

**ARTICLES, STUDIES AND DISSERTATIONS**

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**Evolution of the account of Duke Godfrey's deed  
of hewing the enemy through the middle with  
a single blow during the siege of Antioch by  
the First Crusade. A source study**

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**Summary.** The article contains research on the narratives describing the battle of the Bridge Gate (March 6, 1098), which took place during the siege of Antioch by the Crusaders. It focuses on the scene which is the climax of the above-mentioned tale, when the duke Godfrey of Bouillon hews the Turkish warrior through the middle with a single stroke of the sword in a duel on the bridge in front of the city.

The study is divided into three parts. The first one includes views of historians regarding the accounts of hewing the foe through the middle by Godfrey as well as an analysis of the earliest stage of shaping the literary tradition of the studied scene, which in the opinion of the author of the article consists of descriptions created by Crusade participants: Raymond of Aguilers, Peter Tudebode and that included in the chronicle of Albert of Aachen. The second part focuses on the modifications and transformations of the earliest accounts introduced by chroniclers from Capetian France in the first two decades of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The last part is devoted to an analysis of the later versions of the scene and their connection with earlier accounts. Research showed that the most popular and vivid version of the tale was created by Robert the Monk, yet there are clear connections with the earlier versions of the account even in the case of authors writing at the end of 12<sup>th</sup> century and later.

**Keywords:** siege of Antioch, Crusade, Godfrey of Bouillon, chronicle.

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Probably no other event in the history of Middle Ages triggered more abundant 'literary output' within the Latin civilization than the First Crusade. The course of the Crusade and its final success, which was re-conquest of Jerusalem on July 15, 1099, was a phenomenon having such a big impact on the societies of that time that it should be perceived in the category of a breakthrough also in relation to the European culture and literature<sup>1</sup>. Due to the extraordinary wealth of source materials describing struggles of the Crusaders in the Near East between 1097 and 1099<sup>2</sup> it is possible to undertake studies on the process of shaping the memory of Crusade events which quickly became the fundamental element of knightly culture which was being formed back then<sup>3</sup>. The siege of Antioch occupies a special place in the narratives of the events from the years 1097–1099. The Crusaders spent most of their pilgrimage under the walls of that city<sup>4</sup> and it was precisely then that the first narratives came into being in order to commemorate the killed and perpetuate memorable deeds<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> It is worth pointing to the following works which have been published on the subject recently: J. Rubenstein, *Crusade and Apocalypse: History and the Last Days*, 'Quaestiones Medii Aevii Novae' 2016, vol. XXI, pp. 159–188 where the author shows that the Crusade contributed to reconceptualization of Middle Age historiographic literature; on the subject of uniqueness of the wave of works dealing with the Crusade: idem, *What is the Gesta Francorum, and who was Peter Tudebode?*, 'Revue Mabillon' 2005, vol. XVI, p. 201. See also: D. Kempf, *Towards a Textual Archaeology of the First Crusade*, [in:] *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory*, eds M. Bull, D. Kempf, Woodbridge 2014, p. 116, where the author perceived the heyday of historiography in the 12<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the re-conquest of Jerusalem in 1099.

<sup>2</sup> David S. Bachrach argues that sources concerning the First Crusade form the most extended source corpus focused on the same events which came into existence in Latin Middle Ages: D.S. Bachrach, *Lay Confession to Priests in Light of Wartime Practice (1097–1180)*, 'Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique' 2007, vol. CII, p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> The impact of the First Crusade on knightly literature is discussed, for instance, by: H. Glaesener, *La prise d'Antioche en 1098 dans la littérature épique française*, 'Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire' 1940, vol. XIX, pp. 66–85; *Les épopées de la croisade*, eds K.-H. Bender, H. Kleber, Stuttgart 1987; S. Edgington, *Albert of Aachen and the Chansons de Geste*, [in:] *The Crusades and their Sources. Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton*, eds J. France, W.G. Zajac, Ashgate 1998, pp. 23–38; D.A. Trotter, *Medieval French Literature and the Crusades (1100–1300)*, Geneva 1988, p. 280.

<sup>4</sup> The Crusaders reached Antioch on October 20, 1097 yet it was not until March 1, 1099 that the last troops headed for Jerusalem: H. Hagenmeyer, *Chronologie de la première croisade 1094–1100*, Hildesheim 1973, pp. 104, 219; T. Venning, *A Chronology of the Crusades*, Routledge 2015, pp. 35, 41.

<sup>5</sup> See: *Introduction*, [in:] *The Chanson d'Antioche. An Old French Account of the First Crusade*, eds S. Edgington, C. Sweetenham, Ashgate 2011, pp. 1–98;

One of the most important moments in the siege of Antioch was the battle of the Bridge Gate fought on March 6, 1098<sup>6</sup>. In reconstructing the picture of the course of the battle, historians tend to rely on the narrative sources considered to have been written by the First Crusade participants, i.e. above all on the anonymous work entitled *Gesta Francorum*<sup>7</sup> as well as in the chronicle *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*<sup>8</sup> by Raymond of Aguilers, *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere*<sup>9</sup> by Peter Tudebode and *Historia Ierosolimitana*<sup>10</sup> by Albert of Aachen even though its author was not a witness to the events. This collection should be complemented by the letters written under the walls of sieged Antioch which supplement chronicle narratives<sup>11</sup>. Arab<sup>12</sup>, Syrian<sup>13</sup> and Armenian<sup>14</sup> sources may be used to place the events in the Near East context.

The most mysterious element of the account on the battle of the Bridge Gate is the climax scene when the Duke Godfrey strikes the deadly blow to the Muslim opponent: he hews his adversary through the middle with one stroke of the sword, which wrecks fear in the ranks of the enemy and assures triumph of the Crusaders. Within the historiographic literature describing the First Crusade individual authors related Godfrey's deed in a diversified way. Chroniclers supplemented and modified narrative details, extended or shortened the tale and paid attention to different elements of

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*Introduction*, [in:] *The Canso d'Antiocha. An Occitan Epic Chronicle of the First Crusade*, eds C. Sweetenham, L. Paterson, Ashgate 2003, pp. 1–190.

<sup>6</sup> T. Venning, *op. cit.*, p. 36; H. Hagenmeyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 134–137.

<sup>7</sup> *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum. The Deeds of the Franks and the other Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, ed. and transl. R. Hill, New York 1962, pp. 40–41.

<sup>8</sup> *Le 'Liber' de Raymond d'Aguilers*, eds J.H. Hill, L.L. Hill, Paris 1969, pp. 59–61.

<sup>9</sup> Petrus Tudebodus, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, eds J.H. Hill, L.L. Hill, Paris 1977, p. 156.

<sup>10</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana. History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, ed. and transl. S. Edgington, Oxford 2007, pp. 238–247.

<sup>11</sup> *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer, Innsbruck 1901 – particularly important are: *Epistula II Stephani comitis Carnotensis ad Adelam uxorem* (pp. 149–151), *Epistula II Anselmi de Ribodimonte ad Manassem archiepiscopum Remorum* (pp. 156–160), *Epistula cleri et populi Lucensis ad omnes fideles* (pp. 165–166).

<sup>12</sup> *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades. Extracted and translated from the Chronicle of Ibn al-Qalanisi*, transl. H.A.R. Gibb, London 1932, p. 368.

<sup>13</sup> *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, transl. J.-B. Chabot, vol. III, Paris 1905.

<sup>14</sup> *Armenia and the Crusades. The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*, transl. A.E. Dostourian, London 1993, p. 375.

the account. This article presents research into narratives on hewing the enemy through the middle: an analysis of sources in this respect allows to draw conclusions on the mutual relations between individual chronicles and how the account of the battle of the Bridge Gate developed. This analysis corresponds to the stream of research of perceiving the anonymous work entitled *Gesta Francorum* not as the original and most important history of the Crusade, but as a text which represents a reformulation of the earlier account, written or oral.

Nineteenth century authors included the Godfrey's legendary blow in their narratives about the siege of Antioch. For instance, Joseph-François Michaud paid a lot of attention to Godfrey in the description of the battle of the Bridge Gate, mentioning his grand deed<sup>15</sup>. Several dozen years later Heinrich von Sybel perceived the deadly and impressive Godfrey's blow as decisive for the outcome of the battle<sup>16</sup>. Reinhold Röhricht went even further: apart from discussing the events, he made detailed references to source texts which mentioned Godfrey's deed of hewing the enemy through the middle<sup>17</sup>. In his works published after World War II Steven Runciman showed the course of events concluding that Godfrey's deed is a fictional element and is not suitable for analysis in a scientific text<sup>18</sup>. In his military history of the First Crusade published in 1994 John France stressed the leading role of Godfrey in the battle of the Bridge Gate, in which one important moment consisted in hewing the enemy through the middle by the future ruler of Latin Jerusalem<sup>19</sup>. Thomas Asbridge drew attention to the extraordinary density of religious rhetoric in chronicle descriptions of the battle

<sup>15</sup> J.-F. Michaud, *L'histoire de la première croisade*, [in:] *Des Croisades*, vol. I, Paris 1825, pp. 295, 296.

<sup>16</sup> H. von Sybel, *Geschichte des Ersten Kreuzzugs*, Leipzig 1881, pp. 333–335.

<sup>17</sup> R. Röhricht, *Geschichte des Ersten Kreuzzuges*, Innsbruck 1901, p. 124 together with footnote 4.

<sup>18</sup> S. Runciman, *The First Crusade and the Foundation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, [in:] *A History of the Crusades*, vol. I, Cambridge 1951, pp. 226, 227; idem, *The First Crusade: Antioch to Ascalon*, [in:] *A History of the Crusades*, ed. K. Setton, vol. I (*The First Hundred Years*), Wisconsin 1969, pp. 308–343. The legendary deed of Godfrey was also omitted by Jean Flori in his works on the battle of the Bridge Gate: J. Flori, *La Première Croisade. L'occident chrétien contre l'Islam*, Bruxelles 1992, pp. 87, 88; idem, *Bohémond d'Antioche, chevalier d'aventure*, Paris 2007, pp. 149, 150.

<sup>19</sup> J. France, *Victory in the East. Military History of the First Crusade*, Cambridge 1994, pp. 253, 254. The battle of the Bridge Gate was not discussed by Raymond C. Smail, the most important, beside John France, historian of crusading warfare

of the Bridge Gate which militarily did not represent any particular moment during the siege of Antioch yet it became turning point from the viewpoint of the morale of the fighting parties as then the spirit of the defenders was broken and the initiative was irreversibly taken over by the Crusaders, which, according to Asbridge, has not been noticed by Crusade researchers until now. In his extended reflection on the significance of the battle and contents of source materials the London historian did not include any description of Godfrey's legendary blow<sup>20</sup>. In his recently published monograph showing the First Crusade through the prism of apocalyptic threads present in the source material Jay Rubenstein included Godfrey's legendary deed in the description of the events at Antioch, at the same time pointing out that the scene is present in all 'Crusade' chronicles based on *Gesta Francorum*, yet *Gesta Francorum* alone passes over in silence the role of Godfrey in the battle of the Bridge Gate<sup>21</sup>.

The scene showing Godfrey hewing the enemy through the middle at Antioch is the topic of the article by Simon John in which he analysed ten versions of this scene so as to make comparisons with similar motifs present in works from the genre of *chanson de geste*<sup>22</sup>. In his conclusion S. John pointed out that the process of extending the narrative on Godfrey's legendary blow reached its climax in *Chanson d'Antioche*, and even the earliest authors writing accounts of the First Crusade constructed narratives correlated

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in his well-known work: R.C. Smail, *Crusading Warfare 1097-1193*, Cambridge 1956.

<sup>20</sup> T. Asbridge, *The First Crusade. A New History*, London 2005, pp. 189-193 the author, unlike the majority of historians, dated the battle on March 7. Thomas Asbridge also does not mention the discussed scene in a more general synthesis of the history of Crusades: idem, *The Crusades. The War for the Holy Land*, London 2010, pp. 69-70. See also: idem, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, Woodbridge 2000.

<sup>21</sup> J. Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven. The First Crusade and the Quest for Apocalypse*, New York 2011, p. 179, footnote 16. See also: idem, *What is the Gesta Francorum...*, pp. 189, 202.

<sup>22</sup> S. John, *Claruit Ibi Multum Dux Lotharingiae: The Development of the Epic Tradition of Godfrey of Bouillon and the Bisected Muslim*, [in:] *Literature of the Crusades*, eds S.T. Parsons, L.M. Paterson, London 2018, pp. 7-24. Simon John, a researcher from Swansea University, generously shared his research results sending the Author an unpublished text in autumn 2017, for which the Author wished to express his gratitude. The article expanded the research presented here which, not to repeat Simon John's findings, focus on the earliest historiography of the First Crusade.

with the rich oral tradition revolving around the memory of the events between 1096 and 1099<sup>23</sup>.

So as to avoid too extensive and frequent quotations of the source text, the analysis is limited only to the scene in which Godfrey of Bouillon strikes the impressive blow. It is easier to see the authors' invention and transformations which the scene underwent on this small section of the narrative. Presenting the research problem in this way also makes it possible to account for a larger number of works, which is more beneficial from the point of view of the adopted research aim which consists in analysing different versions of the description of Godfrey's deed during the battle of the Bridge Gate and correlations between them. Consequently, there is a tendency to make references in the main text to the source material which is not directly related to the discussed scene rather than quote it.

### **The earliest stage of shaping the account**

The first part of the analysis includes the source material created the earliest, either still during the Crusade or shortly after it. The accounts in the chronicles of Raymond of Aguilers and Peter Tudebode as well as Albert of Aachen are the most basic versions of the account on Godfrey's deed during the battle of the Bridge Gate.

The sequence of events which led to the bloody battle between the Antioch garrison and the Crusaders was triggered by the arrival of a fleet of ships with supplies for the Crusaders to the St Simeon harbour at the beginning of March 1098<sup>24</sup>. Assistance was needed as the forces of the sieging army were substantially weakened. The siege had lasted from October 20, 1097 and was filled with military activities which consisted in constant clashes with the raiding city garrison, exhausting expeditions for supplies to the nearby unknown territory and two major battles with armies coming to the rescue:

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<sup>23</sup> Simon John carries out extensive research into shaping the legend of Godfrey of Bouillon: idem, *Godfrey of Bouillon: Duke of Lower Lotharingia, Ruler of Latin Jerusalem*: the book, representing an extended version of his doctoral dissertation, will be published by Routledge. See also: idem, *Historical Truth and the Miraculous Past: The Use of Oral Evidence in Twelfth-Century Latin Historical Writing on the First Crusade*, 'English Historical Review' 2015, vol. CXXX, pp. 263–301; idem, *Godfrey of Bouillon and the Swan Knight*, [in:] *Crusading and Warfare in the Middle Ages, Realities and Representations. Essays in Honour of John France*, eds S. John, N. Morton, Ashgate 2014, pp. 129–142 where the key role of the legend on the Swan Knight is shown in the process of mythologizing Godfrey of Bouillon.

<sup>24</sup> T. Venning, *op. cit.*, p. 36; H. Hagenmeyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 131–133.

the forces from Damascus were defeated on December 28, and the army of Ridwan of Aleppo on February 9<sup>25</sup>. The fleet of English ships which reached St Simeon on March 4, was very important for the Crusade due to the transported cargo, namely materials enabling to construct fortifications which were to allow to block all the Antioch gates<sup>26</sup>. A strong troop left the camp of the Crusade army and headed for the harbour. It was commanded by two main rivals for the position of the expedition leader, i.e. Bohemond of Taranto and Raymond of Toulouse. When the convoy with the cargo and part of the troops from the ships was coming back to the camp, it was attacked by a strong city garrison troop which had imperceptibly left the city walls in order to organise an ambush. The gambit was successful and the troop of Crusaders was split. Those who had managed to flee and reach the main camp alarmed the rest of the army, while at the same time the commander of the citadel army, seeing the success of his troops, decided to attack the Crusaders. Then new groups of defenders made an attack, leaving the city through the Bridge Gate. It was precisely in the foreground of the gate to which the bridge at the Orontes River led that the battle took place, later forming the framework for the account about the legendary deed of Godfrey of Bouillon<sup>27</sup>.

Raymond of Aguilers wrote that the turning point of the battle was the counterattack of Christian infantry led by a noble knight of Provence called Hisnardus de Gagia<sup>28</sup>. After the counterattack the enemy, seeking ways of escape, headed for the bridge preceding the Bridge Gate. An element which adds to the dramaturgy of the

<sup>25</sup> T. Venning, *op. cit.*, pp. 35, 36; H. Hagenmeyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 115–117, 125–127; J. France, *op. cit.*, pp. 237–239, 245–251.

<sup>26</sup> The account from the perspective of the fleet from Lukka which then reached St Simeon together with English ships: *Epistula cleri et populi Luccensis ad omnes fideles*, [in:] *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe...*, pp. 165–167. It has been recently argued that the support, in fact, came from Byzantine as it was composed of English and perhaps Scandinavian mercenaries paid by Byzantine who were stationed in Laodicea: P. Frankopan, *The First Crusade. The Call from East*, Cambridge Mass. 2012, p. 159.

<sup>27</sup> The general vision of the course of the events is not a subject of controversy: J. France, *op. cit.*, pp. 253, 254; T. Asbridge, *The First Crusade...*, pp. 189–191; J. Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven...*, pp. 177–179.

<sup>28</sup> On the person of Hisnardus: Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*, transl. J.H. Hill, L.L. Hill, Philadelphia 1968, p. 43, ref. code 10. Jonathan Riley-Smith placed him on the list of Crusade participants together with identification of his place of origin: J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131*, Cambridge 1997, p. 213.

scene was the order of the intendant of Antioch to close the gate: sending his soldiers to fight outside the city walls, he ordered them to either win or perish. That was followed by complete destruction of the enemy's forces in a trap between the attacking Crusaders and the narrow bridge over the fast-flowing river which led to the Bridge Gate opened in order to save survivors<sup>29</sup>. The chronicler adds to this description that 'audivi a multis qui ibi fuerunt quod viginti Turcos, et amplius, de ponte sumptis spondalibus in flumine obruissent. Claruit ibi multum dux Lotharingiae. Hic namque hostes ad pontem praevenit, atque ascenso gradu venientes per medium dividebant'<sup>30</sup>. Therefore Godfrey distinguished himself as he was faster than the fleeing warriors and he blocked their way to the city or possibly, if different interpretation is adopted, divided the crowd of retreating enemies by his charge in such a way that part of them managed to escape whereas the rest stood in front of Godfrey blocking them<sup>31</sup>. Raymond did not provide any more details but his description leaves the reader with the feeling that Godfrey's charge, by cutting off the way of evacuation, allowed to inflict heavier losses to the enemy, which led to depleting the forces of the besieged. The chronicler stressed that he had heard about that from many eyewitnesses, which suggests that the role of Godfrey in the battle became the topic of oral accounts already at the earliest stage<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> *Le 'Liber' de Raymond d'Aguilers...*, pp. 60, 61: 'Hostium itaque superbia turbatur, porta clausa est, et pons strictus, fluvius vero maximus. Quid igitur? Hostes turbati prosternuntur et caeduntur, ac saxis in flumine obruuntur, fuga autem nulla patet. Quod nisi Gracianus pontis portam aperuisset, illa die de Antiochia pacem habuissemus'.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>31</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers, *op. cit.*, p. 43: in the translation the authors interpret the deed as dividing the enemy troops 'into two ranks'. Simon John describes that Godfrey 'forced the *hostes* to split into two': S. John, *Claruit ibi multum...*, pp. 9, 10. Simon John confirms the lesson proposed by the authors of the latest edition: he explains that the word 'dividebant', or the verb in third person plural rather than singular, must have been a mistake by a scribe. In the older edition the verb in this place was in singular ('dividebat'), which seems to make more sense with the general meaning of the utterance: *Raimundi de Aguilers Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*, [in:] *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Historiens occidentaux*, vol. III, Paris 1866, p. 249.

<sup>32</sup> It was not uncommon that chroniclers based their works on accounts of eyewitnesses but here it is important to draw attention to such a clear suggestion of the chronicler. On the topic of quoting eyewitnesses historiographic accounts concerning the First Crusade: S. John, *Historical Truth and the Miraculous Past...*; E. Lapina, 'Nec Signis Nec Testis Creditur...': *The Problem of Eyewitnesses in the Chronicles of the First Crusade*, *Viator. Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 2007,



Raymond of Aguilers created his narrative being the chaplain of Raymond, the count of Toulouse, hence it was certainly not his intention to glorify Godfrey of Bouillon. He was writing his chronicle probably still during the Crusade and finished it in autumn 1099<sup>33</sup>. Raymond's work should be therefore treated as containing traces of the earliest tales on the Crusade events which were composed as part of daily communication within groups taking part in the expedition and between them: at that stage oral accounts did not have one established version, which is why it seems pointless to look for the original<sup>34</sup>.

The anonymous work entitled *Gesta Francorum* provides similar description elements of the battle of the Bridge Gate, not mentioning any of the chiefs: the Crusader charge caused the general retreat of the enemy whose troops crowded on the bridge leading to the gate were decimated and many defenders lost their life in the waters of the Orontes, falling off the crossing<sup>35</sup>. A description which is almost identical with the version of *Gesta Francorum* may be found in the chronicle by Peter Tudebode, i.e. in its three out of four manuscripts known today. The Paris manuscript BN Paris MS Latin 4892 includes a passage of several sentences on the battle of the Bridge Gate<sup>36</sup> which

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vol. XXXVIII, pp. 117–139; Y.N. Harari, *Eyewitnessing in Accounts of the First Crusade: the Gesta Francorum and Other Contemporary Narratives*, 'Crusades' 2004, vol. III, pp. 77–99.

<sup>33</sup> Recently on the subject: J. Flori, *Chroniqueurs et propagandistes. Introduction critique aux sources de la Première Croisade*, Genève 2010, pp. 173–191; as well as: Raymond d'Aguilers, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–15; C. Klein, *Raimund von Aguilers. Quellenstudie zur Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzuges*, Berlin 1892, p. 146.

<sup>34</sup> The abundance of oral traditions which historiographers came across explains the degree of complexity of mutual relations between First Crusade sources. Consequently, doubts arose with relation to Jay Rubenstein's theory which assumes that there is a text being a collection of sermons or accounts on the First Crusade hypothetically entitled *Jerusalem History* whose individual chronicles of the Crusade participants were to be adaptations of different degrees of accurateness. See: J. Rubenstein, *What is the Gest Francorum...* See also: *Medieval Oral Literature*, ed. K. Reichl, Göttingen 2012, p. 743; *Vox intexta. Orality and Textuality in the Middle Ages*, eds A.N. Doane, C.B. Pasternack, Wisconsin 1991, p. 304.

<sup>35</sup> *Gesta Francorum...*, pp. 40, 41.

<sup>36</sup> Petrus Tudebodus, *op. cit.*, p. 75: 'Tunc dux Godefredus Christi miles potentissimus irruens in eos evaginato ense, percussit quendam gentilem ferocissimum tam viriliter ut in duas partes ipsum divideret a vertice videlicet usque in sellam equi. Actumque est ex Dei providentia ut quamvis in duo discissus minime ex toto de equo dilaberetur. Post hunc aggressus alium ex oblico secuit eum per medium. Ex hinc maximus timor et horror omnes inimicos Christianitatis perculet, non solum qui praesentes aderant sed omnes qui hoc utcumque audire potuerunt. Deinde dux per omnia memorandum illos in fugam versos persequens, nunc hos nunc illos ut leo fortissimus invadens, detruncabat,

has no counterpart of similar content in the remaining versions of that chronicle or in *Gesta Francorum*<sup>37</sup>.

Thanks to the preserved manuscript containing a fragment which cannot be found anywhere else the historian has a unique insight into the process of forming the legend on Godfrey and his bravery in the battle of the Bridge Gate. As compared to the account of Raymond of Aguilers this narrative was much more developed. In the quoted passage Godfrey's charge precedes the attack of all the Christian forces. Hence the deed in question was attached the importance of not only the opening but also decisive moment of the battle. Godfrey was given the role which in the Raymond's narrative is played by Hisnardus de Gagia, i.e. the commander of the army who, leading the attack, turned the tide of the battle. An unequivocal account relates a story in which Godfrey hewed the fiercest warrior of the enemy ranks with a stroke of the sword and he did it with such a might that he cut the enemy vertically from his head to the saddle. The description stresses that the defeated warrior did not fall off the horse, which is to suggest that his body hewn through the middle was seen by many knights and spread panic among the Antioch garrison. Subsequently, Godfrey hewed another enemy through the middle and, as the author points out, not only eyewitnesses were petrified but also those who heard the news about Godfrey's deeds. This is another reference which may be treated as an element of literary convention, but also as an indirect suggestion about how the account functioned in the oral tradition. Later it may be read that Godfrey cut off heads and threw enemies into the river and that other Crusade commanders

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et annem praecipitabat'. It is worth pointing out that the location of this event distorts the logic of the narration as it is after the words quoted that a sentence begins on the decisive charge of the Crusaders and forcing the enemy to retreat. In turn, Raymond of Aguilers places the description of Godfrey's deed at the end of the account of the battle.

<sup>37</sup> The *Recueil des historiens des croisades* edition includes two parallel versions of Peter Tudebode's chronicle: one is common for three manuscripts, whereas the lower part of the page contains fragments of the text from manuscript BN Paris MS Latin 4892 which differ from the text from the other manuscripts. Importantly, the manuscript 4892 is dated for the 12<sup>th</sup> century like the Paris manuscript 5135 and the London 3904 manuscript, whereas the manuscript from Montpellier 142 identical with the two last manuscripts is dated for the 13<sup>th</sup> century. See Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, transl. J.H. Hill, L.L. Hill, Philadelphia 1974, p. 5. In the edition from 1977 used in this research the Paris manuscript 4892 was marked as B and differences in relation to the Paris manuscript 5135 were placed in the critical apparatus.

performed similar feats. Interestingly, the author of the quoted description of Godfrey's deadly blows used the words which play the main role in the narrative of Raymond of Aguilers containing both the phrase 'per medium' as well as the verb 'dividere'. Although used in differently constructed narration, they give the impression of using the same elements and adding new layers of the account.

The third source which permits to analyse the earliest stage of the development of the narrative on Godfrey during the battle of the Bridge Gate is *Historia Ierosolimitana* attributed to Albert of Aachen<sup>38</sup>. Importantly, Godfrey is the most important figure of the whole chronicle, and also during the description of the battle of the Bridge Gate his role is prominently highlighted by the author. It is the duke who inspires the ranks of Crusaders and leads them into battle<sup>39</sup>. Albert of Aachen is considered to be an author independent from the remaining chroniclers, he did not participate in the Crusade and his narrative was written on the basis of the accounts of returning pilgrims. The first part of his work was written shortly after 1102 and includes books from I to VI which narrate the events of the First Crusade. For this reason the Aachen chronicle should be treated as an account which is not only autonomous and close to the oral tradition but also one of the earliest records of Godfrey's deed<sup>40</sup>.

In the account of the Aachen chronicle<sup>41</sup> Godfrey struck the deadly blow to a Turk who represented a threat to the duke as he used the bow. The Aachen chronicler described the blow struck by Godfrey, using almost the same words as may be found in one of

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<sup>38</sup> On the author and the work see: Albert of Aachen, *op. cit.*, pp. xxi-lx; P. Knoch, *Studien zu Albert von Aachen. Der erste Kreuzzug in der deutschen Chronistik*, Stuttgart 1966, p. 223. J. Flori, *Chroniqueurs et propagandists...*, pp. 259-311.

<sup>39</sup> Albert of Aachen, *op. cit.*, pp. 240-242.

<sup>40</sup> On the topic of relation of the Aachen chronicle to the oral tradition and chivalric poetry: S. Edgington, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-38; R. Cook, *Chanson d'Antioche, chanson de geste: le cycle de la croisade est-il epique?*, Amsterdam 1980; F. Andrei, *Alberto di Aachen e la Chanson de Jerusalem*, 'Romance Philology' 2009, vol. LXIII, pp. 1-69.

<sup>41</sup> Albert of Aachen, *op. cit.*, lib. III, cap. 65, p. 244: 'Dux vero Godefridus, cuius manus bello doctissima erat, plurima capita licet galea tecta ibidem amputasse refertur, ex ore illorum qui presentes oculis perspexerunt. Dum sic plurimo belli labore desudaret, et mediis hostibus plurimam stragem exerceret, Turcum, mirabile dictu, sibi arcu inportunum acutissimo ense duas divisit in partes, lorica indutum. Cuius corporis medietas a pectore sursum sabulo cecidit, altera adhuc cruribus equum complexa in medium pontem ante urbis menia refertur ubi lapsa remansit'.

the manuscripts of Peter Tudebode's history: the phrase 'in duas partes dividere' is repeated<sup>42</sup>. It is difficult to presume that such a clear concurrence in the scope of vocabulary in the description of the same event was accidental. This proves that both authors had contact with the same oral tradition regarding the battle of the Bridge Gate. This tradition must have gained popularity in the first years after 1099. Perhaps the account in that shape had already been in circulation during the Crusade but it was not included in the quickly accomplished narrative *Gesta Francorum* or in the version of the chronicle by Peter Tudebode which was preserved in three manuscripts. It was likely that one of the scribes-editors of the chronicle *Histora de Hierosolymitano itinere* added an anecdote on Godfrey to the text which was perpetuated in the most initial version by Raymond of Aguilers.

Albert wrote that Godfrey killed many enemies, and then hewed an armoured Turk through the middle in the horizontal axis: the upper part of his body fell to the ground whereas the lower one together with his legs was carried by the horse to the middle of the bridge where it fell down and lay. Albert stressed that he had heard about that event from many eyewitnesses, which confirms the anecdotal character of the description<sup>43</sup>. As far as the content is concerned Albert's version is more scanty: the account on hewing the Turk through the middle by Godfrey does not dominate the description of the battle and does not play a decisive role in it.

### **North French interpretations**

Both Peter Tudebode's chronicle and the chronicle written by Raymond of Aguilers as well as *Gesta Francorum* were composed shortly after the First Crusade had ended, their authors participated in the expedition and worked on their accounts on the course of events while they still lasted. At the turn of the first and second decade of 12<sup>th</sup> century three Benedictine monks climbing the clerical career ladder in northern France began works on the First Crusade

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<sup>42</sup> Petrus Tudebodus, *op. cit.*, p. 75: 'ut in duas partes ipsum divideret'; *Le 'Liber' de Raymond d'Aguilers...*, p. 61: 'atque ascenso gradu venientes per medium dividebant'.

<sup>43</sup> A proposed definition of anecdote and its distinctive features in relation to the corpus of sources describing the First Crusade: C. Sweetenham, *What Really Happened to Eurvin de Creel's Donkey? Anecdotes in Sources for the First Crusade*, [in:] *Writing the Early Crusades...*, pp. 75–88.

on the basis of the tradition of the account included in *Gesta Francorum*<sup>44</sup>. Chronicles of Guibert of Nogent, Balderic of Dol and Robert the Monk represent a valuable source material for research into how the memory of the Crusade events was developing. The authors did not take part in the events of 1096–1099, hence in constructing the account they relied on written sources available to them, oral tradition and, most likely, their own invention. Until recently these three North French reinterpretations of the account on the First Crusade were underestimated by researchers due to their supposedly excessive reliance on *Gesta Francorum*. This vision was subject to criticism, and in-depth research showed complex connections also with other accounts on the Crusade events<sup>45</sup>.

The excerpt on hewing the enemy through the middle by Godfrey in *Dei gesta per Francos* confirms that Guibert of Nogent used other sources apart from *Gesta Francorum*. He wrote that Godfrey cut the enemy in such a way that his body fell off the horse to the ground and his legs were carried ahead, and this deed, as Guibert ascertains, is the topic of songs he heard<sup>46</sup>. The author repeated the most important elements of the legend, i.e. striking the blow which hewed the Turk through the middle and spectacular carrying off the mutilated body by the horse. The passage was placed, however, not in the course of the narrative on the battle of the Bridge Gate, but immediately after Godfrey's election for the ruler of Jerusalem,

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<sup>44</sup> Recently published and extremely valuable reflections on the political and personal context of writing these chronicles: J. Rubenstein, *The 'Deeds' of Bohemond: Reform, Propaganda, and the History of the First Crusade*, *Viator. Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 2016, vol. XLVII, pp. 113–134. See also: J. Flori, *Chroniqueurs et propagandists...*, pp. 105–164; and J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and Idea of Crusading*, London 2003, pp. 135–152.

<sup>45</sup> N. Paul, *A Warlord's Wisdom: Literacy and Propaganda at the Time of the First Crusade*, *'Speculum'* 2010, vol. LXXXV, pp. 534–566; M. Bull, *Robert the Monk and His Source(s)*, [in:] *Writing the Early Crusades...*, pp. 127–139; J. Rubenstein, *Guibert of Nogent, Albert of Aachen and Fulcher of Chartres: Three Crusade Chronicles Intersect*, [in:] *ibidem*, pp. 24–37; S. Biddlecombe, *Baldric of Bourgueil and the Familia Christi*, [in:] *ibidem*, pp. 9–24; J. Flori, *Chroniqueurs et propagandists...*, pp. 105–169.

<sup>46</sup> *Guiberti abbati Novigentis Dei gesta per Francos*, [in:] *Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Medievalis*, vol. CXXVIIA, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, Turnhout 1996, p. 284: 'ut testimonio veraci probabile id de ipso preclari facinoris cantitetur, Turcum eum illoricatum, equo tamen vectum, apud Antiochiam super pontem Pharpharis obvium habuisse huicque ilia tam valide gladio traiecisse, ut corporis truncus decidens terrae procumberet et crura sedentia pertransiens equus efferret. Solent enim Lotharingi cum longitudine tum acie spatias habere mirabiles'.

which shows that legends about that deed were communicated partly irrespective of the accounts on Crusade events. The narrative space following the description of elevating Godfrey to power in the Holy City was used by the chronicler to break the chronological sequence and characterise the new ruler by means of anecdotal accounts: the description of hewing the enemy through the middle is followed by a tale about Godfrey's fight with a bear. The description alone of the battle of the Bridge Gate is similar to *Gesta Francorum* as far as the content is concerned although it is written in a far more sophisticated literary form<sup>47</sup>.

Balderic of Dol mentioned that he had been given an account about the Godfrey's impressive blow according to which the duke hew the enemy through the middle with one blow and the upper part of his body fell to the ground while the lower one was carried off by the horse back through the gate to the city<sup>48</sup>. Balderic placed a one-sentence description after the account of the battle of the Bridge Gate, as it was in the case of Raymond of Aguilers. This relation does not represent a complementation of the narrative on the course of the battle which is based on *Gesta Francorum*. In Balderic's version the lower part of the body of the cruelly slain opponent was carried on horseback towards the city walls, which is, on the one hand, an element enhancing its spectacularity, and it suggests, on the other, that the opponent was fleeing from the battlefield through the bridge to the city, and Godfrey blocked him the way out: this vision corresponds to the course of the battle sketched by all historiographers.

Among the three North French monks Robert of Reims is the author of the most extended narrative on the discussed Godfrey's deed<sup>49</sup>. This account of the battle of the Bridge Gate written at the

<sup>47</sup> The description of the battle of the Bridge Gate: *Guiberti abbati Novigentis...*, p. 192. On the person and works by Guibert in general: J. Rubenstein, *Guibert de Nogent. A Portrait of Medieval Mind*, Routledge 2002.

<sup>48</sup> *Baldrici episcopi Dolensis Historia Jerosolimitana*, [in:] *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Historiens occidentaux*, vol. IV, Paris 1879, pp. 50–51: 'In hac siquidem pugna, ut a multis relatum est, dux Godefredus militem Turcum adeo fortiter ense percussit, ut uno ictu dimidati corporis pars superior ad terram caderet, pars inferior in sella adhuc residens in civitatem rediret'.

<sup>49</sup> *The Historia Iherosolimitana of Robert the Monk*, eds D. Kempf, M. Bull, Woodbridge 2013, pp. 44–45: 'Dux itaque Godefridus, militie decus egregium, ut vidit quia illos nemo ferire poterat nisi post dorsum, equo celeri volitans anticipavit pontis introitum[...] Cumque unus ex eis audacior ceteris, et mole corporis prestantior, et viribus, ut alter Goliath, robustior, videret ducem sic supra suos

turn of the first and second decade of the 12<sup>th</sup> century became one of the most widespread written versions of the account, which is why the narrative elements used by Robert are particularly noteworthy<sup>50</sup>. The chronicler gives an unambiguous picture of the situation: Godfrey overtook fleeing foes and blocked them the way to the bridge in front of the gate, and then perpetrated the massacre by himself on the enemy troops evacuating to the city. The most important element of the account is the confrontation with the mightiest warrior from the enemy ranks: Robert compared him to Goliath. In this way the author constructed the tread of Godfrey confronting the dangerous opponent, which was used for the first time in the manuscript BN Paris MS Latin 4892 of Peter's Tudebode's chronicle where the duke of Lorraine faced 'the most savage pagan'. Robert the Monk spoke about the duel in which Godfrey received a deadly blow, fended off due to the duke's strength and the help of God. In response he hit Goliath with a sword in such a way that he hewed through his body at an angle so that the right part of his body together with his head fell into the river, and his left part together with legs galloped on horseback to the city. Robert's narrative is particularly vivid, and at the same time expressed in quite simple language, which makes it clear and easy to understand<sup>51</sup>.

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inmisericorditer sevientem, sanguineis calcaribus urget equum adversus illum, et mucrone in altum sublato totum super verticem ducis transverberat scutum. Et nisi dux ictui umbonem expandisset, et se in partem alteram inclinasset, mortis debitum persolvisset. Sed Deus militem suum custodivit, eumque scuto sue defensionis munivit. Dux, ira vehementi succensus, parat rependere vicem, eiusque tali modo appetit cervicem. Ensem elevat, eumque a sinistra parte scapularum tanta virtute intorsit, quod pectus medium disiunxit, spinam et vitalia interrupt, et sic lubricus ensis super crus dextrum integer exivit; sicque caput integrum cum dextra parte corporis immersit gurgiti, partemque que equo presidebat remisit civitati [...].

<sup>50</sup> There are over 80 medieval manuscripts of Robert's chronicle: none of the early Crusade chronicles was preserved in more than a couple of manuscripts. Reflections on the reasons for the extraordinary popularity of the work by Robert the Monk: D. Kempf, *op. cit.*, pp. 116–126; Otto Friesing and the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa as well as Cistercian scriptoria and channels of communication had the key impact on the widespread phenomenon of copying Robert's chronicle. The context of the work origins was discussed by: J. Naus, *The 'Historia Iherosolimitana' of Robert the Monk and the Coronation of Louis VI*, [in:] *Writing the Early Crusades...*, pp. 105–115. See also: L. Russo, *Ricerche sull' 'Historia Iherosolimitana' di Roberto di Reims*, 'Studi Medievali' 2002, vol. XLIII, pp. 651–691.

<sup>51</sup> The authors of the latest edition see one of the reasons for the work's popularity in the simple style of Robert's prose: *The Historia Iherosolimitana of Robert the Monk...*, p. xi.

Analysing the account of the battle of the Bridge Gate in the chronicle of Robert the Monk, one may arrive at a conclusion that subsequent versions of the scene of hewing the enemy through the middle are created in the circumstances of certain rivalry, with a surge of invention on the part of the chronicler. The scene certainly underwent some modifications both at the stage of the oral account and during the chronicler's work with a pen at the writing-desk. The elements which make the account of Robert the Monk exceptionally dramatic include fending off the enemy's mighty blow and striking a cruel blow in response as well as a fragment of the body falling straight into the river while the rest of it with the legs returns on horseback to the city. In the following part of the story the author stressed the significance of Godfrey's feat for the outcome of the battle as well as his significance and fame<sup>52</sup>: in this way the chronicler provides the recipient with an unambiguously formulated interpretation concerning the dimension and significance of Godfrey's blow. Such a strongly outlined evaluation of the event shows the important place of the account on the Godfrey's deed in the narratives about the Crusade. Besides the shape of Robert's narration and the chronicle's extraordinary popularity had an impact on spreading the vision of the course of the battle of the Bridge Gate.

The description of Godfrey hewing the enemy through the middle by Gilo of Paris<sup>53</sup> is similar to the account of Robert the Monk. This work in verse on the First Crusade entitled *Historia vie Hierosolimitane* also gives an account of the battle which the Duke

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 45: 'O predicabilis dextera ducis invicti et animosi pectoris robur excellens! Laudandus et ensis, qui in sua integritate perseverans vibranti dextere sui famulatus prestitit obsequium. Et cuius cor eructare, cuius lingua enarrare, cuius manus scribere, que pagina valet suscipere aliorum facta principum, qui illi compares fuerunt in omnibus victoriis preliorum? Victoria ducis pre ceteris enituit, quoniam pars dimidiati corporis que remansit testimonium laudis fuit'.

<sup>53</sup> On the work and the author see: *The Historia Vie Hierosolimitane of Gilo Paris and a Second, Anonymous Author*, eds and transl. C. Grocock, J.E. Siberry, Oxford 1997, pp. xiii–xxiv; C. Grocock, *L'aventure épique: le traitement poétique de la première croisade par Gilon de Paris et son continuateur*, [in:] *Autour de la première croisade*, ed. M. Balard, Paris 1996, pp. 17–28; S. Duparc-Quioc, *Un poème latin du XIIIe siècle sur la première croisade par Gilon de Toucy, augmenté par Fulco*, [in:] *Les épopées de la croisade. Premier colloque international (Trèves, 6–11 août 1984)*, eds K.-H. Bender, H. Kleber, Stuttgart 1987, pp. 35–49. Shortly after writing *Historia Vie Hierosolymitane* Gilo of Paris became the cardinal-bishop of Tusculum and papal legate, and he served as papal legate e.g. in Poland. For the connection of Gilo's literary work with his career in the Roman Curia see: J. Rubenstein, *The 'Deeds' of Bohemond...*, p. 120.



of Lorraine fought with the mighty Arab and after fending off his attack struck the deadly blow which hewed the enemy through the middle. Gilo described the wounds suffered by the defeated opponent in great detail<sup>54</sup>. This work was written at the turn of the first and second decade of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, so approximately at the same time as Robert the Monk's chronicle, which is why it is impossible to definitely capture the relation between these two works<sup>55</sup>. Gilo, like Robert, stated that during the battle Godfrey blocked the way of escape for the enemy troops and wreaked a massacre, slaying many city defenders. The direct correlation between the accounts of the battle of the Bridge Gate by Gilles and Robert is not certain, hence repeating the pattern of the discussed scene, albeit with the use of different vocabulary, may be a proof that both authors wrote their chronicles under the influence of orally transmitted accounts of Godfrey's deed<sup>56</sup>.

The vision of events included in Robert the Monk's chronicle was so influential that its text was copied in the work entitled *Historia Nicaena vel Antiochena*<sup>57</sup> written in the forties of the 12<sup>th</sup> century: it was composed on the orders of Baldwin III in the environment of the court of Latin rulers of Jerusalem. Therefore Robert the Monk's chronicle must have reached Outremer as the anonymous author of *Historia Nicaena...* based his work largely on quotations from the Monk of Reims<sup>58</sup>. Its popularity even increased as years went by and the account of Robert the Monk about Godfrey's blow hewing the enemy through the middle was used later by such writers so

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<sup>54</sup> *The Historia Vie Hierosolimitane of Gilo Paris...*, p. 122: 'Moxque choruscantem gladium levat et ferit hostem;/ Os, caput illidit, vitalia tota cecidit,/ Spargit et arvinam, rupit cum pectore spinam;/ Sic homo prostratus cadit in duo dimidiatus/ Atque super scutum partes in mille minutum/ Pars cecidit, pars heret equo trahiturque supina,/ Estque sui moderator equi non iusta rapina./ Ictu sic uno fit magna nec una ruina.'

<sup>55</sup> Historians agree that it is impossible to establish the precise datation: *ibidem*, p. xxiv; *The Historia Iherosolimitana of Robert the Monk...*, pp. xxxiv–xli. According to Marcus Bull Gilo of Paris used the text of Robert the Monk's chronicle: M. Bull, *op. cit.*, pp. 131–133.

<sup>56</sup> There are arguments which point to certain independence of Gilo from Robert the Monk: *The Historia Vie Hierosolimitane of Gilo Paris...*, pp. lix–lx.

<sup>57</sup> *Balduini III Historia Nicaena vel Antiochena*, [in:] *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Historiens occidentaux*, vol. V, Paris 1895, p. 156.

<sup>58</sup> D. Gerish, *Remembering Kings in Jerusalem: The 'Historia Nicaena vel Antiochena' and Royal Identity around the Time of the Second Crusade*, [in:] *The Second Crusade: Holy War on the Periphery of Latin Christendom*, eds J.T. Rouche, J.M. Jensen, Turnhout 2015, pp. 51–89.

the so-called anonym of Rhine<sup>59</sup> and Benedetto Accolti<sup>60</sup>. The latter, the chancellor of Florence and a humanist, moved the scene in question from the end of the account on the battle of the Bridge Gate to its beginning as it was in the manuscript by Peter Tudebode in the manuscript BN Paris MS Latin 4892.

### Later versions of the account

In his work entitled *Historia Ecclesiastica* the Anglo-Norman chronicler Orderic Vitalis included an extensive account of the First Crusade with the battle of the Bridge Gate. At the end of the description of that battle he included a tale about Godfrey's famous blow<sup>61</sup>. In his version the duke of Lorraine struck from behind in the back of the mightiest enemy clad in golden armour. Orderick repeated the motif which first appeared in Robert the Monk's work, namely in the aftermath of the blow the upper part of the slain foe fell straight into the river whereas the horse galloped away to the city with the lower part still sitting in the saddle. Orderick stressed the impression which the scene made on the defenders who were observing everything from the height of the city walls. Interestingly, one may perceive echoes of earlier versions of the scene: the text contains both the repeated phrase 'per medium', which was used already by Raymond of Aguilers, as well as 'lorica indutum' which is present in the Aachen chronicle. In the case of Orderick it is impossible to exclude the possibility of direct contact either with the manuscripts describing the First Crusade or tales disseminated orally.

Godfrey's blow hewing the enemy through the middle was also described by another twelfth-century Anglo-Norman writer, Henry

<sup>59</sup> *Anonymi Rhenani Historia et gesta ducis Gotfridi, seu Historia de obsidione Terrae Sanctae*, [in:] *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Historiens occidentaux*, vol. V, p. 469.

<sup>60</sup> *Benedicti de Accoltis Aretini Historia Gotefridi*, [in:] *ibidem*, p. 578.

<sup>61</sup> *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and transl. M. Chibnall, vol. V, Oxford 1975, p. 84: 'Insignis dux Godefredus quendam maximum bellatorum aurea lorica indutum in tergo ense percussit, ualidoque ictu per medium quasi tenerum porrum obruncauit. Caput cum humeris et superiori parte corporis a cingulo in flumen cecidit; inferiorque pars super uelocissimum cornipedem remansit. Equus autem rectore carens aspere calcaribus urguebatur; et laxatis habenis fugientes preueniens urbem ingressus est. Hoc totus populus qui in muris et propugnaculis stabat ut prospexit, ualde mestus contremuit; et de tanto strenui baronis ictu plurima cum lamentis uerba euomuit'.

of Huntingdon<sup>62</sup>. He mentioned that the upper part of the body fell to the ground while the lower was carried by the horse towards the enemy ranks. Henry made an unprecedented shift: the scene of Godfrey's deadly strike was interwoven into the battle of the Iron Bridge which took place a month before the battle of the Bridge Gate, on February 9, 1098<sup>63</sup>. In most narratives on the siege of Antioch the events of March 4–6 are preceded by the description of the battle of February 9. Henry composed the tale of the battle of the Bridge Gate on the basis of *Gesta Francorum* and similar versions of Peter Tudebode's chronicle. Hence it may be concluded that the narrative on hewing the enemy through the middle by Godfrey was so popular that it could have functioned parallelly to the accounts of the battle of the Bridge Gate which did not account for it. This resulted in different positioning of the discussed scene in the whole narrative in the work by Henry of Huntingdon.

The chronicle composed by William of Tyre is a testimony of collective memory of the Latin elite of Jerusalem in the seventies and eighties of the 12<sup>th</sup> century<sup>64</sup>. The chancellor of the Crusader Kingdom stressed that Godfrey's deed had gained fame which immortalised him forever. He wrote that the Duke of Lorraine beheaded many armed warriors during the battle, and then he hewed an ironclad enemy through the middle<sup>65</sup>. Interestingly, the archbishop of Tyre composed a description different from the anonymous *Historia Nicaena vel Antiochena* which was written three decades earlier at the royal court of Jerusalem. Hence it may

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<sup>62</sup> *Henrici Huntendunensis De captione Antiochiae a Christianis*, [in:] *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Historiens occidentaux*, vol. V, pp. 376–377: 'Dux vero Godefridus quemdam medium secuit; cum igitur pars terrae cecidisset, partem domini ferebat equus inter paganos pugnantes; quo monstro perterriti...'

<sup>63</sup> T. Venning, *op. cit.*, p. 36; H. Hagenmeyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 125–126.

<sup>64</sup> P.W. Edbury, J.G. Rowe, *William of Tyre. Historian of the Latin East*, Cambridge 1988, p. 187.

<sup>65</sup> *Guillelmi Archiepiscopi Tyrensis Chronicon*, [in:] *Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Medievalis*, vol. LXIII, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, Turnhout 1986, pp. 278–279: 'Dux vero Lotharingiae, etsi in toto conflictu optime se habuerat, tamen circa pontem jam advesperascente die, tantum tamque insigne virtutis, qua singulariter praeeminebat, dedit argumentum, ut perpetua dignum judicaretur memoria factum ejus celebre, quo se universo exercitui reddidit insignem. Nam, postquam multorum capita loricatorum, sine ictus repetitione, solita virtute amputavit, unum de hostibus protervius instantem, licet lorica indutum, per medium divisit, ita ut pars ab umbilico superior, ad terram decideret; reliqua parte super equum cui insederat infra urbem introducta. Obstupuit populus, visa facti novitate; nec latere patitur, quod ubique praedicat, factum tam mirabile'.

be concluded that William of Tyre did not have any contact with the record initiated by Robert the Monk. He created a tale which displays different degrees of similarity to the versions of Albert of Aachen, Guibert of Nogent and Raymond of Aguilers<sup>66</sup>. William's description was copied virtually word for word by Mathew Paris in his chronicle<sup>67</sup>.

## Conclusion

Having analysed different versions of the account of Godfrey's deed during the battle of the Bridge Gate one may conclude that the shape of relations between different sources describing the First Crusade cannot be accounted for by simple correlations between one chronicle and another. The presented analysis shows that the contents of the narrative, beside other written versions of events, may have been also affected by the chronicler's contact with witnesses or orally disseminated tales and the author's invention gave it the final form.

The earliest version of the account was written by Raymond of Aguilers, while Peter Tudebode and Albert of Aachen created independently two earliest extended narratives on hewing the enemy through the middle by Godfrey of Bouillon. The author of the most popular version is Robert the Monk, who composed it being largely inspired by his own imagination, outshining earlier accounts. Yet it was the chronicle by William of Tyre and its old-French renditions, very popular also in the decades and centuries to come<sup>68</sup>, that clearly referred to the early stage of shaping the legend of Godfrey of Bouillon, who hewed the enemy through the middle with one blow of the sword during the battle of the Bridge Gate.

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<sup>66</sup> J. Rubenstein, *Three Crusade Chronicles Intersect...*, pp. 24–38. On the connections of the chronicle by William of Tyre with the chronicle of Albert of Aachen: Albert of Aachen, *op. cit.*, p. xxvi; P. Knoch, *op. cit.*, pp. 29–63.

<sup>67</sup> *Matthaei Parisiensis Chronica Maiora*, London 1874, vol. II, p. 74.

<sup>68</sup> See: P. Handyside, *The Old French William of Tyre*, Leiden–Boston 2015, pp. 124–126.

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BARTŁOMIEJ DZWIĞAŁA

### **Kształtowanie się przekazu o przecięciu jednym ciosem przeciwnika przez Gotfryda Lotaryńskiego w czasie oblężenia Antiochii przez pierwszą krucjatę. Studium źródłoznawcze**

W artykule prezentuję badania nad opowieściami kronikarskimi o bitwie pod Bramą Mostową, która odbyła się 6 marca 1098 r., w czasie oblężenia Antiochii przez wojska pierwszej krucjaty. Skupiam się na kulminacyjnym momencie tych opowieści – scenie, w której książę Gotfryd Lotaryński w starciu na moście prowadzącym do Bramy Mostowej jednym ciosem przepołowił muzułmańskiego adwersarza. Swoją wywód podzieliłem na trzy części – w pierwszej pokazuję, jakie stanowisko zajmują historycy wobec przekazów o przepołowieniu przeciwnika przez Gotfryda, a także analizuję najwcześniejszy etap kształtowania się przekazu, za który uważam opisy stworzone przez uczestników krucjaty: Rajmunda z Aguilers, Piotra Tudeboda oraz ten zamieszczony w kronice Alberta z Akwizgranu. W drugiej części analizuję modyfikacje i przekształcenia, jakim poddawali omawianą scenę kronikarze z północnej Francji tworzący w pierwszych dwóch dziesięcioleciach wieku XII. W ostatniej części zajmuję się późniejszymi wersjami tej samej sceny, wnioskując na temat ich związku z wcześniejszymi przekazami. W toku badań okazało się, że najpopularniejszą i najsilniej oddziałującą wersję stworzył kronikarz Robert Mnich, natomiast dostrzegalne są wyraźne związki z najwcześniejszymi wersjami nawet u autorów piszących pod koniec XII w. i później.

**Słowa kluczowe:** oblężenie Antiochii, krucjata, Gotfryd Lotaryński, kronika.