or Kenneth Setton, which are almost as persistent in the writings of other 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century historians as the early chronicles were upon their contemporaries.

This endeavor is not meant as a criticism of admirable historians like Runciman or Setton, nor is it a panacea for the issue of writing document-based narratives of the First Crusade; it is however meant as an indication of where historical analysis currently stands on these documents and as an entreaty for mindful interpretation and use of these vital, loaded, and often overly influential chronicles. While most traditional historians have constructed their narratives by scavenging details from multiple accounts of the First Crusade, the controversy over the events at the Battle of Antioch and the finding of the Holy Lance illustrate that this approach often ignores the complexity of the issue and using only

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one historian's narrative can prove as much a problem for establishing a balanced perspective as relying on a sole primary source chronicle.

### **The Chronicles and Chroniclers**

The level of disparity between accounts of the First Crusade creates obvious challenges for constructing precise narrative histories based on their analysis. An understanding of the biases and characters of the authors behind these accounts is central to any argument dealing with this problem. Therefore the purpose of this section will be to provide that much needed introduction as well as to highlight and anticipate some of the key claims about these accounts and their authors which will be revisited later.

Many general factors of the age and circumstances contributed to the ways in which these accounts were written. To start, the accounts are limited by the very feature which gives them their unique value. In John France's words, "Overall, the central problem of these eye-witness sources is that they were eye-witnesses with all the narrowness of perspective that implies."<sup>1</sup> No writer could be present at every battle, observe every skirmish, or be privy to every political decision made by the Crusade's leaders. The chroniclers reported according to what they knew and where familiar with and each come with their own strengths and weaknesses which will be elucidated upon later.<sup>2</sup> Ecclesiastical writing in the European Middle Ages from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pg. 377

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Military history lends itself particularly well to the analysis of how chroniclers reported events in terms of what they knew or were familiar with.

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Centuries essentially held sway. The cleric became almost the sole written voice for that age. According to August C. Krey, the typical themes for writers of this period were; “theological writings, Scripture, the writings of Church Fathers, books of Church service, textbooks for the schools, and treatises on kindred subjects...”<sup>3</sup> The chronicles of the First Crusade are largely responsible for bringing this to an end with a wealth of information on the secular activities of nearly every social class from nearly all regions of Europe. The perception that the accomplishments of the Crusade leaders and participants were to be lauded as a new “chapter to Sacred History”<sup>4</sup> drew intimate attention to the individual deeds of previously ignored segments of the population.<sup>5</sup> Certainly, then, it is not an exaggeration to claim that religion and genuine belief in the divine significance of the Crusade were a motivator for eyewitnesses to chronicle the event. However, its usefulness is limited as an explanatory factor for discrepancies between these accounts. For one, The *Gesta Francorum*, Raymond d’Aguilers’ account, and that of Fulcher of Chartres, are simply composed so early as to preclude the employment of high-level refinement or interpolations anticipatory of future Crusading movements on any grand scale.<sup>6</sup> These three

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<sup>3</sup> August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pg. 4

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pg. 6 But for a more detailed study of this perception in the minds of Crusaders and Crusade chroniclers, see Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986)

<sup>5</sup> See August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pgs.2-13 Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), pgs. 327-330

<sup>6</sup> See August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pgs.2-13, Jonathan Riley Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania

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sources in particular were chosen for this topic because they serve as the greatest sources of information used by authors of later, more refined accounts, often appearing copied almost in full. The religious significance of the Crusade as motivating factor for the chroniclers serves much better instead as an indicator of what was most important to the authors to record and of their level of credulity with regards to the mystical or supernatural.<sup>7</sup>

Many other personal biases come into play such as political loyalties, attitudes toward Byzantines, Orthodox Christians and Turks. But each of these simply form the author's perspective—what was important to him and what wasn't, what he knew and didn't know, who he was partial to and who he held in contempt. They do not add up to an artfully constructed, thoroughly pre-meditated political or religious agenda. In fact, much of the work put into revised accounts based on these was to make up for the "absence of a polished literary finish."<sup>8</sup> For example, the most popular account, *The Gesta Francorum*, inspired three early revisionist accounts based upon it, those of Baldric of Dol, Guibert of Nogent and Robert the Monk.<sup>9</sup> Each of these authors complained of the *Gesta's* base,

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Press), pgs. 135-152. Riley-Smith's work is an authority on what he refers to as "theological refinement" present in the chronicles, he locates this trend most with later chroniclers such as Baldric of Dol, Guibert of Nogent and Robert the Monk.

<sup>7</sup> This will become especially important during the episode of the Holy Lance. See August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921) and Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951)

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 4

<sup>9</sup> Robert the Monk's chronicle has, however, received more attention relatively recently as possibly being less dependent on the *Gesta* than previously assumed.

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uneducated language, lack of refined structure and artless style.<sup>10</sup> Obviously, this helps to overcome some of the challenges associated with constructing narrative histories from these three accounts in particular. The details presented within these earliest accounts are reported based on what was most immediately important to the author to record, call attention to or imply. Regardless of whether immediate importance is given to details such as the deeds of Crusade leaders to whom they owe loyalty, to mystical visions and sacred relics, or to soldiers' camp stories, speculations and exaggerations, much can be learned from deconstructing these perspectives and the effects they have upon their author's accounts. However, deconstruction of these perspectives naturally brings about deconstruction of the assumptions made by narrative histories constructed from multiple, often conflicting accounts.

### **The Gesta Francorum**

The first of these early accounts is the *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitorum*, or simply the *Gesta Francorum*. Written by an anonymous author, this account became the most popular and was often borrowed from or copied entirely by later chroniclers. It appeared earlier than the others and was probably written on the

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See Carol Sweetenham trans., *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade: Historia Hierosolymitana* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005)

<sup>10</sup> See Jonathan Riley Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), pgs. 135-139 Peter Tudebode's account and the *Historia Belli Sacri* are two other works which are essentially copies of the *Gesta*. See John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pg.379. For more information on the relationship between the *Gesta* and Tudebode's account, see Conor Kostick, *The Social Structure of the First Crusade* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Publishing, 2008), pgs. 20-27

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journey. Ekkehard of Aura had a copy available to him in Jerusalem in 1101, suggesting it was probably published in 1100 or earlier that year.<sup>11</sup> The account's uncertain authorship makes this a challenging chronicle to analyze and its discrepancies difficult to account for. Thankfully, historians are not to be foiled by his anonymity and much research has become available on this mysterious figure often referred to by classic histories of the Crusades as simply The Anonymous.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, much can be inferred from the author's writing with regards to his origins and biases. For instance, his use of Latin has led some historians to place him as being from Norman Southern Italy.<sup>13</sup> This fits with another feature of this account, the author's reverence toward the Italo-Norman Crusade leader Bohemond of Taranto. Throughout the account, while other chronicles seem to consider Bohemond's actions to be rash and self-serving, the *Gesta* endeavors to defend and glorify him. Taken together these two points indicate a strong Norman bias. The Anonymous' writing betrays a lack of education, it is strained and his use of adjectives severely limited.<sup>14</sup> As discussed above, the chief criticism of this account by its contemporaries was its base language and "uncouth style."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) pgs. 329-330

<sup>12</sup> For a more in depth look at the author of the *Gesta Francorum*, see Jay Rubenstein, "What is the *Gesta Francorum* and Who is Peter Tudebode," *Revue Mabillon* 16 (2005) pgs. 179-204

<sup>13</sup> August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pg. 7

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 7

<sup>15</sup> See the section "Theological Refinement" in Jonathan Riley Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press) pgs. 135-139



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Furthermore, the author of the *Gesta* takes a much more secular point of view compared to the other accounts and seems to have participated in combat, leading many historians (in conjunction with his apparently poor education and writing) to conclude that he was not, in fact, a cleric. This would make him unique among the other chroniclers. He must have been a lesser knight, given his “lack of intimacy with the leaders...”<sup>16</sup> The fact that he left his lord’s service after Antioch and continued on to Jerusalem speaks to both his character as a soldier and a believer. His account also stands out for its general impartiality toward the other Crusade leaders as well as toward the Turks. The Anonymous is also limited by the “worm’s eye-view” problem described by France.<sup>17</sup> A simple soldier, The Anonymous as an eye-witness often proves unable to graduate from this point of view and fails to place his revelations and observations in the appropriate grand context. According to Krey, “What he lacks elsewhere is greatly outweighed by his judgment in evaluating the relative importance of events, his restraint in preventing intimate details from obscuring the perspective of his story, his unusual fairness and impartiality toward the rival Christian leaders, as well as his Turkish foes, and a certain native instinct for the dramatic apparent throughout the book.”<sup>18</sup>

That said, even its oldest extant copy contains evidence of later meddling. Sir Steven Runciman identifies both a passage taken

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<sup>16</sup> August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pg. 7

<sup>17</sup> For an insightful take on the Anonymous’ apparent perspective in the *Gesta*, see John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pgs. 377-379

<sup>18</sup> August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pg. 7

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from Raymond d'Aguilers and one which corrupts the record of Bohemond's dealings in Constantinople as having been added by others.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, some other historians claim the story of Kerbogha's mother is another such interpolation.<sup>20</sup> John France in *Victory in the East* stresses the importance of these passages and other instances of possible revision, writing that "...there are indications that what we have may not be the text written or dictated by an anonymous South Italian Norman knight in the service of Bohemond. He goes on to suggest that several literary passages show signs of later revision or even entirely different authorship.<sup>21</sup> This may be due in part to Bohemond's vital role in the account's popularity, for regardless of any pro-Norman slant to this account's writing, its distribution was certainly a political affair. In 1106, Bohemond personally propagated it throughout Northern France and according to Runciman, considered it his *apologia*.<sup>22</sup> The *Gesta's* inflated popularity and obvious influence over nearly every other account of the First Crusade lead France to claim that "...*de facto* the idea has grown that the Anonymous' is the 'normal' account of the crusade and its frame work has been built into almost all modern

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<sup>19</sup> See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) pgs. 159, 329

<sup>20</sup> See Natasha Hodgson, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (New York: Boydell Press, 2007) pgs. 190-196

<sup>21</sup> See John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pgs. 377-378

<sup>22</sup> Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) pgs. 329-330

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writing"<sup>23</sup> and then to warn that this its appearance as the traditional account of the First Crusade is "...a dangerous illusion."<sup>24</sup>

### **The Account of Raymond d'Aguilers**

The next significant account to be analyzed is that of Raymond d'Aguilers, known as the *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*. Much more can be said specifically about Raymond's origins and motivations for writing his account. He probably began writing his account on the Crusade, during the siege of Antioch. His work appears after the *Gesta* but was published before 1105, the year of Count Raymond of St. Gilles' death, of which this account makes no mention.<sup>25</sup> This account was originally to be co-written with one Pontius of Balazun, a Provençal knight who died at Archas.<sup>26</sup> Though a cleric, he shows a remarkable lack of clerical restraint when it comes to his credulous belief in and ready acceptance of divine intervention and the mystical more generally. This may be due in part to the fact that he was only elevated to the priesthood after the Crusade began. He came to serve as chaplain to Count Raymond of St. Gilles and is particularly valuable given his intimate familiarity with that crusade leader and other Frankish princes, as well as with Adhemar, the Bishop of Puy and papal legate to the Crusading army.<sup>27</sup> This close relationship with the leadership of the Crusading

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<sup>23</sup> See John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pgs. 378-379

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, pg. 379

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, pg. 377

<sup>26</sup> August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pg. 8

<sup>27</sup> See Edward Peters, *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), and August

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army allows Raymond's account to place events in better context and to provide much needed information on the political affairs of the leaders and the army's "internal dynamics."<sup>28</sup> This serves as a great relief to the dearth of such context in the *Gesta* but the account ultimately proves unable to provide as much detail on military engagements. August Krey claims that Raymond's is the most valuable of all the accounts for "sociological aspects of the Crusade."<sup>29</sup>

Despite this, Raymond d'Aguilers' account is often criticized as highly partisan and "a mass of confused and credulous mysticism."<sup>30</sup> His chief motivations for writing his account seem to be a desire to impart the tale of Count Raymond, the Provençal army and Adhemar of le Puy as well as to call out and defend the divine significance of the Crusade<sup>31</sup>, the Antiochene Holy Lance in particular.<sup>32</sup> Though d'Aguilers certainly was not uncritical of Count Raymond or of the Provençal host and at times proves able to set aside his bias, the man did seem to harbor an unabiding hatred for

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Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pgs. 8-9

<sup>28</sup> See John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pgs. 376-377

<sup>29</sup> August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pg. 9

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 8

<sup>31</sup> See Marcus Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) pgs. 242-246

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, pgs. 7-9, John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pgs. 375-377, Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) pgs. 328-329

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Greeks and all their ways.<sup>33</sup> He openly disapproved of Count Raymond's cooperative attitude toward the Byzantines and throughout his entire account, only mentions them once without a scornful remark.<sup>34</sup> His presentation of Antioch's siege borrows from the *Gesta*, but only to make up for his own focus on the episode of the Lance. Otherwise, his account is almost entirely independent.<sup>35</sup> His reporting of the events at Antioch after Kerbogha's siege began is essentially devoted to the Lance and the visions reported by Bartholomew and others in the city. He appears utterly unwilling to acknowledge that the Crusader's suffering and sense of eminent doom had anything to do with their desperate belief in divine intervention and credulity toward unshackled mysticism. Instead, like Fulcher of Chartres' account later, he paints their hardships at Antioch as punishment for their sins committed on the Crusade and when taking the city. France suggests that Raymond's true purpose here is to "show the workings of the divine economy as then understood."<sup>36</sup> He was among the staunchest defenders of the visions

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<sup>33</sup> Runciman discusses Raymond's instances of being critical of the Count of Toulouse and hatred of Greeks. France also describes his anti-Greek sentiments. See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) pg. 328 and John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pg. 375

<sup>34</sup> See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), pg. 328

<sup>35</sup> France discusses the addition of details from the *Gesta*. See John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pg. 377 See also Susan Edgington, "The First Crusade: Reviewing the Evidence" in *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact*, ed. Jonathan Phillips, (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1997), pg. 56

<sup>36</sup> France, referring to the divine cycle perceived by d'Aguilers, that sin leads to falling out of favor with the divine, and in turn punishment. In this case, the

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of Peter Bartholomew, the barely-literate pilgrim who claimed St. Andrew revealed the Lance's location to him, and even participated in its excavation. Interestingly, even after Bartholomew died from severe burns received during an Ordeal by Fire to prove the validity of his visions, d'Aguilers' credulity persisted. The zealous and clumsy defense of Bartholomew's visions and the episode of the Lance at Antioch that has caused many historians to diminish his account's value may indeed be due to Raymond's conscious desire to amend popular opinion in light of Bartholomew's denunciation, as Krey suggests.<sup>37</sup> These strong biases and motivations make d'Aguilers account particularly problematic, but its other strengths ensures its lasting value to historians.

### **The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres**

Finally, the third major account to be analyzed is the Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, the *Historia Hierosolymitana*. Fulcher was a Frankish cleric present at the Council of Clermont in 1095, where Urban II preached the Crusade. By this time, Fulcher had received his clerical training and was a priest in either Chartres or Orleans.<sup>38</sup> Fulcher joined the Crusade when Stephen of Blois' army passed through Chartres. He left Europe attached to the armies of Stephen, Robert of Normandy and Robert of Flanders. However,

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Crusaders falling woefully under siege in Antioch. Endurance of punishment and the restoration of piety returns God's favor whom, to d'Aguilers, is responsible for their spectacular victory over Kerbogha's army. See Ibid, pgs. 375-376

<sup>37</sup> August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pgs. 8-9

<sup>38</sup> See Ibid, pg. 9 and Edward Peters, *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), pg. 47 and August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pg. 47

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when Godfrey of Bouillon's younger brother, Baldwin, detached from the other Crusaders to secure Edessa for himself, he joined Baldwin and served loyally as chaplain. He remained with Baldwin until the Fall of Jerusalem in 1099, at which point he made a pilgrimage there with Bohemond and Baldwin, but ultimately returned to Edessa with his lord. When Baldwin became King of Jerusalem, he returned and remained in Baldwin's service until his death in 1118. Edward Peters suggests he may then have become prior of the Mount of Olives.<sup>39</sup> He probably began writing his chronicle in 1101 with the first part appearing as early as 1105, but was not completed until 1127-1128.<sup>40</sup>

Fulcher's account stands out sharply against the others here due to the fact that his service to Baldwin kept him from actually being present at the Siege of Antioch. However, Fulcher gathered good information and his account is valuable for this battle particularly as a counterweight to the others. Both d'Aguilers' account and the *Gesta* are highly charged with their own biases. While Fulcher's certainly shows some of the same motivating factors as d'Aguilers', namely a conscious effort to call out the religious significance of the Crusade, he remains the most non-partisan of the three and seems to have earnestly reported his understanding of events. He was also probably the most well educated of the Chroniclers, as evidenced by his writing.<sup>41</sup> Further, his has been

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<sup>39</sup> See Edward Peters, *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), pg. 47 and the more recent Christopher Tyerman, *The Chronicles of the First Crusade* (New York: Penguin Group, 2012)

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, pg. 47

<sup>41</sup> See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

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widely considered by historians to be the most reliable of the accounts. As Peters puts it, "Fulcher's presence throughout most of the expedition, his close connection with the princes of northern France and later with Baldwin, and his ability to organize a maze of complex experiences and motives, make his chronicle perhaps the most reliable of all sources for the history of the First Crusade."<sup>42</sup> Fulcher wasn't particularly interested in the politics of the Crusade leaders but certainly shows evidence of some influence of their intrigues on his writing. France argues, for instance, that Fulcher's failure to cover the issues that split the Crusader leadership after Antioch was due to his fealty to the Baldwin and by proxy, the House of Boulogne.<sup>43</sup> His account was used widely as a source for contemporary histories and is surpassed only by the *Gesta* in terms of influence.<sup>44</sup>

### Narrative History

When historians construct narrative histories based on multiple, very different primary source accounts, as is the case for the siege of Antioch, this construction is done through the selection

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1951) pg. 329. Fulcher's writing has been criticized for its over abundant use of quotation, but as Krey points out, this is only a dominant feature of his later writings in his old age. See August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pg. 10

<sup>42</sup> Edward Peters, *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), pg. 47

<sup>43</sup> See John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pg. 378.

<sup>44</sup> See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) pgs. 329-330 and August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pgs. 9-10



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of individual details from each account considered most important or valuable for their insights. Typically, one account is chosen as the foundation with other chroniclers used to fill in the gaps. However, these supplementary details are often chosen for their ability to shed light on an issue or event on which other chroniclers' were silent, with less than ample consideration of that chronicler's reliability or motivations for including such information. Early chroniclers' tendency to borrow wholesale from other accounts was widespread and the persistence of the *Gesta's* tradition and prevalence as a source (often copied almost verbatim) for other accounts cannot be overstated. As mentioned above, John France, in his "Note on the Sources" at the end of *Victory in the East*, puts forth a well-evidenced argument against the *Gesta's* reliability. He goes on to issue a strong criticism of historians who rely on it and a warning to those unaware of the influence of that account's tradition of events upon most other contemporary sources. France's critique and warning, though levied directly at the *Gesta Francorum*, hints at some of the chief problems associated with constructing histories from disparate documents and is applicable to the practice of relying too much on any one account without sufficient analysis of that account's background. The following section will itself be a condensed narrative history of our focal portion of the Battle of Antioch and is intended to provide a holistic view of the events and their relevant background. Ultimately, it should show how modern historians have constructed their narratives from these sources. The details selected from documents used in the narrative presented here will be based on the particularly influential tradition of Sir Steven Runciman established in his *A History of the Crusades, Volume I*.

Antioch, founded by Seleucus I Nicator, a general of Alexander the Great and named for his father Antiochus, has

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historically been a site of contention due to its vital position along the Orontes River.<sup>45</sup> Its port was St. Symeon, located on the coast to the West of the city. Yaghi-Siyan, the city's governor at the time of the Crusaders' siege, received his position from the Sultan Malik Shah who in turn had received it from Suleiman ibn Kutulmish, who captured the city from the Byzantines in 1085. Following Malik Shah's death, Yaghi-Siyan served as vassal to Ridwan, the emir of Aleppo. However, Yaghi-Siyan consistently sought greater sovereignty and used Ridwan's rivalry with Kerbogha of Mosul and Duqaq of Damascus to his advantage.<sup>46</sup> When the Crusaders laid siege to Antioch in 1097, Yaghi-Siyan found himself in the difficult position of finding allies. His lord Ridwan would not come to his aid because Yaghi-Siyan had betrayed him during a war with Duqaq in 1096.<sup>47</sup> Though others eventually came to his aid, it was Kerbogha who first recognized the threat posed by the Crusading army.<sup>48</sup> During the eight months of siege, the Crusaders proved able to repulse any offensive mounted by Yaghi-Siyan or his allies but otherwise made few significant gains themselves. The crusaders had yet to face Kerbogha, but were aware of his approach which loomed over the army through the latter part of their siege of the city. They had taken several key sites in the surrounding region as well which

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<sup>45</sup> See Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)

<sup>46</sup> Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Vol. 1: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1951), pgs. 213-214

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 213

<sup>48</sup> Kerbogha also sought possession of Antioch for personal gain. Should that city have fallen into his power, his rival Ridwan of Aleppo would be surrounded. See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), pg. 215

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fortified their position.<sup>49</sup> The crusaders likely would have been caught still outside the city walls by Kerbogha's army had the atabeg not attempted to first cover his flank by ousting Baldwin from Edessa. Baldwin was in no position to attack Kerbogha but proved able to resist him defensively, resulting in a three week grace period for the Crusaders outside Antioch.

It was in this three week period that Bohemond made an arrangement with "a captain"<sup>50</sup> within the city, an Armenian named Firuz.<sup>51</sup> Bohemond made a deal with this man to deliver the city into his hands, a deal which Bohemond kept hidden from the other Crusade leaders. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, Firuz sent word to Bohemond that he was ready to hand over the city. Apparently, Firuz had been hesitant until the previous night when he ascertained that his wife "...was compromised with one of his Turkish colleagues."<sup>52</sup> Firuz urged Bohemond to lead the Crusading army East as a diversion, and then to swing back so that he might enable them to enter the city by stealth. Firuz is said to have secured their passage over the walls and the Crusaders began ascending by way of a ladder, with one Crusader, Fulk of Chartres, leading the others.<sup>53</sup> Bohemond was not

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<sup>49</sup> Thomas Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch* (New York: Boydell Press, 2000), pgs. 24-27

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, pg. 231

<sup>51</sup> I refer to Firuz as an Armenian here to follow Runciman, but the chronicles do not agree on this point with many referring to him as a Turk and some listing no race at all. See Ibid, pg. 231

<sup>52</sup> Runciman here includes this detail and as such has become a part of traditional modern histories of the Siege, despite the fact that only one account, that of William of Tyre, includes this detail. See Ibid, pgs. 233, 235

<sup>53</sup> Not to be confused with Fulcher of Chartres, who was in Edessa with his lord Baldwin. Only one eye-witness account mentions a Fulk of Chartres as the first Crusader to enter Antioch, this is the version of Raymond d'Aguilers. See Steven

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among them, to the dismay and panic of Firuz. A servant was sent to fetch him and he then ascended the ladder with the rest. The ladder soon broke however, leaving the Crusaders already inside the city to open gates and allow the rest inside. When this was done, the Crusaders rushed into Antioch, and Yaghi-Siyan's son gathered his men in the Citadel above the city. Bohemond tried and failed to secure this position, but the Turks inside were entrenched and would remain so during the Crusaders' stay in that city. Yaghi-Siyan panicked and fled the city but was found and decapitated by Armenian peasants who sold his head, sword belt, and scabbard to the Franks.

The Crusaders' victory in securing the city was short-lived however, and soon afterwards Kerbogha's army had arrived, trapping them in the city. Shams ad-Daula, Yaghi-Siyan's son, sent word from the Citadel to Kerbogha, seeking his direct aid. Kerbogha insisted that the Citadel be put into his hands despite Shams' pleading that it remain in his possession until the Crusaders were routed.<sup>54</sup> Desperation brought on by starvation and impending fear

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Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), pg. 233 and Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*. Trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pg. 205

<sup>54</sup> Runciman presents this exchange thusly, however its' details are cobbled together from several accounts. Shams' entreaties to Kerbogha to retain the citadel are taken from the Gesta's portrayal of a particular scene in which Shams personally goes to Kerbogha's encampment and is urged to hand over the city in payment for Kerbogha's aid. See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) pg. 237 and Anonymous, *Gesta*

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of death at the hands of Kerbogha's army, gripped the beleaguered army. Runciman calls it "an atmosphere in which dreams and visions thrived..." For on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, the Crusade leaders Count Raymond and Adhemar were visited by one Peter Bartholomew, claiming holy visions of St. Andrew. In these visions, Bartholomew claimed to have received several divine commands for the Crusading army. One was that Adhemar should be reproached for his ineptitude as a shepherd of God's flock, another was that Count Raymond of St. Gilles should be granted the Holy Lance, which the visions claimed could be found under the Cathedral of St. Peter.<sup>55</sup> Adhemar, a learned and ranking clergyman, was intensely skeptical of the lowly, at least partially illiterate Bartholomew. Count Raymond on the other hand, eagerly took up the search for the Lance, and put Bartholomew into the care of his chaplain, Raymond d'Aguilers. A cleric named Stephen also came forward, reporting visions of Christ. Adhemar was more accepting of these visions as they came from a reputable churchman. The Bishop then, in a well-timed play for morale based on the popularity of this new vision, brought the Crusade leaders together and they swore an oath of

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*Francorum*, trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pgs. 207-208

<sup>55</sup> Many of the specific details of Bartholomew's visions here are taken from Raymond d'Aguilers, the most credulous of Bartholomew and the Lance. It is likely not a coincidence that this account, written afterwards with the intent of defending the Lance's authenticity and Count Raymond's claim to it, scolds Bishop Adhemar, the Lance's and Bartholomew's most fervent skeptic. See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) pg. 242 and Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*. Trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pg. 216

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faithfulness to the Crusade's cause and promised to never desert.<sup>56</sup> The crusading army rejoiced and on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June, Bartholomew was brought to the Cathedral in the company of other Crusade leaders and nobles who began excavating for the Lance. Nothing was discovered until Bartholomew himself entered the pit and, after leading the surrounding witnesses in prayer, produced a piece of metal from the earth which he claimed to be the tip of the Lance.<sup>57</sup> Though many later expressed their disbelief, for the moment the Crusading army was overjoyed and morale was bolstered throughout the city.

The Crusaders, now fortified by what they saw as renewed divine favor for their cause, were more prepared for battle than they had been since capturing the city. Bartholomew continued to come forward with visions of St. Andrew, urging the Crusading army to attack Kerbogha's army directly. He also called for a fast of five days, despite the fact that the Crusaders were already starving. The Crusade leaders already recognized the need for a direct assault on Kerbogha's encampment and were aware of the many problems the atabeg of Mosul was having with his allies.<sup>58</sup> Peter the Hermit was sent to lead an embassy to Kerbogha's camp in an attempt to call off the siege. The exact proceedings of these negotiations are lost to us and Runciman calls the dialogue present in the chronicles "clearly

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<sup>56</sup> See Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2005)

<sup>57</sup> For a thorough treatment of the episode of the Lance at Antioch, see Colin Morris, "Policy and Visions: The Case of the Holy Lance at Antioch," in *War and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of J.O. Prestwich* ed. John Gillingham and J.C. Holt (Woodbridge, 1984), pgs. 33-45.

<sup>58</sup> See Kenneth Setton, *History of the Crusades, vol. 1* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1969-1989), pgs. 322-323

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fictional.”<sup>59</sup> The negotiations were ultimately unsuccessful and the Crusaders were then organized into six armies divided by regional origin and each led by a different Crusade leader.<sup>60</sup> Raymond d’Aguilers is said to have carried the Lance into battle while Count Raymond, being very ill, stayed behind with a contingent of men to guard the Citadel which was still occupied by Turks. Though they were starving and many of them had been deprived of horses, their renewed faith and zeal drove them on across the bridge to battle.<sup>61</sup> Kerbogha, who wished for the opportunity to destroy the entire Crusading army, did not engage them on the Bridge and instead attempted to draw them all out at once. This was a grave error as the Crusaders’ attacked with unexpected success. They were further bolstered by visions of an army of holy knights led by famed military saints.<sup>62</sup> During the Crusaders’ attack, many of Kerbogha’s allies, already fearing Kerbogha’s formidable power should he be victorious and secure the city, abandoned him. This sparked panic among the Turks and in turn, more desertions. The battle raged on until the Turks had all either been killed or had fled. Kerbogha

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<sup>59</sup> See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), pg. 247

<sup>60</sup> See Ronald Finucane, *Soldiers of the Faith: Crusaders and Moslems at War* (Irvine, CA: Phoenix Press, 2005).

<sup>61</sup> These details are here compiled into narrative form, much as they are in Runciman’s tradition, from *The Gesta Francorum*, Fulcher of Chartres, Raymond d’Aguilers and Albert of Aix. See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), pgs. 246-248, see footnote to pg. 247.

<sup>62</sup> SS. George, Mercurius and Demetrius. See Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum*, trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pg. 223.

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managed to escape but his reputation was ruined. As Runciman puts it; "The Crusaders' victory was unexpected but complete."<sup>63</sup>

### **Episodes from the Chronicles**

The following section will highlight individual episodes from the Siege within the chronicles that stand out in historical narrative and are either particularly revealing of their chronicler's perspective or are significant to the overall battle, and show how these events are presented between the *Gesta*, Fulcher's *Chronicle* and by Raymond d'Aguilers. The first episode to be examined stands out because it takes place prior to the Crusaders being trapped in the city. Its inclusion is justified however, because of its importance to the mindset of the Crusading army and for what it can reveal about its authors. The subsequent episodes all take place either during Kerbogha's siege or during the battle in which the Crusaders were finally victorious over him.

### **Firuz as Glorious Traitor and the Capture of Antioch**

When it comes to the Crusaders capture of Antioch, after many long months of siege, the chronicles report the specifics in a variety of ways. However, all accounts agree on roughly one point. That the city was secured with the help of a Turk or an Armenian<sup>64</sup> alternately called Pirus, Firuz, Firouz, and several others. The

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<sup>63</sup> Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), pg. 249

<sup>64</sup> Latin chronicles say he was a Turk, while Arabic chronicles usually present him as an Armenian. See Robert Levine, "The Pious Traitor: The Man Who Betrayed Antioch," *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* XXXIII (1988), pgs. 59-80



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accounts can't seem to agree on more about this mysterious figure other than that he was in charge of several of Antioch's towers and most accounts list his profession as a an armorer, specifically a cuirass maker.<sup>65</sup> All other details about him, including his motivations for betraying the city to the Crusaders, vary greatly from account to account. It is generally accepted however that this man's aid was secured by Bohemond who used it as his trump card in securing rights to the city from the other Crusade leaders. However, given the great importance of the city's capture as a part of a Crusade considered by many to be a sacred and miraculous undertaking, deceit and treachery (even treachery beneficial to the Crusaders) did not sit well with the chroniclers as the means by which this victory was attained.<sup>66</sup> Because of this, they set out to explain Firuz's actions and justify his motivations in a number of ways, ultimately forging out of him a heroic Christian figure in touch with the righteousness of the Crusaders' cause, rather than a self-interested traitor who betrayed an entire city and its inhabitants to bloody slaughter at the hands of a conquering army.<sup>67</sup>

Fulcher of Chartres does not introduce Firuz by name, instead referring to him only as "a certain Turk." However, his introduction

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<sup>65</sup> Most accounts present him as such with some, chiefly the Arabic chronicles, presenting him as a part of a guild of cuirass-makers in the city, the Beni Zarra or, in Latin, *fili loricatoris*. See Kenneth Setton, *History of the Crusades, vol. 1* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1969-1989), footnote to pg. 318

<sup>66</sup> For a complete discussion of Firuz as a character in the chronicles, see Robert Levine, "The Pious Traitor: The Man Who Betrayed Antioch," *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* XXXIII (1988), pgs. 59-80

<sup>67</sup> This is precisely how Firuz is presented in the Arabic chronicles. See Ali ibn al-Athir, *The Complete History*, trans. Francesco Gabrieli in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), pg. 230, Firuz is there called Ruzbih.

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to his role in securing the city is much more telling. Beginning his section on Antioch's surrender, Fulcher writes, "When it pleased God that the labor of His people should be consummated, perhaps pleased by the prayers of those who daily poured out supplications and entreaties to Him, out of His compassion He granted that through a fraud of the Turks the city be returned to the Christians in a secret surrender. Hear, therefore, of a fraud, and yet not a fraud."<sup>68</sup> Fulcher then goes on to present Firuz as having been a divinely predestined plant for God's army all along, writing that he was "...chosen beforehand by His Grace". He persists in this direction by reporting that Firuz experienced three holy visions of Christ. In the first of these, Christ addresses Firuz by saying "Arise, thou who sleepest! I command thee to return the city to the Christians." According to Fulcher, Firuz kept silent about this vision until a second one appeared to him, again with Christ as the speaking figure. Firuz was scorned by the ruler of Antioch when he spoke of this and when the third vision appeared to him, he was ready to negotiate with the Crusaders. Fulcher, though not present for these events personally, would have been aware by the time he wrote his account of the reports of Bohemond's involvement (some would say treachery) in securing Firuz's aid but does not include any mention of it in his account. Fulcher here has no reason to defend Bohemond, and probably excludes this from his account as it would take away from his favorable presentation of Firuz. This instance indicates the need felt by Fulcher and echoed by others to defend Firuz as a character, and to keep political intrigue out of the issue. Elements of the truth show through however as Fulcher does report that Firuz gave his son to Bohemond as a hostage and also says that Bohemond

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<sup>68</sup> Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana* trans. Martha McGinty in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), pg. 75

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was the first of the Crusade leaders that Firuz “persuaded” to accept his aid. According to Fulcher, Firuz helped some twenty men into the city by way of a ladder, these men then opened a gate to allow the rest of the army into the city. Fulcher reports that Bohemond’s standard flew over the city and goes on to describe a grisly scene of indiscriminate slaughter and pillage. He writes that Aoxian (Yaghi-Siyan), the emir of Antioch, was beheaded by “...a certain rustic Armenian” and that the head was brought to the Franks.<sup>69</sup>

The *Gesta*, which refers to Firuz as Pirus, takes a much different approach to justifying that man’s actions and character. The Anonymous does not report him as a cuirass-maker and instead inappropriately calls him an emir, probably merely to indicate that he was a prince or noble on equal standing with Bohemond. In the *Gesta*, rather than omit Pirus’ connection to Bohemond and rely on religious inspiration to explain his actions, The Anonymous claims that his motivation was a sincere friendship between he and Bohemond.. Bohemond is said to have offered him safety, Christianity, as well as other gifts in exchange for aid in securing the city. Pirus is said to have accepted this offer and promised to deliver the city to him at whatever time he desires. According to the *Gesta*, Bohemond then went to the other Crusade leaders with a proposition. This was that should any of them prove able to secure the city and end the suffering of their army, by any means, then that man should be granted possession of the city. The other leaders are said to have refused this offer at first, but reconsidered when they learned of an approaching Turkish army. In this version, Bohemond beseeches Pirus for aid who, like in Fulcher’s *Chronicle*, allows them to scale the walls by way of a ladder.

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid, pgs. 74-76.

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In an interesting episode, The Anonymous includes an event most unflattering to his favored lord, Bohemond. In this account, when the first detachment of Crusaders scaled the ladder, Bohemond was not among them and Pirus grows frightened, exclaiming, "*Micro Francos echome*" ("There are few Franks here!") and then sarcastically, "Where is that fierce Bohemond, that unconquered knight?" At which point a Longobard servant was sent down to retrieve him. This servant reportedly questions him, "Why do you stand here, illustrious man? Why have you come hither? Behold, we already hold three towers!"<sup>70</sup> The use of the Greek, "*Micro Francos echome*" is the only instance in the whole of the *Gesta* in which The Anonymous allows someone to appear speaking in un-translated language.<sup>71</sup> Emily Albu in *The Normans in their Histories* suggests that this passage could have either been heard by the author from eye-witnesses or was perhaps a rumor circulating around the camp to challenge Bohemond's position.<sup>72</sup> It then reports that Bohemond gladly went to the ladder, which lifted the morale of those already in the towers. The *Gesta* reports that the ladder soon broke but that the rest were let in by through a small gate. In this account, the gate was not opened by Crusaders inside the city, but instead was found and broken into by men positioned to climb the ladder. When discussing breaking into the gate, the Anonymous switches to the first person and seems to be describing it as an event he was personally present for. He goes on to report the slaughter of the Saracens and Turks at the hands of the Crusaders and, like Fulcher, mentions Antioch's

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<sup>70</sup> These quotations are all found in the *Gesta*, see Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum*, trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pg. 204

<sup>71</sup> See Emily Albu, *The Normans in their Histories: Propaganda, Myth and Subversion* (New York: Boydell Press, 2001), pgs. 158-159

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 159

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ruler's flight and death in much the same way. In this version, Cassianus (Yaghi-Siyan or Fulcher's Aoxian) fled on horseback and took refuge in a house in the mountains. Here he was recognized by either Syrians or Armenians and beheaded. The Anonymous reports that his head was returned to the Franks and that his sword belt and scabbard were sold for sixty besants.<sup>73</sup> The *Gesta* leaves us with this vision of the city after its conquest, "All the squares of the city were already everywhere full of the corpses of the dead, so that no one could endure it there for the excessive stench. No one could go along a street of the city except over the bodies of the dead."<sup>74</sup>

Where Fulcher attempted a justification of Firuz through divine inspiration, and The Anonymous through friendship and honorable behavior, Raymond d'Aguilers deals with this difficulty through vagueness alone. Firuz is not mentioned by name and the only mention of him at all is when d'Aguilers reports that Bohemond had announced that "one of the converted" would deliver the city into their hands.<sup>75</sup> Any mention of Bohemond's negotiations with the other Crusade leaders for control over the city is here omitted. This is in keeping with d'Aguilers' style, who never shows too much concern for the politics of the Crusade army. In this account, d'Aguilers also expresses knowledge of a coming Turkish relief force

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<sup>73</sup> See Krey's section on the Crusaders and foreign coins, August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), pgs 17-18.

<sup>74</sup> Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum*, trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pg. 205

<sup>75</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem* trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), pg. 205

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which caused problems for morale and sparked desertions.<sup>76</sup> Upon waiting for night watch to pass upon the walls, they ascended a ladder into the city. D'Aguilers here agrees with The Anonymous that the ladder broke and a small gate had to be used to gain entrance to the city. In this account, the gate is opened by Crusaders who had previously scaled the walls using the ladder. In a manner similar to the other chroniclers, d'Aguilers describes a scene of slaughter within the city. Also like the other accounts, d'Aguilers reports that Yaghi-Siyan (here called Gracianus) was beheaded by Armenian peasants in the mountains as he attempted to flee. It also reports that his head was returned to the Franks for reward. At this, d'Aguilers expresses "This, I believe, was done by the ineffable disposition of God, that he who had caused many men of this same race to be beheaded should be deprived of his head by them."<sup>77</sup>

### **Kerbogha's Arrival**

It is generally understood that after the victory by the Crusaders and their conquest of the city, Kerbogha, the atabeg, or regent, of Mosul, appeared with an army surrounding the city, and after a failed negotiation attempt by the Crusaders, he began his siege of the city. The details of these events can be found in the several accounts which have emerged about the battle. After the city had been stormed by the Crusading army under rallying cries of "God wills it! God wills it!", and the following ransacking of the city, Fulcher's Chronicle tells us of the army of "Corbagath" (Kiwam ed-

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid, pg. 205. For more detailed information on desertions, see Conor Kostick, "Courage and Cowardice on the First Crusade" *War in History* vol. 20 (January 2013) pgs. 32-49

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, pg. 206

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Daula Kerbogha<sup>78</sup>) surrounding the city the day after the Crusader's victory, a force of nearly sixty thousand according to him. The besieged Crusaders were in an imperiled and fearful state after witnessing the arrival of this army due to their fear of punishment for their sins, as Fulcher says they had laid with many "unlawful women" in the city. The army is said to have assaulted the city by way of a cliff-top fort and "the Franks, shut in, remained unbelievably anxious."<sup>79</sup> Fulcher does not mention that this great anxiety was in large part due to a meteor which according to some accounts, was simply seen, and according to others, actually fell from the sky. This account is far less detailed at this point than the following accounts of the *Gesta* and Raymond d'Aguilers.<sup>80</sup>

According to the *Gesta* version, in which Kerbogha is known as "Curbara", the Emir of Antioch, Cassianus (Yaghi-Siyan or Aoxian in Fulcher's Chronicle), had sent him a message while being besieged by the Crusaders, seeking aid and promising the city in return.<sup>81</sup> However, by the time he arrived, the city was already in Crusader

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<sup>78</sup> The spelling of Kerbogha's name changes between different accounts, the generally agreed upon spelling and full name listed here is from Peters. See information on Kerbogha's name. Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1971), pgs. 77, 187

<sup>79</sup> Fulcher does not mention that this great anxiety was in large part due to a meteor which according to some accounts, was simply seen, and according to others, actually fell from the sky. See Kenneth Setton, *History of the Crusades* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1989) and Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1971), pg. 77

<sup>80</sup> The details of Fulcher's account here taken from: Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana* trans. Martha McGinty in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1971), pg. 77

<sup>81</sup> For the full *Gesta* account of this and the following exchanges, see August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921) pgs. 163-168

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hands and he was met by the weeping son of the slain Cassianus (Yaghi-Siyan), begging for aid against the Crusaders. Kerbogha then demands the city in return and Sensadulus (Shams ad-Daula), the son of Cassianus, offers it to him upon his victory over the Crusaders. Kerbogha was not pleased by this however and demanded the city first. Sensadulus, in his desperate state, agreed. This sort of story is typical of the *Gesta* and reflects that author's unique perspective as a simple soldier, privy to the camp stories and gossip of the army.<sup>82</sup> Kerbogha, is then said to have gathered rusted and pitiful weapons from nearby peasants, and for rallying effect, claimed before his troops that these were the pathetic weapons with which the Christians have come to conquer with. Interestingly, the *Gesta* account even claims that as Kerbogha was preparing for battle, his mother traveled from Aleppo to beseech him not to go to war with the Christians, claiming that their god protects them and he would be punished for attacking them. Kerbogha, though reportedly troubled by his mother's words, nevertheless decided to go to war with the Christians at Antioch. Though usually written off as more "camp gossip", this passage stands out for perspective and revelations about the attitudes toward women and non-Christians. As Natasha Hodgson points out in *Women Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative*, "Although crusade narratives occasionally portray women attempting to dissuade men from fighting, there are no distinct literary precedents for a Turkish woman attempting to prevent her son from fighting on the basis of

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<sup>82</sup> See Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume I: The First Crusade and the Foundations of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) pgs. 246-247 and John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pgs. 377-378.



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Christian supremacy.”<sup>83</sup> Hodgson also suggests that this passage’s distinct style indicates that is in fact a later interpolation added by another author entirely.<sup>84</sup>

The version of Raymond d’Aguilers focuses on the Christian perspective and, much like the account of Fulcher of Chartres, blames the condition of the Crusaders on their own sins after taking the city. He makes mention of the Christians partaking of great feasts and indulging in the pleasures of the pagans. He ties this to the fate of the Crusaders by saying that, “And so it was brought about that they who by the mercy of God had so long besieged the Turks in Antioch were through His disposition in turn besieged by the Turks”. He goes on to tell us that the upper fortress of Antioch, or the citadel, was still held by the enemy. Kerbogha, (in this account he is referred to as “Corbaga”) is said to have assembled his forces two miles from the city and then proceeded to march to the bridge of Antioch, this assault however, was repulsed by the Crusaders. It is then said that the Turks launched another attack on the city on the third day and that they attacked with incredible violence and were prepared to destroy the walls and sack the city until Raymond claims they were mysteriously stricken with terror and fled. He says that at a distance from the city they regained their senses and attacked yet again, only to once again be mysteriously stricken with fear, and flee. Raymond attributes these events to the power and influence of God. He then says that on the next day, the Turks returned with siege weapons and assaulted the city by way of the gate and the upper

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<sup>83</sup> Natasha Hodgson, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (New York: Boydell Press, 2007) pg. 190

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, footnote to pg. 190.

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fortress, forcing the Crusaders to fight on two fronts. He tells us that only nightfall brought an end to the combat.<sup>85</sup>

### **The Finding of the Lance**

As the previous accounts suggest, this fighting continued for several days and left the Crusaders in a most beleaguered state, facing starvation, exhaustion and desertions by their own,<sup>86</sup> beginning with the flight of Count Stephen of Blois the day before Crusaders took Antioch.<sup>87</sup> The first major change in events during the siege happened on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, when a man of no fame named Peter Bartholomew begins making claims that he has had visions of St. Andrew, revealing to him the location of the Holy Lance. Doubted by many including the papal legate, Adhemar, he was nonetheless believed by Count Raymond of St. Gilles. The events surrounding this are some of the most varied between the different accounts.

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<sup>85</sup> The details of d'Aguilers' account here taken from: Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*. Trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pgs. 211-213

<sup>86</sup> For a detailed look at how abuses of Crusade ideals, including the failure to fulfill vows or the shame associated with desertion, appeared in contemporary criticism of the Crusades. See Elizabeth Siberry, *Criticism of Crusading* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985)

<sup>87</sup> Fulcher's along with other accounts ignore the fact that Count Stephen later returned in 1101 and was martyred. For information on this departure see James Brundage, "An Errant Crusader: Stephen of Blois" *Traditio* 16 (1960), pgs. 380-395 and Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana* trans. Martha McGinty in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1971), pgs. 74, 187.

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The overview of these events is best described in the Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres. Fulcher's distance from this situation, being in Edessa, robs him of the ability to color his account of these events with rich detail but thankfully also puts distance between himself and the hysteria that gripped the Crusaders while under siege. The Chronicle states that "After the city was taken, it happened that a Lance was found by a certain man..." leaving out even the name of the finder.<sup>88</sup> Fulcher writes that this man was visited by St. Andrew and instructed to bring this news to the Bishop of Puy (Adhemar, the papal legate) and to Count Raymond. It is said that though Raymond was hopeful of the its authenticity, the Bishop was highly skeptical. Fulcher also states, agreeing with the other accounts, that the find led to a great boost in morale in the Crusaders, restoring their will to fight and their enthusiasm. Fulcher goes on to say that despite this, many still questioned the legitimacy of the find and the honesty of the man who found it, claiming that it could have been planted there by him. And so Fulcher tells us that the man who found the lance was put to a trial by fire, voluntarily, and that the Crusaders built a great pyre for the man to walk through. Though all accounts speak of the Peter's trial, only Fulcher places it here rather than its actual date in 1099 in an attempt to conclude the issue.<sup>89</sup> This account gives a good overview of the

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<sup>88</sup> This unnamed figure is Peter Bartholomew. See Martha McGinty, *Fulcher of Chartres: Chronicle of the First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1941) and Peters, pg. 76

<sup>89</sup> Edward Peters, *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), footnote to pg. 76.

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events regarding the finding of the lance, but of course, more is desired.<sup>90</sup>

The *Gesta* version tells us that a priest first goes before Adhemar and Count Raymond, telling them of a vision he has had of Jesus Christ and St. Mary. In his vision, he reports that Jesus revealed himself to him. He says that Jesus told him that he has guided the Crusading army to this point and kept them safe but now chastises him for the conduct of the Crusaders saying "...and lo! You are working much evil pleasure with Christian and depraved pagan women, whereof a stench beyond measure arises unto heaven". The priest then tells them that St. Peter and the Virgin Mary fall at the feet of Jesus and beg him to aid the Crusaders in their hardship. Jesus then tells him that he will send aid in five days. The priest then begs Adhemar and the others to believe him, offering to throw himself from the tower as a trial of his honesty, saying to believe him if God protects him and he is unharmed, and to slay him if he suffers any injury. This was likely added to anticipate the trial of Peter Bartholomew. Then Adhemar had him swear an oath on the gospel and the cross. It is then said that the armies rejoiced because the leaders took a valiant oath never to flee from battle. The *Gesta* version then tells us of the coming of Peter Bartholomew, and that he reported visions of St. Andrew, revealing to him the location of the Holy Lance. The *Gesta* version is here framing this to be the predicted aid that was to come from Christ in five days. This version then reports that Peter was too afraid to reveal his vision to anyone, fearing that it would be unbelievable to them, at which point, St. Andrew again appears and takes him to the very spot where the

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<sup>90</sup> The details of Fulcher's account here taken from: Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana* trans. Martha McGinty in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1971), pgs. 76-78

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Lance is to be found and tells him that none who hold the Lance will ever be overcome in battle. Peter then tells the Crusaders who at first are too fearful to believe him but are convinced as Peter delivers to them the words of St. Andrew, echoing the words of Christ in the priest's vision. It is then written that they proceed to the Cathedral of St. Peter and dig from morning until evening until Peter, like in the Fulcher's Chronicle, discovers the Lance himself, leading to rejoicing by all throughout the city.<sup>91</sup>

The account of Raymond d'Aguilers on the finding of the Holy Lance is by far the longest and most detailed and gives us the most personal narrative of the actions and visions of Peter Bartholomew. This account's intimacy with Bartholomew and his visions probably comes from the fact that d'Aguilers was assigned by his lord, the Count of Toulouse, to guard Bartholomew personally. However, as discussed above, this account's version is by far the most credulous and mystical. Its presentation of events is a blatant defense of the Lance retroactively contrived in response to Bartholomew's failed Ordeal and the Antiochene Lance's general denunciation. D'Aguilers' account is a classic case of the source most familiar with an issue also having the most cause to obscure it. It greatly expands upon the idea presented in the *Gesta* version that Peter was at first too afraid to present his ideas to the Crusaders. Raymond begins straightaway telling of a poor peasant, chosen by god, who would come to deliver the Crusaders from their misery. It is then told from the perspective of Peter reporting his visions to Count Raymond and Adhemar. He says that Peter was first visited by a vision of two men on the night of an earthquake, while the

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<sup>91</sup> The details of The Gesta appearing here from: Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum*, trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pgs. 213-215.

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Crusaders were laying siege to the city. He says that the older one spoke to him, revealing himself to be St. Andrew the Apostle, and that he asked him to bring together Count Raymond, Ademar, and Peter Raymond of Hautpoul, and to ask them why the Bishop has not preached and blessed the Crusaders daily, saying that it would help them if he did. He then says "Come and I will show thee the Lance of our father, Jesus Christ, which thou shalt give to the Count. For God has granted it to him ever since he was born". The importance of this passage is twofold. First, it issues a not-so subtle criticism of Adhemar, one of the Lance's and Bartholomew's staunchest critics. Second, d'Aguilers is here able to offer a defense of his lord's claim to the Lance. The vision of St. Andrew then leads him through the city, bringing him to the Cathedral of St. Peter. Then, asking him to wait by a column, the vision sinks into the earth and retrieves the Lance, handing it to Peter Bartholomew before replacing it, who weeps and swears he will bring it to the Count. However, Peter was too afraid to approach Count Raymond and Adhemar. He feared approaching them because of his condition of poverty, not out of fear of disbelief like the previous account. After reporting his failure in another vision, St. Andrew comforted him saying to him how great his purpose his and how much he is beloved by God and even goes so far as to say that "...the saints, already at rest, fore-knowing the grace of Divine arrangements, wished that they were in the flesh and struggling along with you". He goes on to tell him that like gold is greater than silver in value, he, Peter Bartholomew, is greater in "favor and rewards" than all men before or after him. The vision then vanished and Peter was left with a great illness which he felt would be the death of him. However, d'Aguilers writes that he then considered that the illness was just since he disobeyed the command of the Apostle. He then returned to Antioch but was once again too afraid to approach Count

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Raymond and Adhemar, fearing harm will come to him and that they would accuse him of doing this only for food. Later, on Palm Sunday, while in a tent with William Peter, the same vision of the two men appeared to him yet again and told him not to fear any harm, and also informed him to tell Count Raymond to cross the river Jordan by boat, and once he was on the other side, to be sprinkled by water from the river. This version reports that William Peter could hear this discourse, but could not see the vision. It was then said that Peter returned to the city but could not gather the leaders together, and so went with a group to take a ship to Cyprus for supplies. This caused St. Andrew to appear to him again and storms forced them to turn back. After several attempts, Peter was again stricken with a terrible illness, finally convincing him to return to Antioch and follow the command of the Apostle. Like the other versions, this version also agrees that Adhemar didn't believe him, and that Count Raymond did,<sup>92</sup> and that the Count had him guarded by his chaplain, Raymond d'Aguilers, the writer of this account.<sup>93</sup> After this, not before it like in the *Gesta*, a priest appears who has a vision of Jesus Christ himself. In this account, the priest is named as Stephen. It is recorded that Stephen was greatly distressed and weeping because he felt that he and his companions were about to meet their deaths because he had heard a rumor that the Turks had

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<sup>92</sup> All referenced versions of these events agree on the point that Adhemar was suspicious but Count Raymond either believed Peter or was very hopeful in his sincerity. See Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1971), Pgs. 76-77, 215-221

<sup>93</sup> d'Aguilers leaves out the politics of the Crusade leaders surrounding the Lance's discovery, focusing instead on the divine significance of it's discovery. For a detailed discussion of what is here omitted, see Colin Morris, "Policy and Visions: The Case of the Holy Lance at Antioch," in *War and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of J.O. Prestwich* ed. John Gillingham and J.C. Holt (Woodbridge, 1984), pgs. 33-45.

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already entered the city and that the Crusaders were retreating. Because of this fear, he went into the church of the Blessed Mary and began to pray, at which point a man appeared before him and asked him who are the people who have entered the city, to which Stephen told him that they are Christians. Interestingly, the vision asks him "What kind of Christians", to which Stephen replies "Christians who believe that Christ was born of a Virgin and suffered on the Cross, died, and was buried, and that He arose on the third day and ascended into heaven."<sup>94</sup> Here, much like the event described in the *Gesta* version, the vision asked Stephen if he knows who he is, after Stephen told him that he does not, the vision asked him to look closely, at which point a shining cross appeared on his head. Stephen then said that his people believe that such a sign is associated with their Lord Jesus Christ. To this the vision answered that he is indeed Jesus Christ. He then asked Stephen who is the lord of the Christian army, to which Stephen answered that the leaders of the army do not have one lord but that they do "put trust in the Bishop", who we know to be Adhemar, the Bishop of Puy.<sup>95</sup> To this Jesus told him that the army had not been under his protection due to their sins after taking the city, much like in the account of Fulcher and the *Gesta*. Then Stephen attempted to wake his companion, but the visions disappeared. It is then said that Stephen assembled before the leaders the next day and swore upon the cross that what he said was true. And here, this account agrees with the account of the *Gesta* in that Stephen offers to pass through fire or throw himself from the tower to prove his honesty. And again, here the leaders swear that

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<sup>94</sup> See Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986)

<sup>95</sup> Often referred to throughout the various accounts as simply "the Bishop" or "The Bishop of Puy" See Kenneth Setton, *History of the Crusades* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1989)



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they will never flee from battle, to the great joy of the people, though this account reveals why this oath was so important to them, saying that the people of the city believed that the leaders all wanted to flee the city and indeed many had already fled the previous night. Here it is recorded that a star appeared over their camp and split into three parts, and began to fall into the camp of the Turks. Then, waiting for the fifth day, many set out for the Cathedral of St. Peter and twelve men began to dig for the lance. It is recorded that among those twelve were the Bishop of Orange, Count Raymond, Raymond's chaplain, Raymond d'Aguilers, Pontius of Balazun<sup>96</sup>, and Feraldus of Thouars. This is the only account here represented that speaks of a group digging for the Lance. This tradition persists in most later Crusade narratives however. The group dug from morning until evening at first to no avail, but as some would leave, more would come to dig until finally Peter Bartholomew asked them to join him in prayer and they began to pray to the Lord to show them his Lance. Shortly after this, it is recorded that Bartholomew personally produced a piece of metal, claiming it to be the Lance-head. Raymond d'Aguilers claims in his account to have personally kissed it. It is then written that the city rejoiced and celebrated. It is further recorded that St. Andrew and Jesus Christ appeared to the finder of the lance and told him that the finding of the lance was to be celebrated as a holy day each year and gave to him the liturgy to be performed on that day.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Pontius was originally to be a co-writer of d'Aguilers' *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem* but died later at Archas. See August Krey, *The First Crusade: Accounts of Eye-witnesses and Participants* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1921), pg. 8

<sup>97</sup> The details of d'Aguilers' account here taken from: Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*. Trans. August Krey in Edward Peters,

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### The Crusaders Break Free

After all these events, from the suffering of the Crusaders to the supposed finding of the Holy Lance, and the boost to morale that this brought, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, 1098, the Crusaders would ride out from the gates of the city. It is generally understood that Raymond or his chaplain (d'Aguilers) held the relic thought to be the Holy Lance and that after a fierce battle, many of Kerbogha's emirs fled and the army besieging Antioch was routed. The various accounts record these events in a few different ways. The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres is the most brief and heavily attributes the victory by the Crusaders to the aid of God while painting the whole matter as a victory of Christianity over paganism. He writes that Hugh the Great, Robert of Normandy and the Count of Flanders were in the front line, Duke Godfrey with the Lotharingians and the Germans were in the second, behind them he says "...marched the Bishop of Puy and the people of Count Raymond, Gascons and Provençals."<sup>98</sup> He also says that Count Raymond stayed behind to personally guard the city. And finally, he writes that Bohemond led the last division. After this charge, Fulcher says that the Turks began to engage in guerrilla tactics and fire arrows but quickly gave into fear and broke into a full retreat. He says that Kerbogha, again, in this account referred to as "Corbagath", himself fled and attributes this to

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*The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pgs. 215-221

<sup>98</sup> Each account generally agrees on this formation of the lines of battle charging forth from the city. See Peters, pgs. 80-81 and August Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants*.

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intervention by God himself overwhelming the “pomp and strength” of the man and forcing him to flee in terror.<sup>99</sup>

In the account of the *Gesta* it is recorded that a message was sent to the Turks asking them why they “assail servants of Christ”. It is said that Peter the Hermit<sup>100</sup>, who brought this message to Kerbogha, telling his “profane assemblage”, that they would be allowed to leave safely and take whatever they wished should they depart quickly. This version records Kerbogha as being insulted by this and making an insult against the Christian God and Christianity. He goes on to write that Kerbogha also said “We have come now even hither because we marveled greatly why the princes and nobles whom you mention call this land theirs, the land we took from an effeminate people.” The “effeminate” people mentioned here are the Greeks and the word choice probably indicates that this passage was either added by the author or represents soldiers’ gossip since the perception of Greeks as un-masculine was a popular facet of the Crusading army.<sup>101</sup> Kerbogha is then recorded to have told the messengers that if their leaders become entirely Turkish and renounce their god that they will be given the city of Antioch and

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<sup>99</sup> The details of Fulcher’s account here taken from: Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana* trans. Martha McGinty in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1971), pgs. 78-81

<sup>100</sup> Peter the Hermit, famed for his preaching of the First Crusade in Europe, is presented differently between the chronicles. He had previously attempted to desert and failed, to his shame and loss of standing. His selection as emissary to Kerbogha’s camp shows his reputation was beginning to recover. See Colin Morris, “Peter the Hermit and the Chroniclers,” in Jonathan Phillips ed., *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), pgs. 21-34

<sup>101</sup> See Marc Carrier, “Perfidious and Effeminate Greeks: the Representations of Byzantine Ceremonial in the Western Chronicles of the Crusades,” *Annuario Dell’Istituto Romeno di Cultura e Ricera Umanistica Venezia*, vol. 4 (2002), pgs. 47-68

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many more, and all will be granted the privileges of knighthood. This is naturally refused by the leaders of the crusading army and they begin to prepare for battle. This account also lists the formation of lines of battle much like the Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, the compilation of the lines is the same as well, but with Adhemar wielding the Holy Lance and the inclusion of Tancred and his army in the fifth line of the army. This account records Kerbogha as initially being glad that the Christians were marching out of the city to do battle, believing them to then be in the heart of his power. But then shortly after seeing the ranks of the Crusaders, he is said to have become frightened and sent word to start a slow retreat. As they retreated, the Turks are said to have divided and sent different divisions at the crusading army from different sides but the crusaders formed new ranks to combat these divisions. This version then records an army bearing white standards and riding white horses riding out of the mountains, it is recorded that this was an army sent by Christ and led by the saints George, Demetrius, and Mercurius.<sup>102</sup> It is then said that the Crusader armies led a holy charge against the Turks that was not even stopped by their setting the grass on fire, and ultimately, defeated the Turkish army and sent them in retreat. In response to this, the citadel which had been in Turkish hands throughout, finally surrendered.<sup>103</sup>

The account of Raymond d'Aguilers begins with its continued tradition of emphasizing the importance of the Lance and holy visions saying that the crusaders had now been told how to carry

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<sup>102</sup> Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1971), pgs. 221-224

<sup>103</sup> The details of The Gesta appearing here from: Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum*, trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pgs. 221-224

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themselves in battle and had been scolded for their conduct after taking the city. He then records the liturgy the Crusaders were to perform in preparing for and fighting in battle, which he again tells us came from St. Andrew through the Bartholomew. He writes that each crusader should give five alms, for the five wounds inflicted on Christ and that they should then begin the battle in the name of God under the battle cry of "God help us!". He goes on to frame this battle in Apocalyptic terms saying that "...those days are at hand which the Lord promised to the Blessed Mary and to His apostles, saying that He would raise up the kingdom of the Christians, and the kingdom of the pagans had been cast down and ground into dust" He also records that, like the *Gesta* version, Peter the Hermit was sent with a message to Kerbogha (referred to as Corbara) asking him to abandon the siege, and was proudly refused. This version also records Count Raymond as staying behind to guard the city, but here he is recorded as having been "deathly ill". Raymond d'Aguilers also writes of the same formation of battle regiments and lines as does the *Gesta* and The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres. Raymond records that Kerbogha was playing chess when an escaped Antiochene Turk named Mirdalin offers to scout the Christian army. He does this and returns saying "These men can be killed, but they cannot be put to flight". He then records that Kerbogha asks if any can be driven back, to which Mirdalin is written to have replied "They will not yield a footstep, even if all the people of the pagans attack them". Kerbogha regardless sends out his men to challenge the Christian armies, at first allowing the Christians out of the gates, hoping to trap them. But then Kerbogha becomes frightened at the sight of the Christians and sends word to them asking for a few Turkish knights to do battle with a few Christian knights of the same number and that the battle would be decided by the winner of this smaller skirmish, the Crusaders refuse and continue their march. This

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account does not make mention of the Turks dividing up their forces and only says the whole of their army retreated before the Crusader armies and finally set fire to the grass to stop them. He goes on to record that as the Crusaders climbed up to the mountain, the Turks attempted to surround them and that the Holy Lance prevented any of them to come to harm. It is generally understood that the standard bearer of Adhemar was slain here, but interestingly, Raymond d'Aguilers simply states that if he was injured, he had given his standard to another and fallen behind. He goes on to record that soon the Turkish army was in full retreat and even the citadel of Antioch had finally surrendered.<sup>104</sup>

### Conclusion

As evidenced by the very complex, often quite different perspectives presented within the documents, the process by which historical narratives are constructed is no simple matter. Each document comes with its own unique challenges for genuine analysis and evaluation of its relative value. Chroniclers who were also eye-witness participants are obviously valuable for their insights, but as this study shows, these eye-witnesses were both severely limited in terms of what they were aware of and often had the most motivation for obscuring the truth. Furthermore, the events of the Crusade share a backdrop of political rivalry and perceived divine significance. Each eye-witness chronicler naturally had their own opinions and biases regarding this which influenced their presentation of events and even served as specific motivations for writing their accounts at

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<sup>104</sup> The details of d'Aguilers' account here taken from: Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*. Trans. August Krey in Edward Peters, *The First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) pgs. 224-228

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all. Of course the most significant challenge to overcome when considering these documents is their dominance over Crusade scholarship. Just as historians today naturally gravitate toward these eye-witness accounts for use in their narratives, chroniclers and historians of posterity were also tempted to adhere to the traditions of events laid out by those who participated in them. At times, like in the case of Bohemond's use of the *Gesta* as propaganda, this historiographical dominance has been intentionally facilitated. The result has been an artificial commonality between most primary source chronicles and histories of the First Crusade built from the undue persistence of perspectives which were often skewed from their inception. This trend has continued on into modern times, leaving the interpretation of these documents and their perspectives' inclusion in historical narratives largely up to the judgment of the individual historian. Further complicating the matter, traditional historians have established fixed traditions based upon these documents' interpretation which in turn come to the next generation as the "normal" account of the First Crusade. There is at present no new information which settles the myriad disputes over which chronicler's account should be given primacy at which point in the story, but relying on one historian's narrative or one chronicler's account is not sufficient to grasp the value of comparative analysis, which this subject absolutely requires.